

NSW Disability Advocacy Futures Program

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Improving the disability advocacy system
for people with disability in NSW.

What is Disability Advocacy?

For the purpose of this Review, the National Disability Advocacy Program provides a purposeful definition:

Advocacy for people with disability can be defined as speaking, acting or writing with minimal conflict of interest on behalf of the interests of a disadvantaged person or group, in order to promote, protect and defend the welfare of and the justice for either the person or the group by;

- **Acting in a partisan manner (i.e. being on their side and no one else's)**
- **Being primarily concerned with their fundamental needs**
- **Remaining loyal and accountable to them in a way which is empathic and vigorous (whilst respecting the rights of others) and**
- **Ensuring duty of care at all times**

This definition also supports the experience and type of advocacy identified in this Review by people with disability, which includes the need for someone to talk to about their rights, someone who is loyal and makes them feel heard.

For NSW, the Review believes that effective advocacy should:

- Promote, protect and secure the rights of people with disability.
- Assist people with disability to access government and non-government services.
- Enable the voice of people with disability to inform and influence public policies and programs.

The Challenges with Disability Advocacy Provision in NSW

Currently the system is not easily accessible to everyone with disability across NSW, cultural backgrounds, even disability type. Depending on where you live can dictate the quality and access to the service needed, and the services received.

There is also a general low awareness of what advocacy is within the community.

Disability Advocacy needs to be equitable and better understood across NSW.

There is instability in the sector and the system as a result of inconsistent, short term and mixed funding sources. This impacts the capacity of advocacy services and ability for organisations to retain or upskill staff, evaluate programs and develop long-term working relationships.

Disability Advocacy organisations need secure and sustainable funding.

Expertise and specialist knowledge takes time to build. High quality advice to other agencies including the state government and NDIS is always needed, but it is difficult to constantly deliver on. There is also high demand for advocates to facilitate clients accessing services generally.

Disability Advocacy requires a better connected system to build more effective interfaces between the NSW government and non government agencies.

There is a lack of sector support and capacity-building that could grow the advocacy workforce and entice new talent. There are minimal opportunities to develop skillsets, to evaluate outcomes or align to a code of conduct.

Advocates need a network to better assess performance, identify outcomes, build capabilities and deliver a high quality service to people with disability.

Funding Sources for Disability Advocacy

The key current funding sources provided to NSW disability advocacy and representative organisations, including from the Commonwealth, are outlined below.

National Disability Advocacy Program

Provides advocacy for some people with disability, addressing issues around access to NDIS, Administrative Tribunal Reviews and NDIS appeals.

Transitional Advocacy Funding (TAFS)

Short term funding to ensure people with disability have access to information and advocacy/planning support, and meet funding shortfalls from the Commonwealth/NDIS.

Information and Linkages and Capacity Building

Provides capacity building, community participation and information services.

