

# **Joint Statement on Australian, State and Territory responses to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission)**

Disability Ministers welcome the historic final report of the Disability Royal Commission.

The Disability Royal Commission was the result of many years of tireless advocacy. Through grassroots movements, people with disability and their supporters played a pivotal role in initiating the Royal Commission, turning their shared experiences into a powerful force for change.

We thank the Commissioners for their extensive work over the past four and a half years, and acknowledge the nearly 10,000 people who shared their experiences and views.

The Disability Royal Commission has clearly shown us what needs to change to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability across Australia. It highlighted shortcomings across all levels of Australian society, and recommends actions for all governments and the wider community to make Australia a better place for people with disability.

The final report includes 222 recommendations. Addressing these recommendations requires a coordinated national effort. All governments are committed to working closely together to support and implement the Royal Commission's vision for an inclusive Australia, and to ensure reform will implement meaningful and lasting change.

Carefully considering the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission and the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Review) and how they intersect is the top priority for Disability Ministers in 2024, and these matters will be standing agenda items for DRMC meetings in 2024.

Consistent with National Cabinet's agreement of 6 December 2023, all governments are committed to engaging deeply with the disability community to develop a unified ecosystem of support for people with disability. This includes building on existing foundational supports for people with disability and getting the NDIS back on track to deliver positive outcomes for participants for generations to come. Consideration of the Disability Royal Commission recommendations will need to take into account these significant reforms.

All governments have agreed that we need to work together in a coordinated way to ensure all people with disability have access to culturally appropriate, safe and quality services and supports regardless of where they are living in Australia. The actions required to achieve this link closely with the commitments in Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031, and state, territory and local government disability strategies and inclusion plans. Implementation of these commitments remains a priority.

Disability Ministers acknowledge the Disability Royal Commission recommended all governments publish responses to recommendations by 31 March 2024 (Recommendation 12.1). Given the scale and complexity of reform recommended, and the importance of consulting widely and understanding implications, all governments will formally respond to the Royal Commission's final report after 31 March 2024.

The additional time will ensure responses are informed by the views of people with disability, their families, carers, representative organisations, service providers, unions and the broader community. It will also enable the development of strategic responses that drive meaningful and lasting change to make Australia safe, accessible and inclusive for all people with disability.

The Commonwealth and seven jurisdictions\* have agreed to respond to joint recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission final report by mid-2024.

The timing of responses to recommendations within the sole responsibility of the Commonwealth or a state or territory will be announced at a time appropriate for each jurisdiction.

*\*Following the calling of the Tasmanian general election on 14 February 2024, the Tasmanian Government has assumed a caretaker role and has been unable to endorse this Joint Statement at this time.*

