

## **ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS TO BE ABLE TO SLEEP IN MY BED**

**The shocking exclusion of people over the age of 65 from the National Disability Insurance Scheme is having terrible impacts on people with disability – leading people to resorting to sleeping in their wheelchairs for 120 out of 180 nights.**

Mark Townend, CEO of Spinal Life Australia, the organisation behind the Disability Doesn't Discriminate campaign believes that the majority of Australians want an inclusive, fair Australia, and that the NDIS ignoring people with disability simply because of their age will lead to tragic circumstances.

“One of our members living with a disability in South-East Queensland has had to sleep in their wheelchair as there is not enough funding for her to employ support workers to help them into bed every night. Imagine being in the situation of not being able to get out of your wheelchair for a restful nights sleep lying down. This person is having to exhaust their hard-earned superannuation to pay for carers to help get into or out of bed. All this person wanted for Christmas 2021 was to be able to get into and out of bed like other Australians do.

“This is a shameful situation that would and should horrify Australians – a Commonwealth Government scheme actively discriminating against some of the most vulnerable in our community. Imagine if this person was your parent or your grandparent. Seeing them put at risk of pressure areas, falls and worse simply because of their age. This is an example of neglect that the Disability Royal Commission is trying to eradicate forever from Australia and will lead to preventable sickness and death in extreme circumstances.

“Australians would be shocked to know that when the National Disability Insurance Scheme was created in 2013, it excluded people over 65 years of age – a situation that current and former Disability Discrimination Commissioners agree is discriminatory and not in keeping with Australia's obligations to the United Nations.

“Our 26 partner organisations and the 20,400 individual supporters of the campaign are aiming to convince politicians that ending age discrimination in the NDIS needs to form part of their electoral platform.

Since June this year, people who have been signing the Disability Doesn't Discriminate campaign, have had emails sent by the campaign on their behalf to their local member of federal parliament.

“These emails, together with two complaints to Australian Human Rights Commission are turning the tide against this unAustralian discrimination. We are continuing to raise the awareness of this inequitable situation in the Australian community – letting voters know that their vote could improve the lives of people with disability who have been unfairly and unjustly excluded from the NDIS.”

Along with the increasing public support for this campaign, one of the architects of the NDIS - Mr Bruce Bonyhady recently stated the NDIS is “deeply inequitable”.

Mr Townend went on to say “It is clear that the time for discrimination in Australia is over, and the Government-mandated discrimination against people with disability needs to end now. I call on all people who intend to stand as candidates in the upcoming federal election to clearly state whether they will support this injustice to end.

“I also call for all Australians to join the campaign to end this inequity and make a fairer Australia for all by signing the online petition at [www.disabilitydoesntdiscriminate.com.au](http://www.disabilitydoesntdiscriminate.com.au).” Each website sign-up triggers an email to the person's local member of Federal Parliament. Together we can end age discrimination in the NDIS and everyone can have a better Christmas.

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**For more information on the Disability Doesn't Discriminate** campaign, please visit [www.disabilitydoesntdiscriminate.com.au](http://www.disabilitydoesntdiscriminate.com.au)

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