

2010–2020
National Disability Strategy

Report to the Council of
Australian Governments
2012

Summary Document





ISBN: 978-1-921975-89-9

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This document must be attributed as the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 Report to the Council of Australian Governments 2012 Summary Report*.

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THE NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY

The *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* outlines a ten-year national approach to improving outcomes and whole-of-life opportunities for people with disability in Australia. The Strategy aims to influence the planning, design and delivery of mainstream policies, programs, services and infrastructure, as well as the specialist disability services system, so that people with disability can participate as equal citizens in all areas of Australian life.

The Strategy recognises that as part of this approach, governments need to listen to people with disability, their families and carers to better understand their needs, the barriers they face and how to work together to improve participation and life outcomes.

The Strategy is structured under six broad policy outcome areas:

- 1. Inclusive and accessible communities**
- 2. Rights, protection, justice and legislation**
- 3. Economic security**
- 4. Personal and community support**
- 5. Learning and skills**
- 6. Health and wellbeing**

These six outcome areas were developed in consultation with people with disability and reflect the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which Australia is a signatory.

The National Disability Strategy has been agreed by all levels of government. This means that for the first time in Australia's history, all governments have committed to a unified, national approach to improving the lives of people with disability, their families and carers.

A copy of the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* and the full *Report to the Council of Australian Governments 2012* is available online at www.fahcsia.gov.au

Implementation of the National Disability Strategy

Implementation of the Strategy will be guided by three separate implementation plans over its ten-year life span. The first implementation plan, *Laying the Groundwork 2011–2014*, establishes the foundations to drive reform in the planning and delivery of both mainstream and disability-specific policies and services. It also establishes the basis for reporting and evaluation of the Strategy.

The second and third implementation plans—*Driving Action 2015–2018* and *Measuring Progress 2019–2020*—will recognise existing commitments under the Strategy and will consolidate actions that are driving ongoing improvement and better outcomes for people with disability.

Laying the Groundwork 2011–2014

Implementation of the Strategy in this first phase focuses on six main actions to achieve results. These actions are designed to influence and enable improvement across all service systems and eliminate barriers for people with disability in all areas of life.

These six actions are:

1. influencing the mainstream support system by ensuring that when National Partnerships and National Agreements are periodically reviewed, consideration is given to how these agreements might be amended to better respond to the needs of people with disability
2. appointing Ministers from a range of mainstream portfolios to take a strong national leadership role to support the implementation of the National Disability Strategy and to act as champions for disability issues within their portfolio areas
3. improving the evidence base—acknowledging that the more we know and understand, the better we can respond to the needs of people with disability
4. developing, reviewing and implementing state and territory government disability plans and/or initiatives that complement the objectives of the National Disability Strategy
5. involving people with disability in the development and implementation of government policies and programs
6. maintaining a commitment by governments to work together to realise the objectives of the National Disability Strategy.

Together, these six actions aim to achieve real, measurable and reportable improvements in the support available to people with disability, their families and carers through both mainstream and specialist disability services.

In addition to the pursuit of these actions, *Laying the Groundwork 2011-2014* provides detailed information on how the Australian and state and territory governments will respond to the fifty-three areas for future action that sit under the six policy outcome areas of the National Disability Strategy. These areas were identified as priorities for future action by people with disability during community consultations conducted in 2009 and reported in *Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia* (2009).

A select number of these actions have been summarised on pages 5-10 to illustrate the breadth and variety of activities that will be undertaken across and within all governments to give effect to the objectives of the Strategy. The complete and comprehensive list of actions is provided in the full *Report to the Council of Australian Governments 2012*.

In addition to the specific actions agreed under the Strategy, each state and territory government has, or is developing, its own disability plan to translate the Strategy's vision into tangible and achievable service improvements. Local governments also have a role in implementing local initiatives.

