**Disability Discrimination Commissioner National Consultations**

**Violence Video Transcript**

All people have the right to be safe and free from violence.

But people with disability do not enjoy this right – they are at high risk of experiencing violence, abuse and neglect, and violence against them often goes unrecognised or addressed.

You told me that people with disability are subject to many forms of violence that others may not experience, including forced sterilisation, violence in institutions, sexual and reproductive rights violations, restrictive practices, seclusion and restraint and deprivation of liberty. Because of the closed nature of many of the places where people with disability live, violence is difficult to detect, investigate and prosecute. The lack of access to information about rights, complaints processes and effective independent advocacy means that people with disability don’t always recognise when their rights are not being upheld. And people with disability are often highly dependent on others for care, so might be unwilling or unable to report abuse from others who care for them.

You told me that there are many barriers to reporting abuse, including access to accessible and effective complaints processes. That there are physical, attitudinal and communication barriers that make the justice system inaccessible to people with disability and make it more difficult for them to report abuse and access justice. And that people with disability who report abuse are often not believed.

You also told me that violence disproportionately affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. That women with disability often face discrimination and exclusion when engaging with mainstream domestic violence services, and that refuges aren’t always accessible. And that recommendations from government inquiries to address the issue of violence against people with disability are not being implemented.

There is agreement that we need a national strategy to address the issue of violence against people with disability. There is support for the approach of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and safeguards framework, but concern that this will not address the issue of violence because it only covers NDIS participants, not all people with disability. There is a need for appropriate, high quality services that people with disability can access if they are unsafe or at risk of violence, and support to ensure people can give evidence about their experiences of abuse and neglect and access justice.

We will know that people with disability are enjoying their right to be safe and free from violence when national policy and practice supports all people with disability, regardless of their age, gender, cultural, Indigenous and/or linguistic background to be free from violence, abuse and neglect.