

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **HANDS OFF OUR NDIS FUNDING - PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR THE BUDGET SURPLUS**

In the wake of this week's Federal Budget, the St Vincent de Paul Society National Council has called on all sides of politics to publicly commit to delivering in full the commitment made to people with disability, their families and carers when the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was introduced.

The Budget Papers reveal that the surplus announced on Tuesday is built on taking funds from people with disability because the Scheme's administrative arm has not been able to get much-needed monies to those who continue to wait to receive much-needed support services.

The Scheme promises so much to so many people whom for too long have received poor services and supports. Funds committed to the Scheme in previous Budget commitments must not be stolen to paint a rosier financial picture in 2019-20.

"Much has been made of the Budget's return to surplus. We find it unacceptable to craft a surplus if much of that surplus is funded off the backs of people with disabilities," said Claire Victory, President of the St Vincent de Paul Society National Council.

"The underspend is not due to a lack of demand. It has been brought about by ongoing problems people with disability, their families and carers continue to face when trying to access the Scheme.

"People with disability, their families and carers have been unable to get the support they need due to administrative errors, delays, systems that are not quite people focussed and implementation issues. People are desperate for help and support – they just can't access it."

Ms Victory maintained that all underspent funds must be invested back into the NDIS to fix systemic problems so that people with disability and their families get the assistance they need right now.

"We call on the Government to rethink its decision to direct funding away from the NDIS, and to publicly guarantee that funds allocated to the NDIS are used to fix the scheme, not prop up the Budget surplus," said Ms Victory.

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