

Down Syndrome Australia welcomes Government report which calls for a more targeted approach to Disability Support Pension Reviews

For Release: 11 May 2017

Down Syndrome Australia welcomes the final report of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Inquiry into Qualifying for the Disability Support Pension which has been tabled today in the House of Representatives.

In recent years, people with Down syndrome have been subjected to unnecessary, time consuming and stressful medical reviews to prove that they continue to be eligible for the DSP. Down Syndrome Australia has been strongly advocating for a change to the review process for the Disability Support Pension.

In the report tabled today, the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit has recommended “the Department of Social Services review the List 1 of conditions that provide eligibility for manifest grants of the Disability Support Pension. The Committee recommends particular attention is given to the merits of including chromosomal disorders, such as Down syndrome, on List 1.”

Down Syndrome Australia CEO, Ellen Skladzien said “We are very pleased that the Committee has listened and responded to the concerns we raised in our submission. These unnecessary reviews not only put needless burden on families but also are an inefficient approach and a waste of limited resources. The inquiry has clearly revealed the need for a more targeted approach to reviews and ensuring that appropriate safeguards are put in place to avoid unnecessary burdens on people with a disability and their families.”

Down Syndrome Australia also welcomes the recommendation for the Department of Human Services and the Department of Social Services to conduct an end-to-end review of the administration of the Disability Support Program, including consultation with stakeholders as well as a recommendation to provide people with more time to provide medical evidence to the Department.

ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME AUSTRALIA

Down Syndrome Australia was established in 2011 as the peak body for people with Down syndrome in Australia. Our purpose is to influence social and policy change, and provide a national profile and voice for people living with Down syndrome. We work collaboratively with the state and territory Down syndrome associations to achieve our mission. More information about the work of Down Syndrome Australia and the contact details for local support and services can be found at www.downsyndrome.org.au.

For media queries, contact media@downsyndrome.org.au