



# Counselling and advocacy support

For people affected by violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation or engaging with the Disability Royal Commission

# Communication toolkit

Last updated 8 June 2021

*Support is here for you.*

**NDAP**  
National Disability  
Advocacy Program

 **blue knot**  
foundation  
National Centre of Excellence  
for Complex Trauma

  
Australian Government

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## Introduction

The Australian Government is funding counselling and advocacy support services for:

- people with disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- anyone who is engaging with or affected by the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability ('the Disability Royal Commission').

These services are free, independent and confidential.

Anyone who wishes to access these supports does not need to make a submission or have any prior involvement with the Disability Royal Commission.

Advocacy and support services are available to a wide range of people including, but not limited to, women with disability, children with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community.

As a key touchpoint for people with disability and their family members, friends and carers, we encourage you to spread the word about these support services to ensure people get the support they need.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has developed this communication toolkit to provide you with a suite of materials to help get the message out.

We are continuing to explore new ways to raise awareness of these support services, and we will provide you with updates as they become available.

## Disability Royal Commission

On 5 April 2019, the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP and former Minister for Families and Social Services, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, announced the establishment of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission).

In Australia, royal commissions are the highest form of inquiry on matters of public importance.

The Disability Royal Commission wants to hear from the Australian community about experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability.

People can tell the Disability Royal Commission about their experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation by phone, in writing, or by making an audio or video recording.

The Disability Royal Commission will run until September 2023.

For information about the work of the Disability Royal Commission call 1800 517 199 or visit [disability.royalcommission.gov.au](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au).

## Counselling support

The National Counselling and Referral Service, delivered by Blue Knot Foundation, provides free, independent and confidential counselling to support people with disability, family members, carers, advocates and workers who have experienced or witnessed violence, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Blue Knot Foundation are specialists in phone counselling and complex trauma. They will provide short to medium-term, trauma-informed counselling over the telephone, or online (through webchat) or video conference.

There are also a number of additional organisations across Australia funded to deliver more in-depth counselling services including in-person, medium-term, trauma-informed counselling to help those who may have complex needs.

The National Counselling and Referral Service may refer people to these organisations where needed or people can contact these organisations directly.

All counselling providers are listed on pages 22–24 of this toolkit or you can visit the DSS website to find [support services in your area](#).

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** (9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays).

People who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact the service through the National Relay Service (NRS) on **133 677**.

People who require support in another language can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) free of charge by:

- calling the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** and asking for an interpreter; or
- calling TIS National on **131 450** and asking to be connected to the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468**.

Visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) for more information.

**Any person currently experiencing any form of violence or abuse, or who is concerned for their or someone else's safety, should call 000 immediately.**

## Advocacy support

After the Disability Royal Commission was established, 50 National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) providers across Australia received additional funding to provide independent advocacy support for people with disability, or family members or carers acting on their behalf, who may have difficulty in communicating or understanding the process.

An advocate can help a person with disability to:

- understand how to tell their story to the Disability Royal Commission
- work out problems or avoid discriminatory issues
- find communication supports such as interpreters
- access supports such as legal or financial services related to the Disability Royal Commission.

The Australian Government recognises the need to fund disability representative organisations for systemic advocacy, which seeks to remove barriers and address discrimination to ensure the rights of people with disability. For that reason, we are also funding seven disability representative organisations to:

- Develop submissions and prepare case studies for the Disability Royal Commission.
- Support members, both organisational and individual, to understand and engage with the Disability Royal Commission, including workshops and forums to reach vulnerable individuals and groups.
- Engage with hard to reach individuals and groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Advocacy providers are listed on pages 22–24 of this toolkit or you can visit the DSS website to find [support services in your area](#).

People can contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** and ask to be referred to an advocate near them. For more information, visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support).

## Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability

Counselling and advocacy providers are funded to provide a range of independent, culturally appropriate counselling services to help those who may have complex needs and require more in-depth support, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability and their families.

In some areas of Western Australia, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland, counselling support is delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Up to eight Indigenous Community Advocates will soon be employed to increase access to culturally appropriate support and information in identified communities.

The Australian Government has funded the First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) to help build the capability of support providers to strengthen their understanding, skills and capacity to deliver culturally appropriate supports.

