



Legislative Assembly for the ACT
Standing Committee on Education & Community Inclusion
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HCCA Submission:

ACT Legislative Assembly Inquiry into the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024

We are pleased to provide our support for the Disability Inclusion Bill 2024 ("the Bill").

Social model of disability

We note the inclusion of a social model of disability in the Bill and that this is already included in the *ACT Disability Health Strategy 2024-2033* and Canberra Health Services' *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2025*.

The Bill is consistent with HCCA's Inclusive Health Care Position Statement which states:

Inclusive health care requires that healthcare systems, policy makers and their providers:

- Understand the diversity of consumers;
- Respond to consumers' values, preferences, needs and the barriers they experience to full participation;
- Undertake continuous learning, through training and reflection;
- Reflect on their own identity, experiences, privilege, and bias/or unconscious biases.

Inclusive health care also includes:

- A workforce reflective of community diversity;
- Genuine opportunities for consumer participation and feedback that form part of the systems for quality improvement and guide planning and delivery of care; and

Our view is that this Bill will operate in support of these principles.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

We support the inclusion of reference to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities* in the Bill. We also support linking the Bill to Australia's Disability Strategy and the commitments and responsibilities it contains.

Disability inclusion: equity and equality

Health Care Consumers' Association

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We note that in Part 2 Section 6 Important Concepts that:

...**disability inclusion** is a process intended to achieve equity between people with disability and other members of the community...[underlining added]

Section 6 goes on to state:

- (a) ensuring equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes between people with disability and other members of the community [underlining added]

We welcome disability inclusion processes that recognise the different starting points of people living with disabilities and strive for equity. We support equality of rights, responsibilities and outcomes. We are concerned that the inclusion of ‘*ensuring equality of “opportunities”*’ may mean that access and inclusion strategies targeted at people living with disabilities may be interpreted as unequal and this may impact effectiveness.

Disability Advisory Council

We support the establishment of a Disability Advisory Council (“the Council”), including ensuring diversity amongst its members, and would like the functions of the Council to include advising the responsible Minister on the development, implementation, evaluation and reporting on the Disability Inclusion Strategies as described in Part 3.

Section 10 could specifically require the Minister to seek advice from the Council. We would like to see the Council required to work with and take into account the advice and priorities of existing Disability Reference Groups where these are consistent with the Object of the Act.

We suggest that the Bill should ensure that appropriate resourcing be provided to the Council to carry out its functions.

Thank you again for the opportunity to register our support for the Bill.

Yours sincerely



Darlene Cox
Executive Director
22 March 2024