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MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 15 November 2017

Ensuring Flexible Housing Options are Available for Older Queenslanders

COTA Queensland, the seniors peak body representing 718,000 Queenslanders aged 65 and over, has called on all parties contesting the State Election to make ageing a policy priority.

By 2036, it is projected one in five Queenslanders will be aged 65 and over. Ensuring flexible housing options are available to older Queenslanders needs to be a top priority for the incoming Queensland Government.

COTA Queensland urges the incoming Queensland Government to adopt the recommendations contained in the ***Advisory Taskforce on Residential Transition for Ageing Queenslanders Report 2016***. This report was prepared by a group of stakeholders who represented all sectors involved in aged housing, including residents and developers. The report provides both an analysis of the issues that impact on seniors housing as well as a comprehensive set of recommendations that provide a pathway forward.

“Housing is a key issue, and it has significant implications for many aspects of older people’s lives. Planning ahead is critical. Housing decisions are complex, often have emotional implications and for some older people decisions may be made under stress. Many older people are overwhelmed by the challenge of finding and processing the information they need.” said COTA Queensland Chief Executive Mark Tucker-Evans said.

“It is imperative that older Queenslanders have access to reliable information about the various housing options available to help support them to make the best decisions to meet their future housing requirements.

“The current Queensland Government has made a commitment of \$1million to fund support services to assist seniors in making informed decisions about housing options as part of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. We are requesting the incoming Government to continue the program, and consider increasing the funding to cope with the increasing proportion of seniors over the age of 65.

“Vulnerability and homelessness is an issue that is starting to have a growing impact on seniors and in particular, older women. More concerted action is needed to assist those seniors who, for a variety of reasons, find themselves displaced from appropriate housing and made homeless.

“People have a right to maintain personal independence, be treated with dignity and respect, live without exploitation, abuse or neglect be and feel safe. Be provided with information, have personal privacy, make decisions, have choice and support if required.

“We need to involve older people, peak agencies, and advocates in the development or improvement of housing and homelessness assistance in a way that encourages personal independence and fosters full participation in communities.

COTA Queensland aims to help create a more just, equitable and caring community in which older people are actively involved and have access to appropriate support, services and care.

“We welcome the opportunity to work closely with the incoming Queensland Government to ensure flexible housing options are available for older Queenslanders.”

To read the 2017 COTA Queensland State Election Priorities, visit www.cotaqlld.org.au.

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