

## Q: What does Youngcare do?

### A: We work to get young people out of aged care facilities

- More than 6,500 young Australians (under the age of 65) with 24/7 care needs are living in aged care facilities around the country because there are very limited alternatives (The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee 2005). A further 700,000 are being cared for at home by family and friends. (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007).
- Many have long lives to live, yet the realities of aged care mean they will share a residence where the average age is 86 and the average life expectancy just three years
- We are committed to **raising awareness** of the issue across the nation so that we can **drive change and create real choice in care and accommodation options for young Australians and their families**
- Being young is about having a lifetime ahead of you, yet aged care is designed for someone who is at the end of their life. In most cases, the specific care needs of a young person will not be met in aged care as they differ greatly to those of the elderly residents
- For those young people living in aged care, statistics suggest that:
  - 44% will receive a visit from friends less than once a year
  - 34% will almost never participate in community based activities such as shopping
  - 21% will go outside the home less than once a month*(Di Winkler et al Winkler, D., L. Farnworth, et al. (2006). Australian Health Review)*
- This could happen to you, a friend or a loved one
- Young people are living in aged care facilities around the nation because they have had a catastrophic injury or illness, like Motor Neurons, MS, Huntington's or an Acquired Brain Injury, that has left them requiring full-time care
- In 2007, the first ever Youngcare Apartments were opened at Sinnamon Park, west of Brisbane. It is now home to 16 residents with 24/7 care needs
- Over the next 12 months, we are working to deliver greater choice through a range of initiatives:
  - Raising awareness of the issue and securing support to fund our work
  - The Youngcare Connect hotline to provide support and advice to those who need it most
  - Lobbying Government to drive policy change and systems reform
  - Providing an At Home Care Grant program to top-up the care funding for those young people wishing to reside at home
  - Continuing to build more Youngcare accommodation on the Gold Coast; followed by Sydney and Melbourne
  - Undertaking research to more comprehensively understand the issues
- With the combined support of the community, government and business, Youngcare can help address this desperate gap in the health care system
- Youngcare is providing a voice of dignified care for those with 24/7 care needs, and a beacon of hope for those affected by the issue. Youngcare exists to connect people with the issue, government with people, and business with the community
- **YOUNGCARE CEO** - Marina Vit
- **YOUNGCARE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN** – David Conry