

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Most vulnerable must benefit from reforms to disability services

Jesuit Social Services has welcomed the Victorian Government's commitment to significant reform of disability services and called for action to ensure the most vulnerable members of our community benefit from these reforms.

Releasing Jesuit Social Services' [submission on the Draft Victorian State Disability Action Plan](#), Jesuit Social Services CEO, Julie Edwards, said, "The Government's Draft Action plan outlines what will be significant reforms to policy and services for disabled Victorians. We endorse the principles and policy direction put forward in the plan. However, the government must put in place safeguards and procedures to protect the rights and needs of disabled people with complex needs, particularly those involved in the criminal justice system."

The Draft State Disability Action Plan outlines a change in approach to disability policy and services. In particular, disability services will be reformed and be based on a person-centred approach so as to be more effectively aligned with the incoming National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Ms Edwards said, "We welcome the Victorian Government's commitment to the NDIS and to reforming Victorian services so that they are integrated and focus on the individual needs of members of our community who are living with disabilities."

"The move towards self-directed care, does pose some risks, however, for individuals with multiple and complex needs. If there are not sufficient safeguards, then these individuals may miss out on the quality of care to which they are entitled."

"We also believe that greater clarity is required with regard to how the transition and implementation period is to be managed. There is a range of excellent organisations who work to improve these individuals' livelihoods. It is important that the experience of these organisations is not lost during the reform process."

Jesuit Social Services has recommended that the government put in place mechanisms to involve service users and providers in the reform process. Ms Edwards explained, "We believe that there must be a whole of government steering committee which will consider the needs and rights of the most vulnerable groups of disabled people during the reform process."

"In order to fully realise the aspirations outlined in the Draft Victorian State Disability Action Plan, the government must work closely with service users and providers."

**Jesuit Social Services' Submission on the Draft State Disability Action Plan can be viewed by clicking [here](#).**

**Jesuit Social Services is a not-for-profit organisation which works to build a just society by advocating for social change and promoting the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged young people, families and communities.**

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