

# A new National Disability Strategy - Stage 2 consultations

Submission process-  
Position paper for development of the next  
national disability strategy

29 July 2020

## Introduction

This submission process will inform the next national disability strategy. There are 9 questions. The questions ask for your feedback on some ideas in a position paper, which has been jointly developed by all Australian governments. The position paper builds on the stage 1 consultations and other previous reviews. This process is part of stage 2 of consultations.

You can also provide a written submission.

## Background – Stage 1

During stage 1 (March – July 2019), more than 2,600 people did an online survey. They were people with disability their families and carers, and people in the disability and community sectors. More than 1,000 people also attended community workshops and discussions.

In December 2019, the report arising from the stage 1 consultations, Right to Opportunity: Consultation report to help shape the next national disability strategy, was released on the Department of Social Services website.

In stage 1, we asked about:

- **the barriers people with disability face**
- **what has improved, and what has not**
- **what is important for the next national disability strategy.**

## About the submission

Now, we are asking for your specific feedback on governments' proposals for the next Strategy, as set out in the position paper. The proposals include:

- **the vision, outcome areas and guiding principles for the new Strategy**
- **a stronger focus on improving community attitudes**
- **clearly describing roles and responsibilities of governments and the community**
- **regular public reporting that shows whether the key outcomes for people with disability are improving**
- **developing targeted action plans to drive better implementation**
- **how people with disability can be engaged in the delivery and monitoring of the next Strategy.**

The Department of Social Services will collect and analyse your answers and the results will inform development of the next national disability strategy for beyond 2020. Standard words on privacy. Individual responses are anonymous.



Governments acknowledge the challenges people with disability are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate the time taken to provide feedback on the positions outlined in the position paper.

### Support to help you complete the survey

You can get help to do this survey. You can:

- **Ask a friend, family member or support person to help you**
- **Call 1800 334 505 and someone from the Department of Social Services will help**
- **Call 1800 334 505 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required and someone from the Department of Social Services will help**
- **Email [disabilityreform@dss.gov.au](mailto:disabilityreform@dss.gov.au) with any questions or concerns.**

## About you

### Are you responding as an individual or as a representative of an organisation?

*\*If you are responding as an organisation your responses may be published and attributed to your organisation in public reporting.*

I'm responding as an individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm representing an organisation (please provide the name of your organisation)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Which of the following statements best describes you? Please select all that apply.

I'm a person with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a parent / guardian or other family member of a person with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a carer of a person with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a support worker / work directly with people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a disability advocate and/or work for a disability peak association or service provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
I employ people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a business owner	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a health professional	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm a researcher or academic	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm employed by federal, state or territory, or local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Which state or territory do you live in?**

Australian Capital Territory	0
New South Wales	0
Northern Territory	0
Queensland	0
South Australia	1
Tasmania	0
Victoria	0
Western Australia	0
I do not live in Australia	0
Prefer not to say	0

**Which type of geographic location do you live in?**

A capital city	1
A regional city or town	0
A remote town or area	0
Prefer not to say	0

**Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?**

Yes	0
No	1
Prefer not to say	0

**Are you from a culturally or linguistically diverse background?**

Yes (please provide more information)	0
No	1
Prefer not to say	0

**Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQI+ community?**

Yes	0
No	1
Prefer not to say	0

## Guided questions on proposals in the Position Paper

### **Vision and Outcome Areas**

Reviews and consultations have told us that the six outcome areas in the current strategy are still the right ones. Therefore, the Government proposes keeping these outcome areas in the next Strategy.

It is important to keep an aspirational vision in the new Strategy to guide disability policy in Australia. Governments are suggesting to keep the current vision in the new Strategy, except to change the word 'citizen' to 'members of the community'.

