

\$82 Million Boost in Support for People with a Disability

13 February 2012

The NSW Government has today announced the introduction of *Ability Links NSW*, an \$82 million five-year commitment to expand support services for people with a disability, their families and carers.

Minister for Disability Services, Andrew Constance, made the announcement at the National Disability Services (NDS) state conference in Sydney this morning.

"*Ability Links NSW* involves the creation of 248 coordinator positions over the next three years," Mr Constance said.

"These *Ability Links NSW* coordinators will be located throughout the state to help people with a disability, their families and carers to plan for their future and support them to achieve their goals by building new networks and accessing supports and services in their community."

"*Ability Links NSW* delivers on the NSW Liberals & Nationals pre-election commitment to introduce an expanded form of local area coordination."

The NSW Government currently commits \$2.4 million a year to assist people with a disability, their families and carers using a form of local area coordination but, the Minister said, the Government can do better.

"Today I'm announcing an immediate injection of \$1.7 million in extra funding this financial year, and \$11.6 million in 2012/13 with the ability to assist more than 20,000 people," Mr Constance said.

"This will increase to \$24.5 million per year by the end of June 2014, with the ability to assist 25,500 people."

"*Ability Links NSW* is designed to work with people with disabilities under the age of 65 years to build resilience, maintain support networks and access mainstream services enabling them to live a life of their choosing," Mr Constance said.

"It is also designed to build the capacity of local services and community groups to involve people with disabilities in their services and activities on an ongoing basis."

Ability Links NSW will be delivered by non-government organisations with tenders to be called from suitable providers this month and awarded mid-year.

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