



MEDIA RELEASE: Monday 24th June 2024

2024/25 NSW Budget a partial win for regional communities

Mallee Family Care (MFC), a place-based community service provider in the Mallee region that includes far-west New South Wales, has described the 24/25 NSW budget as a partial win for regional communities.

“Mallee Family Care acknowledges that economic times are tough, and that the NSW government has had to make challenging decisions regarding expenditure. We are therefore pleased to see that housing, domestic violence, and education are among the key areas that have received increased funding,” CEO Teresa Jayet said.

“We also welcome the proposed plan to reform the foster care system by expanding the number of foster care placements and carers. This addresses an urgent need and would benefit from the perspective and expertise of place-based providers of foster care, such as MFC.

“MFC reminds the government that the broader economic crisis is not over. Regions like Mallee have seen first-hand the impact of the economic downturn. Demand for our services is at an all-time high – and not just from low-income families. That’s why we continue to call for more comprehensive and targeted solutions that are missing from this budget.

“For instance, while MFC welcomes the introduction of the NSW Rental Taskforce, we also need immediate action to help families who are unable to cover their existing rent. Allowing families to drift into homelessness is not an acceptable outcome and ultimately one which costs the government more.

“In a similar vein, increases in energy rebates will help eligible households afford the rising cost of power. However, unless eligibility criteria for these schemes is widened, there will be many NSW residents struggling to pay their energy bills who will miss out on this vital support.

“Representation from regional areas is important in the implementation of these budget measures to ensure they reflect the needs and priorities of our communities,” Ms Jayet said.

“MFC is committed to engaging with the NSW government throughout the implementation process as a place-based service provider and strong advocate for the Mallee region.”

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Media enquiries

Mieka Symes | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966 M: 0439 850 638

E: misymes@malleefamilycare.com.au