National Office

Locked Bag 3002
Deakin West ACT 2600

33 Thesiger Court
Deakin ACT 2600

Ph: 02 6283 3200
Fax: 02 6281 3488
Email: nds@nds.org.au
Web: www.nds.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

8 May 2012

FEDERAL BUDGET MARKS A TURNING POINT FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

National Disability Services (NDS) welcomes the Australian Government's significant commitment to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) announced in tonight's Budget. Treasurer Wayne Swan announced a package of $1.03 billion over four years, with $342.5 million for individualised packages and $664.5 million for information technology, workforce development and other investment measures needed to launch the NDIS.

Dr Ken Baker Chief Executive of NDS said "The NDIS is nation-building social reform and today the Government has taken a significant step towards making the NDIS real. Disability organisations have campaigned long and hard for the NDIS and will applaud tonight's announcement. But these organisations also recognise the substantial work that lies ahead of them in preparing for the NDIS."

"Anyone who has worked in or relied on our disability system will know how big the task is to fix the current system, which is chronically underfunded, fragmented and inequitable."

"Once the NDIS is fully implemented people with disability and their families should get the support they need when they need it."

"In this Budget the Government provides the major share of funding for launch sites that will provide long-term support to 20,000 people. These launch sites will commence in mid 2013 - sooner than the Productivity Commission recommended, but on a smaller scale. The Australian Government expects State and Territory governments to increase their disability funding if they wish to host the launch sites.

"Expanding the NDIS from launch sites to a fully-functioning national scheme supporting an estimated 410,000 people will require substantial and sustained effort by all stakeholders. Future Budgets will need to grow accordingly.

"The allocation of an extra 1 billion dollars to start the NDIS in such a tight fiscal environment marks an historic shift in the Federal Government's priorities."

"Tonight's Budget lays the foundations for reform. The task ahead is to ensure that the resources and determination are there to build the new system.

Contact: Dr Ken Baker, Chief Executive, National Disability Services
Ph: 02 6283 3203, Mbl: 0409 606 240

About NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES
National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak industry association for disability services, representing 700 non-government organisations around Australia.