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Welcome funding to care for the rural ageing population

The Federal Government's announcement of a \$900 million investment to enhance aged care services in rural and remote areas is a vital step towards ensuring that older Australians, regardless of their postcode, can access the high-quality, safe aged care they deserve.

“We know that older people living in rural, regional and remote Australia face significant barriers to accessing aged care, increasing the risk of poorer quality of life and premature death.

“People who prefer to stay in community and need the support of living in residential aged care are often forced to move hundreds of miles away because local aged care infrastructure is not there or suitable. This takes them away from family and friends and the surrounding sights and smells that they know and love,” said the Alliance Chief Executive Susi Tegen.

The allocation of \$600 million for the Support at Home initiative, combined with an additional \$300 million for infrastructure improvements, shows commitment to addressing the unique challenges faced by aged care providers in thin – and often no – markets.

“Rural communities need this commitment from the government. These resources will empower providers to maintain service continuity and enhance the overall quality of care for older Australians living in rural, regional and remote areas.

“Access to quality aged care services should not be determined by where they live. We must not forget that the rural ageing population has contributed socially and economically to Australia and that they deserve the same dignity and support as those in the city.

“The ability for Support at Home providers to apply for thin market grants will help ensure their sustainability and enable them to meet the diverse needs of our aging population.

“The additional \$300 million designated for the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program will also support addressing workforce challenges and attracting much-needed health workers to the regions,” Ms Tegen added.

The Alliance commends the government's efforts to address the disparities faced by rural communities and looks forward to working collaboratively with federal and state governments, aged care providers and communities to ensure the successful implementation of these initiatives.

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