

13 April 2016

## **Media Release re. Family Violence Response**

### ***Caroline Chisholm Society welcomes new intensive in-home early childhood support service***

Caroline Chisholm Society today welcomed the Victorian Government's response to the Family Violence Royal Commission. As part of the comprehensive response, the Government has also released a 'Roadmap for Reform: strong families, safe children'. The Roadmap included \$33.8m for services including a new intensive in-home early childhood support service for vulnerable children and \$5.65m for family support services that build resilience of parents.

The Society's Chief Executive Officer, Helen Cooney, said 'We welcome the new intensive service for expectant and new families. I look forward to working with the Government on a model that builds on the skills of midwives and maternal and child health nurses. If this new service gives them a non-stigmatising place to suggest families can go for help without a long waiting list, it's worked.'

Ms Cooney also welcomed funding for programs for building the resilience of parents. She said 'It's incredibly difficult to find money for evidence based programs that teach practical parenting skills. So I hope they are included. These programs are often seen as fluffy, but culture classes help with recovery from trauma and cooking classes help with nutrition; at the same time they offer a very simple way to offer a non-stigmatising 'entry point' for more intensive support services.

The Roadmap outlines a new conceptual framework for 'visible entry points'. Ms Cooney indicated that the Society hopes what is brought forward is simple for the community to understand, build on the strengths of the ChildFIRST system, and is not dogged by demand issues.

She said 'It should be as easy as this - If you're pregnant, you get yourself to the GP, you talk to the midwife and you work with a maternal and child health nurse. If you or they notice you need help with family violence you should look up family violence. If you need help with a house, you look up housing. If you need parenting help, you call for parenting support. It has to be intuitive and the support team at that entry point need to know how to navigate the rest.'

Ends.

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