

Disability Reference Group Work plan 2018-19

ACT Disability Reference Group Work Plan Background

The purposes of the Disability Reference Group (DRG)

- To ensure the ACT Government is aware of the issues which affect people with disability in the ACT; and
- Advise the ACT Government on ways in which the ACT can be a more inclusive community for people with disability.

The DRG delivers on its purposes through the following roles and functions:

- providing timely and cogent advice to the ACT Government on issues affecting people with disability;
- advising on, and participating in, community engagement to build an inclusive Canberra;
- providing strategic whole-of-government advice to the Minister of Disability on relevant national policy development including on the six NDS strategic policy outcomes;
- fostering cooperative linkages with people with disability, their families and other unpaid carers, non-government organisations, government and the community;
- alerting the ACT Government to emerging issues, potential risks and opportunities related to the ongoing implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS); and
- providing advice on strategies that raise community awareness of the rights of people with disability including the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) and the role of government and community in promoting these rights.

DRG work is underpinned by and closely aligned with:

- *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*;
- *ACT Disability Services Act 1991*;
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*;
- *ACT Human Rights Act 2004*;
- *INVOLVE: Canberra Disability Commitment*;
- The six strands of the National Disability Strategy:
 - Inclusive and accessible communities
 - Rights protection, Justice and Legislation
 - Economic Security
 - Personal and community support
 - Learning and skills
 - Health and Wellbeing;
- ACT Government's Community Services Directorate strategic priority to support people disability; and
- The work of the ACT Office for Disability.

As a leading disability body in the ACT, the DRG will:

- be able to demonstrate its meaningful connectedness to the broad spectrum of interests within Canberra's disability community and beyond;
- develop timely and cogent advice to the ACT Government that draws on the expertise and knowledge of DRG members and their understanding of, and connections within, Canberra's disability community;

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- focus on identifying solutions (based on qualitative and quantitative evidence) that lead to better outcomes for people with disability, their families and supporters (formal and informal).

To fulfil its purposes the DRG will:

- ensure the lived experience of people with disability informs and underpins all advice the DRG provides to Government;
- recognise and strive to reflect in the work of the DRG the diversity of people with disability's lived experience and identities;
- operate within a rights-based framework of promoting better outcomes for people with disability;
- work to develop effective partnerships, focused on better outcomes, within Canberra's disability community, across the whole of Government and with strategically-placed leaders (organisations and individuals) in the wider community.

DRG Priorities 2018

The DRG has agreed key areas within which it will develop advice for the ACT Government during 2018. These are:

1. reinvigorating *ACT's Disability Commitment*;
2. increasing the rate of employment of people with disability of working age across all sectors of the Canberra economy (public, private, non-government not for profit, and self-employment);
3. better health outcomes for all Canberrans with disability; and
4. reducing the disproportionate levels, and often adverse outcomes, of people with disability's engagement with ACT justice systems.

Alongside these four specific priorities, the DRG will retain an active awareness of and interest in two critical areas of disability policy reform:

5. the experience of Canberrans with disability & ACT support organisations of the NDIS as well as progress towards the full implementation of the NDIS across Australia; and
6. ACT and national initiatives intended to make progress towards achieving the outcomes of the *National Disability Strategy*.

How the DRG measure success in priority areas:

- Through the Minister for Disability, the ACT Government has received and acted on DRG advice in each of its priority areas: NDS, employment, health, and justice.
- People with disability, their representative organisations, support organisations and the wider community have contributed to the development of DRG advice to Government and will understand what the DRG advice has been and why it was developed. (Communique-reports, summaries, submissions)
- People with disability have become more engaged with community-based discussion and action to promote a more inclusive Canberra. (leadership development- community conversations)

Work the DRG will complete in each priority area in 2018

1. Reinvigorating *ACT's Disability Commitment* (referred to as the commitment of strategy)

- a. Present advice to the ACT Minister for Disability on actions the DRG believes would reinvigorate the strategy. These include (but are not restricted to):
 - i) applying lessons learned from successful promotion and awareness-raising campaigns of other jurisdictions to the ACT;
 - ii) involving more people with disability in the implementation of the strategy;