The proposed vision is:

**An inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal members of the community.**

There are six outcome areas in the current strategy, which are proposed to continue in the new Strategy. Outcome areas guide the areas in which the strategy seeks to improve outcomes for people with disability. They are:

- **Economic security**  
People with disability have economic security, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives. Economic security can include things like having an income and having a job.
- **Inclusive and accessible communities**  
People with disability live in accessible and well-designed communities with opportunities for full inclusion in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.
- **Rights protection, justice and legislation**  
People with disability feel safe and have their rights promoted, upheld and protected.
- **Personal and community support**  
People with disability, their families and carers have access to a range of well-coordinated and effective disability services and supports that are appropriate for their needs.

- **Learning and support**

People with disability have opportunities to participate in high-quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives in both formal and informal settings.

- **Health and wellbeing**

People with disability attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives.

**Question 1****Do you have any comments on the vision and outcome areas being proposed for the new National Disability Strategy?**

For example, you might like to provide advice on any specific issues within the outcome areas that you think need a particular focus in the next Strategy.

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

The vision statement is clear, concise and provides an explanation of the purpose of the Strategy.

The outcome areas remain relevant.

Areas requiring further focus include:

- 1) Economic security - Employment of people with disability (pwd) and opportunities for greater social and economic participation. Evidence suggests that there has not been a significant improvement in this area. As outcomes have not been well-measured in the 2010-2020 Strategy it is hard to provide firm evidence.
- 2) Rights, protection, justice and legislation – The South Australian [Disability Justice Plan 2014-2017](#) provided some improvements for pwd with key priority actions under areas to:
  - uphold, protect and promote the rights of pwd
  - support vulnerable witnesses in the giving of evidence
  - support pwd accused or convicted of a crime
  - continuously monitor and improve performance.

A focus on safeguarding pwd from abuse and neglect across all forms including physical, emotional, sexual, chemical and financial abuse is important.

Further work around the elimination, regulation and authorisation of the use of restrictive practises with pwd needs to occur to educate and inform pwd and those who support them.

- 3) Learning and skills – Inclusive education for children with disability. Access to employment post schooling with support to transition to meaningful adult employment is a continuing issue. Ongoing, concerted and proactive opportunities from all employment sectors along with challenging biased attitudes is imperative to grow opportunities to increase skills and employment.
- 4) Health and wellbeing – Evidence shows that pwd have poorer health outcomes. A more proactive and collaborative approach towards addressing these matters is essential starting with physical accessibility of services in both public and private sectors. Access to mainstream health services with responsive services and support for pwd attending health and hospital services, particularly mental health services. Regular medication reviews are essential to ensure safeguards, to minimise chemical restraint and overmedication.



**Note:** The outcome areas for the next Strategy would continue to guide actions. It is also proposed they be the foundation for a new Outcomes Framework. The proposed Outcomes Framework would provide a clear and consistent approach across all levels of government to measure how effective mainstream and disability-specific services are at improving outcomes for people with disability. You will be able to have a say on a draft Outcomes Framework through a separate public submission process.

## **Guiding Principles**

Guiding principles will help to guide governments when they design and deliver policies and programs. They will also guide the actions of the non-government and private sectors to ensure the inclusion of all people with disability. You can read more about the principles in the position paper on page 7.

In addition to the principles set out in [Article 3 of the UN CRPD](#), an agreed set of guiding principles could include:

- **Involve and engage:**  
has the policy or program designer engaged with and listened to people with disability?
- **Design universally:**  
have the principles of universal design been applied where possible?
- **Engage the broader community:**  
how has the broader community been informed of, involved in and made responsible for removing barriers and supporting the inclusion of people with disability?
- **Address barriers faced by priority populations:**  
how have the priority populations (noted by the National Disability Strategy) been identified?  
What action has been taken to specifically address the barriers they may experience?
- **Support carers and supporters:**  
how have the needs of the family, carers and circles of information and formal support for the person with disability been considered?

The new Strategy must include ways to make sure different types of organisations and individuals adhere to the guiding principles, including ensuring they understand and can effectively use the principles. This could be done through:

- training and information sharing by people with disability who have lived experience
- providing clear information about what each principle means
- sharing case studies of how organisations or programs are applying the principles in action
- a checklist for organisations of the steps they could take to put the principles into action.

