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STATE GOVERNMENT MAKES RYDE FAMILIES' DREAMS COME TRUE

After almost seven years of lobbying, attending several hundred meetings that became a rollercoaster of hope and despair, the parents of a group of 20 intellectually disabled adults who live in the Ryde area have been granted their one wish – to have suitable supported accommodation provided for their adult children.

RASAID (Ryde Area Supported Accommodation for Intellectually Disabled) spokesperson, Estelle Shields, says, "The RASAID families welcome Minister Andrew Constance's announcement that our project will be funded by the State government, fulfilling a promise he made to us more than eighteen months ago. We acknowledge his courage and integrity in making our 'dare to dream' development become a reality. We are elated."

RASAID has been chosen to pilot a new model of supported accommodation in which a cohesive group of intellectually disabled people live together in a cluster setting within the local community they know. Their parents will oversee their adult child's gradual and humane transition out of the family home and into the new environment.

RASAID believes that its model, favored by thousands of families of intellectually disabled people, will be a template for many similar developments. A key feature of the RASAID model is that the families are philosophically united and committed to finding local, appropriate and responsive accommodation that will meet the needs of their adult children, while allowing a high level of family governance and community involvement.

The group believes that the success of its years of advocacy will bring hope and encouragement to families on waiting lists for supported accommodation. If the proposed National Disability Insurance Scheme becomes a reality later in the year, it is expected that many families will follow the RASAID lead and form groups to pool funding, in order to secure the best outcomes for their disabled members.

There has been no announcement yet as to the location of the accommodation in Ryde.

~~~End of Release~~~

For interview: Jenny Rollo, President of RASAID on 0407-030.269

For media inquiries: Teresa Russell on 0400-00 23 49

To find out more about the members of RASAID and their stories: <http://www.rasaid.org.au>