

**Submission
No 203**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL
DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME AND THE PROVISION
OF DISABILITY SERVICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Ms Nerida Jackson

Date Received: 8 August 2018

To: The Director
Portfolio Committee No. 2

I am writing to you today to add my voice to those with a disability, and those working in disability services, who are deeply concerned that already marginalised members of our community may lose access to valuable Advocacy Services post 2020.

As a Linker at Ability Links, I work exclusively with people in the community who have a disability, so I have first-hand experiences of the barriers they encounter in their attempts to lead a fulfilling life – a life that the majority of the population takes for granted. A lot of these people have multiple issues they are living with, often including mental health problems. As such they may have difficulty communicating with different services, or just find it too overwhelming to even attempt to. This is where an Advocacy Service is vital and can be life changing. I have enlisted advocates for people I've worked with on the following occasions over just the last 5 months:

- To support an application to Housing for a transfer to a safer area – ensuring the supporting documentation fully explains their reasons and the problems they're encountering including supporting medical evidence
- To support a person with autism in responding to, and managing discrimination from neighbours
- To support a person with autism in responding to, and managing verbal abuse from residents and tenants.
- To support a person's challenge to NDIS for refusing their application.
- To support a person to pursue a claim against Sydney Buses for an accident, leaving the person with restricted mobility.

Without the support and guidance from Advocates, these people would not have access to the same basic human rights, that the rest of us enjoy. That is discrimination. Advocacy Services for people with disabilities, must be viewed by the government as the essential service that it is.

Sincerely,

Nerida Jackson