



Inclusion Australia

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Media Statement

Friday, 6 May 2016

Inclusion Australia

The national peak agency for people with intellectual disability and their families

A national *inclusive* employment plan for people with intellectual disability

Inclusion Australia welcomes the *Willing To Work National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability* report from Age and Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Susan Ryan.

We agree that we must do something to address the poor rates of employment participation of people with intellectual disability in Australia.

We call on the Commonwealth to develop a national strategy based on **what works** in collaboration with Inclusion Australia to lift the participation rate of people with intellectual disability.

Just 8% of adults with intellectual disability in receipt of national disability services work in the open labour market, despite decades of research and demonstration finding this group can successfully work in the open labour market when provided with **the right support**.

People with intellectual disability are currently subject to a system that underestimates their capacity to work, and fails to provide skilled providers across all regions.

The Commonwealth's evaluation of Disability Employment Services found that:

Research and practice in the field has shown that with the right level and type of support, people with significant intellectual disability can achieve more substantial employment. After 30 years of open employment provision in Australia, it is clear what works and what doesn't in achieving outcomes for people with intellectual disability.

Our plan — provided to the Commonwealth in 2015 — is focused on building competent open employment support. This support is **critical** to raising expectations, engaging employers, achieving outcomes, and providing savings to the Commonwealth.

The Centre for International Economics has estimated that national evidence based open employment support for people with significant intellectual disability would save the Commonwealth up to \$53 million per year.

Our plan calls for a new open employment program which exclusively targets jobseekers with disability that are NDIS eligible. A new support system must presume a capacity to work in the open labour market and provide evidence based support to give the best opportunity to lift the current poor participation rates.

Contact:
Mark Pattison
Executive Director
0407 406 647

PO Box 771
Mawson ACT 2607
T 61 2 6296 4400
E info@inclusionaustralia.org.au
W inclusionaustralia.org.au

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The Federal Budget 2016 did not offer any indexation to the immediate concerns about Disability Employment Services (DES) funding. There has been no Indexation of DES funding since 2010 and this is putting the the viability of evidence based open employment support for people with intellectual at risk. There was also no discussion or decision from the Budget about the Commonwealth's plans to develop a new national disability employment system.

Inclusion Australia, in partnership with Down Syndrome Australia, will be writing to all political parties as part of the **We Can Work With the Right Support Campaign**, to begin a national discussion to find a way forward to develop a long term national plan to lift the employment participation rates of people with intellectual disability.

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