

## **AUSSIES WANT AGED CARE IN THEIR HOMES**

### **NOT IN AGED CARE HOMES**

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National Seniors Australia has seized on a new survey showing more than half of the respondents are considering pulling their loved ones out of aged care and into their own care.

The research by 'Fifth Dimension Consulting' shows 54 per cent of adult Australians surveyed are considering the move.

In the run up to the October Federal Budget, National Seniors Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke says the government has the means to help older Australians access the care they need in their own homes.

"The government needs to release more home care packages and also reduce the interest rate on the existing Pension Loan Scheme (PLS), so older Australians can unlock the equity in their home to pay for more home care. This could help them to get the care they desperately need and stay out of residential care.

"They are aware of home care packages, but few older Australians are aware of the PLS and those who are, have been put off by the high borrowing rate of 4.5 per cent. That's why we are demanding a lower rate," Mr Henschke said.

Despite the name, the PLS is available to self-funded retirees as well as aged pensioners following recent changes by the federal government. A couple can get more than \$55,000 a year. A single almost \$37,000.

The scheme allows seniors to use the equity in their home to provide a supplementary fortnightly payment. The maximum amount available via the PLS is 150 per cent of the maximum pension rate. As at July 2020, the maximum amount payable was \$2,135.40 per fortnight for a couple and \$1,416.45 for a single.

However, a retiree can choose to withdraw a smaller amount, can stop or start payments at any time and can pay back the loan at any time.

"Using a home care package topped up with PLS money can even provide more hours of care than you get in Aged Care."

"Our own research shows more than 90 per cent of our members would much rather stay in their own homes than being placed into an aged care facility and that was before COVID-19," Mr Henschke said.

To see our full Budget Submission click here: <https://nationalseniors.com.au/advocacy/FederalBudget>

**ENDS**

**Ian Henschke is available for comment, call 0488 047 380 to arrange an interview.**