

Date 26 May 2011

Subject Cystic Fibrosis Outreach Support Service now open in Northern NSW

Living with cystic fibrosis (CF) is a lifelong battle for many Australian families, but for those located in remote and rural areas these challenges are even greater due to limited access to specialist CF clinics and support services.

A new CF Outreach Support Service has been opened in Northern New South Wales courtesy of a \$30,000 community partnership from nib foundation, which will reduce this service gap and ease the burden for regionally-based families.

The service will provide these families with access to much-needed guidance and counselling to help them overcome the difficulties of living with CF.

CF NSW Chief Executive Officer, Alex Huntir said the outreach support service will significantly improve the equity and access of rural families to such vital services.

"Thanks to nib foundation this program will allow people living with CF and their extended families to deal with the anxiety, grief and guilt they experience following diagnosis and throughout their lives," Mr Huntir said.

"They will benefit from being able to discuss their feelings and fears on an individual basis and in a group setting, to allow them learn from each other and understand that they are not alone in dealing with CF."

The home visiting service will see support workers visit more than 20 families through Northern New South Wales, twice a year to provide support, education and information.

nib foundation Chairman, Terry Lawler said with one in every 2,500 Australian babies born with CF, the need for such support services is continuing to grow and should be accessible to families living in both rural and metropolitan communities.

"Supporting carers is one of the foundation's focal areas, so we are delighted to be able to help improve the understanding of CF and its implications for those living with CF in the comfort of their home environment," Mr Lawler said.

"The visits will also provide opportunities for local community and medical services to learn more about the needs of people with CF and how they can best support them and their families."

To help raise awareness and funds for CF, 65 Roses Day will also be held this Friday 27 May 2011 with local florists selling roses to aid the cause. For more information about 65 Roses Day visit www.65rosesday.org.au

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