



MEDIA ALERT

DATE: 20 May 2016 CONTACT: Danielle Blewett PHONE: 0400642794

StGiles asks for your help

StGiles is relying more than ever on public donations because children with disability will not be eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme when it starts on July 1.

Children from birth to 11 years - who are the majority of the 6674 children StGiles supports each year - will have to wait at least another year and up to two years before they can benefit from the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Even then, StGiles has not been told which of its current children's services will be eligible for NDIS funding.

"We learned in November that children would be the last to be included in the national roll-out of the NDIS. Our teams were gutted," StGiles chief executive Ian Wright said.

"We've done everything we can to prepare financially – including capping waiting lists, adjusting appointment times and working with more children in group settings. These actions are necessary if we are to keep doing the work our community needs and expects," Mr Wright said.

The two-year wait for children with disability compounds the already under-funded organisation which has traditionally carried the financial burden of a million dollar shortfall between Commonwealth and State funding of its disability and early intervention programs for Tasmanian children.

StGiles is an acknowledged leader in the provision of public child physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, assistive technology, wheelchair, respite and support services in Hobart and Launceston on behalf of the State and Commonwealth.

"The services we provide are not offered elsewhere. If we can't afford to provide them, no-one can," Mr Wright said.

"As well, many of the children we currently see are not classified as disabled and we have not been able to get answers about who will pay for their services.

"It's really hard because we know there are already children who are missing out because we cannot afford ongoing cost of sending our therapy teams to outreach clinics across regional Tasmania."

Please make a donation to StGiles Mid-Year Appeal at www.stgiles.org.au/donate

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