

Bill Shorten's **Disability e-News**

Bill Shorten MP | Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services



Welcome

The e-news comes with a new look this month, which is a little simpler and should hopefully improve compatibility with all of the various email programs and readers out there. If you have any difficulty reading the new-look e-news, please [let my office know](#).

Federal Budget

Summary

The 2010-11 budget is one that reflects the difficult economic circumstances Australia has found itself in since the global financial crisis began in 2008.

It has been designed to reduce Australia's net debt, to encourage savings and superannuation and support small business.

There are also some initiatives that will improve the lives of people with disability. These build on the initiatives we have announced previously, such as the pension reforms and the boost in funding through the National Disability Agreement.

Some highlights include:

- [New funding of \\$520,000](#) to involve people with disability, their families and carers in the Productivity Commission's landmark [inquiry into long-term care and support](#)
- [Reforms to Special Disability Trusts](#) to allow greater flexibility in what trusts can pay for and allowing beneficiaries to work up to 7 hours per week. This should lead to a 20 per cent rise in the take-up of Special Disability Trusts
- [Changes to the Disability Support Pension](#) to help return people with disability to the workforce, and maintain a safety-net for those who genuinely need it
- An extra \$14.9 million to the Australian Paralympic Committee's High Performance Program and \$1million to ensure the 2012 London Paralympics is broadcast in Australia

Employment Services

The budget also includes two new measures to improve employment support for people with disability, starting from July 2010.

Firstly, young people with disability who have just left school or who are moving from a transition to work program will have streamlined entry into Disability Employment Services - eliminating the need for unnecessary assessments.

They will also receive the highest level of Employment Support funding available.

Secondly, Disability Employment Services providers will receive additional support to work with school leavers and other jobseekers with moderate intellectual disability.

This is a targeted measure aimed at highly vulnerable jobseekers linked to a sustainable goal for employment of at least 15 hours per week.

2010-11 Disability funding

Overall the 2010-11 budget contains disability measures totalling more than \$20 billion.

This includes:

- \$12.9 billion on the Disability Support Pension
- \$5.1 billion on payments to carers (majority to carers of people with disability)
- \$310 million on Australian Disability Enterprises
- \$14 million on young carers
- \$1.2 billion on improved Disability Employment Services
- \$1.04 billion in payments to States and Territories through the National Disability Agreement

There is still a lot more to be done in disability, but more is on the way. The [National Disability Strategy](#), to be released before the end of the year, will be a major step forward in removing many of the barriers that are still faced by people with disability.

[Read more](#) ➔

[Productivity Commission consultations](#)

The Productivity Commission inquiry into a disability insurance scheme is underway, with [14 submissions](#) received already, an issues paper about to be released within the next few weeks, and [consultations](#) to begin in June.

We want as many people as possible to participate in the consultations. In fact, we've allocated [\\$520,000 in grants](#) to help people get to the public hearings.

I'm a great supporter of the concept of an insurance scheme, and I know many within the disability sector are as well. This inquiry will tell us what kind of insurance scheme is possible in Australia, and how it could be set up, and I would urge everyone with an interest to [make a submission](#).

[Read more](#) ➔

[Review of schooling](#)

A new [review of school funding](#) will consider the best way to meet the costs of a range of factors, including disability, on educational outcomes.

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, released the draft terms of reference and a discussion paper on 30 April. The education sector is providing feedback on the terms of reference throughout May. Once the terms of reference are finalised, everyone will have the opportunity to contribute to the review.

[Read more](#) ➔

[Good News Week apologises for autism 'jokes'](#)

Some recent [poor-taste humour on TV's Good News Week](#) demonstrates two things: firstly, that some comedians still think it's ok to make jokes about vulnerable, powerless people. And secondly, that the disability community has the power to influence and educate the mainstream media. Within 24 hours of the show going to air, [Channel 10 had issued an apology](#).

[Read more](#) ➔

[Special Olympics Australia Games](#)

Over 700 athletes and hundreds of coaches, volunteers and supporters descended on Adelaide for the Australian Special Olympic Games on April 19-24. Along with Minister for Sport, Kate Ellis, I had the opportunity to speak at the opening, which was a great privilege. People with a disability shouldn't have to miss out on the joy and the camaraderie of sport, and events like this help the community see the person for their accomplishments, not their disability. The Special Olympics relies on the support of many volunteers, and I would encourage anyone who is interested to [find out more about how to get involved](#).

[Video of the opening speech](#) ➔

[Video montage from the ceremony](#) ➔

[National Disability Summit](#)

Attendees at the [National Disability Summit](#) in Melbourne on 29 and 30 April displayed plenty

of energy and commitment to change. For those of you who missed it, don't despair - there will be many more opportunities to discuss disability policy issues, particularly with the [Productivity Commission consultations](#) coming up. I was kindly given an extended timeslot for my opening [speech](#), which let me lay out a few of my thoughts on what needs to happen, and why I think we need a new approach to care and support for people with disability in Australia.

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[Latest media releases](#)

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- [Teachers and Parents to continue benefiting from Autism Workshops until 2012](#)
 - [New Independent Living Units in Launceston for People with Disability](#)
 - [New centre for people with vision impairments in Western Melbourne](#)
 - [Making the Disability Support Pension fairer](#)
 - [Giving voice to disability advocacy groups](#)
 - [National Summit on challenges for people with hearing impairments](#)
 - [New brochure to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to use disability abuse hotline](#)
 - [Good News Week comments about children with autism just not funny](#)
 - [Adelaide roundtable hears concerns of people with disability](#)
 - [Special Olympics open in Adelaide](#)

[Latest speeches](#)

& transcripts

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- [1 May 2010 - Marysville Primary School Opening](#)
 - [29 April 2010 - Opening of Vision Australia building](#)
 - [29 April 2010 - Opening of National Disability Summit in Melbourne](#)
 - [27 April 2010 - Transcript, 7.30 Report story on individualised funding](#)
 - [23 April 2010 - National Deafness Summit in Sydney](#)
 - [22 April 2010 - Launching National Indigenous Disability Network](#)
 - [19 April 2010 - Transcript, ABC Adelaide, Special Olympics](#)
 - [15 April 2010 - Transcript, ABC Radio Darwin, Disability Insurance Scheme](#)

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