



people with
disabilities
western
australia



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY *wa*

Media Release

Inquiry Endorsed into ‘Australia’s Hidden Shame’

Today the Federal Senate has endorsed a national inquiry into disability violence, abuse and neglect in residential and institutional settings.

People with Disability WA’s Executive Director Samantha Jenkinson today applauded the move, saying that the problem was rife across Australia, including in WA.

‘In recognition of the issues, we are working together with Developmental Disability WA and union United Voice and have commenced a three month State inquiry to investigate the prevalence of violence, abuse and neglect in Western Australia,’ she said.

‘It is encouraging that the Federal Government has heard the voices of people with disability, especially those who are amongst the most marginalised. Over 90% of women with intellectual disability have been subjected to sexual, domestic or other violence – it is Australia’s hidden shame.’

Disability advocates Samantha Connor and Ben Keely have been commissioned to investigate violence, neglect and abuse in WA, including abuse in schools, boarding houses, day centres, group homes and supported accommodation.

‘We hear too often of people being taken advantage of sexually and physically,’ said Ben Keely, a psychology student and survivor of institutional neglect and abuse.

‘What’s worse, if you are unable to communicate your problems or have no family or friends to support you, you are left with no hope, nowhere to go and certainly no justice.’

Greens senator Rachel Siewert said that there is an unacceptably high number of people with disability who have been subjected to abuse and violence while in care.

‘It is not just a state issue, it is a federal one, and it needs national leadership,’ she said this week.

The Western Australian Disability Abuse Inquiry commences this week.

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11 February 2015