



Media Release

20 April 2022

Significant campaigning sees vital centre get funding commitment from Government

“How hard have we been fighting for this. I’ve got happy tears running down my face. This is such good news. It is really going to help us End Deadly Disability Discrimination.” Fiona McKenzie, Chair, Council for Intellectual Disability.

Following sustained campaigning by the disability community the Minister for Health, Greg Hunt has today announced \$8 million in funding for the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health. The Centre is the key to successful delivery of the National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability. A further \$20 million has been committed to intellectual disability health research.

This funding is a timely response to a constantly growing research base. People with intellectual disability face big health inequalities compared with the general population. They often experience discrimination in hospitals and other health services. The facts are staggering: people with intellectual disability die up to 27 years earlier than most people, and up to half their deaths can be considered preventable.

“A National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health will lead much needed improvements to health care for people with intellectual disability. The Centre will work with people with disability and their families to lead developments in health service systems, research and training of health professionals” Professor Julian Trollor, Head of the Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry at UNSW Sydney and President of the Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine.

“The funding announced by the Minister will allow the establishment of a Centre with solid foundations and for important research into practical strategies for improving health care for a very disadvantaged population. While the initial funding of the Centre is only for 2 years, we will be working with government to make it ongoing.” Jim Simpson, CID Senior Advocate.

The advocacy campaign, “End Deadly Disability Discrimination” is a collaboration of the disability community. It is spearheaded by Council for Intellectual Disability and Inclusion Australia with the collaboration of Down Syndrome Australia, the Australian

Association of Developmental Disability Medicine and UNSW Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry 3DN.

Linda Hughes, featured in the End Deadly Disability Discrimination campaign with her son Jacob says “This is good news. It is going to save lives. Getting this Centre funded will really help to address the disability discrimination that I have experienced first hand when caring for my son Jacob in hospital.”

END

Media contact; Rochelle Porteous 0404 487 247

Available for interview:

Jim Simpson – CID Senior Advocate

Linda Hughes – Mother and carer of Jacob Hughes

The link to the video of Linda and Jacob is here: <https://youtu.be/nIN0QCGtVo8>

References:

[Health Status of People with Intellectual Disability Evidence Summary 22 June 2021](#)

Trollor, J (2021)

[Cause of death and potentially avoidable deaths in Australian adults with intellectual disability using retrospective linked data](#), Trollor, J; Strsuebku, P, Han Xu and

Howlett, S (2017)

[Upholding the right to life and health: a review of the deaths in care of people with disability in Queensland](#), Office of the Public Advocate (Qld) (2016)

Greg Hunt Media Release 20 April 2022 <https://www.greghunt.com.au/record-investment-in-improving-the-health-of-people-with-intellectual-disability/>

