



Royal Commission
into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
of People with Disability

Issues Paper

Health care for people with cognitive disability

Easy Read version



16 December 2019

Easy read

This is an Easy Read document.

Some words are in **bold**. We tell you what they mean at the end.

Introduction

The **Royal Commission** into **Violence, Abuse, Neglect** and **Exploitation** of People with Disability is looking at people with disability in Australia and their

- Safety
- Treatment
- Rights, and
- Supports

It can be hard for people with disability to get the health care they need.

This can mean their health is affected. They might be unwell for longer or even die because of their bad health.

Issue

The Commission is looking at health for people with cognitive disability including

- Making your own decisions about your body and health
- Giving **consent**
- Treatments are what you need and decide on
- Wellbeing which is also **spiritual, cultural or social**
- Whether some groups miss out on health care they need

People with disability have the right to decent and accessible health care.

Some of the **barriers** we know of include

- Medical professionals don't have or take time to explain things so people with disability understand
- Not enough information makes decision making hard
- Cost and transport
- Medical professionals thinking all health problems are because of the disability
- Problems between NDIS and health care
- People getting stuck in hospital for a long time

You can tell us about other issues and experiences.

Questions

These questions

These have been written as thinking points. You can tell us about other issues and experiences too.

People with cognitive disability

This Issues paper focuses on health care for people with cognitive disability.

A **person with cognitive disability** (including intellectual disability) may have some differences in how they think, remember, concentrate, communicate or learn.

Questions

Tell us your thoughts and experiences with these issues.

We would like to know about health care for people with cognitive disability.

1. What do you think of the quality of health care for people with cognitive disability?

Quality of health care is how well you are supported with your health.

2. What problems have you had getting health care as a person with cognitive disability?

- What stops you from getting good health care?

3. What problems have you had with the NDIS and getting health care as a person with cognitive disability?

4. What should change to make health care for people with cognitive disability better?
 - How can the NDIS and healthcare work better together?
5. Why do you think violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation happens in health care?
6. Is violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation for people with cognitive disability worse in some types of health services?
 - This might mean doctors' offices, hospitals, **specialists** or somewhere else.
7. Is violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation for different groups of people with cognitive disability worse? For example, people who are male or female, or from different countries?
8. What could stop violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation in health care?
 - What would make people with cognitive disability feel safer in getting health care?
9. What stops you making a complaint or telling if someone hurts you in the health care system?
10. Are there any other problems about health care you would like to share with us?

Support

If you are feeling upset by thinking about things that have happened to you, you can get free help for how you feel.

Contact Blue Knot on the National Counselling and Referral Service.

If you are worried about talking to us or making a submission, you can get free legal help from

- National Legal Aid, and
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services.

Further information about these supports is on our website: [Disability Royal Commission - legal and emotional supports](#)

Have your say

We want to hear about your experiences and opinions on Health Care.

You can do this by

- Telling us what you think about the things in this issues paper
- Making a **submission**

The questions and information in this paper are for ideas only.

You can tell us about other things that have happened.

Your response will not be made public if you do not want it to be.

How to tell us what you think about this issues paper

Information and questions are included in this paper to help you tell the Royal Commission your thoughts. You can do this by

- Email to DRCEnquiries@royalcommission.gov.au
- Letter to GPO Box 1422, BRISBANE QLD 4001, or

- Phone on **1800 517 199**.

We would like to hear from you before **20 March 2020**

Please let us know if you need more time.

Make a submission

You can make submissions about your experiences by going to our website

[Disability Royal Commission - make a submission](#)

Contact us

You can phone **1800 517 199** between 9am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

If you are experiencing any violence or abuse, or if you feel unsafe call 000 or contact the Police.

Website – www.disability.royalcommission.gov.au

Word List

Abuse

If someone is treating you badly.

Barriers

Things that stop you from accessing health care or other services.

Bold

Dark writing like **this** is bold.

Cognitive Disability

A person with cognitive disability (including intellectual disability) may have some differences in how they think, remember, concentrate, communicate or learn.

Consent

Saying yes or giving the OK for something to happen to you.

Exploitation

If someone is taking advantage of you.

Neglect

If someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.

Royal Commission

A formal public inquiry.

It is an official way of looking into a big problem and working out what went wrong.

Specialists

Doctors who are experts in one or two types of medicine. Like a psychiatrist or an endocrinologist and more.

Submission

An official way of giving information to the Royal Commission.

Wellbeing including spiritual or cultural or social

Wellbeing is more than just physical health. It can also include what you believe spiritually and religiously. It can include your community and culture and participation in them.

Violence

If someone is hurting your body.



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