FPDN are developing a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources about the support services available, and working separately with the Disability Royal Commission itself on producing culturally appropriate information and videos about the process for sharing your story. More information is available at <https://fpdn.org.au>.

FPDN, along with the Department of Social Services and other partners, are also working to build pathways and connections with disability stakeholders and providers across Australia to find innovative ways to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and communities find and access the support they need.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service for counselling support, or ask them to connect you to a counsellor or advocate near you. Contact details are on page 5.

Counsellors and advocates can arrange translations and interpreting for people who need help in another language.

Counselling and advocacy providers are listed on pages 22–24 of this toolkit or you can visit the DSS website to find [support services in your area](#).

Visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) for more information.

## Legal and financial support

The Australian Government is funding free legal support and financial assistance for people who are engaging with the Disability Royal Commission.

Your Story Disability Legal Support is a free, national legal service. It provides information and legal advice to people about safely sharing their story with the Disability Royal Commission.

Your Story is available to people with disability, their families and carers, supporters and advocates.

Your Story does not provide legal advice to organisations e.g. disability service providers, non-government organisations and residential facilities.

Your Story for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is delivered by Legal Aid Commissions and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services in each state and territory (except Queensland where it is delivered by the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service).

To contact Your Story Disability Legal Support:

- Call **1800 77 1800** (9am to 5pm AEST Monday to Friday)
- Visit [www.yourstorydisabilitylegal.org.au](http://www.yourstorydisabilitylegal.org.au)

Financial assistance is also available for individuals and entities to help meet the costs of legal representation and disbursements associated with engaging with the Disability Royal Commission.

To contact the Attorney-General's Department Financial Assistance Section:

- Call **1800 117 995** (9am to 5pm AEST Monday to Friday).
- People who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can call the National Relay Service and give **02 6141 4770** as the number to call.
- Visit the [Attorney-General's Department website](#) for more information.

## Social media and website images

We encourage any provider or organisation to download images from [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) to help spread the word about support services.

All people with disability portrayed in these images have provided their fully informed consent for this purpose.



# Accessible resources

We encourage any provider or organisation to download the following resources from [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) to help spread the word about support services.

These products were produced by Indigenous-owned creative company Carbon Creative and tested with people with disability through an independent research company.

They are WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessible and available in a range of formats.

### A3/A4 posters

**Do you need support for the Disability Royal Commission?**

The Disability Royal Commission is looking at ways to prevent people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Free and independent support is now available to help you.**

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 from 9am to 6pm weekdays or 9am to 5pm weekends and public holidays or visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

### A4 Poster – Indigenous

**Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who needs support for the Disability Royal Commission?**

The Disability Royal Commission is up and running until 2022. It's looking at ways to prevent people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Free and independent support is available to help you.**

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service 1800 421 468, 9am to 6pm weekdays or 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays.

### Easy Read fact sheets

**Do you need support?**

Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who needs support for the Disability Royal Commission?

**Free and independent support is available to help you.**

**Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?**

If this has happened to you, you may need emotional support or help to protect your rights. Free, independent and confidential support is available to help you.

**Advocacy support**  
An advocate can help you to work out your problems and protect your rights.

**Emotional support**  
A counsellor can support you to talk about your feelings and emotions in a safe and private way.

This support is also available for people who are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468 from 9am to 6pm weekdays or 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays or visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

**Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?**

You have the right to speak up. Independent, culturally appropriate support is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families. Support is free, independent and confidential.

**Advocacy support**  
An advocate can help you to work out your problems and protect your rights.

**Emotional support**  
A counsellor can help you and your family talk about your feelings in a safe and private way.

This support is also available for people who are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468 for counselling support, or ask to be connected to a counsellor or advocate near you. It is available from 9am to 6pm weekdays, and from 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays. Support in some areas is provided by Indigenous-run organisations.

For a full list of support services visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

**Counselling and advocacy support**

For people with disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation

**Free and independent support is available to help you.**

## Translated fact sheets

العربية - ARABIC

### هل أنت بحاجة إلى دعم اللجنة الملكية المعنية بذوي الإعاقة؟



**الدعم الاستشاري من مؤسسة بلو توت**  
 يتم توفير الدعم الاستشاري للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وأعضاء أسرهم وشركائهم أو أفراد أسرهم من قبل اللجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة.

**الجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة**  
 اللجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة مستقلة عن اللجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة. تم إنشاؤها في عام 2022. تتمثل في توفير دعوى قضائية للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة من قبل اللجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة. وتتمثل في تقديم المشورة والدعم للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة والتمثيل عنهم في المحاكم.

**الدعم الاستشاري من مؤسسة بلو توت**  
 يتم توفير الدعم الاستشاري للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة وأعضاء أسرهم وشركائهم أو أفراد أسرهم من قبل اللجنة المعنية بذوي الإعاقة.

• حل مشاكلهم وصعوباتهم في بيئة آمنة وسرية  
 • حل مشاكلهم في مكانهم  
 • إرشادهم بشأن الدعم المالي الذي يمكنهم من الحصول عليه

تصل على 1800 421 468 أو زورنا على الموقع [des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)  
 إذا كنت بحاجة إلى دعم أو استشارة أو كنت تشعر بالقلق بشأن صحتك العقلية، فالتصديق على رقم 000.

### 您有残障吗？是否有人曾经伤害过您、以恶劣的方式对待您或者利用您？



如果您遇到这些情况，您可能需要情感上的支持或帮助来保护自己的权利。我们可以为您提供免费咨询，独立和保密的支持。

**情感上的支持**  
 心理咨询师可以为残障人士、其家人和护理人员提供帮助。  
 心理咨询师可以帮您：  
 • 在安全保密的环境下讨论您的感受和情绪  
 • 解决您的问题或困扰  
 • 寻求其他对您有用的帮助。

**代言支持服务**  
 代言人可以代表残障人士、其家人和护理人员，为您发声。  
 代言人可以帮您：  
 • 保护自己的权利  
 • 解决您的问题  
 • 寻求其他对您有用的帮助。

正在考虑参与残障人士事务委员会的人士也可以寻求帮助及指导。您可以致电或发邮件给委员会寻求帮助。

**我们随时都可以帮您。**

请联系皇家咨询与福利服务，电话 1800 421 468 或 02 6146 1468 或访问 [des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)。  
 如果您当前正遭受任何形式的暴力或虐待，请担心自身安全，请拨打 000 报警。

Chinese (Simplified) - 简体中文

## DL Brochures

### Do you need support for the Disability Royal Commission?



Support is here for you.

National Disability Advocacy Program

### Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?

If this has happened to you, you may need emotional support or help to protect your rights. Free, independent and confidential support is available to help you.



Support is here for you.

NDAP National Disability Advocacy Program

## A4 factsheets

### Do you need support for the Disability Royal Commission?



**Advocacy support from the National Disability Advocacy Program**  
 An advocate can support people with disability or family members or carers acting on their behalf to help protect their rights and understand how to engage with the Disability Royal Commission.

**How to find supports**  
 Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service for counselling support or to be referred to another support service.  
 Call 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468 9am to 5pm weekdays or 9am to 5pm weekends ESDT.  
 You can also find contact details for support services on our website at [des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

An advocate will be able to help you to understand how to tell your story, work out problems, find communication supports, or access other supports such as legal or financial services. Advocates don't make decisions for you or tell you what to do.

Support is here for you.

NDAP National Disability Advocacy Program

blue knol National Disability Advocacy Program

Australian Government

## DL Brochures - Indigenous

### Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who needs support for the Disability Royal Commission?



Support is here for you.

Australian Government

### Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?

Independent, culturally appropriate support is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families.



Support is here for you.

Australian Government

### Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?



If this has happened to you, you may need emotional support or help to protect your rights. Free, independent and confidential support is available to help you.

**Emotional support**  
 Counselling support can help people with disability, their families and carers. A counsellor can support you to:  
 • discuss your feelings and emotions in a safe and confidential environment  
 • work out a problem or issue  
 • find other practical supports available to you.

**Advocacy support**  
 Advocacy can help people with disability, their family members or carers acting on their behalf. An advocate can help you to:  
 • protect your rights  
 • work out problems  
 • find communication supports  
 • access other supports such as legal or financial services.

This support is also available for people who are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission. You can take your time to think about getting support. It's here for you when you are ready.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468 or visit [des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://des.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)  
 If you are currently experiencing any form of violence or abuse, or are concerned for your safety, call the police on 000.

