

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Greens ageing policy will improve lives of older Australians**

Leading seniors advocate COTA Australia today welcomed the first major party's policy on ageing *Equality and Compassion: Supporting older Australians by the Australian Greens*, that includes commitments on more choice and control in aged care, improving mature age work opportunities and providing funds for dementia and palliative care.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Ian Yates said these were important measures, many which COTA has been calling for, and commended the Greens on being the first to release a comprehensive ageing platform for this election.

"I am pleased that the Greens have recognised the need to have a policy for older Australians and have consulted widely in its development," Mr Yates said.

"Older people are a significant voting block and the recently released COTA Election Survey showed that more than a third of older people are still making up their mind on who they will vote for. I call on all major parties to use the final week and a half to make clear what their party will deliver for older Australians.

"The Greens platform prioritises the development of a national strategy for mature age workers. In particular, the increased job active support recognises the need to holistically support mature age workers beyond simply incentivising employers to hire this critical cohort of experience within of our population.

"A national mature age participation strategy is something for which we have been advocating and I hope it will be similarly considered by other political parties ahead of 2 July."

Mr Yates said the Greens plan to move to full consumer directed aged care would give more choice and control to older Australians. However he said he was disappointed that the policy platform stopped short of committing to a timetable to implement the Roadmap to phase out rationing of aged care packages, which results in many older people not getting aged care when and where they need it.

"Consumer directed care is already being introduced in the home care setting and thousands of older people are benefiting. However it has not yet moved to the residential care setting and this is a critical next step to ensuring older Australians are in control of their care no matter where it is delivered.

"Older people should be able to have any funding for aged care allocated to them directly, rather than it being tied to whoever is providing the service, giving them the ability to go elsewhere if the service they are receiving is not to an appropriate standard.

"It is great to see the Greens move in this direction – but the sector needs stability and all parties need to go the further step and provide a clear timeframe on reform."

Mr Yates also said additional funding for palliative care and dementia are also welcome measures of the Greens platform.

COTA Australia notes the release of policies by the ALP on an age-friendly nation and a Minister for Ageing, a review of Aged Care Reforms and improving the lives of people with Dementia. COTA Australia also notes the Coalition's policies on protecting the rights of older Australians, investment in dementia including a National Dementia Strategy and support to dementia friendly communities.

"However we need the major parties to release comprehensive policies for an older Australia – the electorate awaits!"

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**COTA Australia is the peak policy development, advocacy and representation organisation for older Australians, representing COTAs in every State and Territory and through them over 500,000 older Australians.**