

Empowered Lives

SECURING CHANGE FOR VICTORIANS WITH DISABILITY

Empowered Lives brings together people with disability, advocates, and organisations across the Victorian disability community.

Together, we have developed this platform for change – outlining the key issues that face Victorians with disability in their interactions with Victorian Government systems, and setting out achievable actions the Government can take to provide more opportunities for people with disability, more inclusive environments and communities, and stronger support when needed.

This factsheet provides information about one of the areas for change identified in the platform.



10 Nurture a strong disability service system

Goal: Victorians with disability have access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

Access to specialist support is critical for many people with disability, to ensure their specific needs are met and that they are able to participate fully in community life. While the NDIS has brought opportunity and the chance for greater choice and control over services for many people with disability, there are emerging gaps between the NDIS and state-funded services, and for people who are not NDIS participants. Ensuring there is a strong, sustainable workforce is also essential to support Victorians with disability.

We call on the Victorian Government to:

Address emerging gaps between the NDIS and other services

By the time the NDIS is fully rolled out, it is expected that approximately 105,000 Victorians will be part of the scheme,¹ leaving around one million Victorians with disability who will require support outside the NDIS.² The Victorian Government has promised 'continuity of care' for people with disabilities and their carers during the transition to the NDIS, but large service gaps are emerging, and lack of certainty around funding is creating distress for people and organisations.



The Victorian Government should provide information to the community about the gaps between disability and mainstream services during the NDIS roll-out,³ and provide adequate funding for mainstream services outside the NDIS to meet the needs of all people with disability, including those who are not eligible for the NDIS.

Guarantee quality crisis response services

The disability and other service systems have changed since the introduction of the NDIS, and some people are falling through the cracks, getting stuck in a system where nobody will take responsibility for providing adequate services. One area in which this has already become apparent is in crisis response services, including 'provider of last resort' arrangements. This has led to people being kept for long periods of time in inappropriate settings, such as hospitals and prisons, because they have nowhere else to go.⁴

The Government should work with the NDIA, the Commonwealth Government and other state and territory governments to clarify responsibilities for the provision of crisis response services for NDIS participants – including provider of last resort arrangements – urgently. The Victorian Government should also ensure quality crisis response services are available when and where needed for people who are not NDIS participants.

Support development of the disability workforce

There are serious challenges facing the disability workforce in Victoria with the introduction of the NDIS, including training and development, remuneration, casualisation of the workforce, and opportunities for peer workers and people with disability to participate.

More information

More information about Empowered Lives, including the full platform and an Easy English summary, can be found online at empoweredlives.vcoss.org.au/



We welcome the Victorian Government's recent announcement that the Certificate IV in Disability will be free in Victoria from 2019. This should continue in future years, and to complement it the Government could explore further ways to support people with diverse backgrounds and experience entering the workforce, such as through scholarship programs for individuals and grant programs for organisations.⁵

The Victorian Government could also work with organisations and people with disability to develop and promote career pathways and professional development opportunities for people working in the sector.

1 NDIA, *NDIS Victoria roll out: Participant Information Pack*, 2015.

2 ABS, *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Victoria, 2015*, Catalogue #4430.0.

3 Productivity Commission, *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Costs: Study report*, 2017, Recommendation 6.2.

4 See, for example: Victoria Legal Aid, *Clients and market failure by the NDIS*, webpage, 9 November 2017; R Morton, 'NDIS abandons disabled to state hospitals', *The Australian*, 16 January 2018.

5 Future Social Service Institute, *Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Market Readiness*, 2018.

This project has been funded by the Victorian Government through a Disability Advocacy Innovation Fund grant from the Office for Disability.

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2018*