## A4 factsheets – Indigenous

**Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who needs support for the Disability Royal Commission?**



**The Disability Royal Commission**  
The Disability Royal Commission is up and running until 2022. It's looking at ways to prevent people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Free counselling support**  
You and your family can talk to a free, independent counsellor who can help with your emotional wellbeing. A counsellor can support you to:

- talk about your feelings in a safe and private way
- work out a problem or issue
- make choices about telling your story to the Disability Royal Commission
- find other practical help available to you.

**Call 1800 421 468, 9am to 5pm weekdays or 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays. If you are worried about your safety right now, call 000.**  
For a full list of support services visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

**Do you have disability? Has someone ever hurt you, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?**



**Emotional support**  
You and your family can connect with a counsellor to:

- discuss your feelings and emotions in a safe and private way
- work out a problem or issue
- find other practical supports available to you.

**Advocacy support**  
You and your family can connect with an advocate to help you to:

- protect your rights
- work out problems
- find communication supports
- access other supports such as legal or financial services.

This support is also available for people who are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission. You can take your time to think about getting support. **It's here for you when you are ready.**

**Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 03 9346 5488 or visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support).**  
**If you are worried about your safety right now, call 000.**

## Auslan videos



## Counselling and Advocacy videos



## Braille with Large Print Overlay

**Do you need support for the Disability Royal Commission?**

**The Disability Royal Commission**  
The Disability Royal Commission will run for three years until 2022. It will look at ways to prevent people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Free and independent support is now available to help you. These supports are funded by the Australian Government.

**Counselling support from Blue Knot Foundation**  
Counselling support is for people with disability, their families and carers, and anyone affected by the Disability Royal Commission.  
Call the National Counselling and

For more details about products please email [DRCsupports@dss.gov.au](mailto:DRCsupports@dss.gov.au)

## Social media content

You are welcome to use or adapt the content below for your own social media platforms to help spread the word about supports available for people with disability experiencing violence, abuse or neglect or exploitation or engaging with the Disability Royal Commission.

### For people with disability



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Free and independent emotional support is available for people with disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation, and their families and carers. This support is also available for people who are engaging with or considering taking part in the Disability Royal Commission. A counsellor will provide trauma-informed support in a safe space, and work out a problem or issue.

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468. It's open 9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and public holidays. Visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) for information, including Auslan and Easy Read resources. #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Do you have a disability? Has someone hurt you physically, treated you badly or taken advantage of you? Support is available – you are not alone.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468. It's open 9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and public holidays. For more information, including Auslan and Easy Read resources, visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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If you are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission, you might need advocacy support. An advocate can help you tell your story and access other supports. It's free, independent and confidential.

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 to be referred to an advocate or visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Free, independent, confidential emotional support is available for people with disability affected by violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation. Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 for support. Find out more at [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport

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Do you have disability? Has someone hurt you, treated you badly, or taken advantage of you? Support is available – you are not alone. Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468. It's free, independent and confidential. #DisabilityRCsupport

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An advocate can help you tell your story to the @DRC\_AU. Find a free and independent advocate calling **1800 421 468** and asking for a referral, or visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) . #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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## People with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds



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Do you have a disability? Has someone hurt you physically, treated you badly or taken advantage of you? You might need support from a counsellor. If you would like to speak to a counsellor in a language other than English, you can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) free of charge.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** and ask for an interpreter. A counsellor can support you, with the help of an interpreter, to talk about your feelings and emotions in a safe space, and work out a problem or issue. For more information, including translated resources, visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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If you are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission, you might need support. A counsellor can support you to talk about your feelings and emotions in a safe space. Support is free, independent and confidential.

To speak to a counsellor in a language other than English, you can contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** and ask for an interpreter. It's available from 9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays. For more information, including translated resources, visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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If you are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission, you might need support. An advocate can help you tell your story and access other supports. If you would like to speak to an advocate in a language other than English you can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) free of charge.

