

NSW DISABILITY NETWORK FORUM

This Update is designed to provide information on the activities of the NSW Disability Network Forum (DNF). Updates are produced regularly after scheduled DNF meetings. Contact the DNF through the NCOSS secretariat at the contact details listed below.

June

Disability Reform Council meeting on 24 April Update

The Disability Reform Council Communique of 24 April 2015 outlined that some supports related to individual advocacy such as decision support, safeguards support and support to approach and interact with disability and mainstream services would be funded by the NDIS — either through individual packages or through a revised Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Policy Framework. The Communique did not provide detail about the scope of this funding.

The Communique stated that systemic advocacy would be funded outside the NDIS, without detailing the source of the funding. It was decided that more information would be sought to clarify arrangements for funding systemic advocacy.

Delegation to the Disability Council of NSW

A delegation of four members of the DNF met with the Disability Council in June. The meeting went well and the delegation shared information about DNF and concerns about future funding of independent advocacy, representation and information services in NSW. There were a lot of similarities in goals and interests. Delegates contextualised what advocacy, representation and information mean for people with disability and sought for clarity about Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) and funding for systemic advocacy. The delegation shared the DNF position Statement with the Council and laid the foundation for further dialogue between the groups.

Guest Speaker: John Le Breton Chief Executive Officer, Greystanes Disability Services

John le Breton shared his experience with devolution of large residential centres and as a provider of person-centred support in accommodation. Members discussed issues including the consultation process being undertaken around devolution, advocacy for isolated residents of large institutions and strategies to persuade the NDIA (and others) of the importance of separating accommodation and support.

Consultation: Rose Samuels Principal Project Officer - Workforce Management (FACS)

Rose discussed the process FACS is using to consult stakeholders on its Disability Action Plan and attempts to streamline consultation processes for plans being developed by other NSW Government Agencies. Members commented that:

- The DNF values the opportunity to engage to improve planning process
- There could be value in holding joint sessions and disseminating information broadly to avoid duplication. As many disability organisations are small and operating at capacity the demand for consultation with representative bodies may require these processes to be resourced through the provision of sitting fees or other means.

Submission to Disability Employment Taskforce

The Disability Employment Taskforce has been established to review the entire disability employment system and develop a National Disability Employment Framework to boost employment rates for people with disability.

Contact the **NSW Disability Network Forum** through the NCOSS secretariat
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The Issues Paper has been released: <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/disability-employment-services/disability-employment-framework-consultation>. The group agreed to develop a submission which has since been lodged. The submission can be accessed [here](#).

July

Mary Mallett, CEO of the Disability Advocacy Network Australia

Mary discussed the review being undertaken by DSS into the National Disability Advocacy Framework and advocacy funding generally. The group discussed points for the DNF submission into the review, including

- the need to emphasise the importance of independent advocacy; and
- the need for advocacy outside the NDIS and the provision of disability services.

Mary discussed the advocacy funding situation in other States. Mary noted that the current review is of the Framework only and a review of the National Disability Advocacy Program would soon follow.

Draft DNF Strategic Plan

With the many reforms happening in disability, the DNF decided to develop a new Strategic Plan for the period July 2015-December 2016. The Plan focuses on four key areas:

1. Inclusion and participation
2. Housing
3. Independent advocacy, information and representation
4. NDIS and Disability Services

About the NSW Disability Network Forum

The NSW Disability Network Forum comprises non-government, non-provider peak representative, advocacy and information groups whose primary purpose is to promote the interests of people with disability. The aim of the DNF is to build capacity so that the interests of people with disability are advanced through policy and systemic advocacy.

NSW Disability Network Forum Member Organisations:

Aboriginal Disability Network NSW	Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW
Association of Blind Citizens of NSW	NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health
Brain Injury Association NSW	NSW Council for Intellectual Disability
Deaf Australia NSW	NSW Disability Advocacy Network
Deaf Society of NSW	People with Disability Australia
DeafBlind Association NSW	Physical Disability Council of NSW
Deafness Council (NSW)	Positive Life NSW
Information on Disability and Education Awareness Services	Self Advocacy Sydney
Institute For Family Advocacy	Side By Side Advocacy Incorporated
Intellectual Disability Rights Service	Council of Social Service of NSW

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