

Aspect's Response to the Disability Royal Commission Summary

Notice to Give Information in Writing and Notice to Produce

Submitted 23 June 2020

What is the Disability Royal Commission about?

This Royal Commission is called the **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability**.

We call it the Disability Royal Commission.

The Disability Royal Commission wants to know about people with disability and their experience of:

- **violence** – if someone's body is being hurt by someone else
- **abuse** – if someone is being treated badly
- **neglect** – if someone is not being helped in the way they are supposed to be
- **exploitation** – if someone is being taken advantage of.

What is the *Notice to Give Information in Writing* and *Notice to Produce*?

The Disability Royal Commission sent letters to Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) to ask for information.

These letters were called a *Notice to Give Information in Writing*, and a *Notice to Produce* (Notices).

The Notices asked Aspect about its work from 1 January 2015 to 13 May 2020.

The Notices told Aspect to:

- answer questions in writing
- give the Disability Royal Commission documents with information.

What was Aspect's response to the Notices about?

Aspect wrote back with its answers (response) to the Notices to the Disability Royal Commission on 23 June 2020.

Aspect answered questions, and gave the Disability Royal Commission documents about the following topics.

Aspect's governance

We wrote about how Aspect is managed, including:

- Aspect's governance – see **Governance Framework** policy
- How much, and where Aspect gets money from to do its work – see **Funded Supports** and Aspect's **Financial Integrity** policy.

Aspect shared documents that gave this information.

Aspect's disability services

We wrote about our Aspect **Therapy, Outreach, Employment, Assessments** and **Adult Community Services**.

We explained what information is available for people who want to come to Aspect, and how to find out how much it costs.

We explained what Aspect does to make information easy for people to understand in **easy English**, and **help in other languages**.

Aspect wrote about how many people use Aspect disability services, and the different genders, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, ages and disabilities of those people.

The Disability Royal Commission asked about Aspect's disability services only. We did not talk about Aspect's schools.

Impact of emergencies and natural disasters

The Disability Royal Commission asked how the 2019–2020 bushfire season and the **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** emergencies changed things at Aspect and for the people we support.

This is because emergencies are dangerous situations that we don't expect to happen, and can put our health and safety at risk.

Aspect talked about:

- positive changes and what has been done well
- negative changes and what needs to be done better in future.

Choice and control for people with disability

How Aspect respects rights, choice and control

Rights are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.

Aspect wrote about, and shared documents that showed the ways it makes sure that everyone is treated fairly, such as:

- Aspect's rules, called the **Aspect Service Charter**
- welcoming **feedback and complaints**
- reporting **incidents**
- supporting choices – see **Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk** policy, and **Person Centred Approach and Recognition of Valued Status** policy
- respecting privacy – see **Privacy of Personal Information and Data** policy
- welcoming **diversity** and **including everyone**.

Working with guardians

Some people with disability have guardians. A guardian is a person who acts and makes decisions for that person. A guardian might be:

- a member of your family

- a friend
- chosen for you by the government.

Aspect wrote about how we work with guardians, and shared information about people with guardians to the Disability Royal Commission.

Behaviour support and restrictive practices

Aspect wrote about how we support people who show behaviour that might put themselves or other people in danger.

Aspect uses **Positive Behaviour Support**.

Sometimes, if other plans do not work, we may need to use a restrictive practice to keep someone safe.

Restrictive practices are actions that stop people from:

- moving
- doing what they want.

Aspect told the Disability Royal Commission about when a restrictive practice might be used in our services, and how we follow the rules about using them.

We shared behaviour support plans that have a restrictive practice in that plan.

Health services

Aspect has health services. These are Aspect **Therapy** and **Assessments**.

Aspect wrote about how we are helping people to access other health services that are not part of Aspect.

We explained how we manage any **conflict of interest**.

A conflict of interest is when someone could affect a decision so that the result is better for them.

Safety from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation

Aspect talked about how we work to keep the people we support safe.

Aspect's [Safeguarding the People We Support](#) policy explains how we prevent, identify, respond, report and investigate where people may be unsafe.

We wrote about how we are always:

- trying to improve how we work to keep people safe
- working with families, [support agencies, advocates and government](#).

Aspect shared information about incidents that have happened at Aspect, who we told about them, and what we did to prevent more incidents happening.

Engagement with the Disability Royal Commission

Aspect shared what we have said about [taking part in, or talking to, the Disability Royal Commission](#).

Advocacy and representation

Aspect wrote about how people with disability are involved in managing Aspect – see [Engaging people on the autism spectrum](#).

Aspect works with many people, including [families and advocates](#) to listen to the needs of the people we support.

External bodies and Community Visitors

Aspect wrote about how we work with [external regulatory bodies](#), including community visitors.

External regulatory bodies are government organisations, like the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

We shared quality audits and accreditations that we have had against the disability service standards – see [Accreditations](#) on this page for Aspect's certificates.

What will the Disability Royal Commission do with Aspect's response?

The Disability Royal Commission will use the information Aspect gave them to:

- complete their work
- decide if they want to ask Aspect for more information
- share information
- maintain confidentiality for individuals.

Confidentiality is when someone promises not to share information. The Royal Commission will not share any ideas or information about someone unless that person says it is ok. Sometimes, the Royal Commission might share information about a person without using their name.