**Review of the National Disability Advocacy Framework - June 2015**

1. Do you believe the current Framework encompasses your vision of advocacy in the NDIS environment? If not, what changes are required?

* The current framework for disability advocacy has a place and value in the new NDIS environment particularly in light of the reduction of government involvement in direct service provision and the public’s perceptions that government services can provide additional levels of checks and balances.
* The Framework clearly articulates the key advocacy principles and concepts that underpin empowerment, equity and social justice for people with disability.
* The Advocacy Framework affirms the independent nature of advocacy and provides for objective and impartial support for an individual that may not necessarily be addressed by service providers or families.
* The Framework is effective however better funding of services is required as individuals with disability fully transition to the NDIS.

1. Are the [**principles**](#_Principles)of the Framework appropriate for guiding the delivery of advocacy for people with disability in a changing disability environment, including in the context of the NDIS? If not, what changes are required?

* The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes fundamental principles which should be inherent in all advocacy practice. Disability advocates should utilise the UNCRPD to promote, protect and enable people’s rights. The convention promotes self-determination, full and active social and economic participation which shares a synergy with advocacy and the NDIS.
* The principles should explicitly state that advocacy supports active and full economic and social participation consistent with stated outcomes. This helps ensure that advocacy also has a clear mandate about employment participation as well as other life domains.
* The implementation of the principles of systemic change and self-advocacy need to be clearly articulated in terms of the operational capacity of disability advocacy services. While an agency may be funded to provide individual advocacy, it is paramount that both principles be recognised in the accountability framework, particularly in terms of effectiveness and achievement of targets. For example a proportion of funding should be provided for advocacy development and self-advocacy training based on the patterns and incidence of individual issues being presented.

1. Are the[**outcomes**](#_Outcomes)of the Framework still relevant or should different ones be included? If so, what should be included?

* The Outcomes are all relevant and clearly stated.
* The statements about supported decision making are acknowledged as essential to independence and self-determination within the emerging NDIS environment and this support needs to be independent from other forms of service provision, and free from conflict of interest.
* The outcomes stating that people with disability are actively involved in all aspects of the development, delivery and evaluation of disability and broader government policies, programs and services that impact upon their lives, should be extended to recognise the role individuals will play under the NDIS in shaping community and commercially based services and their rights to use market forces as a consumer. Given that the government has less of a role to play in the provisions of services for people with Disability under the NDIS this needs to be explicitly stated in terms of full social and economic participation.

1. Are the [**outputs**](#_Outputs)of the Framework still relevant or should different outputs be included?

* Community education and raised awareness of disability issues and rights are welcomed outputs, but it also needs to be acknowledged that there is a need to resource relevant activities that effectively support these outcomes.

1. Does the Framework identify what is needed in the current and future disability environment? If not, what changes are required?

* More could be done to articulate advocacy strategies/frameworks that facilitate effective supported decisionmaking.
* Awareness of Disability Advocacy services and entitlements to utilise an advocate could be made more explicitly available to individuals. For example it should be a part of the initial engagement process through the NDIS.

1. Do you have any other comments, thoughts or ideas about the Framework?

* Advocacy is required now more than ever as, the sector transitions to the NDIS environment, particularly adults who do not have access to significant familial or social service supports.