

The Hon. Lisa Neville
Minister for Mental Health
Community Services & Senior Victorians
GPO Box 4057, Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Minister Neville,

Date:

Re: A Fair Go for people with a disability

I am a parent/relative of a person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who uses a range of crucial services to support my child. I expect the service to deliver quality individualised supports to assist my child/relative to achieve their full potential.

I commend the Victorian Government for recognising, in December 2008, Autism Spectrum Disorders is a disability within the meaning of the Disability Act and for the vision of the *State Disability Plan 2002 – 2012* affirming the rights of people with a disability to live and participate in the life of the community. However, the reality is that we are a long way from the 'vision' of the *State Plan*, as current resources and funding for disability support services, including those to people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder are totally inadequate.

I want a **fair go** from your Government for my child/relative. I am extremely disappointed that the level of funding by the Victorian Government to both schools and non-government service providers in Victoria falls short of the true cost of service delivery. This shortfall is evident in The Department of Human Services *Price Review Out-of-Home Disability Services*.

I support the State Budget submission by National Disability Services Victoria for an increase of \$33 million for supported accommodation, day services, respite services and therapy. If community service organisations were funded adequately it would allow them to employ additional staff and provide more direct support to our child/relative.

We also need longer-term solutions and better funding for disability supports like a National Disability Insurance Scheme, which I strongly support. While we wait for such a scheme, it is critical that the Victorian Government provide a fairer **allocation of State revenue now** to work towards a future where my child/relative can reach their full potential, participate in our community, access independent living and achieve their goals.

I look forward to hearing how funding will be allocated for disability services in the 2010 State Budget and how your Government will respond to the crisis in supported accommodation and the recommendations of the recent Parliamentary Inquiry in this area.

Yours sincerely

Name:

Address: