



**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY  
AUSTRALIA**

6 September 2021

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email to: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Committee Secretary

**Re: Supplementary submission to People with Disability Australia's submission (submission 116)**

We write to draw the committee's attention to key recommendations of Economic Justice Australia (EJA) to the your inquiry on the purpose, intent and adequacy of the Disability Support Pension (DSP), that echo recommendations made by People with Disability Australia (PWDA) in our submission.

PWDA and EJA have made a range of recommendations to the inquiry, as well as the Department of Social Services review of the DSP impairment tables, that can be implemented immediately to meaningfully improve the adequacy of support available to people with disability.

As noted in PWDA's submission, we do not believe that policy changes that can be implemented in the short-term should be delayed.

For this reason, we would like to emphasise the importance of urgently progressing several specific recommendations.

**Postal address:**

PO Box 666  
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

**Street address:**

Level 8  
418a Elizabeth Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2010

**Phone:** 02 9370 3100

**Fax:** 02 9318 1372

**Toll Free:** 1800 422 015

**NRS:** 1800 555 677

**TTY:** 02 9318 2138

**TTY Toll Free:** 1800 422 016

**TIS:** 13 14 50

**Email:** [pwd@pwd.org.au](mailto:pwd@pwd.org.au)

**ACN:** 621 720 143

**A voice of  
our own**



PWDA endorses EJA's submission in full and all recommendations below. We highlight the urgency of the following recommendations:

- Recommendations 6–8 regarding proactive assistance to people who are at risk of or have fallen out of the system, and additional funding for community legal centres, particularly those providing services to remote First Nations communities
- Recommendation 9: That the preamble to the DSP Impairment Tables be amended so as to delete references to 'fully' as a qualifier to 'diagnosed', 'treated' and 'stabilised'
- Recommendation 10: Amend section 94 of the Social Security Act so as to remove the program of support requirement; OR, in the alternative, amend section 94 so as to include exemption criteria
- Recommendation 12 and 13: Reintroduce completion of a treating doctor report (TDR) as a mandatory component of DSP claims, with the TDR pro forma part of the DSP claim package. Enable completion of the mandatory TDR to be billable under Medicare, with a Medicare item number introduced for report completion.

We note that EJA has also recommended that Services Australia consult with PWDA regarding mutual obligation requirements for people with disability receiving JobSeeker or other income support payments (Recommendation 5).

Mutual obligations requirements put the health of people with disability at risk. We reiterate our recommendation to remove all participation requirements for people who provide medical evidence of their disability.

The practice of requiring repetitious medical evidence to continue suspensions are onerous, stressful, expensive and unnecessary. It is PWDA's view that engagement with employment services must be voluntary to enable people with disability to receive meaningful and quality support, and to avoid harm.

If there are legislated constraints on Services Australia, people who provide medical evidence of a disability should by default be granted the maximum suspension period allowable.



The amendments we seek are straightforward and essential to advance the right of people with disability to our full participation in society.

Should you wish to discuss matters further, please contact me on \_\_\_\_\_ or  
via email at \_\_\_\_\_

Yours sincerely

**Giancarlo de Vera**  
Senior Manager of Policy  
People with Disability Australia

**Leanne Ho**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Economic Justice Australia