



**THE HON MARK BUTLER MP  
Minister for Mental Health and Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

26 May 2011

**More Support for Palliative Care Patients, Their Families and Carers**

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler today marked National Palliative Care Week 2011 by announcing an \$8.6 million boost to improve palliative care support and services for patients, their families and carers.

National Palliative Care Week (22-28 May 2011) aims to raise awareness about palliative care and the services available to Australians of all ages.

The theme of National Palliative Care Week this year is 'Let's chat about dying' to encourage people to talk to their loved ones about their preferences for end-of-life care and raise community awareness of available services.

Launching National Palliative Care Week in Canberra today, Mr Butler announced the Government would provide Palliative Care Australia with up to \$3 million in funding to purchase new specialised palliative care equipment.

"Palliative Care Australia will be provided with this funding to operate an equipment loans scheme which will provide palliative care patients with access to specialised equipment when being cared for in a home setting," Mr Butler said.

"This will significantly increase community access to new equipment such as electronic beds, pressure care mattresses and enable palliative care patients to remain in their home close to their family and loved ones.

"This funding will potentially provide, for example, an additional 200 electronic beds and pressure care mattresses, or 2000 wheelchairs, or 300 hoists and slings."

A further \$5.6 million in grants of up to \$150,000 will be provided to 81 community groups, health and aged care providers and charitable organisations.

"Grants of up to \$150,000 are being offered under Round 6 of the Local Palliative Care Grants Program for fitting out premises and the purchase of assistive equipment.

"This will enable local organisations to continue to deliver the vital and compassionate care needed by Australians at the end of their lives."

The Local Palliative Care Grants Program is one component of the Government's commitment to improve palliative care support and services for patients, their families

and carers. The Government currently provides over \$23 million to the National Palliative Care Program.

“It is important people receive the best palliative care available, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances. Today’s announcement is a clear indication of our commitment to respond to the palliative care needs of the community,” Mr Butler said.

**For more information, please contact the Minister's Office on (02) 6277 7280**