



THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP

Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Research: By 2060 – Average Aussie Woman Will Reach 90 Years

New research shows that by 2060, Australian women could expect to reach 90 and by mid-century most Australians can expect – on average – to live to their mid-to-late-80s.

By 2045-50 – Australian men and women will live five years longer than they do now with women going from 83.7 years to 88 and men from 79 to 84.1 years.

Currently, Australians now have the second longest life expectancy in the world at 81.4 years – after Japan.

Australian women in some parts of the nation like the Sunshine Coast and agricultural areas outside Perth have among the longest life expectancy in the world.

Currently, about 13 per cent of our population - some 2.8 million people is aged 65 years or older. This is expected to rise to 18 per cent by 2021 and to 26 per cent (around 7 million people) in 2051. The number of people aged over 80 years will almost double over the next 20 years.

Minister for Ageing, Mrs Justine Elliot released the new data from the Department of Health and Ageing – in a major speech to Australia’s Ageing Population Summit 2008 – in Melbourne.

She also detailed the Australian Government’s response to the challenge of an ageing population.

“Our life expectancy rates in Australia are to be celebrated,” Mrs Elliot said.

“This is wonderful news and can be attributed to healthy lifestyles and medical advances in Australia,” Mrs Elliot said.

In 1901-10, Australian women lived seven per cent longer than men. Currently, the difference is six per cent and it will be five per cent by 2045-50.

Life Expectancy at Birth (Australia)

	Women	Men
Born in 1901-10	58.8	55.2
Born in 1953-55	72.8	67.1
Born in 2004-06	83.5	78.7
Born in 2007	83.7	79
Born in 2045-50	88.0	84.1
Born in 2060-65	90	

Department of Health and Ageing data also shows that people who reach 100 have a greater chance of reaching their next birthday than ever before.

Remaining Life Expectancy at Age 100 (Australia)

	Women	Men
Turned 100 in 1901-10	1.2	1.2
Turned 100 in 1953-55	1.7	1.5
Turned 100 in 2004-06	2.9	2.7

Currently two in every 10,000 people are aged at least 100. By 2050 this will be 23 in every 10,000 people.

Currently, there are 2,860 Australians over the age of 100 and that is expected to increase to 78,000 by 2055.

Centenarians are the fastest growing age segment of the Australian population. Their numbers have increased by 8.5 per cent a year over the past 25 years.

Ninety-three (93) per cent of Australians over 100 are between 100 to 104; 6.3 per cent are 105-109 and 0.3 per cent are over 110 years.

There was an increasing demand meaning that Australian government expenditure on aged care could rise from the current three per cent of total Commonwealth revenues today to nine per cent by 2050, if current policy settings remain unchanged.

The United States is facing the same issue. Medicaid – which 70 per cent is spent on the elderly – is the largest single expenditure in 22 out of 50 American States (source: National Association of State Budget Officers). In New York State, Medicaid accounts for 29.2 per cent of entire State budget and in Tennessee, it is 35.7 per cent.

Mrs Elliot said the Australian Government was responding to the challenges of an ageing population and the impact on our society.

The Australian Government is investing in aged and community care. Over the next four years, funding for aged and community care will reach record levels of more than \$40 billion - with \$28.6 billion of that on residential aged care alone.

“No government in Australian history has spent more on aged care and community care than this one. We are proud of our plans for aged and community care,” Mrs Elliot said.

“This is about planning for Australia’s future and the challenges of the 21st century.

“We want to ensure that older Australians can live independent lives and age in their own homes, but also have the option to enter aged care homes if they need to,” Mrs Elliot said.

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