



The Hon Justine Elliot MP
Minister for Ageing



The Hon Reba Meagher MP
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$11 million investment to eliminate disability equipment waiting list

NSW Minister for Health Reba Meagher and Federal Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot today announced a one-off \$11 million funding package to support people across NSW living with long-term disabilities.

Ms Meagher said the joint State-Commonwealth funding boost will provide essential equipment for about 5,000 people living with disabilities.

"This investment - \$6 million from the Lemna Government and \$5 million from the Rudd Government - will eliminate the current waiting list for disability aids and equipment," Ms Meagher said.

"It will deliver essential equipment such as wheelchairs, adjustable beds, communication devices, hoists, and ventilators for people living with disabilities."

Federal Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot said the money would be provided as a boost to the NSW Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP).

"The Australian Governments' allocation of \$5 million will support older people through the provision of equipment to assist with permanent physical disabilities in the areas of mobility, self care and communication,"

"The additional funding will help more people maintain their independence by continuing to live within their community and their own homes, as most people tell us they wish to do," Mrs Elliot said.

Ms Meagher said the one-off \$11 million funding boost for 2008-09 was on top of the Lemna Government's \$25.6 million investment in the PADP program this year.

"We have more than doubled the budget for disability equipment since 2000-01 to provide a better quality of life for people living with a disability and to make sure they have access to the sort of support they need," Ms Meagher said.

Ms Meagher said in addition to increased investment, the Lemna Government is making a number of important changes to improve the quality and efficiency PADP and other similar programs.

These changes include:

- Establishment of EnableNSW to bring together the administration of five disability support programs including PADP, the Artificial Limb Service and three Home Respiratory Programs
- A new website to be launched in 2009 providing clients and clinicians with information about EnableNSW and about the availability of specialised equipment
- A statewide information line 1800 ENABLE (1800 362 253), which has been operating since October last year to provide expert advice to members of the public and clinicians.

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