Dietitians Australia

Dietitians: We need to support aged care homes to meet standards

Ahead of the Federal Budget, Dietitians Australia is renewing its call on the Government to fund accredited practising dietitians to support aged care homes to improve food and nutrition for residents.

“Accredited practising dietitians stand willing and ready to support the Government and aged care sector to improve food and nutrition offerings for older people in residential aged care,” Dietitians Australia CEO Robert Hunt said.

“The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety rightly appalled and shocked Australians when it highlighted some homes were spending less than $6 a day on food,” Mr Hunt explained.

“As a nation, we need to do better to care for our mothers, fathers and grandparents who gave so much to our country.

“We welcome the Government’s draft reforms to aged care, which aim to help to lift the bar on food and nutrition offerings in aged care.

“Our workforce of accredited practising dietitians is ready and able to assist the aged care sector in responding to the new Aged Care Quality Standards and challenges.

“To meet the draft standards for food and nutrition, it will be important for every residential aged care home to have an annual on-site assessment of their menu, food offerings and dining environment. Accredited practising dietitians stand ready and able to assist,” said Mr Hunt.

“An on-site assessment by an accredited practising dietitian will help providers with simple and pragmatic solutions that can vastly improve not just the nutritional adequacy of the food provided but also the residents’ enjoyment and ability to consume the food”.

“Satisfaction with the food provided plays an essential role in maintaining the quality of life.

“A tasty, nutritious diet tailored to the unique needs of older people reduces the risk of malnutrition, unplanned weight loss, dehydration, pressure injuries/wounds, falls and admission to hospital,” Mr Hunt said.

“This is not a punitive response; this is about working with each home’s circumstances to improve the lives of every resident in aged care throughout Australia.”

“Annual on-site assessments of the menu, food offerings and the overall dining environment must become embedded in systems to support the aged care sector,” said Mr Hunt.

For media enquiries and interviews, contact our Media Manager on 0409 661 920.

Note to Editors: Dietitians Australia is the leading voice in nutrition and dietetics, 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.