

Media Release



13 May 2011

Carers Australia is the recognised national voice of Australian carers. Our members are the carers associations in each state and territory. We have no political affiliation. We work with all parties to achieve better outcomes for all carers.

Carers Australia to deliver Better Start initiative

From 1 July 2011, Carers Australia will deliver the Better Start for Children with Disability initiative, which provides early intervention funding to parents and carers of children with a disability. This program is funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Carers Australia President Tim Moore said, "Carers Australia welcomes the opportunity to deliver such an important program for parents and carers of children with a disability – a program which can deliver the opportunity for a better start in life."

The Better Start initiative will commence on 1 July 2011 and be implemented across Australia through the state and territory Carers Associations, which provide carers with access to a range of supports that respond to their needs.

A dedicated Registration and Information Service will be established to register eligible children, and will give information about entitlement to supports and services in the local area.

Children under six years of age who have been diagnosed with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, Fragile X syndrome, or moderate or greater hearing or vision impairments will be able to register for access to funding of up to \$12,000 for early intervention services, up to a maximum of \$6,000 per financial year.

From 1 July 2011, parents and carers will be able to contact their local Carers Association to register their child for the initiative via Freecall **1 800 242 636**. Further information on the program will be available at www.carersaustralia.com.au

"It is well documented that early diagnosis and treatment can go a long way to improving the outlook for these children in later life," said Mr Moore.

"The Better Start initiative will give these children greater opportunity to fulfil their potential, and their families and carers the reassurance that comes with early treatment"

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