



## Abuse & Neglect in WA's Disability Sector

Leaders in WA's Disability Sector launch [NationalDisabilityAbuseInquiry.com](http://NationalDisabilityAbuseInquiry.com) to prove the abuse and neglect facing WA's people with disabilities.

- **PRESS CONFERENCE: 11.30am Parliament House steps, West Perth.**
- **In attendance: Samantha Connor, Taryn Harvey, Kelly Shay and Ben Keely.**

In light of the recent abuse allegations and investigations into disability care in Victoria, WA's leaders in disability advocacy and care have come together to support a national inquiry into the sector.

Samantha Connor; disabilities advocate, administrator of Disabilities Clothesline & board member of People with Disability Australia (PWDA) will today launch [NationalDisabilityAbuseInquiry.com](http://NationalDisabilityAbuseInquiry.com) to support a national inquiry into disability care facilities and support workers.

The site also brings to light confronting stories showing the truth of what is happening to people with disabilities across the country.

"Every day, an Australian with disability is abused, raped, neglected or assaulted in residential or institutional settings," Ms Connor said.

"The first step is to support a national inquiry into disability abuse.

"We must engage with people with disability and their families, to ensure they are at the forefront of reforms and increase transparency and accountability in the service sector."

**Gemma Walsh** | Media Advisor

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Ben Keely who has Cerebral Palsy said his experience of disability care showed that people with significant disabilities were vulnerable to neglect in formal care settings.

“Most of the day I was sitting alone in a room with no water or food, or even the tablets I need to take.

“This went on until I said enough is enough.

“I stayed in that place for a year and I still maintain that it was the worst year of my life.

“I think (Disability) agencies should be held accountable for their actions,” Mr Keely said.

Taryn Harvey, CEO of Developmental Disability WA (DD WA), says abuse and neglect is underreported in the sector.

“People with significant disabilities face huge barriers in bringing abuse and neglect to the attention of people and making complaints. Especially those with intellectual disabilities or communication challenges.

“It is unreported in the community generally, and there is no reason to believe it is not also under-reported in the sector. This week’s Victorian story demonstrates that” Ms Harvey said.

Kelly Shay, Assistant Secretary of United Voice WA the Disability Support Workers Union, said United Voice direct care members provide high quality support and care for individuals with disabilities in a range of settings.

“We believe that individuals with disabilities, their families and the workforce should be treated with dignity and respect.

“We are strongly opposed to abuse, violence or neglect of any kind of individuals with disabilities.

“We whole heartedly support the call for a national inquiry,” Ms Shay said.

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