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 to be referred to an advocate or visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support). #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability**



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Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person with disability? Has someone hurt you physically, treated you badly or taken advantage of you? Free, culturally appropriate counselling support is available for you and your family to talk about your feelings in a safe and private way. You can get support by phone, online or in person across Australia. Support in some areas is provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 for counselling support, or ask them to connect you to a counsellor near you. If you are worried about your safety right now, call 000. Counsellors can arrange translations and interpreting for people who need help in another language. For a full list of support services visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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If you are thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission, you might need support from a counsellor or advocate. Free counselling support is available for you and your family to talk about your feelings in a safe and private way. Free advocacy support to help you to tell your story, work out problems, and protect your rights. You can get support by phone, online or in person across Australia. Support in some areas is provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 for counselling support, or ask them to connect you to a counsellor near you. If you are worried about your safety right now, call 000. Counsellors can arrange translations and interpreting for people who need help in another language. For a full list of support services visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person with disability? Has someone hurt you physically, treated you badly or taken advantage of you? Culturally appropriate counselling services are now available. Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 for counselling support or ask to be referred to a counselling service near you. It's free, independent and private. #DisabilityRCsupport

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Thinking about taking part in the @DRC\_AU? You might need support from a counsellor or an advocate. Support in some areas is provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Call **1800 421 468** and ask to be referred to a support service near you. It's free, independent and private. #DisabilityRCsupport

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## Family, friends, carers and support workers



Are you supporting a friend or family member with disability who has been affected by violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation? You might need support from a counsellor. The National Counselling and Referral Service offers emotional support for people with disability, their families and carers.

Call 1800 421 468 for free, independent and confidential support. For more information visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Do you care for someone with disability? Are you, or is someone you know, thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission? You might need support from a counsellor. The National Counselling and Referral Service offers emotional support for people with disability, their families and carers.

Call 1800 421 468 for free, independent and confidential support. For more information visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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If you are affected by news stories about people with disability experiencing violence or abuse, emotional support is available. Free and independent counselling support is available from the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 (9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays). You can also visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Do you work with someone with disability who has been affected by violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation? You might need support from a counsellor. The National Counselling and Referral Service offers emotional support for people with disability, their families and carers and support workers too. You are not alone. Call 1800 421 468 for free, independent and confidential support. For more information visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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Are you supporting a friend or family member with disability who has been affected by violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation? The National Counselling and Referral Service offers emotional support for people with disability, their families and carers. Call 1800 421 468. It's free, independent and confidential. #DisabilityRCsupport

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Are you, or is someone you know, thinking about taking part in the Disability Royal Commission? You might need support from a counsellor. The National Counselling and Referral Service offers emotional support for people with disability, their families and carers. Call 1800 421 468 or visit [dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](https://dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) #DisabilityRCsupport #DisabilityRC

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## Newsletter or website content

Use the text below on your own websites or in your newsletters to help spread the word about supports available for people with disability experiencing violence, abuse or neglect or exploitation or engaging with the Disability Royal Commission.

### Do you need support for the Disability Royal Commission?

The Australian Government is funding counselling and advocacy support services for people with disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and anyone who is engaging with or affected by the Disability Royal Commission. These services are free, independent and confidential.

Anyone who wishes to access these supports does not need to make a submission or have any prior involvement with the Disability Royal Commission.

#### **Counselling support**

Do you have a disability? Has someone hurt you physically, treated you badly or taken advantage of you?

A counsellor will support you to talk about your feelings and emotions in a safe space, and work out a problem or issue. A counsellor can help you talk about your feelings if something bad has happened to you or if someone has hurt you. They can also help you if you are thinking about telling your story to the Disability Royal Commission.

Whatever you decide to share with the counsellor is private – it is not shared with anyone else. You do not have to give your name if you don't want to.

Contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468** or **02 6146 1468**. It's open 9am to 6pm weekdays, and 9am to 5pm weekends and national public holidays.

#### **Advocacy support**

You or a family member or carers acting on your behalf may need an advocate to help you communicate or understand how to engage with the Disability Royal Commission.

An advocate can help you to tell your story and find the right supports to help you with communication or legal issues.

You can call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 to be referred to an advocate or visit [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support)

### **Accessible supports**

To get counselling support or to find an advocate, call the National Counselling and Referral Service on **1800 421 468**.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can contact the service through the National Relay Service (NRS) on 133 677.

If you find it challenging to use the telephone, you can request a video conference. To arrange this, send an email to [ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au](mailto:ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au)

Information about the support services are available in a range of accessible formats including Easy Read and Auslan at [www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-royal-commission-support) You can request information about the support services in large print with Braille overlay by emailing [DRCSupports@dss.gov.au](mailto:DRCSupports@dss.gov.au) with your name and address.

### **Support in other languages**

If you need support in a language other than English, the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) can help you. It is free.

