# Parliamentary Friends of Cerebral Palsy

## A stronger voice for people with cerebral palsy

The Parliamentary Friends of Cerebral Palsy brings parliamentarians together with people with cerebral palsy (CP) and the wider cerebral palsy community.

It is a bipartisan place to **hear, learn and work together**. A place to build understanding, keep cerebral palsy visible and connect the cerebral palsy community with Parliament.



### Why this group matters

Cerebral palsy is lifelong. People's aspirations, opportunities, health and support needs change throughout life — from getting the best possible start, through education and employment, to adult health, participation and ageing.

Australia has also made significant progress in cerebral palsy through research, prevention, earlier identification, evidence —based intervention and disability support.

Now we have an opportunity to build on that progress, with people with cerebral palsy helping to shape what comes next.

**Hear** from us.
**Learn** with us.
**Work** with us.

The Parliamentary Friends group creates a standing, cross-party forum where parliamentarians can hear directly from people with cerebral palsy, families, researchers, clinicians and the wider community.

# A good life at every stage

Cerebral palsy begins in childhood, but life with cerebral palsy does not stop there. The right opportunities and support at the right time can help people stay healthy, independent and connected throughout life.



## Early years

**Earlier identification. Evidence-based intervention. Strong families.**

Research and clinical innovation are changing what is possible for children with cerebral palsy. Earlier identification connects children and families with the right intervention and support sooner.

## Growing up

**Learning. Communicating. Participating.**

Children and young people need opportunities to learn, build relationships, use technology, participate in their communities and prepare for adulthood. CP does not end when childhood services do.

## Adulthood

**Work. Relationships. Health. Independence. Contribution.**

For many adults with CP, the NDIS has been transformative — enabling access to therapy, technology and supports that help people maintain their health and mobility, work, live independently, participate in their communities.

## Ageing well

**Staying healthy, active and connected.**

Pain, fatigue and the physical effects of ageing can increase health and support needs over time. Continuity of health care, therapy and appropriate support matters throughout life.

## What the right support makes possible

> “Seven years ago, I believed I was inevitably losing my ability to walk. Today, because of specialist therapy funded through the NDIS, I walk independently for an hour every day and complete errands on my own.”

*NDIS participant with spastic diplegia cerebral palsy*

# Australia can lead the way

Australia has made remarkable progress in cerebral palsy through collaboration between people with cerebral palsy and families, researchers, clinicians, governments and the disability sector.



**Working together, we can build on this progress and help improve outcomes in Australia and around the world.**

### Research & Innovation

Research is deepening our understanding of cerebral palsy and creating new possibilities for prevention, treatment and participation.

### Earlier diagnosis

Cerebral palsy can now be identified much earlier in infancy, giving children and families earlier access to evidence-based intervention.

### A generation of progress

Australian Cerebral Palsy Register data show a 40% reduction in cerebral palsy prevalence over a generation, reflecting advances across maternal, neonatal and public health care.

### Technology & participation

Australian innovation is developing technologies, digital tools and new approaches that support communication, mobility, independence and participation.

### Collaboration

Australia's cerebral palsy research community works globally to share knowledge and translate evidence into better outcomes.

## From Australian leadership to global impact

Australia's experience shows that progress is possible. By sharing knowledge and building partnerships, we can improve outcomes for people with cerebral palsy around the world.

**50 million** people worldwide live with cerebral palsy — each with their own experiences, priorities and ambitions.

**200+ partners**
**50+ countries** are connected through CP360, cerebral palsy's global network.

**100+ countries** come together through World Cerebral Palsy Day each October to celebrate people with cerebral palsy, raise awareness and drive positive change.

**The global cerebral palsy community is now seeking official United Nations recognition of World Cerebral Palsy Day.**

# Working together for positive change



## Build on what works to get NDIS reform right

The NDIS has transformed the lives of many people with cerebral palsy — enabling greater independence, mobility, participation and employment.

As the scheme evolves, reform should build on what works while ensuring the NDIS remains strong and sustainable.

Cerebral palsy is lifelong and individual. Decisions about therapy, functional capacity and participation need to recognise changing needs and be informed by appropriate clinical evidence and lived experience.

People with cerebral palsy should be involved early in the decisions and reforms that affect their lives.

## Think whole of life

Good policy needs to look beyond any one system.

People with cerebral palsy need opportunities to participate in education, employment and community life, alongside accessible mainstream and specialist health care and appropriate disability support as needs change.

The goal is not simply better services — it is enabling people with cerebral palsy to live healthy, included and fulfilling lives.

## Our invitation to parliamentarians

### Hear from us. Learn with us. Work with us.

- Keep people with cerebral palsy visible.
- Engage directly with the cerebral palsy community.
- Build on what is working.
- Work with people with cerebral palsy to shape what comes next.

Together,
we can create
lasting change.

Parliamentary Friends of Cerebral Palsy

**Co-Chairs:** Dr Mike Freelander MP and Angie Bell MP

Led by the cerebral palsy community, supported by Cerebral Palsy Australia - the national voice of people living with cerebral palsy, across every stage of life.

Cerebral Palsy AUSTRALIA

the national voice