Review of Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) 2021-2031

In September 2024, Cancer Council Australia completed a submission to the Department of Social Services (the Department) on the Review of Australia's Disability Strategy. The review of Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) is a result of a recommendation from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. The Department were specifically seeking feedback on the implementation and outcomes sections of the Strategy.

Cancer Council's submission covered the following areas:

- Ensuring more consistent data collection about the experiences of people with disability across the disability and health sectors. This lack of data limits the robust evaluation of the Strategy, and improving collection will in bolster reporting capabilities within the Strategy Outcomes Framework.
- Advocating for co-creation to underpin the development of the implementation plan, with appointments to the Advisory Council to take an intersectional approach, including community representatives with diverse experiences, including, but not limited to LGBTQIA+ people, people living with mental illness, younger and older people, people in lower socioeconomic groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people residing in rural and remote areas.
- Encouraging the Strategy to reflect the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission report, including specific recommendations that were relevant to the health sector such as Recommendations 6.31, 6.32 and 6.34. We also encouraged the ADS to reflect Recommendations 6.24-6.29 which emphasised the need for healthcare professional education and training in communication and engagement of people with disability to improve healthcare decision-making.

Information about the progress of the consultation can be found on the Department of Social Services' consultation page: https://engage.dss.gov.au/ads-review/