

## Media Release

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For immediate release

### **Speech pathology welcomes funding for students with disabilities**

Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) today welcomed the Federal Government's early budget commitment to spend an extra \$200 million on essential services, equipment and support for students with disabilities.

The funding will include essential speech pathology services that are critical to enable many students with disabilities with speech and language impairments to access a quality education.

SPA National President, Chris Stone said the funding will have a positive impact on the lives of students who are greatly disadvantaged and that she looks forward to discussing the details of the scheme with Minister Garrett in the near future.

"Access to speech pathology services within the education system differs dramatically between states and territories and it's often students with speech, language or communication disabilities who are further disadvantaged due to this inconsistency.

"Speech Pathology Australia and the speech pathology profession welcome the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* program and hope it will ensure better access to appropriate levels of speech pathology services for students with disabilities across the whole of Australia."

Ms Stone said consultation with the relevant allied health peak professional bodies is important to ensure that the implementation of the funding is underpinned by a nationally consistent framework.

"To ensure students are able to access appropriate and sufficient supports and specialist services, the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* package must take into account how the funding will be allocated and how it will be coordinated to best support individual students' needs.

"The Disability Standards for Education are national standards to ensure the provision of services and supports, however no federal legislation oversees their implementation at a local level. The *More Support for Students with Disabilities* package should ensure equal access and uniform coordination of services and support for all students with disabilities, regardless of where they are located.

"We look forward to discussing the detail of the new funding and its implementation with DEEWR very soon."

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For more information or to arrange an interview with Chris Stone contact  
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