**Embargoed until 1pm AEST, Wednesday 8 May  
  
Disability community reveals practical steps government can take right now to improve the lives of people with disability.**

With a major shake-up of the NDIS looming and governments across Australia set to respond to the Disability Royal Commission, disability advocates have today released a set of practical recommendations governments can take right now to improve the lives of people with disability.

Recommendations include opening a national network of hubs where people with disability can come for information and support, and creating a mass purchasing scheme, outside the NDIS, for disability aids, equipment and home modifications.

Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA) CEO Jeff Smith said with complex reform processes impacting the disability community underway, it was important to have some clear actions to take forward.

“The NDIS Review and Disability Royal Commission were welcome and necessary, but the complexity and breadth of their findings is hard to grapple with, and the timelines for some recommendations stretch beyond 2050,” Mr Smith said.

“We are impatient for change, after years of fighting, of telling our stories, of figuring out solutions and campaigning for an end to the abuse so many of us live with.

“The Priorities Project Report we are launching today distils key issues from both reports, and outlines practical changes that could be up and running within a year or two.

“These changes don’t need another strategy, or more consultation, or more delay. They need to start now.”

Recommended actions include:

* Pilot community inclusion hubs – physical locations where people with disability can get information, loan equipment and participate in activities. These would act as a place-based counterpoint to top-down support from government and large providers.
* Creating new schemes for disability aids, equipment and home modifications outside the NDIS to make them easier to access.
* Trialling specialist housing navigators to make the process of finding an appropriate home easier.

Mr Smith said housing was a key priority that came up in every single conversation DANA had with fellow disability advocates while writing the report.

“Accessible homes are very difficult to find in Australia, and home modifications are mostly only available within the NDIS, which excludes many people who would benefit significantly from them from eligibility.

“One of the actions we’re proposing is a new scheme which would make home modifications more accessible to people not on the NDIS.”

Mr Smith said DANA would be presenting the report to Federal, State and Territory governments.

“The wider blueprints from the NDIS Review and Disability Royal Commission will take decades to implement, and it can be hard to know where to start.

“These are the immediate priorities, as identified by the disability community. This is where we can start, right now.”

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