## **Question 2:**

**What do you think about the guiding principles proposed here?**



In responding to this question you might like to think about:

- **Are there other principles that would help ensure policies and programs are right for people with disability, their family and carers?**
- **What information or guidance could help organisations to use and adhere to these principles?**

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Any policy or program work needs to be underpinned by an evidence base which identifies the needs and target groups of people with disability.

Policies or programs developed should include measurable outcomes and reporting requirements to demonstrate their success.

The NDS should be more closely aligned with the DSS Information Linkages and Capacity Building Grants which should be considered as an avenue for funding programs to promote education and access to mainstream support services.

It is noted that this connection is acknowledged in the [DSS Disability and Carers](#) internet pages.

Guidance to assist organisations could be provided in a range of formats potentially and through resources similar to the [Disability Inclusion Planning – A Guide for Local Government](#).

## **A stronger focus on community attitudes**

In the first stage of consultations, people with disability said one of the biggest barriers they face in fully participating in society is community attitudes. This includes in professional and community life.

If community attitudes improved, they said this would help to improve their employment opportunities, financial security, access and involvement in the community.

All levels of government and all parts of the community share the responsibility to shape positive and disability-inclusive attitudes. We all play a part in helping people with disability to fully participate as equal members of the community.

A key focus of the new Strategy will aim to support and foster ongoing attitudinal change across Australian communities so that we harness the rich contribution people with disability make to our society.

### Question 3

**What is your view on the proposal for the new Strategy to have a stronger emphasis on improving community attitudes across all outcome areas?**

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Focussing on improving community attitude is essential to the successful inclusion of people with disability. Governments and councils can do a number of things to promote the inclusion of people with disability but this only goes so far. The community needs to understand that people with disability have the same rights as everyone else and their best interest and wellbeing is also a community responsibility.

Community attitude was identified by people with disability and their families and by the speakers during the NDS Consultation.

Community attitude, community inclusion and community connectedness are keys to safeguarding people with disability.

In South Australia when news broke of the tragic circumstances of the death of NDIS participant Ms Ann-Marie Smith, the question was asked 'Where were her neighbours?' and 'Why were people not looking out for her?'

The South Australian [Safeguarding Task Force](#) identified a prime risk factor for vulnerable people with disability is not having a connection to their community and therefore not having multiple sets of eyes looking out for the individual. By improving community attitudes there is the opportunity to improve these informal safeguards for people with disability.



The following questions relate to the goal of strengthening accountability in the new Strategy.

### **Clearly describing roles and responsibilities**

All Australians have a role to play in achieving an inclusive Australian community.

The new Strategy will **strengthen accountability**. It includes a proposal to **clearly describe the roles and responsibilities** for disability policy and service delivery in Australia.

This includes the responsibilities of different levels of government and non-government organisations, such as community services and the private sector.

The Strategy proposes to bring together a range of publicly available information into one spot. The information would clarify governments' roles and responsibilities for:

- **supporting people with disability**
- **supporting NDIS participants**
- **supporting the people with disability in Australia who are not eligible for the NDIS.**

#### Question 4

**How do you think that clearly outlining what each government is responsible for could make it easier for people with disability to access the supports and services they need?**

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Clearly outlining the responsibility in a range of areas would significantly improve access to supports and services for all people with disability.

In 2019 the South Australian Disability Advocate undertook consultations with over 180 groups of people with disability, families and service providers to understand their experience of the NDIS. One of the most commonly reported problems was that the system was complex and people did not know where to go to for assistance. This was also heard by the South Australian Safeguarding Task Force during their consultations in 2020. Prior to the NDIS, a person with disability may have had a case manager through Disability SA who would assist them to navigate service systems and source support. The Local Area Coordination service providers may be able to provide some assistance but a person needs to know where to go and these services are relatively new.

Although only approx. 10% of people with disability access the NDIS, one could assume that with the rapidly changing service and support sector in disability that any assistance to identify who is responsible for what in an easily accessible format would be beneficial for all people with disability their family and carers.

