



ACT Down Syndrome Association

Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Pearce ACT, 2607

Advocacy for Inclusion

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Mental Health Community Coalition

Level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra City, 2601

Women with Disabilities ACT

Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Pearce ACT, 2607

Shared Statement to members and colleagues following the release of the Governments response to the Disability Royal Commission

1 August 2024

Yesterday the Federal and ACT Governments released their long-awaited responses to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

The Commission's findings highlighted the extensive violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation faced by people with disability. They drew on the personal testimony of thousands of people with disability in closed and open sessions.

Despite this, only 13 recommendations have been fully accepted after nine months, with many remaining unresolved. Many of the most crucial recommendations have been set aside or noted – these include proposals for a Disability Rights Act, a new cross cutting National Disability Agreement, a Minister for Disability, removing sub award wages, moving away from segregated schools and housing plus a national approach to ending non-therapeutic sterilisation.

There are some points of light – like a commitment to modernise the Disability Discrimination Act. There is also some positive work and investments in the ACT which address issues raised by the Commission. There are also changes flagged to remove the discriminatory elements of the Migration Act.

Like many of you, we are disappointed in the overall response which does not match the urgency and seriousness of the problems presented to the Commission nor do justice to the compelling evidence presented by thousands of Australians.

However, it is important to remember that we were heard in the report of the Royal Commission and those stories continue to resonate. There is no going back to the era where disability was neglected and forgotten.

Our organisations continue to hear and amplify your calls for better rights protections, improved services, fewer barriers and an end to low pay and segregation. The path towards change is never linear and together we will regroup and redouble our efforts.

We know that today has left some of you feeling upset and angry and that is understandable.

We have included some numbers for services that can help in crisis, but we also wanted to offer an opportunity to come together, to hear about some positive areas of change that are coming out of the Commission and to share your thoughts.

Join us to debrief, regroup and share hopes for the future:

Along these lines Advocacy for Inclusion, in partnership with the ACT Down Syndrome and Intellectual Disability, Women with Disabilities ACT and the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, offers a briefing for members and community partners on the Royal Commission response.

We will our snapshot analysis of the response in full and then be joined by Dr Rhonda Galbally AC who was one of the Commissioners as we share our reflections and ideas on the way ahead.

The briefing and reflection will be held from 10.30am - 12.00 noon on Tuesday 13 August 2024 on Teams. Please find registration details here:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/0cc8ddb3-1607-478d-a039-28d463c1641c@82be5bff-88dc-4ad8-b79f-f1291fce535e>

Talk to someone:

Lifeline Crisis Support: Call 13 11 14, Text 0477 13 11 14 Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Beyond Blue Support Service: 1300 224 636 Beyond Blue is an organisation that provides a free online and telephone helpline for people with depression, anxiety or other mental health issues. You can talk to trained mental health professionals who can give you support and advice. Beyond Blue can also help you find mental health services near you

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1800 880 052 The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline is a free, independent and confidential service for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability. The Hotline works with callers to find appropriate ways of dealing with reports of abuse or neglect through referral, information and support.

1800RESPECT: Call 1800 737 732, Text 0458 737 732 1800 RESPECT is Australia's national counselling, information and support service for anyone affected by domestic, family and sexual violence. It is available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.