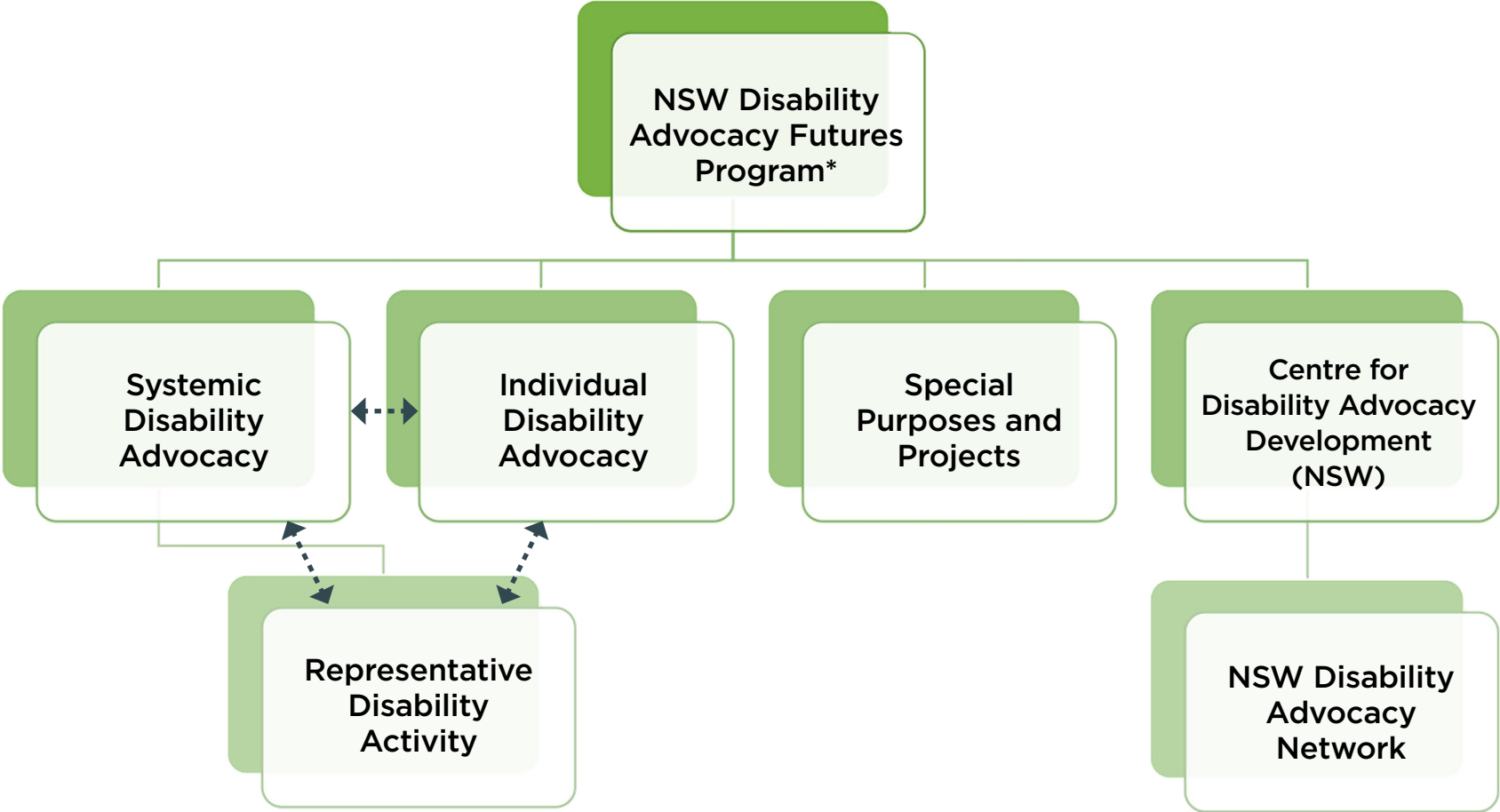
Other

Family, friends and carer's providing informal advocacy and support to a person with disability in their care. Also included here are other government funding sources.

The NSW Government will be able to provide an ongoing role to directly support disability advocacy with the introduction of the **NSW Disability Advocacy Futures Program** (DAFP), which will replace transitional advocacy funding (TAFS).

Renewed Disability Advocacy System

The NSW Disability Futures Program (Program) will create a better connected, sustainable and more equitable advocacy system. The DAFP will enhance and improve systemic and individual disability advocacy services, support representative activity and drive innovation through special purpose projects. The program will also fund the Centre for Disability Advocacy Development and the NSW Disability Advocacy Network, which will have a focus for advocates to develop capabilities, share resources and learning outcomes.



*oversight of the establishment and performance of this Program by the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

