

Tuesday 25 September 2018

AGED CARE RESIDENTS STARVING FOR CHANGE

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) welcomes the Royal Commission into the Aged Care sector, however warns aged care residents will continue to go hungry in the process with potentially dire consequences. DAA urges the Government to recognise the serious nutrition issues of the sector and that solutions are available to address this right now.

Older adults are the largest group of nutritionally vulnerable people in Australiaⁱ and more than one in two aged care residents are identified as malnourishedⁱⁱ. There are more than 5,500 Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs) in Australia, highly qualified and ready to support residential aged care providers.

“Having decent food available is a right, not a privilege for older Australians. Malnutrition is correlated with a lower quality of life in aged care residents and DAA can provide the solution,” says new DAA CEO, Robert Hunt.

DAA highlights that APDs can have a huge impact in addressing malnutrition at both individual and institutional level. APDs provide the best nutritional advice to support and optimise the health of the ageing Australian population.

“APDs can work with management, foodservice staff, medical and allied health professionals and patients, to address unique factors contributing to the malnutrition of residents at each facility,” said Robert.

With the number of people in Australia over 65 set to double over the 40 years to 8.9 millionⁱⁱⁱ, it is imperative we act now to ensure better health for older Australian communities in the future. **ENDS**

For further information or to organise an interview with Robert Hunt, contact Pattie King, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.

ⁱ Kellett, Jane & Kyle, Greg & Itsiopoulos, Catherine & Nauton, Mark & Bacon, Rachel. (2015). Malnutrition Prevalence in Aged Care Residents. Topics in Clinical Nutrition. 30. 276-280. 10.1097/TIN.0000000000000042.

ⁱⁱ Watterson et al, 2009. Evidence based practice guidelines for the nutritional management of malnutrition in adult patients across the continuum of care.

ⁱⁱⁱ Deloitte Access Economics, June 2016, Australia's aged care sector: economic contribution and future directions