**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**(Insert your home town) campaigner raising awareness of Changing Places toilets by (insert what you are doing here)**

A campaigner from (insert your home town) will be (insert brief explanation on what you will be doing here – for example: doing a tour of all Changing Places toilets in the North West or setting up a Changing Places toilet on Brighton Beach) in a bid to secure better disabled toilet facilities.

The event is one of a number of activities taking place to mark Changing Places Awareness Day. This takes place on 19 July every year, and highlights the importance of fully-accessible Changing Places toilets, which are needed by more than a quarter of a million people in the UK with severe disabilities.

(Insert your name), (insert your age), will (insert more detail here on your event – for example: join other campaigners on the beach and encourage members of the public to visit the pop-up facility and take selfies) on (insert date of your event).

(You could include some personal information here – for example, if a family member needs Changing Places toilets you could say: Olivia’s 10-year-old son, Charlie, has the condition Duchenne muscular dystrophy, and is among a quarter of a million people who needs a Changing Places toilet. But often, there are no facilities available, which means Olivia has to change Charlie on the floor.)

**(Insert your name) said:**“(Insert a quote here from yourself. For example: “If there aren’t any Changing Places toilets available, why should we cut our day short, or change Charlie on a dirty floor? Having more Changing Places would give Charlie much more independence, and allow us to enjoy more days out as a family. I’m launching this petition to raise awareness of Changing Places toilets, with the hope that one day every disabled person can enjoy a day out without having to worry).”

The Changing Places UK – co-chaired by Muscular Dystrophy UK – has campaigned for more than a decade for fully-accessible toilets for people with severe disabilities, who need extra equipment and space to use toilets safely and with dignity. More than 2,400 Changing Places facilities are now registered across the UK, but many areas still lack adequate provision.

**Karen Hoe, Changing Places Manager, said:**“A lack of Changing Places is no laughing matter for the quarter of a million people who need them to use the toilet safely and with dignity. Without enough Changing Places toilets, many people cut trips short, don’t leave their homes, or even consider options as extreme as surgery.

“We’re grateful to campaigners like {insert your name} for highlighting the importance of these fully accessible toilets this Changing Places Awareness Day, and we’ll continue to work together to ensure society is more inclusive.”

**ENDS**

For more information, please contact (insert your name here) on (insert your contact details here).

**Notes to editors:

About Changing Places**1.Changing Places UK have been leading the campaign for fully accessible toilets for over a decade, alongside PAMIS, which leads activity in Scotland.

2. A Changing Places toilet is a fully accessible toilet with the following additional equipment: a height-adjustable changing bench, an overhead track or mobile hoist; a peninsular toilet, privacy screen and enough space for up to two carers as detailed in British Standard BS8300: 2009. These toilets should be provided in addition to standard accessible toilets.

3. Research highlights that 230,000 people in the UK need assistance to toilet and/or change continence pads. Users include people with severe and multiple learning disabilities and people with a range of other disabilities including Cerebral Palsy, Motor Neurone disease, Multiple Sclerosis, stroke, some older people and other specific disabilities. Our estimation of up to a quarter of a million users will increase in the future. For some groups the prevalence of individuals will increase, e.g. people with intellectual disabilities and people of advanced age, increasing the need for and relevance of Changing Places toilets.

4. Changing Places UK comprises Muscular Dystrophy UK (co-chair), PAMIS, Centre for Accessible Environments, the Scottish Government and founding member and advisor/campaigner Martin Jackaman. The Changing Places campaign supports the rights of people with severe and multiple learning disabilities, and/or other physical disabilities, to access their community. Without Changing Places toilets, carers are forced to change their loved ones on toilet floors, or have to stay at home. For information and advice on changing places facilities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland email, changingplaces@musculardystrophyuk.org; for Scotland email: pamischangingplaces@dundee.ac.uk

**About Muscular Dystrophy UK**

Muscular Dystrophy UK is the charity for 70,000 children and adults living with muscle-wasting conditions. We provide vital information, advice and support to help people live as independently as possible. We accelerate progress in research and drive the campaign for access to emerging treatments.