



MEDIA RELEASE for Immediate Release

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## **URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO CO-ORDINATE HEALTH AND DISABILITY SUPPORTS**

Research released today further demonstrates the urgent need for action to ensure the coordinated delivery of disability and health supports to young people with complex disability who are eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The report, *Considerations for National Disability Insurance Scheme Design*, also highlights the urgent need for further investment in a wider range of models of housing and support for NDIS participants.

The support needs, health and participation outcomes of people who had moved from nursing homes to live in small-scale supported residential settings (SSA's) were examined. The study documented the characteristics and outcomes of 173 residents (91% were under 65 years of age) from 25 supported accommodation sites delivered by disability service organisations across three states. It showed that in a typical week more time was spent out of bed, receiving visits from friends and family, travelling outside the home and participating in community based shopping or leisure activities, compared to young people with disability living in nursing homes. In summary, the group living in SSA's had greater involvement in home and community life.

However, visiting friends and relatives, and economic participation (i.e. work, study or volunteerism) rates still remained low for the group in SSA's. This highlights the need for the NDIS and other key stakeholders to take a continued focus on building social and economic participation for people with complex disability.

The study found that:

- People in these SSA's typically require daily support with multiple everyday activities, and their disability supports will represent a significant proportion of NDIS funds within the full Scheme;
- The daily lives of this group – and the supports they require – are closely linked to numerous health-related issues; and
- Small-scale residential models (SSA's) are associated with greater opportunities for autonomy, control and social and community participation when compared with young people living in nursing homes.

In the absence of other alternatives, these research findings point to the benefit in maintaining small-scale shared residential settings beyond NDIS transition, as one of a range of housing options for people with complex disability.

Launched today at a forum for hospital discharge planners in the Victorian NDIS trial site in Geelong, this collaborative research project was led by Summer Foundation, Yooralla, Monash University's Occupational Therapy Department and Multiple Sclerosis Limited, in conjunction with providers and tenants of supported accommodation from Victoria, the ACT and NSW.

Download your copy of the *Considerations for National Disability Insurance Scheme Design* report at [www.summerfoundation.org.au/resources/publications](http://www.summerfoundation.org.au/resources/publications)

### Quotes from Partner Organisations

Tom Worsnop, Executive Manager, Summer Foundation stated, "the health and disability interface for NDIS participants with complex healthcare needs to be recognised and coordinated".

Libby Callaway, a researcher in the Monash University Occupational Therapy Department said this research highlighted the need for a range of housing and support models for NDIS participants: "Participation and individual outcomes can be enhanced through moves from aged care to small-scale, well located and designed supported accommodation. NDIS participants require a range of accommodation options and building of 'housing careers' and pathways".

Deb Farrell from Multiple Sclerosis Limited pointed to the need for skilled coordination of supports: "flexible supports need to be delivered by professionals experienced in working across health and disability, to ensure a holistic response to the needs of people at risk of entry to RAC or long term inpatient hospital admissions".



SUMMER  
FOUNDATION

### About the Summer Foundation

The Summer Foundation was established in 2006 with its key aim to change human service policy and practice related to young people in nursing homes. We want to create, lead and demonstrate long-term sustainable changes that stop young people from being forced to live in nursing homes because there is nowhere else for them to go.

**For more information about the report, or to arrange an interview, please contact:**

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