

Cautious reception for aged-care proposals

GREEK AGED CARE PROVIDERS CAUTIOUSLY RECEIVE RUDD'S AGED CARE PROPOSAL

The proposals by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in regards aged care were cautiously received by two major Greek aged care providers, Fronditha Care and the Greek Orthodox Community of Sydney NSW.

Mr Rudd's plan is part of the government's hospital and health reform package, specifically pledges an additional 5000 aged care places.

His plan at a cost of \$739 million over four years includes \$32 million to establish one-stopshops throughout Australia to help seniors and their families access information and assessment for aged care services; \$300 million to provide low interest rate loans to support the development of 2,500 extra aged care places.

A key element of the proposals is that the Federal government will take over responsibility for all aged care services as of July 2012. Currently the burden is shared between the Commonwealth and States who provide services as part of the Home and Community Care programs.



Fronditha Care and the Greek Orthodox Community of Sydney NSW while keen to secure more support from the Federal Government are also keen to point to the increasing costs of aged care.

"The Prime Minister's announcement outlining the proposed aged care reforms is a significant step towards providing better care for our elderly," CEO of Fronditha Care Penni Michael said.

"Unfortunately what is missing from the proposal is consideration of the issues of choice, access and sustainability," she added.

Ms Michael explained that government funding does not compensate for the ever increasing cost of providing care each year thus rendering more difficult the provision of service at the same level. "For

example, our costs go up by about 4 per cent each year, yet funding goes up around 2 per cent. This is simple mathematics; eventually we run out of money to deliver the same service and inevitably we look at ways to make it work."

For Fronditha Care a major concern still lies with funding structures around Community Aged Care Packages which entitle elderly people to live at home while receiving aged care services.

"The Commonwealth has indicated its commitment to this program and more, much more, can be



The President of the Greek Community of Sydney NSW, Harry Danalis

done to support our elderly to stay at home for as long as possible," Ms Michael underscored. The President of the Greek Community of Sydney NSW, Harry Danalis expressed pessimism that the lack of aged care places is so high that Mr Rudd's proposals will not adequately address the problem.

He agreed with the CEO of Fronditha Care that aged care providers are faced with increased costs which are not matched by government funding.

Additionally, Mr Danalis highlighted that the government does not provide enough funding for the building of new aged care facilities.

"Mr Rudd's plan is a positive initiative but it's not enough," Mr Danalis stressed.

(source: neos kosmos)

Greek hero:
John
Loukadellis.
Picture:
Chris Lane



Charitable odyssey

JOHN Loukadellis of Carlton has been recognised for his fund-raising efforts, particularly through the Greek community group, the Antissian Association. He was recognised by his employer, the Macquarie Group, in the annual Macquarie staff community awards. Mr Loukadellis, 29, who works for the group's mortgages division, organised a series of fund-raising and volunteering events which raised more than \$47,000 last year.

A barbecue raised \$4000 for the Australian bushfire appeal which was matched dollar-for-dollar by the Macquarie Group Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Macquarie Group.

Mr Loukadellis organised a volunteer day that raised \$6000 for Ronald McDonald House, a gala night that raised \$14,000 for the Exodus Foundation and a dinner dance that raised \$2980 for the Antissian Association. These fund-raising efforts were matched dollar-for-dollar by the foundation.

Mr Loukadellis also helped to raise \$14,000 at a breast cancer breakfast and he captained the Macquarie Mortgages Movember team and personally raised \$2700 for the men's health charity.

Mr Loukadellis is president of the Antissian Association which was formed in 1978 to help people from Antissia village on the Greek island of Lesbos to settle in Australia. Mr Loukadellis's father, Steve, came from Antissia and it is estimated there are almost 2000 people from the island living in St George and Sutherland Shire. "By doing this work for the association I feel I'm keeping alive the memory of my father's generation who came from war-torn Greece to start a better life, in Australia," Mr Loukadellis said. The association is raising funds for a three-year-old Sydney boy with autism and will be having a fund-raiser for the Exodus Foundation at the Grand Roxy, Brighton-Le-Sands, on May 21.

Article from The Leader - by BY JIM GAINSFORD

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