

Department of Health

By Email: national.mental.health.plan@health.gov.au

Dear sir/madam

Fifth National Mental Health Plan

On behalf of the Disability Council NSW, I am writing to support the submission provided to the draft Fifth National Mental Health Plan by the Council for Intellectual Disability (CID).

Further, while recognising that the draft Plan recognises the link between mental health and psychosocial disability, I note that there is no reference to how mental health systems, services and providers can and should better meet the needs of people with disability generally. It is important to recognise that the National Disability Insurance Scheme is not designed to replace the responsibilities that service providers have to ensure that their services are accessible to and welcoming of people with disability.

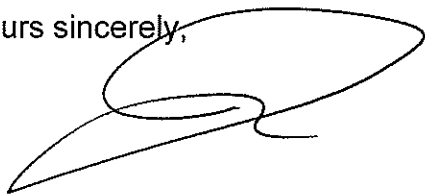
The Disability Council asks the Commonwealth to ensure that the final version of the Plan:

1. Incorporates all seven recommendations made by CID
2. Includes a specific priority area on the mental health of people with disability
3. Noting the barriers towards accessing mental health service by people with disability, amends Priority Area 7 to 'Safety, Quality *and* Accessibility In Mental Health Care', with specific references to the importance of the provision of:
 - o Auslan/English and, particularly, Deaf interpreters¹
 - o Physical access into and within facilities
 - o Audio loops and real-time captioning
 - o Health information in Easy English² and other alternative formats.

¹ Deaf people who are recognised by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) as being able to provide a unique language or communication bridge for Deaf individuals whose communication mode cannot be adequately accessed by a standard Auslan/English interpreter, particularly where a Deaf individual's mental health issues affect their language use (https://www.naati.com.au/media/1106/deaf_interpreting_information_booklet.pdf).

² Easy English is specifically designed to make sense to people who have difficulty reading and understanding English and is particularly helpful for people who have intellectual disability (<http://www.scopeaust.org.au/service/accessible-information/>).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

(Jason Kara on behalf of) **Mark Tonga**
Chair, Disability Council NSW

14 December 2016