



Disability Council NSW

DIRECTION STATEMENT

2020 – 2021

2020

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This strategic direction statement defines the Disability Council NSW's purpose and outcomes for the 2020-2021 period.

Who We Are

The Disability Council NSW (Council) has been established by the NSW Government under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (NSW)¹. Its functions are to:

- Monitor the implementation of government policy in relation to people with disability and their families,
- Advise the Minister for Disability Services on emerging issues related to people with disability,
- Advise public authorities about the content and implementation of disability inclusion action plans (DIAPs),
- Advise the Minister for Disability Services on the content and implementation of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (NSW DIP) and DIAPs,
- Promote the inclusion of people with disability in the community,
- Promote community awareness of matters concerning the interests of people with disability and their families,
- Consult with National People with Disabilities and NSW Carers Council and other similar bodies,
- Consult with people with disability and undertake research about matters relating to people with disability,
- Any other functions prescribed by the regulations².

Council is made up of 12 members³, and is led by a Chair and Deputy Chair. Each member is appointed for up to four years by the Government on the recommendation of the Minister for Disability Services. The Chair and Deputy Chair each hold their

¹ Section 15.

² Section, 17, *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (NSW).

³ Section 16, *ibid*.

positions for the period of one year, but can be reappointed at the direction of the NSW Government.⁴

Members are selected based on their lived experience with disability and expertise in disability issues as well as for their commitment to improving the lives of people with disability in NSW.

Council is diverse with members coming from a wide range of backgrounds and bring to the Council varied skillsets. Council's membership includes Aboriginal people, people from cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, young people, and people from rural and regional NSW. While the membership is primarily made up of individuals with disability, family members and carers of people with disability are also represented. Council also includes individuals who have professional expertise in disability issues. A list of current members and their backgrounds can be found under profiles at: www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/advisory-councils/disability

Council is funded by the NSW Government and receives secretariat support from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

This Direction Statement outlines the strategic direction for Council for the 2020-2021 period (two years). It also provides a framework on which the for Council can assess its performance during this period.

Our Purpose and Outcomes

The **purpose** of Council is to:

- (1) Consult with people with disability and
- (2) Provide the Minister for Disability Services with independent advice on matters that affect people with disability in NSW, as well as their families and carers.

The **outcomes** of this Direction Statement are aimed to ensure that:

- Council seeks for all people with disability to experience the full effects of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

⁴ Schedule 1 Part 2, DIA

- Council seeks for people to be able to fully participate in the life of the community through:
 - Being empowered and in control of their lives;
 - Having their physical, social, cultural and economic needs met;
 - Living safely, free of fear and discrimination;
 - Being included in all facets of society and having the opportunity to enjoy the full benefits of citizenship and fully participate in their communities;
 - Having hope and a capacity to see a better future;
 - Being valued and respected.

Our Roles & Functions

Council's primary role is to **provide advice and other forms of feedback** to the Minister for Disability Services and to the NSW Government. To fulfil this role the Council:

- Conducts **consultations** and engages in **research** to provide an evidence base for its work;
- Develops **policy papers**, submissions and other official documents to help influence government decision making;
- Advises the development and implementation of the NSW DIP by the NSW Government and the DIAPs of public agencies in NSW;
- **Builds networks** with key stakeholders both within government and the community, including other governmental advisory councils and representative bodies at the local, state and national levels;
- **Promotes disability inclusion perspectives** in key government, business, community discussions and public debates;
- **Raises awareness** about the needs, interests and aspirations of people with disability and celebrates and promotes their contributions to community life.

Our Priorities for 2020 – 2021

Council is committed to providing evidence-based, relevant advice to the Minister for Disability Services and NSW Government to ensure that people with disability's voices are heard within government. Council's four focus areas for 2020-2021 are:

1) Employment:

- Aim: To promote opportunities for improving pathways to and in employment for people with disability. Leverage off the opportunity in the DIAPs and the NSW Government commitment to increasing employment of people with disability.

2) National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):

- Aim: To promote the need for services and supports that are not addressed by the NDIS and particularly its intersection with health services.

3) National agenda:

- Aim: To build relationships and exert influence on national activities. Particularly focus on building a national voice with equivalent Councils in other States/Territories and in the Commonwealth.

4) Advice:

- Aim: To ensure the perspective of people with disability is effectively expressed in the development and implementation of Government policy and programs.

Our Success Factors

Over the next two years Council will know it has been successful if:

- The Rights and perspectives of people with disability in NSW is reflected in Council's advice to the Minister and Government;
- The Minister and other key decision makers value Council's advice;
- Council's work is valued by disability stakeholders in NSW.

These will be measured by:

- Council's advice is reflected in Government policy and initiatives;

- At least once per year seeking feedback from a cross-section of stakeholders on:
 - Awareness of Council and its work;
 - How well Council has reflected the views of people with disability in NSW;
 - How well Council has progressed each of its priorities;
 - Whether Council has positively contributed to advancing the rights of people with disability in NSW.

Putting the Plan into Action

In order to put this plan into action Council will:

- Develop and monitor an annual work plan to action the priorities listed;
- Maintain strong governance and communication systems between:
 - Secretariat
 - Council
 - Minister for Disability Services
 - DCJ
- Make Council's website fully accessible;
- Implement processes to better utilise individual Council members' expertise;
- Implement annual review and feedback processes with Minister, and other stakeholders through a self-review process;
- Design, distribute and analyse feedback arising from an annual stakeholder survey.