

DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. What is the Disability Royal Commission?

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission; DRC) was established on 4 April 2019 by the Federal Government of Australia to help inform Australian governments, institutions and the wider community on how to prevent, and better protect, people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The Disability Royal Commission will provide the Australian Government an interim report in October 2020, and a final report in September 2023.

Aspect supports the DRC as an important and positive step towards achieving inclusion for the people we support and is encouraging the autistic and autism communities to participate.

The DRC provides specific information on their [website](#) which is being updated regularly with new information, including about:

- [Public Hearings](#) engagement and past Public Hearings information
- [Issues papers](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Schedule](#) of public hearings
- [News and media](#)
- [Counselling and support](#)

2. What is Aspect's role in the Disability Royal Commission?

As a leading provider of autism-specific services, Aspect has made submissions to the Disability Royal Commission. This includes responding to issues papers and submitting requested information and documents asked of Aspect by the DRC through legal Notices. You can view Aspect's submissions on our [Disability Royal Commission page](#) on our website.

As part of our preparations, Aspect undertook a significant review of our relevant reporting data to determine what might need to be included. We are open to making further issues paper response submissions as relevant to Aspect's work or on request of the DRC.

3. What is a submission?

A submission is any information provided to the Disability Royal Commission. This may be about any of the areas that the DRC wants to know more about, including:

- Incidents of violence, neglect, abuse or exploitation of people with disability
- Complaints processes and outcomes
- Lack of access to support or services
- Quality of disability support services
- Examples of best practice and innovation

More information about making a submission, including the support available to anyone considering a submission, is available on the [submissions page of Disability Royal Commission website](#).

Submissions can be made in any form, including:

- in any oral, written or signed language (the DRC will translate to English internally)
- in writing
- using a video or audio recording
- artworks
- songs or music

Aspect has provided written submissions in response to a range of Issues Papers published by the Disability Royal Commission. They are available on our [website](#).

4. Who can make a submission?

Anybody can make a submission. The Disability Royal Commission wants to hear from all Australians about their experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability. The DRC is specifically looking into multi-layered and systemic impacts of marginalised groups, and has been directed in their terms of reference to consider “experiences associated with age, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status, ethnic origin or race, including the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culturally and linguistically diverse people”.

This might be something you have experienced personally as a disabled person or something you have witnessed. The DRC wants to hear from, and hear about, “all settings and contexts”, which means that you can share your story about experiences from any place or service, not just what has happened in a disability service provider. This includes community organisations; institutions; residential services; workplaces; education and schools; early childhood services; prisons; out-of-home care; health care; transport; mainstream or public services and in your own home.

More information about making a submission, including the support available to anyone considering a submission, is available on the [submissions page of Disability Royal Commission website](#). This website is being updated regularly with new information.

5. When do submissions open?

Public submissions to the Disability Royal Commission opened in August 2019. There are other ways that you can engage with the DRC, including through Community Forums, Public Hearing and the option to tell your story in a private session. Information about how you can engage with the DRC is available on the [Share Your Story](#) webpage of the Disability Royal Commission.

There is no closing date for submissions at this stage.

6. What information needs to be in a submission?

The Royal Commission particularly wants to hear about:

- Incidents of violence, neglect, abuse or exploitation of people with disability

- Complaints processes and outcomes
- Lack of access to support or services
- Quality of disability support services
- Examples of best practice and innovation

More information about making a submission, including the support available to anyone considering a submission, is available on the [submissions page of Disability Royal Commission website](#). This website is being updated regularly with new information.

Specific engagement plans and information is available for:

- [First Nations Peoples](#)
- [Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities](#)

7. Can I make an anonymous submission?

To find out more about an anonymous submission please contact the Disability Royal Commission.

You can contact the DRC via email - DRcenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au - or via telephone on **1800 517 199** (9am to 5pm AEDT, Monday to Friday).

8. What support is Aspect providing to participants wanting to make a submission?

Aspect encourages all interested persons to make a submission to the DRC and would encourage you to visit the [Disability Royal Commission website](#). Aspect is able to provide some support as long as a conflict of interest is avoided and it is within the context of the support or service we already provide to you. This means, that any support Aspect provides to you for your submission must not relate to Aspect and its work, and must be appropriate to what support you normally receive from Aspect.

If you would like to speak to someone directly about Aspect's participation in the Disability Royal Commission, or you have a media enquiry, please email royalcommission@autismspectrum.org.au.

We also encourage you to look for your own advocacy support, using the [Disability Advocacy Finder website](#); or by contacting one of the support services available on the Aspect list of [Useful Contacts for the People We Support](#).

Anyone with concerns about Aspect or how their rights are being supported at Aspect are also encouraged to provide feedback or make a complaint to Aspect directly. Information about how to provide feedback or make a complaint is available on Aspect's [Feedback and Complaints website page](#).

9. What supports are available from the Disability Royal Commission?

The Disability Royal Commission has links to government funded supports on their [Counselling and Support](#) page. There are multiple supports for different communication needs on the DRC website, including easy read, translated and AUSLAN documents and videos.

If you need to refer someone to the DRC for support with their submission, they can look at the [Share Your Story](#) page, contact the DRC via email - DRcenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au - or via telephone on **1800 517 199** (9am to 5pm AEDT, Monday to Friday).

10. What other support options are there?

If you or someone you know, is experiencing any form of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation; or you are concerned for your safety, contact your local police station or dial **000 in an emergency**.

Other contacts that are available include:

- [Lifeline](#) 13 11 14
- [Mens Line](#) 1300 789 978
- [Kids Helpline](#) 1800 551 800
- [1800 RESPECT](#) 1800 737 732
- [National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline](#) 1800 880 052
- Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline 1800 019 123
- [Beyond Blue](#) 1300 224 636
- [Relationships Australia](#) 1300 364 277

11. Where can I find more information about how Aspect manages safety in its schools and services?

To learn more about Aspect's work and processes, you can look at the following information on our website:

- Aspect's Purpose, Vision, Mission, Values and the way we work, see [About Aspect](#)
- How Aspect manages incidents, see [Reporting Incidents](#)
- Aspect's feedback and complaints processes, see [Feedback and Complaints](#)
- Aspect's approach to safety, prevention and response to abuse, violence, discrimination, neglect and exploitation, see our [Safeguarding the People we Support policy](#)
- To learn more about Aspect's approaches to individual support's, safety and management, see [What happens when you come to us?](#)