

TAS Election 2024

# NDS Top 5 Priorities

National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak body in Tasmania for non-government disability services organisations. 140,000 Tasmanians (or 26.8 per cent) have a disability - the highest rate in Australia. NDS members operate several thousand services for people with all types of disability. NDS's vision is for an inclusive Tasmania where all people live safely and equitably. To achieve this, people with disability need to access the right supports, at the right time, from the right people, services, and systems.



## 1. Increase peak body funding to support high quality services

NDS has received State funding to operate as the peak body for disability services for many years. NDS has a proven track record in collaborating and supporting providers to implement best practice. With the disability sector set to undergo substantive reform, it has never been more important to increase peak funding and move to five year agreements, to build sustainable sector support.

For reform of the sector to succeed, disability services must contribute to policy and legislative developments and be engaged, informed, and responsive to proposed changes.

## 2. Support the implementation of safeguarding initiatives

### **Invest in DRC promising practices.**

NDS's Zero Tolerance initiative was named as a 'promising practice' for disability services in the Disability Royal Commission (DRC). This flagship NDS program aims to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability.

A Zero Tolerance program in Tasmania would address a range of DRC recommendations relating to Quality and Safeguarding, findings of the Commission of Inquiry and support for implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework.

### 3. Develop a skilled, capable, and sustainable disability workforce

#### **Invest in the Tasmanian workforce.**

The Tasmanian disability workforce requires direct ongoing investment to attract, retain, and upskill workers to enable the delivery of high-quality services to Tasmanians with disability. NDS Workforce Census 2023, reflected a tightening labour market and the need for investment in the local disability workforce to prevent market failure.

Two dedicated workers, would enable the sector to address workforce barriers, navigate the imminent workforce reforms and ensure the sector can fulfill its priority actions, as per the Industry Compact.



### 4. Foundational Supports – a joined up ecosystem of support

#### **Invest in mapping and gap analyses, to inform an intergovernmental model of foundational supports.**

Approximately 93 per cent of currently provided disability support is funded via the NDIS. For Tasmania, that means approximately 125,819 people are reliant on just 7 per cent of disability funding. Supporting the intergovernmental strategy and model to implement foundational support is critical to meet Australia's Disability Strategy and the NDIS Review recommendations.

A dedicated, NDS project officer, could map existing services and gaps, to inform an intergovernmental model, that is contextualised and responds to needs.

### 5. Tasmanian Social Procurement Framework

#### **Invest in employment of Tasmanians with disability.**

Supporting employment of people with disability makes financial sense and contributes to a more inclusive Tasmania. As a significant purchaser of service and products, the State Government, via social procurement, should send a strong visible message to the community - that disability inclusive practices supporting the rights of people with disability is everyone's responsibility.

A dedicated NDS Project Officer would consult then develop a social procurement framework to ensure the State can contribute greater social value with every dollar spent.

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