

Media Release

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For immediate release

Challenge of NDIS complaints

A report tabled in Parliament this week highlights challenges for people with a disability in the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Disability Services Commissioner (DSC) has tabled his 2017 annual report in Victorian Parliament this week with statistics and information about complaints and serious incidents that occur in disability services.

In the first full year of transition to the NDIS, DSC has seen an increase in the number of NDIS-related enquiries and complaints, from 12 complaints in 2015-16 to 124 enquiries and complaints in 2016-17.

The Commissioner, Laurie Harkin AM, says “While this may seem like a large number, I am concerned that we’re not seeing enough complaints from the 15,000 Victorians with a disability who have transitioned to the NDIS in the past year.”

“We know anecdotally that many people have been unhappy with their NDIS planning process and with the way their plans have been delivered by their chosen disability services. Yet, we hear that people don’t know where to turn to for help, advice, and a resolution of their complaint.”

The Commissioner urges everyone to remember that his office is able to take complaints about NDIS-funded supports and Victorian disability service providers.

“Our office is available on 1800 677 342 to take enquiries and complaints about disability services. Even if we can’t deal with your complaint, we can help direct you to the right place. Everyone should feel confident in speaking up if they’re unhappy with their supports.”

The *Disability Amendment Act 2017* recently provided DSC with additional powers to investigate and inspect disability services if there are concerns about violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

To access the 2017 DSC Annual Report, please visit www.odsc.vic.gov.au.

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Media Enquiries

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About the Disability Services Commissioner

Established under the *Disability Act 2006*, the Disability Services Commissioner (DSC) is an independent oversight body for the Victorian disability services sector. DSC handles complaints, initiates investigations and can inspect disability services. DSC also has oversight of reports about deaths, assault, injury and poor quality of care in disability services, and delivers education and information to the disability sector on responding to complaints and the prevention and reporting of abuse.

Key statistics from 2017 DSC Annual Report:

- 1,213 enquiries and complaints handled in 2016-17, with a significant increase in concerns about quality of service (69 per cent in 2016-17 compared to 48 per cent in 2015-16).
- 124 enquiries and complaints related to NDIS-funded supports, including the NDIS planning process.
- 16 investigations were finalised in 2016-17, with the original complaints relating mainly to assault, abuse or neglect. Where a disability support worker made the complaint, they chose to remain anonymous.
- 1,060 critical incident reports were reviewed in 2016-17, with 43 per cent relating to allegations of physical assault, 28 per cent relating to injury, 18 per cent relating to allegations of sexual assault, and 11 per cent relating to poor quality of care.
- 2,504 new and carried forward complaints were reported by registered Victorian disability service providers in 2016-17.