



Kelvin Thomson MP

Federal Labor Member for Wills

FUNDING FOR CARER RESPITE EXTENDED IN WILLS

Federal Member for Wills, Kelvin Thomson, today welcomed the Federal Government's decision to extend 555 funding agreements for respite and carer support services until June 2011.

"It is good news that carer and respite services in Wills have been allocated \$1,173,329 under the new agreements", Mr Thomson said.

In all, six projects delivered through three services in Wills will benefit from the offers of extended funding. In 2007-08, the Government allocated \$1,173,329 to carer support services in Wills through the agreements.

Organisations who have received funding in Wills are:

- Annecto Inc in Coburg; \$800,000
- Australian Greek Welfare Society in Brunswick; \$202,913 & \$20,937
- Moreland Community Health Service in Coburg; \$24,478 & \$66,962 & \$58,139

The agreements come under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) and the affiliated Commonwealth Carelink Program (CCP) and were due to expire on 30 June 2008.

"Over \$420.33 million, plus indexation in the order of \$18 million, will be provided to respite and carer support services over the next three years through these extended funding agreements.

"The extension will give community-based respite and carer support services the certainty they needed to plan and manage their operations, and continue to deliver high quality services.", Mr Thomson said.

"Access to timely respite care and other carer support is crucial to sustaining carers in their role. The Government estimates that the NRCP and CCP programs alone provide respite care, counselling, carer information and support services as well as carer planning to nearly 130,000 carers per year.

"The respite and other carer support services delivered under the two programs are extremely valuable for our carers, who do wonderful work".

"I am also committed to improving the operation of the community care sector, and the Government is examining streamlining respite services to create a more sensible system for carers".

Officers of the Department of Health and Ageing are contacting services with expiring NRCP and CCP agreements over the coming days to provide more information about the extensions process.

Carers who want more information about these services should contact their local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre on 1800 059 059.

Facts

The two programs fund community-based respite services across Australia, as well as 54 Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres, which assist carers to locate and obtain carer support services.

A Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2003 showed there were 2.6 million carers who provided assistance to those who needed help because of disability or age.

Women were more likely (71 per cent) to be primary carers.

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***For further information please contact Anthony Cianflone from Kelvin Thomson's office
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