How to use this issues paper

The Disability Royal Commission (the Royal Commission) wrote this issues paper.

When you see the word ‘we’, it means the Royal Commission.

We wrote this issues paper in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

We have written some words in bold.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.

We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 32.

This Easy Read issues paper is a summary of another issues paper.

You can find the other issues paper on our website.
You can ask for help to read this issues paper. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

An issue is a subject or problem that people are thinking and talking about.

We have written this issues paper to find out what you and the community think about some issues.

There are some questions in this issues paper.

You don’t need to answer all our questions. Our questions are just a guide.
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What is the Royal Commission about?

This Royal Commission is called the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

We call it the Royal Commission.

We need the Royal Commission because we know that people with disability experience:

- **violence** – when someone hurts you physically

- **abuse** – when someone treats you badly

- **neglect** – when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you

- **exploitation** – when someone takes advantage of you.
What is this issues paper about?

This issues paper is about safeguards.

Safeguards are things we can do to:

- keep someone safe
- make sure they still have choice and control.

Safeguards can be:

- formal
- informal.

When something is formal, there are strict rules about how it should be done.
When something is informal, the rules about how it should be done are not very strict.

We talk about safeguards in more detail on page 13.

This issues paper is also about quality.

Quality is how good something is.

For people with disability, this can be getting good services that:

- meet their needs
- give them choice and control.
Quality services work with people with disability to get the best results.

Quality services:

- listen to what people want
- try to give people what they need.

Quality services always try to get better at how they work.

This issues paper is also about the services and **systems** people with disability need.

Systems are things that:

- connect with each other
- work together.
The services and systems people with disability need include:

- schools and places people go to learn
- health care services
- the justice system
- transport systems
- housing services
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The justice system includes:

- police
- courts
- the law
- prisons.

The NDIS is a way to support people with disability.
Questions to think about

What safeguards do services and systems need to protect people with disability?

How do quality services and systems keep people with disability safe from:

- violence?
- abuse?
- neglect?
- exploitation?
The rights of people with disability

**Rights** are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UN Convention) is an agreement between different countries.

The UN Convention sets out the rights of people with disability.

It explains how people with disability should be treated:

- fairly
- equally.
The UN Convention says people with disability have the right to live free from:

- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.

The UN Convention says governments must have formal safeguards to protect people with disability in their:

- laws
- policies.

Policies are:

- government plans for how to do things
- where rules come from.
Formal safeguards

People with disability use many services during their lives.

Services use formal safeguards such as:

- rules and laws
- documents to tell their staff how they must do things
- safe ways of working
- listening to complaints and fixing problems.

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn’t working well.

People with disability can face barriers when they try to make a complaint.
A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.

For example, a service might:

- make it hard for you to make your complaint
- stop you from making your complaint
- not listen to your complaint
- not do anything about your complaint.

Services must be high quality to keep people with disability safe from:

- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.
High quality services have rules about how they:

- think about risks
- keep people safe
- deal with problems that happen
- make sure people follow their policies.

Questions to think about

How can we make formal safeguards better?

Do you know good ways of keeping people with safe that are being used:

- in Australia?
- around the world?

What are they?

What barriers do people with disability face when they make complaints?

How can we take these barriers away?
Informal safeguards

Informal safeguards are other ways people with disability can keep themselves safe.

Informal safeguards include support for people with disability to:

- build their skills so they can connect with more people
- speak up
- be independent
- be confident.

When you are independent, you are in control of your own:

- life
- choices.

When you are confident, you:

- believe in yourself
- know what you can do
- can try new things.
People with disability must:

- have control over their own lives
- make choices about their own lives
- have a chance to take risks.

Informal safeguards include things like:

- having good relationships with people you can trust
- being able to speak up for yourself.

People with disability can have some safeguards that are already part of their everyday life, such as:

- friends and family
- teachers
- people they work with.
Sometimes people with disability need to find their own safeguards.

These safeguards might include:

- advocates
- microboards
- peer support groups.

An advocate is someone who can:

- support you
- help you have your say
- give you information and advice.

A microboard is a small group of people who get together and support someone to:

- set and reach their goals
- make choices and decisions
- plan how to live a good life.
In a peer support group, people who have had similar experiences:

- share ideas
- support each other.

Things that happen to people with disability when they are young can affect them their whole life.

We want to understand how to better support people with disability across their lives such as:

- when they are a child
- while they are growing up
- when they are an adult.
This will help people feel stronger and more confident.

It will help more people to:

- speak up
- be safe.
Questions to think about

How can we make informal safeguards better?

