Dietitians Australia heralds the introduction of the new Aged Care bill into Parliament

Dietitians Australia is welcoming the introduction of the new Aged Care bill into Parliament, as a significant milestone for bolstering the nutrition rights of Australians in aged care, and moving us another step closer towards transforming nutrition in aged care.

The new bill once passed will enable the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards to come into effect, including a brand-new standard on food and nutrition quality.

“We congratulate the Government for working together, and prioritising quality of life for older Australians, including a standard that will build the groundswell for transforming food and nutrition in aged care,” Dietitians Australia President Tara Diversi said.

“Dietitians Australia expresses our sincere gratitude to the Minister for Aged Care, Anika Wells, for ensuring nutrition and dietitians are well embedded in the Standards.

“The new Quality Standard (Standard 6, Food and Nutrition), will require residential aged care providers to have their menus designed in partnership with older people and developed with the input of chefs, cooks and an accredited practising dietitian.

“The standard also requires providers to have their menu and mealtime experience reviewed by a dietitian at least once a year, and we really encourage providers to ensure they welcome a dietitian onsite to complete this work.

“The rate of malnutrition and unplanned weight loss in Australian residential aged care has been unacceptable for decades.

“We are hopeful we are closer to making malnutrition in Australian aged care history,” Ms Diversi said.

“Many of our members working in aged care are relieved to finally see greater focus on food and nutrition, in the form of a legislated standard,” Dietitians Australia Chief Executive Officer Magriet Raxworthy said.

“Those working in the aged care sector can be assured; you will be well supported by accredited practising dietitians to meet this important standard.

“Dietitians are ready and able to work closely with you, your community, and your teams, to ensure the meals, snacks and drinks on offer to older people meet their preferences and unique nutrition needs.

“Together we can make sure residential aged care in Australia is a place where older people are well nourished and experience joy at every mealtime.

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.