POLICY OUTCOME 1: INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES

This policy outcome area supports the fact that people with disability have a right to a community that is designed to include everybody. Actions that sit under this policy outcome area are directed toward a future where people with disability live in well designed communities with the opportunity for full inclusion in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o The Australian Government will match local government funding with infrastructure grants of up to \$100,000 for sixty-six local governments to help fund a range of infrastructure projects. These projects will improve disability access to public facilities such as swimming pools, libraries, community buildings, parks, sports arenas and toilets.
- o The Victorian Government has partnered with VicHealth to develop disability inclusion standards, an outcomes framework and disability inclusion resources for the VicHealth *Everyone Wins* toolkit, to be used by state sporting associations and local clubs.
- o The Australian Government is rolling out the National Broadband Network (NBN). The NBN will deliver reliable, high-speed broadband to all Australian households and businesses through a combination of optical fibre and next generation, high speed fixed wireless and satellite technologies. The NBN will provide an enabling platform for applications and services that could increase the social, economic and cultural participation of people with disability.
- o The Western Australian Government's Disability Services Commission initiated partnerships with a range of stakeholders including local governments and surf lifesaving organisations, resulting in a number of local governments introducing beach matting and beach wheel chairs ensuring everyone had equal access to Western Australian beaches.
- o Arts Tasmania completed stage one of the *Arts and Disability Community Engagement Strategy*. The objective is to establish a capacity-building networking forum that overcomes isolation, negative stigma of disability, promotes partnerships towards quality arts and disability practice, and assists in contributing towards quality arts and disability outcomes.



POLICY OUTCOME 2: RIGHTS, PROTECTION, JUSTICE AND LEGISLATION

This policy outcome area focuses on ensuring that people with disability have their rights promoted, upheld and protected. It will also guide Australia's response to its obligations as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o The South Australian Government is developing a disability justice plan in consultation with people with disability and the disability sector to improve outcomes for people with disability in the justice system. The plan will focus on vulnerable witnesses and the ability of children with disability to testify in court cases.
- o The Western Australian Government's Disability Services Commission has developed a multi-language DVD, *Our Voices, Our Journeys*, so that people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can be informed of their rights and services.
- o The Australian Capital Territory Government is developing the *Everyone Everyday Program* to promote awareness throughout the Canberra community about people with disability and their capabilities, contributions and rights to dignity and equality. The program aims to inform and positively influence attitudes and behaviours among ACT school students who will take this awareness into their future roles as employers, business owners, policy-makers, teachers, colleagues, neighbours and friends.
- o The Australian Government is in the process of reviewing Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws to make them easier to understand and make access to discrimination complaints processes easier. Exposure draft legislation has been released. The success of this action will be measured in achieving a consolidated anti-discrimination law.



POLICY OUTCOME 3: ECONOMIC SECURITY

Work is essential to an individual's economic security. It also contributes to a person's physical and mental health, their personal wellbeing, identity and social inclusion. Actions under this policy outcome area aim to increase access to employment opportunities and improve housing tenure for people with disability.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o The New South Wales Government has introduced the Payroll Tax Rebate Scheme to promote the employment of people with disability. Under the scheme employers can claim up to \$4000 for eligible employees who continue in the job for more than six months. More information on this measure can be found at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/act+54+2011+ed+0+N
- o The Northern Territory Government is striving to become the employer of choice for people with disability with its *Willing and Able Strategy*. The *Willing and Able Strategy* aims to attract and retain employees, provide better support for both employers and employees with disability and create a more diverse and inclusive workforce.
- o The Australian Capital Territory Government launched its *ACT Public Service Employment Strategy for People with Disability 2011-2015* in April 2011. It includes a target to double employment of people with disability in the ACT Public Service by 2015.
- o The Australian Government has provided \$20 million to seed the establishment of the Social Enterprise Development and Investment Fund to help social enterprises access appropriate finance and business support needed to grow their businesses, some of which may be operated by or for people with disability.
- o The Tasmanian Government has implemented two programs under the *Tasmanian Adult Literacy Action Plan* specifically targeting people with disability to enable the development of core skills for labour market participation. The *Employer Pledge Program* will provide literacy training during work hours for participating employers. The *Adult Literacy Community Grants Program* is designed to improve the literacy skills of community members to improve their access to further education, training and employment.



