

## **National Disability and Carers Advisory Council Communiqué 3 May 2017**

Melbourne hosted the second National Disability and Carers Advisory Council (the Council) meeting on Wednesday 3 May 2017. The meeting focused on developing its initial 12-month activity plan, and was co-chaired by Assistant Minister, the Hon Jane Prentice MP and Ms Keran Howe.

The Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Mr Alastair McEwin, attended the meeting and was announced as an ex-officio member. He provided additional insights on the issues confronting people with disability such as employment, education, housing, the criminal justice system, violence, and the NDIS following his consultations across Australia. Commissioner McEwin discussed the unacceptable level of violence and abuse perpetrated against people with disability.

[The National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020](#) (the Strategy) was developed in partnership with State, Territory and Local Governments, and endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2011. It provides a ten year national policy framework to guide government activity across a number of policy action areas.

The work of the Council will support the Strategy's second implementation plan, *Driving Action 2015-2018*. Three working groups were established to focus on providing advice on: reinvigoration of the Strategy; greater employment of people with disability; and enhanced supports and services for carers.

The Council acknowledged that all governments are committed to refocusing efforts on the Strategy to ensure that all jurisdictions fulfil their important obligations through mainstream service systems to the 4.3 million Australians with a disability and 2.7 million carers. While the NDIS represents a significant step forward for many people with disability, the Strategy remains the key to achieving improvements in access to mainstream services for the 3.8 million Australians with disability who will not be eligible for NDIS supports.

[Membership of the Council](#) comprises leaders who have lived experience as people with disability and carers for people with disability, as well as business and non-government representatives with a focus on supporting people with disability.

The Council will consult with States and Territories and report regularly to the Disability Reform Council (DRC) which includes as its members, Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers and Treasurers.

The Council agreed to focus on priority activities to be achieved over the next year. These include actions by the working groups to:

- Improve engagement with the business community and employers, with a particular focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and regional and remote areas.
- Develop strategies to assist the transition from education to work for people with disability.
- Promote success stories, especially by engaging champions of change and the lived experience of people with disability.
- Enhance the services and supports for carers.
- Examine best practice and promote these initiatives across jurisdictions, consistent with the eight principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Identify improvements to the national measurement and reporting of achievements under the Strategy.
- Make recommendations about strategies to improve advocacy for people with disability and the need for all governments to support advocacy services.
- Identify regulation and red tape reforms.

Reforms to improve services under the Strategy include a focus on the many intersections between disability support and other non-NDIS services such as health, education, and justice.

There is great enthusiasm to advance this work and members will draw on their networks and community connections to engage and consult more widely on the work they are taking forward. The Working Groups will report bi-monthly to the Council on their progress of these objectives.

The Council received an update on Disability Employment Services Reform, the Integrated Plan for Carer Support Services, and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework. Members also discussed improvements that could be made to reduce the regulatory burden on the sector.

More information about the Council can be found [here](#).

Further details on the Working Groups of the Council are located in the First Council meeting [Communiqué of 14 December 2016](#).