

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**25 June 2018**

### **Government supporting more families with innovative Karitane Telehealth strategy** *Parenting support now offered across NSW with Karitane “virtual home visits”*

**NSW:** In an Australia-first for new parents and their families, not for profit and registered charity [Karitane](#) is launching Telehealth virtual home visits to families all across NSW with \$300,000 new financial support a year from the NSW Government.

“We are excited to offer another point of care to families across NSW to access parenting support that may not otherwise be available to them in their local community. We welcome the Government’s announcement of an additional \$157m for parenting support packages. We know the evidence is very clear for the benefits of early intervention and prevention in the early years of a child’s life. Karitane is delighted to offer the telehealth virtual home visiting service to all families across NSW,” Karitane CEO Grainne O’Loughlin said.

This innovative service will allow child and family health nurses to provide consultations via a live web link to families across NSW without the need to leave their homes. These consultations are designed to support the struggles and concerns faced by many new parents, including the common challenges of sleep and settling, feeding, establishing routines, toddler behaviour and perinatal depression and anxiety. In NSW 8 out of 10 mums with children 5 years and under described a need for early infant and child support to assist with these challenges, but less than 30 per cent seek assistance.

The Karitane virtual home visits allow health professionals to consult with families in a timely, accessible and efficient model of care.

Telehealth virtual home visits allow Karitane to provide faster support to families on the waiting list. This may reduce the need for admission into a residential unit and will allow for continuing care with post stay follow ups. It also provides greater reach and accessibility of services to families in rural and regional NSW.

Karitane will continue to work collaboratively with the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) to roll out Telehealth in the coming weeks.

Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, said the District would match the NSW Government’s funding to support Karitane in provide the valuable new service to families in need of immediate help.

“The Telehealth virtual home visits will be a game changer for parents across NSW,” she said.

“To be able to access high quality, expert care in the comfort of their own home will be a relief for parents who cannot easily get a place in residential services. We are certain families in south western Sydney and across NSW will welcome this service with open arms.”

The Karitane Telehealth virtual home visits will ensure easier, faster, efficient access to parenting support for families across NSW.

- ENDS -

**For further information, interviews or images please contact:**

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**About Karitane**

Karitane has been supporting parents since 1923 offering a range of education, prevention and early intervention with families with children 0-5 years of age. Karitane’s purpose is to provide evidence based services and programs to support, inform and educate families throughout the childhood years and to build the capacity of the child and family health and the perinatal mental health workforce. Karitane are leaders in parenting services, with a multidisciplinary team of health professionals dedicated to improve parenting competence, maternal depressive symptoms, maternal anxiety, parenting stress and child behaviours. More on [our services](#).