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For immediate release

## Greater Support for Charities to Make Local's Lives Better

Families and communities in NSW and South East Queensland will benefit from new programs being funded from the inaugural funding round of the newly established Greater Charitable Foundation.

The Foundation has today announced the allocation of more than \$2 million worth of funding for a series of projects and programs being run across eight charitable partners. Funding in 2012 amounts to \$950,000 but most projects have a three year focus.

The programs include:

- the introduction of Starlight Foundation programs in the NSW regional centres Gosford, Armidale, Tamworth, Maitland and Lismore as well as the Gold Coast
- a new KidzWish Foundation mobile speech pathology service for young kids in the Illawarra, a NSW first
- a pilot project by Hunter Institute of Mental Health to support the mental health of kids with chronic illness and their families
- a pilot program by Autism Spectrum Australia designed to provide comprehensive support services to families with a child newly-diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- the pilot of a new online service by Inspire Foundation to improve the mental health of young men aged 14 to 25.

Other funding enables the continuation of Heal for Life Foundation programs to help people to heal from childhood abuse and trauma, Cerebral Palsy Alliance mentoring programs to help young people with cerebral palsy, as well as vital medical research into Stroke by HMRI. (See attached summary for details.)

Greater Charitable Foundation chairman John Kilpatrick said that the programs selected for funding achieve the Foundation's aim of making a lasting difference to the life outcomes for families and communities in the areas served by the Greater Building Society and beyond. Mr Kilpatrick said much of the funding was supporting new early intervention projects and the piloting of projects that can be rolled out to benefit even more people.

"The important common aspects of the programs are a focus not just on people affected by illness but also on their families as well as giving people tools, resources and skills to ensure ongoing success and improvement in their lives and the lives of others," Mr Kilpatrick said.

The Greater Charitable Foundation was established in mid 2011 and is funded by the profits of the Greater Building Society on behalf of members and staff.

Greater Building Society CEO Don Magin said an important feature of the Foundation's work and the programs selected is the opportunity for Greater staff to be involved in the work of the charity partners.

"A number of our staff already give their time and expertise to several of these charity partners and we are looking forward to more staff having an opportunity to benefit from supporting these fantastic organisations," Mr Magin said.

He said that the Greater's funding of the Foundation was in addition to its own sponsorship of events and other sporting and cultural organisations which currently amounts to more than \$500,000 annually.

The Foundation received more than 150 applications for funding. For more information about the Greater Charitable Foundation visit [www.greaterfoundation.org.au](http://www.greaterfoundation.org.au)

**Media information:** John Church, ChurchComm, on 0419 294 944. Backgrounder summarising the funded programs is attached.