



the national voice

## A voice for cerebral palsy in our parliament

**We call on members and candidates to commit to supporting a Parliamentary Friends of Cerebral Palsy group in the 48<sup>th</sup> Federal Parliament - giving a voice to people with CP to create meaningful change and improve their quality of life.**

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is the most common lifelong physical disability globally – 50 million people in the world live with CP. Despite advances in research, CP remains underfunded and misunderstood, with people living with CP experiencing significant barriers in healthcare, education, employment, and social participation.

### **The State of Cerebral Palsy in Australia**

- Over 34,000 Australians live with CP.
- 1.2 babies are born with CP every day.
- 30% of Australians with CP live in regional rural or remote Australia
- CP costs the Australian economy \$5.17 billion annually, in lost productivity, efficiency and support.
- 3% of NDIS participants have primary disability of CP. As result of their complex needs, people with CP have one of the highest average participant plans (~ \$156,600/participant) totalling \$2.76 billion in payments in 2024 (12% increase on previous year)

**The 2020 Australia and New Zealand Strategy aims to improve the health, function, participation and quality of life of people with cerebral palsy and their families. With this election we call on the following priority areas:**

#### **Make early diagnosis for infants at risk of cerebral palsy a national priority**

- Although CP can be diagnosed from 12 weeks of age, 75% of Australian infants aren't diagnosed until after six months.
- Establishing a national network of early diagnosis clinics with a universal screening process will ensure early diagnosis for all at-risk infants, giving them the best chance to thrive.

#### **Ensure early intervention meets the needs of children and families**

- A proactive, evidence-based early intervention approach will greatly improve outcomes for individuals with CP, enhancing their function and mobility.
- It will also ease the burden on families and parents and reduce costs for the NDIS and healthcare systems.

#### **Ensure adults with CP have equitable access to universal preventative health programs**

- People with cerebral palsy are living longer, increasing their risk of cancer.
- Lower participation rates in cancer screening, the complexity of the condition in combination with other health issues makes recovery from cancer and treatments harder.
- Ensuring people with CP participate in cancer screening is crucial for early detection, reducing mortality rates, and lowering healthcare costs.

#### **Ensure a more equitable, accessible society for adults with CP**

- By ensuring **national access standards** across the built environment and public transport, national support standards in education, and inclusive employment practices we can improve the quality-of-life and economic outcomes of people living with CP and improve access across society in general.