

In November 2009, Siblings Australia held a national conference, which included family members, service providers, researchers and policy makers. At the conclusion of the conference the delegates endorsed the following resolution.

We the delegates at the Siblings Australia 'Creating Connections' conference held in Adelaide 19-20 November 2009 affirm that siblings of people with a disability or serious physical or mental illness:

- have the longest relationship with, and often play a vital role in the support of, their brothers and sisters who live with a disability, but can face serious challenges in fulfilling this support role across their lives
- face risks in relation to their long-term emotional, mental and physical well-being, irrespective of their caring role
- have difficulty, both individually and collectively, in speaking out about their own needs; and
- currently have inadequate recognition or support within government programs related to health, families and disability

We therefore call on the Australian government to acknowledge the important needs and contribution of siblings of people with a disability or serious physical or mental illness by:

- recognising that support for siblings is a good investment and reflecting this in relevant policy
- nominating a single Australian government department to take lead responsibility to encourage a whole of government approach for child and adult siblings
- ensuring fair access to funding for quality services for siblings across their life span
- providing secure resources for a national sibling's body with responsibility for advocacy, advising government, disseminating information and facilitating collaboration, training, research and evaluation practices.