

NSW Media Release
Minister for Disability Services, Peter Primrose
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NSW Government strategy for employment in disability sector proves its worth

A NSW Government strategy to boost employment in the disability and community care sectors launched in March is already proving successful.

Minister for Disability Services, Peter Primrose, said Project ABLE promoted the concept of careers in the sectors to students enrolled at secondary schools and university allied health programs and was an extension of the 'carecareer' initiative launched by the Premier in January.

Mr Primrose said that at the beginning of May 321 students from 19 schools were participating in the project, which could cater for up to 600 students and 300 schools.

"We have had interest from other schools wanting to take part in Project ABLE next year," Mr Primrose said.

He said Project ABLE covered the areas of education, health and disability services and there were potential benefits for the three portfolios as well as the broader disability, community care and health sectors.

"It gives students the opportunity to achieve a uniquely accredited certificate by attending a workshop and completing official training and work experience within the sector with a partner organisation."

Mr Primrose said it was estimated that by 2014, an additional 38,000 people would be required to meet vacancies within the disability and community care sectors across the State.

"The aim of Project ABLE is to change perceptions that secondary and tertiary students may have of working in the disability sector and inspire them to take the next step to find and secure work in the sector.

"This will be achieved through a vocational experience that recognises their participation."

Mr Primrose said that the achievement of the uniquely accredited certificate for participation in the program would provide the students with a credential that future employers would value.

Mr Primrose said that Phase Two of Project ABLE would focus on university students studying allied health subjects.

"It will assist our partner organisations to hire five university allied health students on a full-time or part-time basis in a three month paid job placement within the sector.

"Selection will be based on application and interview and those university students who gain the three-month work placement will go on to be strong workplace ambassadors for the disability sector."

Mr Primrose said that Project ABLE was being managed by National Disability Services (NDS) as part of an overall \$4.3 million commitment by the Government to boost employment in the disability sector.

Patrick Maher, NSW State Manager of NDS, said Project ABLE had the potential to engage young people in a rewarding experience and offered them an opportunity to build skills for a future career in disability or community care services.