



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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More Aged Care for Newcastle, But More Can Be Done

Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson today welcomed the announcement of 131 new aged care places for Newcastle, but urged the Howard Government to do more.

The 2005 Aged Care Approvals Round has provided 75 Community Aged Care places, 25 Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) places, 10 dementia-specific EACH places, and 21 Residential Care (Low) places.

The various services will be provided by Awabakal Newcastle Aboriginal Cooperative, Migrant Resource Centre of Newcastle and Hunter, Novacare, Roman Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, Uniting Church, and Maroba.

"I congratulate those organisations that have chosen to provide these services, and welcome the much needed extra places," Ms Grierson said.

"However, after nine long years we are only just starting to see the Howard Government putting back the aged care places that it had taken away."

"In particular, the number of residential aged care beds continues to be well under the Government's own benchmark level of 90 beds per 1,000 people aged over 70 years. When Labor was in power in 1996, there were 92 beds per 1,000 people. Now there are only 85."

"While many older people want to receive care in their homes, the Howard Government must also provide adequate residential services for those with high levels of care requirements."

"There were no new High Level Residential Care places made available for Newcastle this year, and only 21 Low Level places."

"The Howard Government must provide more funding for aged care places so that it meets its own benchmark, and more importantly the care needs of the older people in our community."

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