

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**1 February 2008**

# **THE END OF THE 'BLAME GAME':**

## **A NEW ERA OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AND THEIR FAMILIES ...**

The meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers held today in Melbourne to discuss the next CSTDA (Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement) ended with Ministers reporting a spirit of cooperation in working towards the next Agreement!

The gathering of people with disability, families, supporters and advocates from across Australia at the meeting venue, awaiting the outcome, welcomed this new cooperation between all governments in working for the next CSTDA.

They also welcomed the opportunity to speak with Ministers and to meet with, and present their issues to, Bill Shorten, the Parliamentary Secretary to Jenny Macklin, (Minister for Disability Services).

The delegation restated the expectations of people with disability and families that the Governments of Australia will commit to the planning and funding needed to resolve the disability crisis - to 'meet the need'.

- A commitment is required to meet the '**identified unmet need**' for support services
- A commitment is required to maintain existing services – **indexation** must reflect true cost increases – anything less is, in reality, a cut.
- A commitment is required to ensure that population **growth** is properly covered – this crisis should never be allowed to happen again.

Ministers advised the delegation that they were happy with the outcome of the meeting and that they had agreed to work together co-operatively on a National Disability Strategy which will include working "to ensure the needs of people with disabilities and their families are addressed through coordinated and comprehensive policy planning". Funding was not discussed at this meeting.

"There is still a significant amount of work to be done by Ministers," said CSTDA Alliance Co-convenor, Sue Harris, "and we will be keeping in close communication with Ministers in the lead up to the next Ministerial meeting due to be held in March.

The CSTDA Alliance remains watchful. The goalposts **MUST** be firmly set on the funding, infrastructure and planning required to meet the needs of people with disability now and into the future."

**Enquiries: Sue Harris, 041 22 44 775, or Su-Hsien Lee, 0411 75 44 02.**  
**Email: [convenor@cstdaalliance.org.au](mailto:convenor@cstdaalliance.org.au) Web: [www.cstdaalliance.org.au](http://www.cstdaalliance.org.au)**

*The National CSTDA Community Alliance has been formed to bring people with disability, families, friends, agencies, organizations, supporters and concerned citizens from across Australia together to take a stand for the CSTDA that people with disability need ...for a fair go for people with disability and their families!*