POLICY OUTCOME 4: PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

With the appropriate support, many people with disability are able to maintain a high level of independence, to be involved in activities such as work, education, training and a full range of social and recreational activities. This policy outcome focuses on providing people with disability, their families and carers with access to a range of supports to assist them to live independently and actively in their communities.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o In April 2012 the Australian Government announced funding of \$1 billion over four years to start rolling out the first stage of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Work is currently focused on developing the overarching design, funding and governance arrangements for an NDIS aimed at delivering a sustainable, effective and world class model of support for Australians with disability.
- o The Northern Territory Government's *Remote Intensive Therapy Program* offers specialised and intensive allied health treatment and support for children and young adults with significant disability who live in a remote location.
- o The Queensland Government will provide \$22 million over four years for respite care for 16–25 year olds with high needs and their carers by delivering an extra fifteen hours a week of additional respite for up to 240 people and their families for four years.
- o The Victorian Government has allocated \$20.1 million to establish innovative supported accommodation places and has supported community service organisations to make submissions for Australian Government capital funding under the Australian Government's Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund.



POLICY OUTCOME 5: LEARNING AND SKILLS

A good education is important for all students to enable them to be successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active, informed citizens. Access to learning and skills development also provides the basis for economic security and social inclusion.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o The Tasmanian Government created a scholarship place in the University of Tasmania's Partnerships for Teaching Excellence Program for a Bachelor of Education or Master of Teaching for a student with disability. The scholarship will provide financial support, mentoring and professional development support in addition to guaranteed permanent employment upon completion.
- o The Australian Government will provide \$200 million in funding to offer teachers more resources and training to better meet the needs of school students with disability under the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* initiative.
- o The Australian Government's *Early Years Learning Framework* describes the principles, practice and learning outcomes essential to support young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework also guides early childhood educators in their development of quality individualised learning programs for each child.
- o The South Australian Government has a number of initiatives to support young people with disability transition to independence and with their post-school outcomes. The *Better Pathways Program* provides an advocacy, mentoring and support service for young people with disability and mental health issues. *Skills for All* is a new policy direction for Vocational Education and Training to increase accessibility to training for disadvantaged groups, including people with disability.
- o The Queensland Government's *My Future, My Life* initiative supports young people with disability in their final years of schooling to make plans to transition effectively from school to adult life.



POLICY OUTCOME 6: HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Major reform to the national health system is of great importance for people with disability. The Australian, state and territory governments will work together through the National Disability Strategy and the National Healthcare Agreement to reduce health inequalities, plan improvements for access and inclusion, and improve the health and wellbeing outcomes and life opportunities of people with disability.

Examples of action under this policy outcome area include:

- o The Victorian Government conducted its first population health survey of people with an intellectual disability. The survey represents a significant step forward in understanding the health and wellbeing of Victorians with an intellectual disability and provides some measures of social inclusion, economic participation and wellbeing compared to the general Victorian population.
- o The Australian Government has introduced an additional Medicare Item Number to allow for longer GP consultations with people with intellectual disability; to assess their physical, psychological and social function; and to identify any medical intervention and preventative health care needs.
- o The South Australian Government is providing funding of \$3.5 million per year to establish the *Disability Transition to Community Program* to provide targeted support and defined care pathways for individuals with disability who may be experiencing complexities related to their hospital discharge.
- o The Youth Advisory Committee of the Western Australian *New Children's Hospital Project* ensures that children and young people have a voice in the planning stages of the hospital. This committee is comprised of young people, including a young person with disability, who have experienced hospital life.
- o The New South Wales Government has developed the *Service Framework to Improve Health Care of People with Intellectual Disability*. The Service Framework aims to promote broader understanding of the health care needs and rights of people with intellectual disability and to improve the quality, range, consistency, accessibility and integration of services. The New South Wales Government has committed \$1.5 million per annum in recurrent funding to implement strategies under the Service Framework.



MONITORING AND REPORTING

All levels of government have committed to a bold and ambitious approach to ensure that people with disability have the support necessary to fulfil their potential as equal citizens in Australian life.

While some achievements under the Strategy may not be immediately evident or measurable, a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework has been developed to ensure that improvements are ongoing and governments remain focused on the end goal.

Every two years, a high level progress report will track achievements under the Strategy and provide a picture of how people with disability are faring.

The first biennial progress report will be presented to the Council of Australian Governments in mid-2014.

A final evaluation in 2021 will measure any change in outcomes, and assess the Strategy's influence in improving the lives of people with disability.

This reporting will feed into the Australian Government's reporting obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The diagram below outlines the key elements of the National Disability Strategy and the planning, reviewing, reporting and evaluation sequences over the ten-year life of the Strategy.



