January 2022

Joint statement on Equal Access to Assistive Technology

We call on the Australian Government to establish a harmonised and nationally consistent assistive technology program in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Our organisations represent and support millions of Australians with disability, their families and carers. We have joined forces because we believe that urgent change is needed to ensure people with disability who are excluded from the NDIS can access the assistive technology they need.

While NDIS participants are eligible to receive fully funded assistive technology, people with disability who are excluded from the scheme continue to fall through the cracks. They are frequently forced to wait more than 12 months to access funding for assistive technology, part or fully fund it themselves or simply go without.

Funding for assistive technology for people who are excluded from the NDIS is spread across almost 100 different funding streams throughout the country. This patchwork of funding is inconsistent and difficult for consumers to navigate. Right now, the level of funding an individual receives can vary greatly depending upon their age, where they live and how and where their disability was acquired.

Recommendation 72 of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety states:

By 1 July 2024, every person receiving aged care who is living with disability, regardless of when acquired, should receive through the aged care program daily living supports and outcomes (including assistive technologies, aids and equipment) equivalent to those that would be available under the National Disability Insurance Scheme to a person under the age of 65 years with the same or substantially similar conditions.

In response to this recommendation, we call on the Australian Government to establish a harmonised and nationally consistent assistive technology program to support people with disability who are excluded from the NDIS. This approach would:

- maximise the safety, independence, inclusion and participation of people with disability who are excluded from the NDIS
- reduce the burden on families and carers
- drive nationally consistent outcomes while streamlining access for consumers
- reduce the level of administrative burden on governments
- minimise downstream costs by reducing demand in other areas such as acute health and aged and community care
- align with Australia’s obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This statement has been endorsed by over 60 organisations listed on the following pages.

The Assistive Technology for All campaign is coordinated by Council on the Ageing Victoria
Joint statement on Equal Access to Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology for All campaign is coordinated by Council on the Ageing Victoria
Joint statement on Equal Access to Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology for All campaign is coordinated by Council on the Ageing Victoria