

# Communiqué

**6 November 2023**

The final meeting of the Disability Council NSW for 2023 was held on 6 November. The meeting was chaired by Jane Spring AM.

The Council welcomed the following guest speakers:

- Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion, the Hon Kate Washington MP
- Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Communities, and Parliamentary Secretary for Disability Inclusion, Liesl Tesch MP
- Director Disability Policy, Department of Communities and Justice, Matthew Barden
- Churchill Fellowship recipient, Donna Purcell
- Secretary, NSW Department of Education, Murat Dizdar.

The Disability Royal Commission's Final Report was a key focus of the meeting with several of the guest speakers reflecting on the recommendations. The Final Report was handed to the Governor-General on 28 September 2023. The report includes 12 volumes and 222 recommendations covering an extensive range of issues faced by people with disability, across multiple systems and services. The report calls for significant change through reform to laws, policies and practices.

The Disability Council is committed to working with the NSW Government on its response to the Royal Commission's recommendations and co-hosted a stakeholder forum on 23 October 2023. The forum sought to capture initial reactions from the disability sector to the recommendations as well as their views on which should be prioritised.

Increasing the employment of people with disability was also discussed in response to Ms Purcell's research, [Researching Leadership Models that remove barriers to employment for people with disabilities](#). Ms Purcell explained there is a great deal of work to be done to create equity and opportunity for Australians with disability to find or remain in work.

Ms Purcell shared key learnings from her research including the three key drivers to success: Leadership; A commitment to building an inclusive workplace; and A set of measures and data collection processes to monitor, measure and track progress and change.

The Council heard from the Secretary, Department of Education, about initiatives underway to increase the representation of people with disability among the workforce. The needs of students with disability were also discussed including the use of assistive technology in the classroom, and the importance of teacher training, disability-specific role models and qualified Auslan interpreters.

Council members reported on key issues raised at the government and non-government committees where the Disability Council is represented. Council members continue to advocate for the needs of people with disability through these and other forums. The Disability Council is particularly focused on driving change in relation to the priority areas outlined in the Disability Council Plan 2022-2024:

- Accessible communities
- Ensuring the voice of people with disabilities is heard
- Employment
- Justice and rights
- Housing.

The Council will next meet on 9 February 2024.

Jane Spring AM  
Chair, Disability Council NSW

Associate Professor Jill Duncan  
Deputy Chair, Disability Council NSW