

MEDIA STATEMENT

6 May 2019

The Benevolent Society is making changes to its delivery of services to people with disability

The Benevolent Society – Australia’s oldest charity – today announced it is making changes to its approach to providing services to people with disability in NSW and the ACT. We are ensuring that our staffing levels and property footprint meet community demand and are financially sustainable under the NDIS.

The Benevolent Society has been working with people with disability for over 200 years. In 2017 The Benevolent Society took over the provision of specialist (clinical) services for people with disability from the NSW Government. We have been transforming that business over the past eighteen months and will continue to review the services we deliver now and into the future.

The Benevolent Society remains committed to working with people with disability across NSW and Australia “We are doing everything in our power to minimise the disruption to both clients and staff” said CEO Jo Toohey. The Benevolent Society has committed to continuing to provide services across NSW. Even where we are closing our physical offices, we will continue to provide services by taking advantage of mobile technology and enabling staff to connect with other offices or work from home.

We are fully committed to the provision of services to people with intellectual disabilities, particularly those facing complex challenges. Going forward, we will be concentrating on our areas of expertise and community demand, through the provision of behaviour support and allied health services including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, as well as support coordination.

We are endeavouring to minimise the reduction in staff numbers by offering staff the opportunity to transfer equivalent positions in other parts of our business, such as in our work with children and their families. We will also provide training programs to ensure staff can re-skill and continue to work in the area of social services.

The Benevolent Society remains supportive of the principles of the NDIS – enabling people with disabilities to live an ordinary life. Jo Toohey said, “Our decision to take on specialist services for people with disability was based on our desire to carry on the work done by this team in government and to work out how things could be done better. We are committed to continuing our work with people with complex disabilities who often face enormous challenges.”

We are confident of a strong future for disability services. TBS will continue to be the leading provider of specialist services to people with intellectual disabilities within NSW and ACT under our new operating model. We are maintaining a presence across the breadth of NSW. We will seek to grow from this strong foundation to a vision of an Australia in which people with complex disabilities access supports and services that most Australians take for granted.

FOR ALL MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

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About The Benevolent Society - Australia's first charity, working as a catalyst for social justice and change for over 200 years. Founded in 1813, The Benevolent Society advocates for a better life for all Australians, and provides in-home services for older Australians, and people with disability, as well as providing programs in Family support and early intervention. We help people age well and live their best lives, staying in their homes wherever possible. For more information, please visit benevolent.org.au, on Facebook/[thebenevolentsociety](https://www.facebook.com/thebenevolentsociety) or on Twitter - [@BenevolentAU](https://twitter.com/BenevolentAU)

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