



Media Statement from Australia's Disability Representative Organisations regarding Government Response to Disability Royal Commission today Wednesday 31 July

Government response to violence against people with disability deeply disappointing

List of spokespeople available for media interviews across Australia today is below

Today's Federal, State and Territory government response to our four-and-a-half-year Disability Royal Commission is deeply disappointing and fails to respond to the scale of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability.

National disability representative organisations have expressed significant concern that only 13 recommendations of 222 have been fully accepted, and that after nine months, so many recommendations remain still to be resolved across different levels of government.

We call on all levels of government to urgently act on the 222 recommendations including provide clear timelines within the next six months on all recommendations accepted in principle and embed disability leadership through establishing a Disability Reform Implementation Council. This should be led by a diverse group of people with disability and our representative organisations, ensuring we are setting the pace and directly engaged in the Council's outcomes.

Many recommendations directly impact the lives of First Nations people with disability. It is critical that implementation of any and all recommendations adhere to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, embedding the Priority Reforms and prioritising the most systematically excluded.

The Disability Royal Commission, which ran from 2019 to 2023, heard from people with disability, their families, supporters, kin, advocates and representative organisations about how many of us have been hurt and harmed at school, at work, in hospital, in prison, in public, and in disability services.

The stories that people with disability told filled three full volumes of the Disability Royal Commission final report, showing the scale of abuse against us. The Royal Commission made 222 recommendations across all levels of government, but also to schools, disability providers, health care, police, prisons, employers and more.

This was a once-in-a-lifetime examination of the scale of violence so many people with disability experience and deserves and demands a response of the same scale.

The Royal Commission found that ‘across all age groups, a greater proportion of people with disability experience violence than people without disability. People with disability also experience violence more frequently.’ Women with disability and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability have disproportionate experiences of violence, and need adequate responses.

Key recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission, about how to stop the violence that so many people with disability are subjected to, included national coordination, reform of disability service providers, changes to the law, increased access to support and leadership of people with disability in driving these changes. There is little concrete commitment or funding for any of these areas.

We welcome the commitment to the reform of the Disability Discrimination Act, and funding increase for advocacy organisations.

People with disability have asked for better legal protection of the rights of people with disability by translating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). One of the most important reforms that is needed to safeguard people with disability against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation is the establishment of a federal Human Rights Act, which our organisations support. Disappointingly, this recommendation has not been fully accepted.

National Disability Representative Organisations will provide more detailed analysis as we work through the 300-page response report.

THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY:

- Australian Autism Alliance (AAA)
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
- Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)
- Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA)
- Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)
- Down Syndrome Australia (DSA)
- First Peoples Disability Network Australia (FPDN)
- Inclusion Australia (IA)
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)
- People with Disability Australia (PWDA)

- Physical Disability Australia (PDA)
- Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)

SPOKESPERSON INTERVIEWEES AVAILABLE:

- Marayke Jonkers, President - People with Disability Australia (Brisbane QLD)
- Darryl Steff, CEO - Down Syndrome Australia (Brisbane QLD)
- Jeff Smith, CEO - Disability Advocacy Network Australia (Sydney NSW)
- Jenny Karavolos, Co-chair - Australian Autism Alliance (Adelaide SA)
- Ross Joyce, CEO - Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (Melbourne VIC)
- Skye Kakoschke-Moore, CEO - Children and Young People with Disability Australia (Adelaide SA)
- Damian Griffis, CEO - First Peoples Disability Network (Sydney NSW)
- Catherine McAlpine, CEO - Inclusion Australia (Melbourne VIC)
- Simon Burchill, Executive Officer - Physical Disabilities Australia (Brisbane QLD)
- Sophie Cusworth, Acting CEO - Women With Disabilities Australia (Melbourne VIC).

MEDIA CONTACT:

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