Press release: 21 July 2016

SPARK NeuroCare Collaboration Ignites Coordinated Care in Townsville

In a first for Queensland, seven not for profits have joined forces to establish *Spark NeuroCare* - a free service that will deliver coordinated care services for hundreds of local customers with progressive neurological diseases (PND).

The official launch of the *Spark NeuroCare* project will take place at 4pm on Tuesday 2 August at James Cook University, Townsville.

Special guests at the launch will include the Honourable Coralee O'Rourke MP, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland; Honourable Cameron Dick, Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services; and Cr Jenny Hill Mayor of Townsville.

Of the 35,000 people living with PND in Queensland, a significant proportion are unable to access the necessary information, support and care they require to manage their daily lives. This is particularly prevalent in regional areas.

"Not for profits are under enormous strain to deliver services state-wide. We instigated this collaboration to share resources across Queensland and we are delighted to announce the launch of our first project site in Townsville at James Cook University," said Mr Lincoln Hopper, CEO, MS Queensland and Chair *Spark NeuroCare*.

"By working together, we can support more customers and deliver efficient services with our combined PND expertise. We can also address the significant unmet need for people living with PND. Customers will benefit from advice, referrals, assistance with preparing for the NDIS, links to other service providers, education events and centralised equipment loans," he added.

The members of the *Spark NeuroCare* collaboration include Epilepsy Queensland Inc, Huntingtons Queensland, Motor Neurone Disease Association of Queensland Inc, MND and Me Foundation Ltd, MS Queensland, Parkinson's Queensland and Youngcare.

The proof of concept project is funded by *Spark NeuroCare*, the Queensland Government and from philanthropy. If successful, the current proof of concept project may pave the way to expand the service across the state in line with the NDIS implementation rollout.

Spark NeuroCare is a free service for eligible customers. For more information please visit www.sparkneurocare.org.au.

People with PND, their carers and family members, along with healthcare workers and representatives from community and disability organisations are invited to attend the launch event. Please RSVP your attendance for catering purposes via 07 4412 7700.

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Media contacts

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