

FED:Aged care an issue for Australians

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CANBERRA, June 30 AAP - Access to affordable quality aged care is an issue weighing on the minds of all Australians, not just the elderly, new polling suggests.

The issue is more of a worry than education or the environment for most of the 1000 respondents of a recent online poll conducted for a coalition of aged care groups.

More than 90 per cent of respondents agreed aged care should be an entitlement, and even more wanted to see an increase in commonwealth funding.

Even more - 95 per cent - agreed there should be a boost in commonwealth support for people who can't afford to pay for care.

The Campaign for Care of Older Australians, which conducted the poll, says the system needs to be set straight now, to meet future demands.

"The poll reinforces that Australia's aged care issues must be addressed," group chairman Greg Mundy said in a statement.

The group wants an independent study on cost of care, increased funding for the sector and a more flexible payment option for accommodation.

An independent inquiry into the challenges faced by the sector is under way, with the Productivity Commission expected to hand down its draft findings in December.

Nearly one-quarter of Australians will be over 65 by 2050, compared with 13 per cent now.

AAP sld/rl/jm