



MEDIA RELEASE

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At last deaf and hard of hearing people sleep safe

Premier Kristina Keneally today announced the NSW Government's new commitment of two million dollars over three years for a visual smoke alarm subsidy scheme to be rolled out in partnership with the Deaf Society of NSW.

Conventional smoke alarms, which cost \$20 - \$50, will only wake people who can hear them. A deaf or hard of hearing person is obliged to pay around \$450 for a system with a flashing light or a vibrating device that will wake them in the event of a fire.

The Deaf Society of NSW has been working closely with Fire and Rescue NSW to develop a proposal for the scheme which will see the specialised alarms subsidised for deaf and hard of hearing residents in NSW.

The announcement was made today by the Premier at the National Disability Services State Conference along with a raft of promises aimed at reducing the cost of living for people with a disability, their families and carers.

Colin Allen, Director of Services at the Deaf Society of NSW, said: "We feel that this announcement has brought us one step closer to being on par with the rest of the community. Most of the time deaf people have to just fit in with the way the world is, and bear the cost of that. This is a great example of a government taking seriously the vision of a truly inclusive society.

"It is great to see the NSW Government stepping up to take on responsibility for making the vision of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* a reality.

"I know many deaf people who just live without the safety devices that other people take for granted. Now we will no longer have to do that."

Further information and appointments for interviews can be obtained from The Deaf Society of New South Wales by telephoning (02) 8833 3600.

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Further information can be obtained from www.deafsocietynsw.org.au.

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