**Open Letter to the Prime Minister Scott Morrison**

**The urgent need for a stand-alone Royal Commission into all forms of violence against people with disability**

**15 February 2019**

**People with disability and our representative organisations are urging the Federal Government to call a stand-alone Royal Commission into all forms of violence and abuse against people with disability across Australia.**

People with disability, friends, families, allies and supporters have for years now, been calling for a stand-alone Royal Commission into all forms of violence perpetrated against us. Our calls have been echoed by several of the monitoring bodies of the international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party.

In 2015, a [**Senate inquiry**](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Violence_abuse_neglect) found widespread rates of violence and abuse against people with disability, and its key recommendation was for a Royal Commission into all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect perpetrated against people with disability. During the Inquiry, people with disability shared their experiences of the many and varied contexts and settings in which multiple forms of violence and abuse is perpetrated against them. Representative organisations of people with disability provided [harrowing accounts](http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ACDA_SuppDOC_Sen_Inquiry_Violence_Institutions.docx) of horrific abuses and violations of their members.

In 2017, [**over 160 civil society groups**](http://dpoa.org.au/civil-society-statement-rc/) and [**over 100 academics**](https://disabilityroyalcommissionnow.wordpress.com/2017/04/05/open-letter/) joined the call for a stand-alone Royal Commission into violence against people with disability.

It is critical that a Royal Commission into violence against people with disability is not confined to the disability service sector. Violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of people with disability occurs across a range of settings, contexts, and circumstances. It happens on the streets, in our homes, in schools, at work, and in all types of institutional and residential settings. It encompasses a multitude of forms, including egregious forms of violence that constitute torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

People with disability cannot wait any longer. We cannot accept the playing of politics with our lives. Violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect perpetrated against people with disability in Australia is prolific and systemic. A stand-alone Royal Commission is the **only** mechanism that can provide a comprehensive, independent, and just response to **all** forms of violence and abuse against people with disability. People with disability in Australia deserve nothing less.

Mr Morrison, as the Prime Minister of Australia, we urge you to listen to the voices of people with disability and their representative organisations and act immediately to establish a stand-alone Royal Commission into all forms of violence and abuse against people with disability across Australia.

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