

August 2024

# Government Response to the Disability Royal Commission and Implications for Mental Health and Psychosocial Disability

## MHCC Executive Summary

Mental Health Coordinating Council has identified **74 key recommendations** from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability’s Final Report, that have direct implications for people living with psychosocial disability.

In its [Summary and Overview Report](#) of the Royal Commission’s recommendations, MHCC highlighted actions that if implemented, would achieve transformational reform and meaningful outcomes for people living with mental health challenges and psychosocial disability, as well as strengthen and sustain the community-managed mental health sector and workforce that support them. Alarming, we found only **seven** recommendations that have been fully accepted.

### Summary of recommendations and responses

<b>Recommendations affecting people with psychosocial disability</b>	<b>74</b>
Accepted	7
Accepted in principle	40
Subject to consideration	26
Noted	1

The key Royal Commission recommendations and the Australian Government’s response are as follows:

Recommendation	Response
6.31A Equitable access to health services	<b>Accepted</b>
6.37 Data collection and public reporting on psychotropic medication	<b>7</b>

7.16 Priorities for inclusion in the new Disability Employment Services model	
7.17 Develop education and training resources for Disability Employment Services staff	
7.27 Enable a Fair Work Ombudsman referral mechanism	
7.29 Embed an 'open employment first' approach in the NDIS Participant Employment Strategy	
7.34 Include homelessness in Australia's Disability Strategy	
4.23-4.34 Reform the Disability Discrimination Act	<b>Accepted in principle</b> 40
5.4 Review national agreements, strategies and plans	
5.7 Focal points across jurisdictions to implement the CRPD	
6.21 Additional funding for advocacy programs	
6.31B Equitable access to health services	
6.32 Increase capacity to provide supports and adaptations through improved guidance, funding and accessible information	
6.34 Introduce disability health navigators to support navigation of health care for people with disability	
7.18–7.23 Disability employment in the public sector	
7.33 Prioritise people with disability in key national housing and homelessness approaches	
7.39 Preventing homelessness when people with disability transition from service or institutional settings	
7.41 Group home reform	
7.42 Improve access to alternative housing options	
8.2 Disability awareness in OPCAT monitoring	
8.11 Information for courts and legal practitioners	
8.12 Implementation of the National Principles	
8.13 Data about people detained in forensic systems	
8.19 Amendment of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) to cover police provision of 'services'	
8.20 Improving police responses to people with disability	
8.23 Action plan to end violence against women and children with disability	
8.24 Disability-inclusive definition of family and domestic violence	
10.4–10.7 Quality of support coordination, advocacy and supported decision-making in disability services	

4.1-4.22 Establishment of a Disability Rights Act	<b>Subject to further consideration</b> <b>26</b>
4.21 Objects of the Disability Rights Act	
7.40 Address homelessness for people with disability in the National Housing and Homelessness Plan	
7.43 A roadmap to phase out group homes within 15 years	
7.44 A roadmap to phase out group homes over a generational timeframe	
5.6 New governance arrangements for disability	<b>Noted</b> <b>1</b>

The Government's response includes measures to support the first phase of a staged response with an initial investment. What is unclear is the extent to which the funding will include people living with psychosocial support needs. Some allocations are very small bearing in mind that this a national response..

- \$19.6 million to support grassroots efforts to improve community attitudes around disability
- \$15.6 million to unify national disability quality and safeguarding arrangements
- \$4.4 million for consistent approaches to community visitor schemes as a safeguarding mechanism
- \$227.6 million to implement a new specialist disability employment program
- \$39.7 million to establish a new disability advocacy program
- \$3.7 million to continue the Primary Care Enhancement Program for People with Intellectual Disability
- \$2.6 million for the continued delivery of the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service
- \$1.2 million to develop targets to reduce and eliminate restrictive practices
- \$12.1 million to amend the Migration Health Requirement to be fairer and more inclusive for children with disability
- \$2 million towards improving the safety of women and girls with disability
- \$23.3 million to establish a Disability Employment Centre of Excellence
- \$6.9 million to review and modernise the Disability Discrimination Act
- \$12.3 million to improve national approaches to accessible information and communications, including Auslan.

Having put so much into their submissions and personal testimonials to the Royal Commission, people living with disability are unsurprisingly very disappointed with the Government's response thus far.

MHCC will continue to advocate for meaningful change and will maintain a watching brief and seek opportunities to advance the case for further reform and investment.