

GPO Box 1307 Canberra ACT 2601

[anglicare@anglicare.asn.au](mailto:anglicare@anglicare.asn.au)

Ph: 02 6230 1775

Contact: Dr Ray Cleary (Chair)  
0419 371 613

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### The Housing Crisis untouched by the Big Budget

The 2007 Federal Budget will provide additional support in the areas of taxation, child care, education and health but the issue of affordable housing for low income and vulnerable Australians remains critical.

"Given our experience providing crisis accommodation to an increasing number of Australians unable to access affordable or appropriate housing, we had hoped this budget would go some way towards addressing the chronic shortage in public housing," said Dr Ray Cleary, Chair of Anglicare Australia.

"While we welcome the extension of rent assistance to people on Austudy and the JET child care fee assistance for single parents in training, the fact that housing needs are being unmet for an increasingly large number of vulnerable Australians remains of great concern.

"The Treasurer claims his latest Budget will *invest for the future* but research clearly identifies that, as a nation, we actually spend very little on assisting vulnerable people to access housing and this budget does nothing to address the shortfall."

Anglicare Australia commended the government on initiatives announced for aged care. "We welcomed the pre budget announcements for reform of the aged care system and this Budget adds more funding to address some of the industry's concerns raised since then. Our capacity to provide ongoing aged care to vulnerable Australians has been enhanced," said Dr Cleary.

But Dr Cleary warned that demand for aged care services continues to escalate and there is still more work to be done.

"The additional funding for the Transitional Accommodation Supplement and for community based respite care are very positive but there is still more work to be done on the viability of services, particularly for low income and vulnerable Australians," he said.

Dr Cleary also urged more spending on regeneration of capital infrastructure in aged care.

"While additional funding for service delivery means potentially improved access to services, there is little or no allowance for upkeep and regeneration of buildings in which to house or operate those services. The Treasurer has recognised the need to provide for capital works in Higher Education; so too there needs to be funding committed to capital works for community services.

"The community sector provides services for over 2.5 million Australians. These services are in ever-increasing demand because of the stresses on low income Australians through the rising costs of living. Boosting the capacity for our sector to deliver services will be of greater benefit than token tax cuts if the government is to truly invest in the future.

THE VOICE FOR ANGLICAN CARE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AUSTRALIA

44 Agencies of the Anglicare Australia network expend over \$560 million each year on assistance to families, young people, children, aged, unemployed and homeless Australians, and working with indigenous Australians to overcome disadvantage.