

MEDIA RELEASE



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Autism research funding welcome – but carers remain concerned about cuts

Today's announcement of just over \$11 million to boost autism research is welcome but will not undo the grave concerns carers of autistic people have about proposed changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), says Carers Australia CEO Joanna Cave.

NDIS Minister Senator Jenny McAllister announced the Australian Government's investment to establish the Australian Autism Knowledge Hub at La Trobe University in Melbourne, which aims to bring together researchers and the autism community to transform autism research into practical tools.

Ms Cave acknowledged the importance of strengthening research and collaboration for more evidence-based policies and for improving the lives of autistic people and their carers.

"This is a great opportunity to really enhance the uptake of research to benefit those in our community with autism and assist their family and friend carers. We will be interested to see how the Hub contributes to developments in policy, services and supports.

"We are particularly pleased the role of carers has been recognised, with carers and First Nations Autistic people represented on an advisory council working with the Hub's leadership and governance structures."

Ms Cave said the \$11.1 million investment over three years could contribute to better outcomes for autistic Australians however, it will not stave off concerns about impending cuts to NDIS access.

"Family and friend carers of autistic Australians remain very worried about what the proposed NDIS reforms will mean for the people they care for. While it is always good to see investments like these, the Hub is only just being established and it will be some time before the research results, supports and policy advice flow through. In the meantime, NDIS service cuts for autistic Australians will be underway.

"Carers Australia welcomes the extension to the NDIS inquiry and hopes carers voices and the concerns of carers for our autistic community are heard and changes are made," she said.

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MEDIA INQUIRIES: Frith Rayner 0400 45 9988 frayner@carersaustralia.com.au

About Carers Australia and the National Carer Network

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating to influence policies and services at a national level. The National Carer Network, which consists of Carers NSW, Carers ACT, Carers Victoria, Carers Tasmania, Carers SA, Carers WA, Carers NT, and Carers Queensland, deliver a range of essential carer services across states and territories.