Call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 and ask for an interpreter. The counsellor will make the arrangements. Or, call TIS on 131 450 and ask to be connected to the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468.

### **The Disability Royal Commission**

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) will run until 2023. For information about the work of the Disability Royal Commission, including attending public hearings or making a submission call 1800 517 199 or visit [disability.royalcommission.gov.au](http://disability.royalcommission.gov.au).

## Frequently asked questions

### **How are you ensuring services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are culturally appropriate?**

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are very diverse and require an innovative, and flexible approach to service delivery.

To support an innovative approach, the Department of Social Services is working with partners to build pathways and connections with disability stakeholders and providers across Australia to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and communities find and access the support they need. This approach includes:

- Funding a range of organisations, including Indigenous-run organisations, to cater to a diverse range of people across Australia including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families
- Employing up to eight Indigenous Community Advocates in identified communities to increase access to culturally appropriate support and information.
- Working with Indigenous organisations to provide culturally appropriate materials, translated or interpreter services where needed.
- Supporting providers to develop their own communication and tailored approaches to service provision to cater for local community considerations.

The First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) has been funded to help build the capability of support providers to strengthen their understanding, skills and capacity to deliver culturally appropriate supports. FPDN are developing a range of Indigenous resources about the support services available, and working separately with the Disability Royal Commission itself on producing culturally appropriate information and videos about the process for sharing your story. More information is available at <https://fpdn.org.au>.

### **Who is paying for the support services?**

The Australian Government is funding the National Counselling and Referral Service, the extension to the National Disability Advocacy Program and a range of in-person counselling services. This funding is being administered by the Department of Social Services.

The Australian Government is also funding legal assistance services for people participating in the Disability Royal Commission. This funding is being administered by the Attorney-General's Department.

### **Why were Blue Knot Foundation chosen to deliver counselling services?**

Blue Knot Foundation are specialists in phone counselling and complex trauma, and currently provide counselling and referral services for people engaging with the National Redress Scheme.

### **Who is eligible to access the counselling and advocacy support services?**

Counselling support is available for any person with disability who has experienced violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation and/or who is engaging with or affected by the Disability Royal Commission.

You do not need to make a submission or have any prior involvement with the Disability Royal Commission to access this support.

Independent advocacy support from the National Disability Advocacy Program is specifically for people with disability, or family members or carers acting on their behalf, who are thinking about engaging with the Disability Royal Commission and may have difficulty in communicating or understanding the process.

### **Have the resources available on your website been tested and developed in consultation with people with disability?**

The creative resources in this communication toolkit to promote counselling and advocacy support services were developed by Indigenous-owned company *Carbon Creative*. They were designed in close consultation with a diverse range of people with disability through an independent research company *Whereto*. Participants in this research included people representing a range of disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Department of Social Services also consulted widely with disability representative organisations on designing these products.

All final products are in fully accessible PDF and Word formats and compliant with WCAG 2.0 accessible web standards. Information about support services is available in various accessible formats including Easy Read, Auslan and other languages.

### **Why is the Department of Social Services promoting the support services and not the Disability Royal Commission?**

The organisations funded to deliver counselling and advocacy support services are funded through the Department of Social Services (the Department), which is independent from the Disability Royal Commission.

The Department is working with a range of stakeholders and organisations including the Disability Royal Commission to help raise awareness of available support services. The Attorney General's Department can provide further information on legal and financial support services available to people engaging with the Disability Royal Commission.

### **Does the National Counselling and Referral Service provide face-to-face counselling?**

The National Counselling and Referral Service is primarily a telephone and online service. The Australian Government has also funded additional organisations across Australia to deliver counselling services to help those who may have complex needs and require more in-depth support.

These organisations provide in-person, medium-term, trauma-informed counselling, as well as other methods of counselling such as by telephone or online support. Some of these organisations are Indigenous-run. The National Counselling and Referral Service will refer people to these counselling services on a case-by-case basis as required.

### **Are in-person counselling support services available now?**

In-person support is available now, however it does depend on coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions and the limitation of face-to-face meeting in different states and territories. You can contact the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468 to find a provider in your state or territory and find out what options are available to you right now.

### **Can people use counselling if they haven't decided to make a submission to the Disability Royal Commission?**

Yes. The National Counselling and Referral Service is a free, confidential and independent service for people with disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

It's also available for people who are engaging with, or are thinking about taking part in, the Disability Royal Commission; and people who feel affected by stories or media reports about the Disability Royal Commission.