## Question 5

**How do you think the Strategy should represent the role that the non-government sector plays in improving outcomes for people with disability?**

*(Examples of the non-government sector include big, medium and small businesses, community organisations, employees of these businesses, private research, investment organisations and individuals).*

For example, you might like to suggest a way the Strategy could better guide non-government organisations to improve inclusion and equity for people with disability. This could include their role in communities, the workplace, or as part of delivering services.

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

The non-government sector has a significant role in improving outcomes for people with disability.

The Commonwealth Government plays a role with legislation such as the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010*.

Ultimately the non- government sector needs to do some heavy lifting to recognise the value and valuable contribution that people with a disability have and can make. With approximately 18% of the population identifying as having a disability and by not acknowledging and supporting the needs of people with disability they are essentially excluding nearly 20% of their potential customer base.

Promoting the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace, business or community and recognising good examples of the benefits may assist in furthering the inclusion of people with disability.

## **Reporting**

**Reporting** is an important part of the Strategy's goal of **strengthening accountability** (refer position paper page 9).

Current strategy reporting is done through periodic implementation plans and progress reports. The Australian Government compiles these with input from state, territory and local governments. However, there are concerns this approach does not:

- **give people enough visibility of whether the Strategy is making a difference**
- **guide actions or hold governments accountable.**

Reviews and consultations have suggested more frequent and different types of reporting. For example, the Productivity Commission recommended a National Disability Report be prepared every two years. In consultations, many stakeholders suggested annual reporting.

The position paper suggests reporting options for the next Strategy may include:

- **the responsible Ministerial Council releasing an annual, public statement outlining government policy commitments to lift outcomes for people with disability**
- **a progress report to be published every two years that uses the new Strategy's Outcomes Framework to:**
- **assess whether outcomes for people with disability are improving**
- **identify government policy and program contributions towards achieving these outcomes for people with disability.**

Page 9 of the position paper contains more information about the proposed Outcomes Framework.

These reporting options could provide clearer information to the public on whether government policies and programs are making a difference for people with disability, rather than listing government activities without assessing whether these activities are effective.

## Question 6

**What kind of information on the Strategy's progress should governments make available to the public and how often should this information be made available?**

In providing a response to this question, you might like to think about:

- **What type of reporting would help you know whether the lives of people with disability in Australia are improving?**
- **How often should reporting be done?**

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Information on the progress of the Strategy should be open and transparent to all Australians.

Key performance indicators defined in each policy area of the Strategy should be measurable with outcomes that can be reported on annually.

The suggested reporting options in the position paper appears to be appropriate with the responsible Ministerial Council releasing an annual public statement. In addition to this statement a progress report (or report card) should also include the measurable outcomes.

A more comprehensive report should also be published every two years analysing the progress towards policy and program outcomes and providing statistical data reporting on these. Reporting should also include the evaluation of programs. Where appropriate targeted funding should be applied for vulnerable groups as identified in the 2010-2020 Strategy for programs that have demonstrated positive outcomes.

The National Disability Data Asset once established will assist in this reporting.



**The following questions relate to the Strategy’s goal of putting policy into action to achieve outcomes for people with disability through policy development and program design.**

### **Targeted Action Plans to drive implementation**

The current strategy had periodic implementation plans. The proposal for the new Strategy is for an **Outcomes Framework** and subsequent evaluations to provide a more coordinated and cohesive approach to measuring the effectiveness of programs people with disability use. All governments could also work towards aligning their disability inclusion plans. Aligning timeframes would make implementation, reporting and review nationally consistent.

**Targeted Action Plans** are a specific proposal to improve implementation under the next Strategy (refer position paper page 11).

Governments would work with each other and the non-government sector on a particular topic, for a certain period of time, to make the improvements needed. The Targeted Action Plan would involve committing to delivering actions within a set timeframe. This would contribute to improving outcomes for people with disability.

What these Targeted Action Plans cover would be settled as part of implementation of the Strategy. They would allow the Strategy to respond and adapt to the changing needs of people with disability.

