Dietitians Australia member appointed to Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council - Media release

Dietitians Australia wholeheartedly congratulates Aged Care Subject Matter Lead and Accredited Practising Dietitian Julie Dundon on her appointment to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council.

“Julie has been a fierce advocate and tenacious champion for improved nutrition in aged care,” said Dietitians Australia Chief Executive Officer Robert Hunt.

“Julie’s appointment to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council will bring deep expertise in the best-practice and evidence-based nutrition in aged care.”

Ms Dundon who is a member of Dietitians Australia, the peak body representing over 8,000 dietitians, has been outspoken in her pursuit of improved nutrition in aged care; including mandatory malnutrition screening and annual food audits as a condition of aged care homes receiving the Federal Government’s $10 Basic Daily Fee Supplement.

The Commonwealth Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety showed cases of horrendous neglect and abuse. Unfortunately, as documented on ABC’s 7:30 program on 21 April, this neglect continues today such as the case study of the South Australian Port Augusta nursing home which failed every Aged Care Quality Indicator.

“In residential aged care, Australian studies have identified a prevalence of malnutrition up to 50%,” said Mr Hunt.

“Dietitians Australia has been saying ‘malnutrition is a silent abuser’ for years.

“There are off-the-shelf malnutrition screening tools which are cost effective and can be done by the existing team in aged care homes and take just a few minutes. Weight loss alone is not an indicator of malnutrition.

“Dietitians Australia has been receiving reports of the $10 basic daily fee supplement not going to aged care resident’s food. It was no surprise to us that one in three residential aged care homes continue to spend less than $10 per day on food, despite receiving the basic daily fee supplement.

“Julie’s appointment is very welcomed and we trust the Minister will give significant weight to her deep expertise and passion for improved nutrition in aged care.”

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council is an eleven-person Council and Ms Dundon’s appointment is until April 2025.

ENDS

Interview opportunities:

- Robert Hunt, Chief Executive Officer – Dietitians Australia (Canberra based)

Media enquiries

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Note to editors: Dietitians Australia is the leading voice of nutrition in Australia, representing dietitians nationally and advocating for healthier communities. Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) is the only national credential recognised by the Australian Government as the quality standard for nutrition and dietetics services in Australia.