



The Aged Care Commissioner

Responding to the 'New Aged'
in the 21st Century

**Presentation to
UnitingCare Ageing Staff Conference**

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Aged Care Commissioner**



The New Aged Health and Care Consumer

- Australia first set the retirement age in 1909, at 65 years of age
- The average life expectancy for the Australian male was 58
- If public policy had kept pace with medical advances and the increase in life expectancy, by the year 2000 our retirement age would have been around 80



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Ageing does not prescribe decline as we
have previously understood it

Our individual decline is not pre-programmed



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*“No one is terrified about growing old
in itself, but the terror is in
becoming clinically dependant”*

Prof Suresh Rattan, DSc, PhD. Research Professor,
University of Aarhus, Denmark



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Australians can expect –
and should plan for - two x 30 year
periods in their adult life:
20-50 years, and 50-80 years



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Successful ageing is defined as the ability to maintain:

- *low risk of disease or disability,*
- *high mental & physical function, and*
- *active engagement with life*

MacArthur Foundation Study



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“Changes that a doctor or scientist once might have labelled an inevitable part of growing older are now considered pathology not biology”

Harvard Medical School Report