## Question 7

**What do you think of the proposal to have Targeted Action Plans that focus on making improvements in specific areas within a defined period of time (for example within one, two or three years)?**

In responding to this question, you might like to think about specific topics, areas or strategies you think Targeted Action Plans should focus on.

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Targeted Actions Plans are supported as they provide an opportunity to address arising issues and make the Strategy more able to respond to changing needs of people with disability.

In the 2010-2020 Strategy, the Justice Plan was successful in addressing legislative changes to better support people with disability in their interactions with the justice system.

In the new Strategy, Targeted Action Plans are recommended to address the following topics:

- **Housing and homelessness:**

Working towards addressing the lack of available suitable housing including accessible and robust housing.

- **Safeguarding of people with disability:**

A focus on safeguarding people with disability from abuse and neglect across all forms including, but not limited to, physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse.

Further work around the elimination, regulation and authorisation of the use of restrictive practises with people with disability needs to occur to educate and inform people with disability and those who support them.

- **Education:**

Inclusive learning environments for children and young people.

- **Employment:**

Employment of people with disability and opportunities for greater social and economic participation.

- **Health:**

Evidence shows that people with disability have poorer health outcomes. A more proactive and collaborative approach between the states and Commonwealth towards addressing these matters is essential starting with physical accessibility of services in both public and private sectors.

- **Community Attitudes:**

Measures to assess improvements and awareness of the inclusion of people with disability in society.

- **Transport:**

Measures to identify improvements in access to transport including accessible transport vehicles and public transport.

### **Engagement with people with disability**

The first stage of consultation confirmed that people with disability expect to be more involved in disability policy development and program design (refer position paper page 11). Participants of stage 1 consultations said this would make policies and programs more effective.

It is proposed the next Strategy include an **Engagement Plan**. The Plan would state how governments will ensure people with disability can lead and shape disability policies, programs and services.

### **Question 8**

**How could the proposed Engagement Plan ensure people with disability, and the disability community, are involved in delivering and monitoring the next Strategy?**

When answering this question, you might like to provide advice about specific strategies or actions that could go into an engagement plan so that people with disability have more say in how the Strategy is monitored and delivered.

Please provide your response in space provided below (250 word limit).

Consultation with people with disability their families and carers is essential in the formation, delivery and monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy and any programs and initiatives that sit within it.

This is just good policy development practice and should be undertaken with all policies, programs and legislation.

Some strategies to engage people with disability include:

- The development of a good practice guide for engagement for those needing to engage which provides practical strategies to engage with people with disabilities, those who identify as ATSI, CALD etc.
- Provide regular updates in a range of formats. This may be a distribution list, audio broadcast, sign language, easy read etc.
- Providing the opportunity to feedback in a range of formats i.e. face to face, phone, email or 1:1 interview.
- Targeted engagement with people identified as potentially facing multiple disadvantage such as ATSI, CALD, children, women and people in regional and remote areas.

## Additional information

**Stage 2 of the national disability strategy consultation process will inform:**

- specific sections in the next Strategy
- how we will implement it.

## **Question 9**

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the ideas and proposals in the position paper?**

Please provide your response in space provided below (1000 word limit).

Key points:

- NDS 2010-2020 provides a good foundation to build on for the next Strategy.
- Next NDS needs to ensure co-design with people with disability, ATSI, CALD, children and young people and advocacy services who represent them.
- The next NDS needs strong focus on good data and information about deliverables and outcomes for people with disability.
- Outcomes need to be measurable and reported on annually.
- Housing, safeguarding, employment, education, transport and health were some issues identified that were not well addressed last strategy. These need to be considered in the next NDS potentially under the Targeted Action Plans.
- NDIS has been a major focus in the last few years but only 10% of people with disability actually access it. This focus on the NDIS roll-out has been at the expense of the NDS. Now that the NDIS is up and running it is hoped that the NDS can have a stronger focus for all people with disability.
- The NDIS has a significant amount of funding allocated to it. The NDS needs a stronger alignment with the ILC grants and the role of the Local Area Coordination or access to additional funding sources to promote and deliver programs.
- The NDS needs to be more strongly promoted to the general community.