How can informal safeguards better support people with disability to:

- be independent?

- have choice and control?

What different safeguards have you had at different times of your life?

How can we support people with disability to use safeguards at different times in their life?
The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has rules about safeguards for NDIS participants.

NDIS participants are people with disability who:

- take part in the NDIS
- have NDIS plans
- have NDIS funding.

Funding is money from the government to pay for supports and services.

These rules are called the Quality and Safeguarding Framework (the NDIS Framework).

The goal of the NDIS Framework is to make sure NDIS participants:

- are safe
- get good quality services.
The NDIS Framework includes ways to make sure:

- service providers follow the rules
- support workers follow the rules
- people who work with NDIS participants keep them safe.

The NDIS Framework also has ways to deal with complaints about NDIS supports and services.

**Questions to think about**

Many services that NDIS participants use are only for people with disability.

Do they need different safeguards?

What safeguards should disability services use?
What affects the experience of people with disability?

People with disability can have different experiences based on their:

- age
- sex – whether their body is male or female
- **gender identity**
- sexual orientation – who they love or are attracted to.

Your gender identity is not about your body being male or female.

It is about who you feel you are as a person.

Your gender identity can be:

- male
- female
- a combination of these
- none of these.

We often say LGBTIQ when we talk about people with different:

- gender identities
- sexual orientations.
LGBTIQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning.

People with disability can also have different experiences if they:

- come from other cultures and backgrounds
- speak languages other than English
- are First Nations people.

First Nations people are also known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
Questions to think about

How can we make sure safeguards meet the needs of:

- children and young people with disability?
- women with disability?
- LGBTIQ people with disability?
- people with disability who come from other cultures and backgrounds?
- people with disability who speak languages other than English?
- First Nations people with disability?
How can we make safeguards better for people from these groups?

How can we make it easy for people from these groups to make complaints?
Other questions to think about

Have we missed anything?

What else do we need to know about safeguards?

What else do we need to know about quality services?
How to tell us your answers

You can send us your answers to our questions:

- by email
  DRCEnquiries@royalcommission.gov.au

- in the mail
  GPO Box 1422
  Brisbane
  QLD 4001.

Or you can speak to us on the phone:

1800 517 199
(07) 3734 1900

We are available to talk from Monday to Friday between 9 am and 5 pm.

We can make a time with you to take your response over the phone.
You can tell us:

- in writing
- in a video
- as an audio recording.

You can use:

- English
- another language you speak
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages
- Auslan.

We would like to have everyone’s answers by 1 February 2021.

But we will still accept answers after this date if you need more time.
How will we use your answers?

All the answers people give us will help the Royal Commission with our work.

We might share your answers:

- on our website
- in reports we write.

If you let us share your answers, you can ask us not to include:

- your name
- any information about you.

You must tell us if you don’t want us to share your answers.
Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this issues paper mean.

**Abuse**

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.

**Advocate**

An advocate is someone who can:

- support you
- help you have your say
- give you information and advice.

**Barrier**

A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.

**Complaint**

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn’t working well.
Confident

When you are confident, you:

- believe in yourself
- know what you can do
- can try new things.

Exploitation

Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of you.

First Nations people

First Nations people are also known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Formal

When something is formal, there are strict rules about how it should be done.

Funding

Funding is money from the government to pay for supports and services.
Gender identity

Your gender identity is not about your body being male or female. It is about who you feel you are as a person.

Your gender identity can be:

- male
- female
- a combination of these
- none of these.

Independent

When you are independent, you are in control of your own:

- life
- choices.

Informal

When something is informal, the rules about how it should be done are not very strict.

Informal safeguards

Informal safeguards are ways to support people with disability so they can keep themselves safe.
**Issue**

An issue is a subject or problem that people are thinking and talking about.

**Justice system**

The justice system includes:

- police
- courts
- the law
- prisons.

**Microboard**

A microboard is a small group of people who get together and support someone to:

- set goals
- make choices and decisions
- live a good life.

**National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

The NDIS is a way to support people with disability.

**NDIS participants**

NDIS participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.
Neglect

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

Policies

Policies are:

• government plans for how to do things
• where rules come from.

Quality

Quality is when people with disability get good services that:

• meet their needs
• give them choice and control.

Rights

Rights are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.

Safeguards

Safeguards are things we can do to:

• keep someone safe
• make sure they still have choice and control.
Systems

Systems are things that:

- connect with each other
- work together.

Violence

Violence is when someone hurts you physically.