

# Physical Disability Council of New South Wales

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The Secretary  
Senate Community Affairs Committee  
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## **Inquiry into National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Doctors and Other Health Workers**

The Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) is the peak body representing people with physical disabilities across New South Wales, representing approximately 700,000 residents<sup>1</sup> and believes that an inclusive society is achieved when people with physical disabilities are involved in every aspect of life. PDCN is able to represent the needs and interests of people with physical disabilities. Membership of PDCN includes people with a range of physical disabilities, from young children and their carers, to aged people, living across NSW in either Greater Sydney Metropolitan area or rural NSW, and from a wide range of socio-economic circumstances. PDCN has the background, knowledge and skills to advocate to all levels of Government regarding the needs of people with physical disabilities.

In November 2008 PDCN made a submission to the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council— about the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professions. The Consultation paper focused on the *Proposed arrangements for handling complaints, and dealing with performance, health and conduct matters*.

In the Submission from PDCN we identified that ...

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- *The concept of national registration for health practitioners is not a subject of concern for PDCN*
  - *The particular areas of the Consultation Paper that PDCN has focused on are those of the complaint/ notification process and the investigation of complaints, as these are the areas of most immediate impact upon people with physical disability*

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- *PDCN is concerned that the Principles identified in the Consultation Paper are not reflected in the model proposed in the Paper*
- *PDCN is concerned about the responsibility of the process of complaint assessment (excluding the complaint assessment consultation) resting with the relevant state registration authorities*
  - *Raises concern as to the interests of consumers*
  - *Raises concern as to the independence of the process*
  - *Raises issues of public confidence*
- *PDCN is concerned about the responsibility of the process of complaint Investigation (excluding the complaint assessment consultation) resting with the relevant state registration authorities*
  - *Raises concern as to the independence of the process*
  - *Issues of public confidence*
- *Recommendations*
  - No 1:*  
*That state and territory HCCs conduct the initial assessment of complaints, and that the process used for this initial assessment be based on the process used by the NSW Health Care Complaints Commission*
  - No 2:*  
*That complainants be afforded the opportunity to have review rights for decisions made, at the stage of preliminary assessment.*
  - No 3:*  
*That the investigation of complaints be conducted by an agency separate to the registration authority*
  - No 4:*  
*That both recommendations (1 and 2) be implemented within a co-regulatory framework “*

I have attached a copy of the submission for your information

Yours faithfully

Ruth Robinson  
Executive Officer