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MEDIA RELEASE

The announcement of an additional \$47 million investment for Early Childhood Early Intervention Services in South Australia is positive news for children with disability and their families.

AEIOU Foundation for children with autism Chief Executive Officer Alan Smith says this investment will increase the number of South Australian children who will gain access to supports they need and deserve.

“Since the inception of the NDIS scheme in South Australia in 2014, children on the autism spectrum with a moderate to severe diagnosis have not been able to access high quality early intervention because of lengthy delays in gaining access to the scheme and a very low investment in early intervention,” Mr Smith says.

“This has had a real impact on the number of children in South Australia who have had receive reasonable packages to access necessary support as designated by evidence based Commonwealth Guidelines for Good Practice and funded in other states by the NDIS”.

AEIOU Foundation established an early intervention service in South Australia to provide high quality early intervention services aligned to these guidelines.

“Our experience in South Australia, working with families who are eligible to receive supports through the NDIS, has demonstrated very slow access into the scheme and funding packages well short of what is reasonable to deliver levels of services as defined by the Commonwealth Guidelines and necessary to provide these children with the best opportunity to gain the skills to overcome their disability,” Mr Smith says.

“Unfortunately there is a lack of confidence by the South Australian community in the NDIS. “This announcement by the Hon Dan Tehan MP and The Hon Simon Birmingham MP will go a long way to restoring faith.

“According to the Good Practice Guidelines, children, require 20 hours per week of early intervention therapy. “It is conservatively estimated there are approximately 200 children in South Australia diagnosed with moderate to severe autism. “The incremental direct expenditure on packages required to support these children with 20 hours of early intervention is approximately an additional \$8 million per annum.

“This funding boost to the scheme should see no child missing out on receiving therapy that will benefit them across their lifetime,” Mr Smith adds.

ENDS

ABOUT AEIOU Foundation:

AEIOU Foundation is a leading provider of early intervention for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Our evidence-based therapy and education program is family focused and provides every child with the best opportunity to gain vital independence and achieve their full potential. Operating from nine locations, AEIOU

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enrols children aged 2 to 6 years.

For more information about AEIOU Foundation visit www.aeiou.org.au.

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