

# Media release

## National Seniors

11 May 2010

### **A HEALTHY BUDGET FOR SENIORS**

Older Australians have welcomed the extra \$2.2 billion for healthcare announced in today's budget.

Commenting on the extra funding, National Seniors chief executive Michael O'Neill said:

"Over 50s spend more money on healthcare, have higher hospitalisation rates and are more likely to have long-term health conditions, so extra funding is always welcome."

National Seniors, the nation's peak body for older Australians, has also given a cautious welcome to additional funding to tackle the skill shortage in age care, and measures to help older workers stay in the workforce.

Michael O'Neill said:

"The \$103 million to help age care staff improve their skills is obviously welcome but it will not solve the longer-term problem of staff shortages, especially the shortage of nurses. We are concerned about what appears to be a piecemeal approach to the reform of age care.

"It is also welcome that the government has included mature aged workers in the \$200 million package to help workers retrain and gain new skills, but more still needs to be done to help older workers who want to stay in the workforce."

Michael O'Neill is available for comment on 0448 125 898.

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With around 280,000 members, National Seniors is Australia's largest consumer organisation for the over-50s and fourth largest group of its kind in the world.