



Inclusion Australia

acting locally - representing nationally - connecting globally

We have to *Do Something* about Abuse. Now.

Inclusion Australia (formerly the National Council on Intellectual Disability) supports a national inquiry by the Australian Senate into abuse, violence and neglect against people with disability.

Inclusion Australia welcomes the moral leadership of Senator Siewert and the Australian Greens by calling for a national inquiry by the Commonwealth Parliament about the ongoing abuse of people with disability.

“Excuse me, just get off your backsides.
Do something about it.” (Craig McDonald, 4Corners).

Inclusion Australia president, Kevin Stone, publicly called for a national inquiry into the quality of disability services on September 13, 2012 following revelations of widespread abuse of people with disability on the ABC Lateline program.

Kevin Stone said, “People with intellectual disability are often fearful of challenging decisions or asserting themselves - often with good reason. They frequently experience a range of negative consequences for speaking up - ranging from paternalism and condescension to oppression and abuse.

A national inquiry will give all people with disability, their families, advocates and others the opportunity to have their say on how they are being treated and what should be done to address violence, abuse and neglect in the national disability service system, and in the wider community.”

“And it is still happening to other people -
and it should not be.” (Jules Anderson, 4Corners)

The ABC 4Corners report in late 2014 further revealed the vulnerability of people with disability to abuse and the inadequacy of State and Commonwealth disability service systems’ capacity to address serious breaches of basic human rights.

People with intellectual disability are our children, our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our friends and colleagues. Violence, abuse and neglect are not acceptable under any circumstance.

Disability service providers and their staff should be exemplary in providing support which upholds the basic human dignity and rights of people with disability. This is not currently the case and we must work together to do something about it.

Inclusion Australia welcomes the investigation by the Victorian Ombudsman into how allegations of abuse in the disability sector are reported and investigated, and also the promised investigation by the Victorian government. We also welcome the initiative by the National Disability Insurance Agency to develop a strategy of safeguards for people with disability participating in the NDIS.

We do need, however, a national response that can address the issues of violence, abuse and neglect that cut across State, Territory, and Commonwealth jurisdiction lines, disability service provision lines, and the Australian community at large.

A national inquiry will need to provide a new direction and address a range of much needed reform including;

- Staff Screening, Training and Accreditation;
- Service Standards and Monitoring;
- Mandatory reporting of violence, abuse or neglect;
- A skilled response by authorities to reports of violence, abuse and neglect; and,
- Protections for service provider staff or whistleblowers who report abuse.

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Inclusion Australia is the national and leading voice on issues of importance to people with intellectual disability in Australia. Inclusion Australia brings together members from across Australia, all of who are connected locally to people with intellectual disability and who are committed to the vision of inclusion.

Formerly known as the National Council on Intellectual Disability – Inclusion Australia's strength comes from its members diversity, experience and expertise on intellectual disability.

Inclusion Australia is also guided by the Our Voice Committee whose membership is solely people with intellectual disability.

Collectively, Inclusion Australia works at a national level, providing policy expertise and advice to drive systemic change.

Inclusion Australia is also a member of Inclusion International, the international network that represents people with intellectual disabilities and their families. This provides many opportunities to collaborate and share information internationally.