

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**The Hon. Linda Burney MP**  
**Minister for the State Plan**  
**Minister for Community Services**



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**Thursday 10 June 2010**

### **RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA NSW TO RUN FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIANS SUPPORT SERVICES**

NSW Minister for Community Services Linda Burney today announced that \$1.2 million funding will go to highly-regarded Relationships Australia NSW to run a new state-wide support service for those who grew up in children's homes, orphanages and institutions from the 1920s to the 1990s.

"I am pleased the Government is investing in an organisation as trusted as Relationships Australia NSW to help our Forgotten Australians," Ms Burney said.

"Specialist caseworkers and counsellors will help them cope with the difficult legacy of their childhood experiences and provide support to improve their health and wellbeing."

Ms Burney said the funding was committed following the Government's formal apology to the Forgotten Australians in September last year. The Government pledged more than \$9 million over five years to services for Forgotten Australians including this new Support Service. Additional services will support this group to index historical records and to assist with easier access to those records.

"The Forgotten Australians Inquiry (2003) focused on Australians who experienced institutional and out of home care from the 1920s to the 1990s," she said.

"The report documented the painful memories of many people who had been in care including their emotional, physical and sexual abuse. It also revealed experiences of neglect, humiliation and deprivation.

"Unsurprisingly, many of these Forgotten Australians face a range of problems as a result of that childhood history, such as substance abuse, poor education, homelessness and mental health issues. The difficulties they face may also impact on their children and families.

"While these Forgotten Australians may need services, including counselling, their past experiences dealing with institutions, authority and Government departments often make it difficult for them to seek help. They need support to find and use those services.

"Relationships Australia NSW's Support Service for Forgotten Australians will employ specialist staff who can help them with that process, sensitively considering their fears and concerns."

Community Services will fund the Support Service \$382,000 in the 2009/10 financial year and provide yearly funding of \$834,000 in 2010/11.

Anne Hollonds, CEO of Relationships Australia NSW said, "Relationships Australia NSW has more than 10 years' experience working with adults who were brought up in care through our Aftercare Resource Centre Support Services. We are very aware of the difficulties many of the

Forgotten Australians experience in their personal and family lives and can provide access to a broad range of support services – both inside our organisation and through other services in the community.”

A drop-in centre for the Forgotten Australians will be established in a central location in Westmead and enquiries for support and assistance can be made by clients and other service providers on 1800 656 884. Services will be available to any person who was brought up in care in NSW regardless of where they now live in Australia.

“Relationships Australia NSW is committed to the on-going support of Forgotten Australians and the provision of tailored services to meet their needs,” Ms Hollonds said.

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