

## MEDIA RELEASE

22 MARCH 2010

### Aged care must feature in Leaders' debate

Tuesday's health reform debate between the Prime Minister and the Opposition leader must feature the future care of older Australians.

The Campaign for the Care Older Australians (CCOA) group stressed the health system can never be fixed without comprehensive aged care reforms.

"We look forward to hearing Mr Abbott and Mr Rudd discuss aged care as a part of their solution to the health system mess."

CCOA said Mr Rudd had forecast announcements on aged care including a Productivity Commission inquiry, but no details have been forthcoming.

"Recent announcements concerning nurse practitioners and more funding for training doctors are welcome news for the long term health of the nation including aspects of aged care, but they don't address fundamental aged care concerns – which are about making sure older Australians can choose how to get the care they need when and where they need it.

"Aged Care is inextricably linked to the health and hospitals reform agenda, and Mr Abbott, as the former Minister for Health and Ageing, should be well prepared to put his view of these issues on the table tomorrow.

"Health reform is unlikely to be the subject of the two other debates proposed in the lead up to the federal election, so tomorrow's debate must be used as an opportunity to enlighten Australians about how the major parties intend to support them as they get older."

CCOA has urged reforms including an entitlement based on assessed needs; greater choice of services; provision for special needs groups; and flexible payment options for accommodation.

CCOA comprises 11 national organisations providing community and residential care.

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**Aged & Community Services Australia, Aged Care Association Australia, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Churches of Christ Living Care, Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Homes, Lutheran Aged Care Australia, The Salvation Army Aged Care Plus, The National Presbyterian Aged Care Network, UnitingCare Australia**