



The National Ethnic Disability Alliance

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Disability Advocacy Policy

GPO Box 9820
Department of Social Services
Canberra ACT 2601
Via: DisabilityAdvocacySecretariat@dss.gov.au

14 July 2022

Re: Letter of Support for DANA's submission on the National Disability Advocacy Framework

Dear Disability Advocacy secretariat,

National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this consultation on the draft for a new National Disability Advocacy Framework 2022-2025 (the Framework).

About NEDA

NEDA is a national Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) that advocates for the human rights of people with disability from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) and migrant and refugee backgrounds. NEDA is a founding member of DPO Australia, an alliance of four national DPOs, which are organisations constituted and governed by people with disability.

NEDA would like to add our support and endorsement to the submission by Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA) on the draft Framework and what is needed to realise its intended outcomes.

TARGETED ADVOCACY

We would like to add particular emphasis to [DANA's Section 5: Targeted Advocacy](#) recommendations for developing tailored advocacy approaches to increase access for identified population groups with disability at higher risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

People from CaLD backgrounds, particularly those from new and emerging communities, experience abuse, neglect, and exploitation more intensely and at multiple levels. The evidence shows that CaLD people with disability, as a cohort, experience significant discrimination, marginalisation and compounding barriers to rights, recognition, and participation due to belonging to multiple stigmatised groups.

Under the Principles listed in the Framework, there is a principle for “Respect for Intersectionality and Diversity” and a principle for “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island People with Disability”. We advocate for the inclusion of a specific principle for CaLD people with disability.

People from CaLD backgrounds experience this abuse due to their limited English language proficiency, cultural perception of disability, and stigma that they, their families and ethnic communities put on them. They also experience them because they do not know what services are available and how to access them, as those services may or may not have been available in their countries of origin, and because of the complex access and eligibility criteria for disability support and services.

CaLD people with disability must be involved and should direct how advocacy is designed and delivered. Without a specific CaLD people with disability principle, CaLD people with disability may likely be left out as spectators instead of being active participants in the person-centred and rights-based approach underpinning the Framework.

INTERSECTIONALITY AND DIVERSITY

Our organisation believes the highest priority is the recognition of client diversity and intersectionality.

Regarding the recognition of client diversity and intersectionality, we submit that the idea of diversity should recognise the range of possible conditions for a person with a disability. It must recognise gender diversity and distinguish between cultural diversity and linguistic diversity and the mode of migration. There is also an urgent need to acknowledge those born in Australia from a culturally diverse background.

NEDA supports DANA’s recommendation to establish an expert task force to design a disability advocacy funding model to support people with disability who experience multiple disadvantage factors and intersectionality.

In addition, there is no nationally agreed standard for survey or administrative data to record ethnicity, disability or intersectionality, or violence. Intersectional discrimination has unique and specific effects on people with disability. It may lead to people being considered different or to another degree of bias or new forms of discrimination that has not yet been acknowledged by law, policy, or research.


As discussed above, people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including those in institutional and residential settings, domestic and community settings, mainstream workplace and recreational settings, experience intersectional discrimination that often has aggravating or compounding effects. Yet, this is not recognised or addressed adequately in legislation and policy frameworks in the Australian context to prevent violence and advance the human rights of people with disability.

Data and information improvement are of fundamental importance to achieving the Framework’s outcomes. It is NEDA’s firm belief that to strengthen data and information

systems, it is imperative to have greater consistency in how cultural diversity and linguistic diversity are understood. In that regard, we submit that the Disability Advocacy Work Plan should address the current limitations of data collection, workforce development, and the development of a more comprehensive, uniform, nationally consistent approach to vulnerable person screening, which meets the Convention of the Rights for People with Disability (CRPD) and other human rights requirements.

We urge the Disability Reform Ministers and their respective governments to prioritise this work and make firm commitments to disability advocacy funding and collaboration to help realise the vision of Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme: an Australia that includes and values people with disability and respects human rights for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neha P" with a stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Neha Prakash
Acting Chief Executive Officer