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MEDIA RELEASE

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MS Australia congratulates the incoming Labor Government

MS Australia, the national peak body for people affected by multiple sclerosis (MS), has today congratulated Prime Minister Anthony Albanese MP and the incoming Labor Government, and reiterated its call for full and ongoing funding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

MS Australia President, Associate Professor Des Graham said that MS Australia stands ready to work with the Government to help improve the lives of people with MS, their carers, families and friends.

There are now more than 25,600 Australians living with MS and over 7.6 million Australians who know or have a loved one with this potentially debilitating disease.

“We look forward to working closely with the Albanese Government; in particular, the Deputy Leader of the House and Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler MP; the Minister for the NDIS and Minister for Government Services, Bill Shorten; Amanda Rishworth, Minister for Social Services and Anika Wells, Minister for Aged Care and Sport. There is plenty to do as there is no known cause or single cure for MS, but a cure could well be within reach. While our researchers are working hard to solve MS, we are also focused on improving the management and care of people living with MS.”

In the lead up to the election, MS Australia, with the help of the broader MS community, sought commitments to the following seven asks, which would make significant improvements to the lives of Australians living with MS:

1. Supercharge the MS research agenda
2. Fully fund and improve the NDIS
3. Meet the needs of people with disability not eligible for the NDIS through improved access to assistive technology
4. Improve access to the Disability Support Pension
5. Improve access to MS Nurses
6. Stop young people with MS entering nursing homes
7. Increase the number of and access to Home Care Packages



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Associate Professor Graham today repeated the organisation’s call for full and ongoing funding of the NDIS, together with any necessary legislation to formalise this undertaking.

“Full and ongoing funding of the NDIS is crucial in securing appropriate and necessary access to services and support for those of the over 25,600 Australians living with MS that require such assistance.

In young adults MS is the most commonly acquired neurological disease, and three quarters of all people with MS are women. MS is estimated to have cost the Australian community \$1.75 billion in 2017. [1].

MS Australia Chief Executive Rohan Greenland is encouraged by Labor’s NDIS Policy Announcement that promised to protect the NDIS to ensure that ‘no Australian with a disability is left behind.’

“MS Australia looks forward to the opportunity to work with the Albanese Government to ensure that MS becomes better embedded in the advisory structures of the NDIS so as to guarantee better outcomes for all of those Australians living with MS. We also remain committed to speaking up for those people with MS who can’t access the NDIS, those aged over 65 and those not eligible for an NDIS package” Mr Greenland said.

“MS Australia’s seven election asks have the potential to make significant improvements for people living with MS in Australia and we believe now is the time to build on these measures to achieve the best outcomes for our community.”

[1] The Health Economic Impact of Multiple Sclerosis in Australia 2017 report, commissioned by MS Australia and prepared by the Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania.

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