

DISABILITY REFORM MINISTERS' MEETING (DRMM)

Canberra – 9 September 2022

COMMUNIQUÉ

Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers met on 9 September 2022 at Parliament House in Canberra. The meeting was also attended by the newly appointed Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Ms Libby Coker MP. Ministers noted apologies from the Tasmanian Minister for Disability Services, the Hon Jo Palmer MLC. Mr Chris Edwards, Manager, Government Relations and Advocacy, Vision Australia, attended as a guest for part of the meeting.

Ministers paused for a minute's silence to acknowledge the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Ministers discussed:

- **NDIS Review:** Ministers discussed the NDIS Review Terms of Reference, following feedback provided by the disability community and sector.
- **Job and Skills Summit:** Ministers committed to ensuring people with disability will be at the centre of co-designing ways to improve opportunities and supports in employment, skills and meaningful careers following engagement through a number of employment roundtables and the Government's September Jobs and Skills Summit. Ministers received an update on recently announced outcomes from the Jobs and Skills Summit including the Visitor Economy Disability Pilot and establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Business Council of Australia.
- **Participant experience and planning pathways:** Ministers discussed key issues about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant experience, including access and planning. Ministers agreed to ask the NDIS Review to look for ways to improve the experience of NDIS participants.
- **Assistive Technology:** Ministers discussed issues raised by the disability community associated with Assistive Technology (AT) access and trends in emerging technology. Ministers agreed that the NDIA needs to make operational improvements to increase transparency and make faster decisions. Ministers agreed to continue to discuss ways to improve participant journey and experience, including in the context of the NDIS Review, and to the NDIA exploring whether and how to use scheme buying power for commonly purchased items and potentially trialling loan pool arrangements for some items taking account of State and Territory experiences with previous loan pools.
- **Home and Living Supports:** Ministers discussed issues raised by the disability community in relation to Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), Supported Independent Living (SIL) and home modifications. Ministers agreed that while issues around these supports will be considered as part of the NDIS Review, immediate actions to address known issues can begin such as the NDIA improving communication with participants and their families, and increase information to the market about unmet demand by region as well as look for ways to speed up approval processes for home modifications within Participant Service Guarantee timeframes to deliver better and quicker outcomes for participants.
- **Hospital Discharge:** Ministers noted progress against the NDIA's Hospital Discharge Operational Plan for increasing prompt discharge of NDIS participants from hospital and that the Agency will work to develop a new Hospital Discharge Reporting Framework to inform Ministers on progress to improve safe and timely discharge.
- **COVID-19:** Ministers noted ongoing work to strengthen COVID-19 disability responses and welcomed the continuing lift in 3rd and 4th dose rates for people with disability; reduction in infection rates of NDIS participants and workers; and action to explore a pathway for ventilation supports (air purifiers) for eligible NDIS participants.

- **Australia's Disability Strategy (Community Attitude) Survey: Australia's Disability Strategy Consultation Activities:** Ministers noted the progress on the delivery of the Australia's Disability Strategy Survey to measure change in attitudes towards people with disability and on developing disability confidence in key professionals education and training. Ministers also noted the development of the Guiding Principles and Guide to Involving People with Disability in Evaluation and agreed to promote involvement of people with disability in the related consultation activities.

Ministers agreed to meet again on 21 October 2022.