



Baptist Community Services – NSW & ACT (BCS)

## Media Release

16 February 2009

*EMBARGOED – 18 February 2009*

### EVENT DETAILS

Launch of National Dementia Resource:  
“Living with dementia – how the environment, technology and you can help”  
by The Hon Maxine McKew MP  
**Wednesday 18 February, 11.00am**  
**BCS Age Friendly Home at BCS Marsfield**  
**155 Epping Road, Marsfield**

## National dementia resources to change lives

A new set of national resources will be made available to people living with dementia and their carers this week, including an interactive website featuring virtual tours, a DVD, help sheets, checklists and a poster book.

The collection of training resources, developed by leading care provider Baptist Community Services – NSW & ACT (BCS), aims to improve quality of life for people living with dementia, and will be **launched by The Hon Maxine McKew MP at Marsfield on Wednesday 18 February.**

The resources, developed with funding under the Australian Government’s Dementia Initiative, have been in development since February 2007 following intensive research, consultation and piloting throughout Australia.

“BCS has worked incredibly hard to ensure that these resources provide up to the minute information on how we can improve the lives of people living with dementia,” said Dr June Heinrich, CEO of BCS

“Of great concern to me is the estimated 731, 000 people who will be living with dementia by the year 2050, unless there is a medical breakthrough.”

An interactive website, [www.dementiatechnology.org.au](http://www.dementiatechnology.org.au), offers virtual tours of BCS’ Age Friendly Home in Marsfield, focussing on individual rooms in a house that have been modified to assist people living with dementia with issues of safety, security and independence.

The website does more than just showcase ideas, and offers product, supplier and manufacturer information for a variety of the featured products and modifications.

“I am excited about this set of resources, and I particularly invite the community to experience the innovative online tours, which demonstrate how your typical suburban home can be renovated to be age, dementia and disability friendly through physical, environmental and technological changes,” said Dr Heinrich.

Useful for dementia care workers and service providers, the 20-minute DVD highlights possible difficulties a person with dementia may experience in and around their home, while demonstrating environmental and assistive technology strategies and solutions. The DVD is accompanied by a facilitators guide for group use.

Thirty-three help sheets and a home checklist offer carers the opportunity to ensure to improve areas of the home that impact on the independence, safety and leisure for people living with dementia.

Help sheets cover topics including lighting, medication, nutrition, technology for carers and wandering. Contact details for key organisations offering service and product information throughout Australia are also provided on the help sheets.

"BCS is committed to providing all Australians with innovative solutions to enable the elderly and people living with dementia to remain living in their own home and to age in place for as long as possible," said Dr Heinrich.

"In particular, these training resources will encourage carers to use a personal approach when caring for someone with dementia. Every person has different needs, and relates to the environment and those around them very differently. "

Family carers will be able to use the resources in their own homes, while care workers, health professionals and service providers will use the resources in training and group scenarios.

**[Note: All resources will be available for viewing and demonstration, while the BCS Age Friendly Home will also be open for touring.]**

All resources, as well as a poster and brochures promoting the resources, can be obtained by contacting the Department of Health and Ageing at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) or the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.

Copies of the help sheets, posters and home checklist can be downloaded from the website [www.dementiatechnology.org.au](http://www.dementiatechnology.org.au)

The website features the BCS Age Friendly Home (launched in February 2007), a resource open to the public, the building industry and the health sector, to highlight the changes that can be made to a home to make it more accessible for older people, people living with dementia and people living with a disability.

-- ENDS --

#### **For more information:**

*Elizabeth Gorham  
Dr June Heinrich*

*BCS Media  
Chief Executive Officer*

*0412 739 178  
0417 204 853*

#### **\*\* Interview Opportunity:**

Dr June Heinrich, CEO of Baptist Community Services – NSW & ACT and a passionate advocate for dementia care is available for interview.

#### **\*\* Photo Opportunity:**

The Member for Bennelong Maxine McKew will be the official guest at launch of the dementia resource.