

# Older Persons Services and Accommodation Program

RCV commissioned research into Older Persons Services and Accommodation to support older people to age in their communities and to assess the resulting economic benefits. This research outlines a number of opportunities for member councils to maximise economic outcomes and community benefits, outlined below.

## Age friendly communities

Retention and attraction of the older population with consequent economic benefits can be greatly enhanced by maximising age friendly strategies.

### Recommendations

- Future state government support for age friendly initiatives should place emphasis on developing and embedding ongoing age friendly plans or strategies as specific outcomes
- Age friendly plans / strategies should link to council budgeting processes so that age friendly priorities can be considered in the budget cycle
- Effort should be made to “demystify” age friendly planning and offer simplified strategies for smaller councils

## Housing

Data suggests a growing shortfall of age-specific housing in rural communities. Limited information was available to establish likely demand.

### Recommendations

- Councils should identify local age specific housing so that likely demand can be calculated and suitable sites identified
- Councils should offer development facilitation and use promotion pathways established by this project

## Care at home

Demand for care at home is likely to increase substantially in almost all rural areas. Increasing demand will occur for Commonwealth Home Support Program services, there is likely to be an accelerated increase in demand for Home Care Packages due to the phasing-in of higher provision ratios by the Commonwealth. A nearly 130% growth in rural home care places is predicted by 2031.

Meeting growth alone will create a \$92.4m annual economic and employment boost.

### Recommendations

- Efforts be made by rural councils to raise awareness of Home Care Packages as an alternative to residential care
- Liaise with local Home Care Package providers to highlight the demand
- Councils should consider facilitation of local provider presence (e.g. office space) in return for commitment to wide service coverage

## Residential aged care

Additional Victorian residential aged care rural demand amounts to about 3,600 beds by 2031. A capital investment of around \$900 million is needed with an additional 3,500 new jobs. This is the largest known development opportunity likely across rural Victoria.

### Recommendations

- Councils use guidance and materials from the project to approach local residential care providers and the peak body (Leading Age Services Australia) to alert them to the demographic demand analysis and offer assistance to encourage investment
- Where appropriate, approaches be made to state government to alert them to pending unmet demand and seek appropriate responses
- Use identified pathways to potential investors via Leading Age Services Australia) and the Property Council of Australia

### Read more:

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