



**Media Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Seniors Precinct development marks radical change to aged care service delivery**

Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot today turned the first sod on construction of a new aged care precinct in Shellharbour being developed by UnitingCare Ageing.

This comes at a time when the largest single aged care provider in NSW.ACT is seeking a change to the way aged care is funded and delivered.

As part of a coalition of aged care providers who recently commissioned Access Economics to undertake a study into the viability of funding of residential aged care, UnitingCare Ageing is calling on the Government to overhaul the system.

Director of UnitingCare Ageing, Gillian McFee says, "The long term viability of residential aged care in its present form is at risk. UnitingCare Ageing will have to take the difficult decision to no longer apply for high care places from Government if funding is not aligned with actual costs or if the redefinition of low and high care is not addressed."

The new residential development at Shellharbour will be a 100-bed aged care home (60 low care and 40 high care) and will include a number of places for the Italian community as well as dementia care. Planning for the rest of the 8 hectare site, located in the centre of the township will continue over the next 12 months and will include adaptable housing for older people, key worker housing, affordable housing for families and a mix of community and commercial activities and facilities.

"UnitingCare Ageing is embarking on a different approach to aged care for the future based on the consumers' choice and community development, rather than fitting older people into specific types of 'care' services," says Gillian McFee.

“This approach is in response to our knowledge of what older people of the future will be seeking. The Government must consider separating accommodation and care and responding to the demands of customer choice,” says Ms McFee.

“This is not just anecdotal – the recent Senate Inquiry into Aged Care as well as the Productivity Commission Report into Aged Care, and the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission Report all reinforce the call to enable consumer choice.”

"UnitingCare Ageing is responding to this call in partnership with community and commercial partners and most significantly with the people it serves. Shellharbour is no exception to this vision," said Gillian McFee.

**END**

**For an interview with Gillian McFee, Director UnitingCare Ageing, please call 0413 018 312.**