**Disability Discrimination Commissioner National Consultations**

**Housing Video Transcript**

It is the great Australian dream to have a house that you can call your own.

But this dream is out of reach for many people with disability, who do not enjoy their right to housing on an equal basis with other Australians.

You told me that there is a serious shortage of affordable, accessible and well-located housing. There aren’t a lot of housing options for people with disability with high and complex support needs, so many of these people live in places they don’t choose and with people they don’t choose, simply because it is all that is available. Young people with disability live in nursing homes because there are limited housing options that meet their needs. And in these forced congregate settings, people with disability are at greater risk of experiencing violence and abuse by co-tenants and support workers.

You told me that it is difficult to find accessible housing, because there is a shortage, and because property advertisements often don’t say if a house is accessible or not. It is expensive and difficult to modify housing to make it accessible, and many private landlords are reluctant to allow modifications. There are few incentives for developers to build new housing to a minimum standard of accessibility. In regional and rural areas, there are even fewer accessible housing options, and many people with disability have to move away from their families to find appropriate housing. And even if you can find a house that is accessible and meets your needs, it’s difficult to buy it because finance options are not flexible.

You also told me that part of the housing problem is the lack of advocacy support available to help people with disability get housing that suits their needs. The practice of tying housing and support together means it is difficult for people who are unhappy with their housing or support to change providers, and they often can’t access advocacy to help them do this. And it can be difficult for many people with disability to resolve housing issues like the threat of eviction or repairs and maintenance issues without advocacy support.

A lot of people agree that we need more innovative housing and support models that are integrated into mainstream housing, provide security of tenure and co-ordinate a balance between formal and informal supports. And that there should be advocacy, information and support to assist people with disability to secure appropriate housing. There is also a need for incentives and regulation to enforce a minimum standard of accessibility for all new housing.

We will know that people with disability are enjoying their right to housing on an equal basis when they can live where they want, with whom they want, with the right support.