



Thursday 8 July 2010

Businesses encouraged to support Victorian Carer Card

Nationals Member for Benalla, Bill Sykes, is calling on businesses throughout the electorate to register their interest in supporting the new Carer Card.

Dr Sykes said, "The Carer Card is one way in which local businesses can recognise those family members, friends and other carers who spend much of their time supporting people with a disability, chronic or mental illness, children needing foster care and the increasing number of frail aged who need care.

"I have raised the issue of the need for more support services for carers of people with a disability in Parliament a number of times this year.

"Many of these people receive care from a family member or members who put themselves under enormous emotional and physical pressure because they want to do the best thing for their child or relative with a disability.

"It is important that our carers are acknowledged for their hard work and dedication and I hope that the introduction of this new Carer Card will go some way toward that.

"The Card is aimed at acknowledging the incredible work these carers do and I encourage all carers to take up the opportunity to obtain one.

"Equally I ask that all local businesses get on board the program and register their support for the card by accessing the Carer Card website or contacting my office for more information," Dr Sykes said.

While Dr Sykes said that the introduction of the Carers Card will offer some assistance to carers throughout the Benalla electorate, the Brumby Labor Government must do more to invest in disability services across the region.

"There are significant issues that need to be addressed to assist carers, including more services which provide support and advocacy and the urgent need for improved respite services.

"I recently met a woman from Nagambie who had to wait an unacceptable amount of time for a wheelchair which would safely restrain her disabled son. The totally inadequate wheelchair put the wellbeing of the son and his mother at risk.

"There are many local groups throughout my electorate who do a great job to ensure that families most in need receive the appropriate support services but more needs to be done to help these services in the work they do.

"Hopefully the Carer Card, and the offers that go with it, go a small way towards helping carers throughout the community."

Businesses already registered for the program at this stage in the Benalla electorate are Spirits High (Mansfield), Benalla Bus & Coach Lines (Benalla), Alpenhorn Holiday Units (Mt Beauty) and The Old Tobacco Sheds Tourist Complex (Bright).

For carers seeking more information about the card or businesses wishing to register to be included in its offers, access the website www.carercard.vic.gov.au or call 1800 901 958.

Application and registration forms for carers and businesses are available at Bill Sykes' office at 2/55 Carrier Street, Benalla.

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