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## **INVESTMENT IN PALLIATIVE CARE REQUIRED AS DEATH RATES SET TO DOUBLE**

With the number of Australians dying over the next 25 years expected to double, Silver Chain Group welcomes the recent commitment from both major political parties to not only champion but also increase investment in palliative care services at a Federal level.

At a recent event in Albury to launch a new resource to help begin conversations about end-of-life wishes, Health Minister Hon. Sussan Ley MP outlined her commitment to palliative care in people's homes rather than hospitals as a priority for after the election.

Hon Catherine King MP also announced that a Labor Government would invest \$35 million over four years to roll out new models of palliative care, to ensure Australians have greater choice and control over where and how they live their final days.

Silver Chain Group Chief Executive Officer, Dr Christopher McGowan, said this year, somewhere in the region of 153,000 Australians will die, with most of those deaths occurring in people who have lived with, and suffered from, chronic disease.

"As the population continues to grow and age and we experience living longer with chronic disease, it is anticipated that the number of Australians dying over the next 25 years will double – by 2040 approximately 300,000 people will die each year," Dr McGowan said.

"Studies show that 70 per cent of people wish to die at home. Sadly, 50 per cent of people who die in this country do so in a hospital bed, with a further 35 per cent dying in a residential aged care facility. Only 15 per cent of Australians who die do so at their place of choice - home."

Silver Chain Group provides sustainable models of community based palliative care nationally. In Western Australia, the organisation provides the nation's largest community based palliative care program, servicing the entire metropolitan Perth area, as well as providing expertise, support and advice state-wide.

"Substantial and enduring benefits have arisen through the adoption of community based services. Almost 75 per cent of patient receiving palliative care through Silver Chain will die at home, surrounded by their loved ones and familiar comforts.

"Patients engaged with the community based palliative care services are six times less likely to be admitted to inpatient facilities through an Emergency Department in the last three months of life, avoiding the costs associated with Emergency Department presentations and ambulance transfers.

"Not only is the current level of spending unsustainable but more importantly the current paradigm profoundly fails to meet the needs and wishes of the community – in-home palliative care addresses patient need and is also significantly more cost effective."

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## **About the Silver Chain Group**

We are a not-for-profit organisation delivering community health and care services across Australia. We help people of all ages to receive the care they need to remain happy and healthy at home.

We have a proud history of serving Australians for over 110 years in Western Australia and more than 120 years as RDNS in South Australia. We currently deliver our services in Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

With over 3,200 staff and 380 volunteers, we assist more than 82,000 people to remain living in their homes and community every year.

For more information, please see [silverchain.org.au](http://silverchain.org.au).