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- iii) investing new resources (people, time and funds) in delivering the enhanced strategy;
- iv) encouraging the development of a pool of Ambassadors;
- v) fostering public links between and better understanding of Commitment initiatives, and the range of other Government activities intended to promote inclusion (e.g. Disability Inclusion Grants outcomes); and
- b. Advise and assist the Minister for Disability and the Office for Disability on increasing the participation of people with disability, their organisations and supporters in the reinvigoration of INVOLVE;
- c. Advise and assist the Office for Disability to develop guidance (by 30 June 2018) for ACT Government agencies on the development, implementation and monitoring of Disability Inclusion Action Plans.

2) Greater employment of people with disability

- a) Advise and assist the ACT Government on the implementation of the ACT Public Service People with Disability Employment Framework, launched on 3 October 2017;
- b) Prepare further advice for the ACT Government on reducing barriers to employing people with disability, and on employment-related outcomes arising from implementation of the NDIS (in accordance with recommendation 3 of the ACT Parliamentary *Inquiry into the Employment of People With Disabilities*);
- c) Re-examine the outcomes of the *Disability Reference Group 2016 Roundtable final report* and update employment-related advice to the ACT Government in the light of subsequent initiatives;
- d) Working in partnership with other organisations, re-convene the DRG roundtable on employment of people with disability to consider additional action on achieving better results in the future.

3) Better health outcomes for people with disability

- a) Participate in the deliberations of, and prepare advice for, the ACT Government's *Territory-wide Health Services Advisory Group* established by the Minister for Health in December 2017 (noting that the DRG Community Co-Chair has been appointed to the Health Minister's group);
- b) Contribute to and support the further development of the ACTOSS project *Let's Talk Health: Disability and Access to Health*;
- c) Contribute to and support further work by ADACAS on strengthening supported-decision-making within ACT health services;
- d) Provide advice to the ACT Government – through the Ministers for Disability and Health – on measures to improve the problematic interfaces between disability, health and other formal support systems.

4) Better justice system outcomes for people with disability

- a) Advise the ACT Government on measures to improve outcomes for people with disability engaging with justice systems, in the light of Mary Durkin Consulting's final report, *Gap Analysis for a Disability Justice Strategy*;
- b) Advise and assist the Office for Disability on its responses to the *Gap Analysis for a Justice Strategy*; and

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- c) Work in partnership with representative Disabled People's Organisations, and community-based law advisory bodies to strengthen, develop and sustain independent support for people with disability engaging with the justice system.

Ongoing priority advice areas:

5) National Disability Insurance Scheme implementation

- a) Maintain an up-to-date understanding of the experiences of ACT participants in the NDIS, the circumstances of the Territory's support sector and the effects of the NDIS;
- b) Encourage participation in the ACT Parliament's *Inquiry into the implementation, performance and governance of the National Disability Insurance Scheme*, established 30 November 2017;
- c) Submit evidence to the Parliamentary Inquiry on the NDIS based on the DRG's understanding of participants' experiences and community suggestions for improvements to the NDIS; and
- d) Periodically provide ACT-specific information on NDIS implementation to the NDIS Advisory Council and the National Disability and Carers Council.

How the DRG will work in its priority areas:

- 1) The DRG will normally meet 6 times per year.
- 2) Some work will be conducted by DRG members out-of-session. Such work falls into two broad categories:
 - a) Consideration of DRG papers and / or advice that cannot wait until the next scheduled DRG meeting; and
 - b) Participation in partnership / associated bodies and / or events as a representative of the DRG (e.g. hosting events, attending community forums, meetings or launches, etc)
- 3) DRG members may choose to focus their contributions on particular DRG priority areas through subject matter reference or working groups. Such groups may:
 - a) consider certain topics in greater detail out of session,
 - b) act as the first point of call for feedback to the Office for Disability and / or
 - c) prepare for, host or attend themed events on behalf of the DRG.