National Disability Services

VICTORIA

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MEDIA RELEASE

Date: 30 June 2009

New financial year is the time for a funding guarantee for disability services

Victorians with a disability risk poorer services and less choice unless disability service organisations receive a commitment from the Victorian Government to fully fund services. A major summit in Melbourne tomorrow will hear how the sector is struggling to cope with increased demands of Government and no extra support to achieve the very improvements demanded of it by Government.

“The disability sector is at the cross roads. We cannot continue to comply with increasing Government requirements for the same base funding and have serious concerns about our ability to deliver the high quality services our clients have the right to expect.” said Kerry Presser, State Manager, National Disability Services Victoria.

“New service models- which allow clients greater choice- are more expensive for services to run. Our sector is keen to provide more choice and innovation but we cannot do more with less. Today’s meeting is an opportunity for the State Government to give an assurance to people with a disability that the organisations they rely on to assist them are funded for the full cost of delivering these vital services.”

Disability services in Victoria are funded on a price for services through a unit price for each hour or type of service. Along with the costs associated with high quality staff, complex legislative requirements and new technology, disability services are struggling to

deliver the services they're funded to provide. This price was last set in the early to mid 1990s and much has changed to make this price out of date.

"Victorians with a disability have a right to access the specialised support they need and service providers are keen to continue providing those high quality services. However with increasing costs and the economic downturn affecting both investment and fundraising income we risk losing services if the Government doesn't act.

NDS and the disability services sector will commence a campaign today seeking full funding for quality services.

For background information to arrange an interview please contact David Imber on 0413 274 204. For immediate comment please contact Kerry Presser on 0432 005 520

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About NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES

National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak industry association for disability services, representing 650 non-government organisations around Australia.