

It is now realised by just about everybody that within the next 10 to 20 years, the stress on aged care facilities to provide an adequate level of care for the enormous number of admitting patients will become horrendous and with that in mind, I submit the following.

Aim:

Providing our ever increasing number of aged with a level of care that not only respects their dignity and is of the highest quality but is also able to be monitored, scrutinised and enforced to government set standards whilst minimizing the ongoing costs to government.

Facts:

- The fiscal expectations on government to resolve this issue will be large, no matter what methods are employed to meet this challenge.
- The combined political might of the ageing populace will be, over a period of time, substantial thereby pushing action.
- As the build up of ageing population is of a current 20-30 year period, so will the demise of that demand become.
- Although a “one template fits all” solution may seem democratically fair to apply to all impacted, this, in reality, may not occur, owing to costs and the ability to pay.
- The majority of current aged care facilities are privately owned and controlled.

My solution is investment based. That is, the Government sets up an investment, government guaranteed, fund that would have a life of only, say available only to large investment corporations whereby not only would the returns be healthy but tax concessions on investments would also be considered to make this attractive. This fund would then commence to build comfortable, aged care residences that can provide all the creature comforts required for one to spend the remainder of their lives if they elect to do so. This obviously becomes a “bricks and mortar” investment for the fund that not only add more stimulation to the building sector in the short term but returns to the government, residential infrastructure, the latter being important also in the long term and will touched on later in this document.

These gated residences, once built, will be operated by private industry within a rental situation, but under government supervision. That is to say that the day to day operation will be performed by these companies but the expected expenditures in key operating areas will be monitored by the government. Pre-set amounts of expenditure must be made with receipted proof being provided for regular government inspection. Again, successful operation would attract some tax relief so as to keep industry incentivized.

Group 1.

Firstly here would be two levels of care provided by these residences and as currently provided there would be low care for day to day, live-in residents and high care for those who require constant monitoring.

Secondly, there would be residences built specifically for short stay respite for those who choose to still live at home but require a short respite three times a year plus as directed by physicians.

The operating of these residences would be financed as they are currently with a means test and a proportion of clients funds being invested back into the Aged Care Fund and the operators receiving the interest of that invested monies until such time as the person no longer lives there.

Group 2.

These would run along the lines of that of the above with the exception that the clientele would be those who cannot afford the above residences due to their inadequate financial position. These residences would have more than one person to each room, with the rooms being larger to accommodate this. They would be along the level of not abandoning these people but still having somewhere warm and safe to live. These residences would also have two levels of care, high and low as to NOT accommodate these people will only see them gravitate to the hospital system. It would be seen that they would keep a small proportion of their pension with the remainder going to assist with their living expenses incurred by the residence operator. This also encourages “Baby Boomers” to actually actively save towards the higher quality residential living and therefore paying their way through their aged care life.

Incentives could also be given to companies interested in providing transportation services to accommodate the aged within these residences say, primarily utilising electric powered vehicles. Students could earn “credits” for participating in supervised “hands on” caring for the aged within these facilities that could be converted to some sort of financial credit in paying for University fees or even accommodation. It could be also accredited towards a sympathetic course for a degree or diploma.

A tax incentive could also be given to other companies who are in a position to assist with the quality of living of the aged, not just those who are housed within these residences therefore diminishing the responsibility towards government to provide much of this.

As the demand for aged care facilities started to diminish and residences became “offline”, they could immediately be used to help integrate migrant families into suburbia Australia and hopefully have an impact on preventing the “enclave” mentality of so many who come to our shores as these residences would not only be throughout capital cities but also throughout regional Australia.

In initiating this fund, the government would have to initially provide half of the funds’ capital but after a period of time, allowing a “buy back” of shares in order to recoup its’ initial investment. The fund may also have to invest in areas not associated with the aged in order to maintain a level of return but that is conjecture and can be looked at later.

I think I have put down the smoky images for my vision that, as you will attest, require much more talented fleshing out than I would be able to give but hope they purvey what I am trying to get across,
Many thanks for reading,

Peter Morcomb