

# JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

FROM THE PAUL RAMSAY FOUNDATION, CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY CHILD HEALTH (MURDOCH CHILDREN'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE), SOCIAL VENTURES AUSTRALIA AND BAIN & COMPANY

December 2021

---

## RESTACKING THE ODDS TO GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST START

Australian communities will have valuable new tools, resources and practical data to help them improve the service system for young children, as a successful collaboration scales up to tackle inter-generational disadvantage.

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute (Centre for Community Child Health), Social Ventures Australia, Bain & Company, and the Paul Ramsay Foundation are pleased to announce the launch of the next phase of Restacking the Odds. This initiative aims to transform the capacity of service providers and communities to collect and use data on service availability, quality and participation for the children and family services sector.

Restacking the Odds focuses on five evidence-based platforms and programs in early childhood: antenatal care; sustained nurse home visiting (based on the universal child and family health nurses); early childhood education and care; parenting programs; and the early years of school. The initiative's object is to make these fundamental existing platforms available to all populations, especially those experiencing adversity, to create a cumulative effect that amplifies and sustains their benefit over the first 8 years of life. Today, too many of these strategies are delivered with low fidelity and variable quality, and too many children and families miss out.

Paul Ramsay Foundation Chief Portfolio Officer, Abhilash Mudaliar, said that a new grant of \$6.7 million from the Foundation would support the continuing work of Restacking the Odds, which "will focus on improving quality and access to services that we know are critical to early childhood development".

This new phase builds on the progress and lessons from the first phase of work, which was co-funded by the Foundation in 2017 with Eureka Benevolent Foundation and the Department of Social Services. It aims to embed the use of the Restacking lead indicators at the scale needed to accelerate system level change and make a real difference to children experiencing disadvantage across Australia. The work will also expand into new communities across Australia and include a rigorous evaluation process.

Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Director of the Centre for Community Child Health at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, said "Restacking the Odds will work to support service providers and communities to embed practical and evidence-based lead indicators that can be used and re-used to deliver an equitable early childhood service system in Australia, leading to better outcomes for children".

Social Ventures Australia CEO Suzie Riddell said "Early childhood is a critical time for interventions that can deliver lifelong impact for education, employment, and health. Delivering high quality and accessible services for children and their family at this stage sets them on the best pathway into school and can make a tremendous difference in terms of breaking cycles of disadvantage."

Bain & Company Senior Partner Chris Harrop explained that "The new phase of the project will help communities and service providers make better decisions about how to allocate their attention and resources to best help the children they support."

Leading the day-to-day operations of the initiative will be Olivia Hilton, who has recently been appointed as General Manager. Olivia brings more than 15 years of non-profit executive experience and will start in the role in February 2022.

### **About the Paul Ramsay Foundation**

The late Paul Ramsay AO established the Paul Ramsay Foundation in 2006 and, after his death in 2014, left the majority of his estate to continue his philanthropy for generations to come.

The Foundation seeks to identify and partner with individuals, communities and organisations working to break cycles of disadvantage and create an Australia where people can realise their potential.

**Media Contact:** Pia Akerman, 0412 346 746