

COTA NT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Livable Communities

1. Provide proper funding for NGOs that provide services to seniors.

Territory Alliance will continue to support Non-Government Organisations that provide services to seniors. We recognize that additional funding would be welcome as would longer term funding agreements and are open to finding further support for NGOs in terms of their funding.

2. Invest in healthy ageing initiatives that address the lack of availability of appropriate physical programs in rural townships i.e. providing funding to develop workforce capacity to deliver physical activity programs in Katherine and Tennant Creek.

Territory Alliance recognizes that there is inadequate Commonwealth funding for allied health services across regional and remote Northern Territory. TA members of Parliament would focus on working with their communities to identify how best to meet the physiotherapy and active Territorians needs and lobby the Commonwealth to have Territory-led initiatives.

One such programme announcement TA has made is that of building a new aquatic centre in the rural areas that would have provision to people needing assistance including the aged.

3. Provide appropriate and affordable housing options.

Territory Alliance recognizes that there needs to be multi-faceted approach to housing. From dual-occupancy provisions for large corner blocks and rural sub-divisions within size limits to enable families to realise a dream of having generations housed together, to a continued investment in Seniors public housing and a greater lobbying effort for Aged Care beds from the Commonwealth which supports greater investment in this important housing option.

4. Lobby the Federal government in regard to the Commonwealth Rental Assistance Scheme. We call for this assistance to be indexed to the medium house and rental prices in each regional area of the Territory, not an average medium rental.

Territory Alliance will lobby the Commonwealth to reasonably request that the rental assistance scheme is indexed.

Skills and Jobs

Act as an employer champion to the Northern Territory industry. Through implementing a best practice approach to recruitment and retention of mature aged workers, the government can lead the creation of workplace environments that enable participation by all Territory workers.

Mature aged Territorians are a valuable asset in workplaces. We would encourage the NTPS to have an education and awareness program across its human resources units to value corporate knowledge and experience. We support higher levels of recruitment of mature aged workers into the NTPS.

2. Revise free VET eligibility to ensure that mature aged job seekers and workers who are experiencing employment vulnerability are provided with an opportunity to retrain and access new career pathways.

VET eligibility is set by the Commonwealth Government and private providers, but a Territory Alliance team values the opportunity of re-training and new careers and we would look forward to initiatives proposed to improve accessibility to training. TA recognizes and supports mature aged workers being equipped to take up new job opportunities and will seek out ways to implement this support.

3. Invest in more development programs that attract mature aged workers to the community services industry and enables them to take advantage of growth in employment opportunities. Especially in the aged care and disability sector.

Territory Alliance believes in collaborative and supportive partnerships with the community sector and we'd look at efforts across the NTCOSS membership to support and promote job opportunities.

Territory Alliance is considering what additional support it can provide to groups like NTCOSS to support aged and vulnerable in attaining employment opportunities and we will have more to say on this ahead of the NT election.

4. Review funding arrangements with essential community service providers that will ensure industry viability and

enable growth and retention of a skilled and experienced workforce delivering quality, person-centred services.

Territory Alliance is committed to a collaborative working relationship with the Non-Government sector which is crucial to community service provision. If there are specific issues in regard to retention and quality services we'd be keen to work with COTA NT on a solutions-focused approach. TA values highly the need for certainty in terms of funding provided for organisations to assist in these tasks.

5. Change the Workers Compensation Act to include all workers who are over the age of 65 (open ended).

Territory Alliance would seek legal advice in Government as to the Workers Compensation Act provisions and any changes proposed. There should be no disadvantage perceived or real as a result of a persons age.

Accessible Information Services

1. Invest in a telephone accessible system during ordinary business hours to complement the COTA NT website and provide over-the-phone triage support and information to older Territorians who cannot access digital systems.

Territory Alliance will discuss with COTA NT a hotline approach to supporting Seniors. TA respects the fact that not all in the community have the same level of access to and confidence in using website interfaces.

2. Fund targeted information outreach that meets the communication needs of diverse communities, including rural and remote communities.

Territory Alliance will focus on the provision of crucial government information and its accessibility right across the Territory with an open mind to how it could be improved.

3. Continue investment in non-digital information channels that older Territorians can access (such as face-toface counter services, press, TV and radio information broadcasts).

Territory Alliance has no plans to reduce information to Senior Territorians as we value their contribution to our society.

Preparing for the Future

Invest in the design of a “future life planning” campaign targeting NT workplaces. This would include the development of a program of policies, practice guidelines and resources to develop workplace cultures that positively support middle aged and older workers to *plan* for their futures.

Planning for retirement is important. Territory Alliance is happy to promote an education and awareness package through OCPE.

2. Plan for retirement infrastructure in each regional area.

A failure to plan has been part of the problem in failing to work with the Commonwealth on regional and remote needs. Territory Alliance will have a positive working relationship with the Federal government and provide community-led proposals to meeting our needs.

3. Provide funding for NGOs to prepare literature and information tools for upcoming retirees that would inform them of their financial and physical health.

Territory Alliance would be interested in a submission from COTANT as to what information exists and where there are any gaps.

4. Investment in “seniors’ parks” that provide special equipment that seniors may freely use to assist with improving balance and mobility.

Territory Alliance believes in an inclusive society with accessible equipment and activities for all. TA will be making announcements in respect to this ahead of the NT General election.

5. Provide Senior Territorians with legislated choices – especially at the end of life. We ask that the Territory Government bring in legislation supporting Assisted Dying. In COTA NT’s Seniors Survey of 2018, 78% of the 914 senior Territorians surveyed were in support of assisted dying.¹⁰ In a recent survey of COTA members, over 91% supported assisted dying.

Assisted dying legislation is a conscience vote. Currently the Northern Territory has the experience of the Commonwealth overturning Euthanasia legislation. Any future Private Members Bill should be introduced with the support of the Commonwealth to ensure it is not overturned in future.

TA would provide government business time in the parliament for an assisted dying legislation to be debated.

Towards Ending Family Violence Including Elder Abuse

Increase support to victims of elder abuse: to access support, move out of the crisis situation, improve their safety with the provision of safe houses.

There is a deficit of safe houses and support for victims of abuse. Territory Alliance is keen to work with the Non-Government community sector and the Commonwealth to address this and would be willing to work respectfully with these groups on funding assistance.

2. Invest in a workforce development training package for organisations to build staff awareness of elder abuse.

Territory Alliance will look at what proactive campaigns exist to address Elder Abuse and understand how that can be an informative platform.

3. Invest in specialist accommodation which provides a safe and secure environment for people with a mental illness to reside in.

Territory Alliance will continue the crucial work with our Territory non-government sector delivering supported accommodation to people with a mental illness. We view the TeamHealth model and as an example of what needs to be provided.

4. Invest in specialised dementia village and accommodation.

The Commonwealth provided funding for supported accommodation and Territory Alliance would look at any specialist dementia facilities elsewhere in Australia as a potential model to lobby and work with the Commonwealth on.

Treating All Seniors Equally

Change the scheme's eligibility requirements, so *all* senior Territorians over the age of 65 are eligible to receive *all* of the benefits of the NT Concession Scheme.

Territory Alliance will review the existing scheme understanding that Labor has reduced eligibility for new entrants. We wish to support our Seniors to be able to afford to stay and enjoy retirement in the Territory which was the intent of the scheme.