

## Media Release

Thursday 11 August 2011

### **SPA welcomes NDIS as a voice for Australians with communication impairment**

Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) welcomed the Federal Government's commitment to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and is hopeful it will help meet the communication needs of the over 200,000 Australians living with a severe and complex communication impairment.

SPA National President, Chris Stone, said the Government's in-principal support for the NDIS is a major step forward for disability in Australia and gives hope of relief to people living with disability and their families, especially those unable to communicate without assistance.

"One in seven users of government disability services has little or no effective communication and almost half need assistance to do so - the NDIS will provide much needed support these people need to actively participate in the community."

Ms Stone also welcomed the Productivity Commission's recommendation of funding for early intervention services to ensure timely and pre-emptive access to therapies, such as speech pathology, as well as the creation of a National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) to address the need of people who have suffered traumatic injury.

"The implementation of the NDIS and NIIS is an historic opportunity to dramatically change the way disability services are provided in Australia," Ms Stone said.

Ms Stone mentioned that she was encouraged by the federal bi-partisan support for the scheme and hoped every state and territory government would display similar commitment.

"It is extremely important that everyone – government, industry and health professionals – all work together to assist Australians living with disability to receive access to the services they require, tailored to their needs and in a timely manner."

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