



Mount Alexander Shire Disability Advocacy Group Submission
National Disability Advocacy Framework 2022-2025

22 June 2022

MASDAG's vision/purpose of advocacy

Identify and remove systemic barriers. We work at a Local Government level. We challenge discrimination and barriers, and use community education and information to make change – cultural, social, physical, attitudinal.

Does Framework encompass this vision?

The Framework mentions the barriers and direction needed for change, but offers no suggestions for support to accomplish it nor any processes to enforce the Framework.

Are principles of Framework appropriate guide for delivery of advocacy, including NDIS?

Principles

Presumption of rights and capacity

Access to supports

Participation and inclusion

Justice

Person-centred approach

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with disability

Respect for intersectionality and diversity

Safeguards

These principles/rights have been stated and promoted elsewhere over time and should already be complied with. This is merely repetition. It is impossible for small Local Government Areas (LGAs) to compete with the private sector within the NDIS framework for lack of funding and staffing.

Are outcomes achievable? Any others to add?

- No, the framework cannot achieve any of these outcomes without funding and resourcing local governments' delivery to the community. All of this advocacy, systemic change and delivery of support and services happens at a local level. Commonwealth and state/territory programmes and work plans need to translate into local delivery.
- We urge government not to privatise delivery of services, but rather fund local governments to support the needs of their residents and rate payers.
- Outcome: 'regardless of where they live, people with disability can access quality and independent advocacy support' requires wheelchair accessible transport and infrastructure. It is our view that LGAs are the appropriate



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bodies to provide this access and support, but need funding and resources to do so. Privatisation is not an appropriate solution.

- Changes to Local Government Legislation directs LGAs to actively involve the community in decision making. The Framework could use this inroad to inclusive decision making by funding processes such as citizen juries and other deliberative democratic processes. To truly involve the community in decision making is expensive.

Are responsibilities and policy directions relevant? Add any?

- No. LGAs are the most relevant agencies for the delivery of advocacy, support and services for people with disability, but they need adequate funding to do so.
- The 'Commonwealth, state and territory governments are committing to share the responsibility for disability advocacy in their jurisdiction' – responsibility must include local government.
- 'Nationally consistent guidelines and processes...' – does this imply a one-size-fits all approach to advocacy? Needs vary geographically, demographically and by size and distance. There will not be consistency in delivery because needs are so different.
- Evidence is clear that the 'NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework' does not ensure quality or safeguarding of care for people with disabilities. We believe that this Framework will not either.
- Changes to Commonwealth aged care funding is a concern. We believe that the new proposed funding model of payment in arrears and the one-size-fits-all approach to equity among states and territories will undermine the people-centred service delivery provided by LGAs.
- Will these responsibilities and outcomes be audited, accountable and overseen? By whom?
- Will the principles be enforced and breaches penalised **before** any complaint is needed to be lodged? By whom?
- Any process that is complaint-driven merely adds another barrier. Enforcement prior to breaches will prevent the onus from landing on the person with a disability.
- If there is the need for legal intervention/support, who will pay for that?
- 'improving communication and coordination between disability advocacy organisations, disability services, the NDIS, mainstream services, community-based services and governments...' sounds good. This must be person-centred communication and coordination.

Does Framework identify what is needed?

Mostly yes. What is also needed is the primary involvement of LGAs.



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