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Streamlining and expanding grants program for vulnerable people

ACT Minister for Disability, John Hargreaves, today announced additional grants support of \$830,000 over four years to assist vulnerable people and their carers to maintain their independence.

The funding provided in the 2009-10 ACT Budget will see the establishment of the new Flexible Support Fund, which delivers on an election commitment.

The new Fund consolidates the existing Quality of Life and Carer Recognition grants programs worth \$300,000 each year — boosting the total annual grant funding by an extra \$200,000.

“The establishment of the new Flexible Support Fund is good news for vulnerable Canberrans and their carers,” said Mr Hargreaves.

“This spending initiative is targeted at an area of need in the community. The Government will continue to invest in the community and is committed to maintaining quality services in these challenging economic times.

“The consolidation of two programs with related objectives and significant additional funding now provides a pool of \$2 million over four years, delivered in a far more flexible way,” he said.

The program assists people to maintain their independence as much as possible and also recognises the needs of carers in their valuable role.

Mr Hargreaves said a key element of the grants program is that the funding is available to people outside of formal support services.

“Many grants programs can be quite prescriptive about what funding can be spent on, and this can limit the effectiveness of much needed resources.

“Under the Flexible Support Fund, applications of up to \$5,000 can be submitted for equipment, practical supports, skills training, counselling, respite care or recreational activities.

“The flexibility of the grants program will provide opportunities to make a big difference in the quality of people’s lives.”

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