



# Labor's Plan for More Aged Care

South  
Australian  
**Labor**

For the  
Future





## Foreword

Demand on public hospitals across Australia has continued to grow in recent years. While the Malinauskas Labor Government has added hundreds of hospital beds to the system, it has been offset by a substantial failure in national aged care policy.

By far, this is the biggest problem currently faced by our public health system, and the pain is being felt nationally.

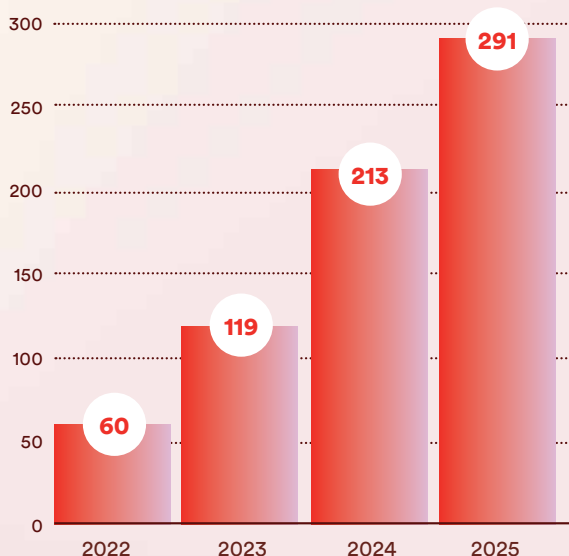
Despite being warned for well over a decade, consecutive Federal Governments have failed to incentivise investment in the aged care sector, and state-managed hospitals are now paying the price.

In October 2022, South Australian metropolitan hospitals had 60 patients medically ready for discharge and awaiting placement in an aged care facility. In August 2025, that patient cohort peaked at 291 - that's a 385 per cent increase in less than three years.

These are older South Australians that are effectively homeless. They no longer require acute hospital level care but are too frail to be discharged without the supports of a residential aged care facility.

We've been taking the action we can as this national trend has taken hold.

We reversed the Liberals' plan to sell the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre, retrofitted two levels of the Pullman Hotel to deliver care, broadened our hospital in the home program and are now reactivating the College Grove aged care site in Walkerville to keep as many older South Australians from needlessly filling a hospital bed through no fault of their own. But we won't stop there.



Patients in SA hospitals medically ready for discharge and awaiting placement in residential aged care.

**The Malinauskas Labor Government will take to the election our plan to establish a \$250 million no-interest Aged Care Loan scheme and to transform the old Women's and Children's Hospital site into a dedicated Health and Aged Care Precinct.**

Our plan will deliver 1,300 extra aged care beds across the system.

With South Australia's population over 65 years of age projected to grow by 30 percent by 2031, this investment ensures our health system is ready to meet the needs of our ageing community.

Peter Malinauskas MP  
Premier for South Australia







## **Labor's Plan to:**

**1** Establish a \$250 million  
No-interest Aged Care Loans  
Scheme

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**2** Dedicated Health and Aged Care  
Precinct at the old Women's and  
Children's Hospital

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**3** Reactivate the College Grove  
Aged Care facility in Walkerville

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# A NATIONAL PROBLEM

**Really just given the population numbers, we really need to be opening a new aged care facility every three days for the next 20 years ...”**

Mark Butler – FiveAA Radio – 6 February 2026

## Hotel hospital a symptom of a sick system

The Australian | 11-12 October 2025



## Waiting for ages in shock care fail

The Sunday Mail | 16 November 2025

## State ministers slam federal counterparts over ‘national tragedy’ aged care bed crisis

The Australian | 2 November 2025

## Bed bloc: hospital fight unites states

The Australian | 11 October 2025

## Government urged to do more to address 2,500 hospital patients waiting for aged care beds

ABC News | 12 September 2025



## CARE DEADLOCKED AND BED-BLOCKED

THE SUNDAY MAIL | 16 NOVEMBER 2025



# National Aged Care Blockage REPORT CARD

Australia

December 2025

## SUMMARY

Number of aged care patients stuck in Australian public hospital beds waiting for a Federal aged care bed:

September 2025	<b>2,419</b>
December 2025	<b>3,048</b>

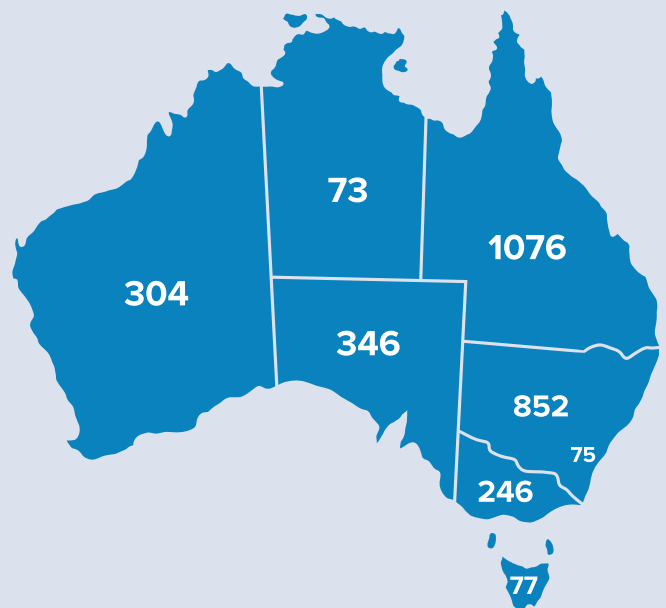
Increase in number of people stuck over the past three months:

**26%** increase

This represents an:

increase of **630** patients

## Aged care patients stuck in public hospital beds across Australia:



## FEDERAL SHORTFALL

Federal Government projected aged care demand increase last year:

10,600 beds

Actual aged care beds delivered by the Federal Government:

800 beds

Shortfall:

**9,800 beds**

## AN AGEING POPULATION

At 30 June 2020, there were an estimated 4.2 million older Australians (aged 65 and over), comprising 16% of the Australian population (ABS 2020b).

The number and percentage of older Australians is expected to continue to grow.

By 2066, it is projected that older Australians will make up between 21% and 23% of the total population (ABS 2018).

# A new dedicated Health and Aged Care Precinct at the Old Women's and Children's Hospital

South Australia's bigger and better new Women's and Children's Hospital is due to open in 2031, with all services set to move from the ageing site in North Adelaide.

For more than a year, a dedicated State Government Steering Committee, established to make recommendations on the future of the site, has scrutinised the condition of the existing facilities.

Their conclusion is clear; there is no cost-effective way to retain these very old hospital buildings for use in the future.

But we don't want this site to be sold off for apartments - we want this site to continue to support our public health system.

**That's why from the day services move into the new hospital site, Labor will have a plan in place to transform the North Adelaide site into a dedicated Health and Aged Care Precinct, building 600 aged care beds and doubling the existing bed capacity on the site.**

The new precinct will be home to a mix of public and private services, including aged care, retirement living, step-down hospital services, primary care and specialist geriatric services, all in one place.

This will help ease pressure on our hospital system - providing the right care in the right setting for older South Australians - and tackling the biggest cause of hospital bed block.







**ARTIST IMPRESSION**

# \$250 Million No-Interest Aged Care Loan Scheme

Our commitment to growing the health system can't just be about building more hospital beds, it's about making sure the right patient is in the right bed, at the right time.

Not only are hospitals busy and noisy, they are also not built for patients to spend months and sometimes years stuck in place.

As the Malinauskas Labor Government is building hundreds of extra beds, they are being filled as a result of the national aged care crisis.

For hundreds of older South Australians stranded in hospital beds, it's clear that they would receive far better care in a dedicated residential facility that's built and staffed to manage personal care needs and make their facility a home.

Not only is this a better outcome for our elderly, it also releases the hospital bed for South Australians with acute health needs and creates more flow through our emergency departments.

State governments across the nation continue to advocate to the Federal Government for more investment and policy settings that support a growth in aged care beds. But this is an urgent problem, and we don't have time to wait.

**The Malinauskas Labor Government will take to the election our plan to establish a \$250 million no-interest loan scheme to incentivise construction of an immediate pipeline of 650 new aged care beds across the state.**

The scheme will be designed to create more capacity, including a minimum requirement for dementia support beds to create the capacity we desperately need.



**\$250m**  
No-interest  
loan program



**650**  
beds

## Revitalise College Grove aged care site in Walkerville

The Malinauskas Labor Government has worked hard to identify vacant health facilities across the state that could be operationalised to respond to the national aged care crisis.

The College Grove has been largely underutilised for many years.

That's why the Malinauskas Labor Government is partnering with Amplar Health to establish a new service of up to 70 beds at College Grove, freeing up beds at the Royal Adelaide and the Queen Elizabeth Hospitals for those who need them, without leaving older South Australians out in the cold.



# DELIVERED

The Malinauskas Labor Government has stepped up to respond to the federal aged care crisis.

✓ DELIVERED



## Dedicated older persons hospital avoidance service

Opened a geriatrician-led Urgent Care Hub at the Playford Health Hub for patients over 65 years old to avoid hospital admission.

✓ DELIVERED



## Reversed the sale of Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre

Reversed the Liberals' plan and opened a new 70-bed model for complex older patients.

✓ DELIVERED



## Transition Care Service

Opened 48 beds at the Pullman Hotel for patients who no longer need to be in hospital but still require care.

✓ DELIVERED



## Reformed Planning Rules

Passed new legislation to treat aged care as essential infrastructure, fast-tracking planning approvals and common-sense exceptions to height limitations.

✓ DELIVERED



## Established the SA Aged Care Roundtable

Established a regular Roundtable with key Executives from Aged Care Providers, maintaining constant dialogue and developing solutions directly with the industry.

✓ DELIVERED



## Built new dedicated geriatric beds for the South

Built and opened 32 new beds specifically for geriatric and complex care for older persons in the southern suburbs.

## Expanded virtual care services

Provided the SA aged care industry with connections to doctors and nurses in the SA Virtual Care Service to help reduced hospital admissions.

✓ DELIVERED



## Supporting Private Aged Care Facilities

Established the new Integrated Care Geriatric Outreach Service for virtual and on-site clinical support to avoid hospital admissions and support placement of new residents with complex needs.

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