You do not need to make a submission or have any prior involvement with the Disability Royal Commission to access this support.

## **If a person tells their story to the National Counselling and Referral Service, does that count as a submission to the Royal Commission?**

No. The National Counselling and Referral Service is run by Blue Knot Foundation and is independent from the Disability Royal Commission.

If a person speaks to a counsellor and they decide to make a submission, the National Counselling and Referral Service can refer them to an independent advocate for advocacy support or directly to the Disability Royal Commission.

## **What organisations are delivering counselling and advocacy support services?**

### **National**

Blue Knot Foundation provides national counselling support through the National Counselling and Referral Service. Blue Knot can also refer people to the counselling and advocacy providers listed below.

### **Systemic advocacy**

- Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)
- People with Disability Australia (PWDA)
- Women with Disability Australia (WWDA)
- First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN)<sup>†</sup>
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
- Inclusion Australia
- Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)

### **State and Territory providers**

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Advocacy (Individual)</b>	<b>Counselling</b>
ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ACT Disability Aged and Carer Advocacy Service*</li><li>• Advocacy for Inclusion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships Australia Canberra and Region</li></ul>
NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SCIA Advocacy Northern Rivers</li><li>• Disability Advocacy NSW</li><li>• Illawarra Advocacy</li><li>• Intellectual Disability Rights Service</li><li>• Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of New South Wales</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships Australia New South Wales</li><li>• Relationships Australia Canberra and Region (Coverage includes ACT,</li></ul>

State/Territory	Advocacy (Individual)	Counselling
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newell Advocacy*</li> <li>• Self Advocacy (Sydney)</li> <li>• Regional Disability Advocacy Service</li> <li>• Side By Side Advocacy</li> <li>• Sydney Region Aboriginal Corporation†</li> <li>• Family Advocacy</li> <li>• People with Disability Australia</li> </ul>	<p>Capital Region, Riverina, Murray)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interrelate Limited</li> </ul>
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Darwin Community Legal Service</li> <li>• Disability Advocacy Service</li> <li>• Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council**†</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships Australia Northern Territory</li> <li>• Danila Dilba Health Service Aboriginal Corporation†</li> </ul>
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia</li> <li>• Independent Advocacy in North Queensland</li> <li>• Mackay Advocacy</li> <li>• People with Disability Australia</li> <li>• Queensland Advocacy</li> <li>• Rights In Action</li> <li>• Speaking Up For You</li> <li>• TASC National</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micah Projects, including sub-contracting arrangements with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Link-Up QLD†</li> <li>○ Cape York/Gulf Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care Advisory Association Inc. †</li> <li>○ WWILD – Sexual Violence Prevention Association</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion</li> <li>• Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia</li> <li>• Disability Rights Advocacy Service</li> <li>• Independent Advocacy SA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships Australia South Australia</li> <li>• Nunkuwarrin Yunti†</li> </ul>
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy Tasmania</li> <li>• Speak Out Association of Tasmania</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships Australia Tasmania</li> </ul>
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation</li> <li>• Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities</li> <li>• Association of Employees with Disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships Australia Victoria</li> <li>• Drummond Street Services</li> </ul>

State/Territory	Advocacy (Individual)	Counselling
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colac Otway Region Advocacy Service</li> <li>• Disability Justice Australia</li> <li>• Gippsland Disability Advocacy</li> <li>• Grampians disAbility Advocacy Association*</li> <li>• Leadership Plus</li> <li>• Melbourne East Disability Advocacy</li> <li>• North East Citizen Advocacy</li> <li>• Rights Information and Advocacy Centre</li> <li>• Southern Disability Advocacy</li> <li>• Southwest Advocacy Association</li> <li>• Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council</li> <li>• Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service</li> <li>• Regional Disability Advocacy Service</li> </ul>	
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy WA</li> <li>• Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre</li> <li>• Midland Information, Debt &amp; Legal Advocacy Service</li> <li>• People With Disabilities (W.A.)</li> <li>• Sussex Street Community Law Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships Australia Western Australia</li> <li>• Yorgum Healing Services†</li> <li>• Kimberly Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation†</li> </ul>

*\*Organisations funded to employ Indigenous Community Advocates.*

*†Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations*