**HEADWEST Brain Injury Association of WA Inc.**

**Response to NDAF paper:**

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

Headwest is supportive of a nationally consistent framework for advocacy which includes individual and systemic advocacy, common definitions and desired outcomes.

Headwest strongly believes in the rights of individuals, families and carers to have access to independent advocacy and this is particularly important in an environment of individualised funding under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Access to independent advocacy which is free from conflict of interest is included within the outcomes of the current National Disability Advocacy Framework, however independent advocacy needs to be embedded in the Framework and, therefore, needs to be embedded within the document.

**Are the 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?**

As mentioned above, the right of individuals to access independent advocacy, free from conflict of interest, needs to be embedded within the Framework and therefore must be included as a guiding principle for the provision of advocacy services for people with disability in Australia. In the changing disability environment, access to independent advocacy to support individuals to navigate the disability service systems is important and this is particularly important when individuals have issues with the service they are receiving.

The principles also need to be strengthened in regards to ensuring disability advocacy services are person-centred. While the principles refer to broad principles of person centred approaches and practices, it must be clear that people with disability are at the centre of any decisions regarding the services they require and the support they wish to receive.

**Other comments?**

There is a need for a clear understanding, across both government and community sectors, regarding disability advocacy funding outside of the NDIS and the Information, Linkage and Capacity (ILC) funding within the NDIS. This needs to be clarified and understood prior to the finalisation of the National Disability Advocacy Framework.