NSW DISABILITY ADVOCACY FUTURES PROGRAM DAFP

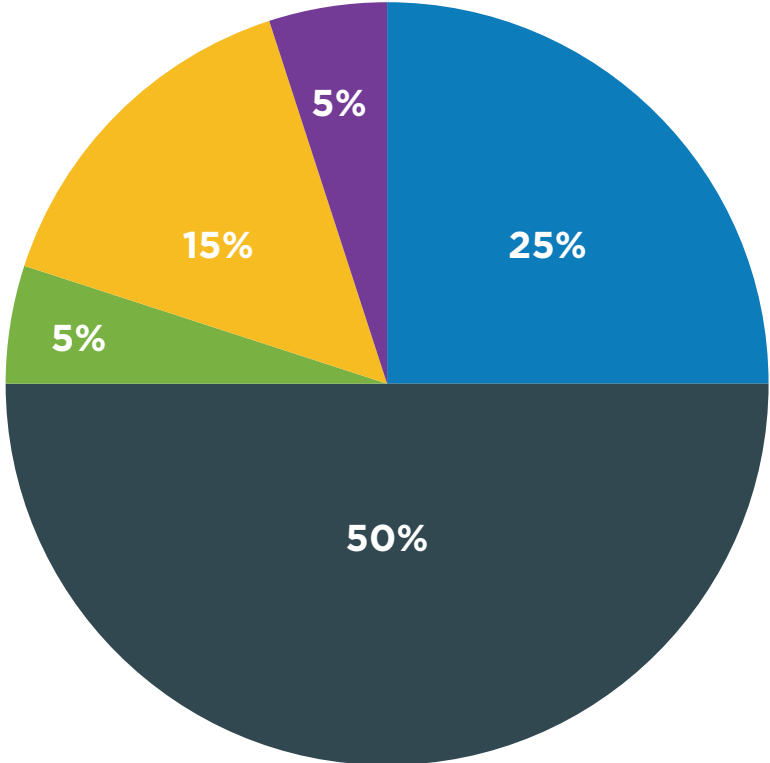
CENTRE FOR DISABILITY ADVOCACY DEVELOPMENT (NSW)	NSW DISABILITY ADVOCACY NETWORK	SYSTEMIC DISABILITY ADVOCACY	INDIVIDUAL DISABILITY ADVOCACY	REPRESENTATIVE DISABILITY ACTIVITY	SPECIAL PURPOSES & PROJECTS
Enhance and improve the development of high quality, sustainable disability advocacy services by fostering collaboration and innovation among disability advocacy service providers.	The Network is a membership-based network of advocacy providers. The purpose is to drive quality improvement, collaboration and innovation among advocacy organisations, and build stronger networks and learning opportunities.	Designed to provide high quality evidence-based advice to inform government and systems owners of ways to protect the rights of people with a disability, that will improve their quality of life.	Involves supported advocacy activities to address specific issues for individual people with disability. A priority will be on issues related to upholding rights, accessing services and resolving disputes and complaints.	Designed to support representative activities primarily conducted by an organisation focussed on a defined cohort of people with specific disabilities, their families or carers.	Designed to support community operated initiatives that assist people with disability to actively engage in their communities in a more informed and empowered way, for which alternative funding sources are not available.
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The collation and sharing of relevant data from disability advocacy services in order to drive learning improvements, efficiencies and improved practices.	Capability building and development opportunities through tailored Communities of Practices'.	The resolution of systemic issues through a more streamlined and informed process.	A focus on people with disability to support their specific needs at a specific time.	Increased awareness about more specific disabilities otherwise unknown, misunderstood or under-represented.	Innovation in the sector delivered through projects that will engage diverse groups of people with disability.
Better access to information about disability advocacy services for the community.	The development of shared resources that will facilitate improved business and service outcome measures, reporting abilities, and cross-sector development.	Better inclusion of the views from people with a lived experience of disability throughout the systemic processes.	Input into systemic issues by individual disability advocacy organisations, and provide ancillary information and referral activity.	Peer and collaborative initiatives between mainstream agencies and more specialised, representative groups.	
The provision of information and advice for self-advocacy and peer support initiatives.	An agreed, workable code of conduct.	Ongoing contributions to government consultations inquiries and reviews.	The development of self-advocacy skills for people with disability where appropriate and able.	A more streamline contribution from representative activity into systemic advocacy.	
A secretariat role for the Disability Advocacy Network.	The ability for advocates to share their learnings and experiences.	Provide ancillary information and referral activity.	More equitable services for legal advocacy, regional communities and for CALD and Indigenous communities.	The delivery of information and referral activity.	

What will the *DAFP* cost?

Certainty of funding will ensure stability in the sector, and continued delivery of some advocacy services until full implementation of the DAFP.

We recommend the government provide a budget allocation of \$13 million for F/Y 2020/21, \$14 million for F/Y 2021/22. The funding allocation for the first full year of the DAFP program should be \$15 million for F/Y 2022-23. The allocations are based on a progressive two year implementation of the reforms and should be adjusted if full implementation can be achieved earlier.

First Full Year Funding



- Individual Disability Advocacy
- Systemic Disability Advocacy
- Centre for Disability Advocacy Development (NSW)
- Representative Disability Activity
- Special Purposes and Projects

How will the *DAFP* benefit you?

FOR ADVOCATES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

A long-term funding program that enables **sustainability**, accountability, and opportunities to collaborate that will enhance skills, capabilities and capacity over time.

FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Simply, a **more accessible and competent advocacy service** delivered in a timely way, regardless of where you live, disability, background or age.

An equitable disability advocacy system that works for **everyone with disability, everywhere** in NSW.

FOR THE NSW COMMUNITY

Access to reliable and accurate disability advocacy information, and confidence that people with disability are being supported by a high-functioning, valuable system.

FOR THE NSW GOVERNMENT

A strengthened partnership with the advocacy sector, providing **evidence-based** solutions and quality **advice**, delivering better outcomes for people with disability in NSW.