

SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO RETIREMENT LIVING

Given the bi-partisan Government policy of keeping the aged in their own homes as long as possible, and given that Seniors are rapidly taking up Broadband technology as shown by the success of the Broadband for Seniors Government program, we ask the Inquiry to investigate the following question and sub-questions

Who is responsible and what steps will be taken to ensure that adequate broadband speeds will be delivered to the homes of residents in Retirement Villages and similar facilities?

- 1) What is an “adequate speed” given that medical and communication technologies are rapidly combining to deliver diagnostic and therapeutic services into the home? These services do, or could include
 - a) monitoring of vital signs such as heart beat, blood pressure, blood sugar
 - b) video-conferencing with doctors, physiotherapists, pharmacists
 - c) emergency call facilities which could include video facilities
 - d) monitoring of medications
 - e) facility for visiting health professionals to make tests and then access diagnostic and prescription services.
 - f) ordering of food for delivery
 - g) video-conference exercise programs
 - h) shopping
 - i) social contact through “Skype “and other video facilities
 - j) health education and entertainment through video streaming
 - k) superannuation and Centrelink services
 - l) many other services which will arise as Broadband becomes faster and easier
- 2) What consideration will be given to much greater population density and therefore broadband traffic in a Retirement Village than in a suburban street? In our area it has been mooted that one node inside a Village will provide for approximately 300 people in 200+ homes over a much wider spread than an average suburban street.
- 3) Since all of the land in a Retirement Village is usually in private hands, including the streets, who will be responsible for the NBN infra-structures within this area?
 - i) Who will be responsible for delivering adequate speeds to individual homes?
 - ii) Who will pay if a resident needs fibre from the node to his/her residence over a distance which could be much greater than the distance from a node to an average home in a suburban street?
- 4) Will people join a Retirement facility if they know that they will get a poorer broadband service than they would in a suburban street, especially in view of older persons’ health needs?
- 5) What responsibility does the owner/operator/manager of a Retirement facility have to provide/ensure that their residents have this adequate access?

With thanks for your consideration

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