

FEDERAL BUDGET CONTINUES UNFAIR AGE DISCRIMINATION

The 2022 Federal Budget does nothing to end age discrimination against people with disability enshrined in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Rather than seeking to fix this blatant injustice by enabling people over 65 to receive the same services as people under 65 in the NDIS, the federal government is continuing the active discrimination against some of the most vulnerable Australians.

Mark Townend, CEO of Spinal Life Australia said *“The government has clearly decided to short-change people with disability once again with no new funding commitments of any significance and they continue to perpetrate legislated age discrimination.”*

This comes after an extended period where the Morrison government has been ruthlessly cutting individual NDIS funding packages - so ruthlessly in fact that appeals from NDIS participants against adverse decisions have risen **sharply** in the last six months.

People with a disability have been treated very poorly by this government over the past nine years, Mr. Townend said. *“The government talk about their massive investment in the NDIS, but they were dragged kicking and screaming into supporting it and since then their primary, and some would say only concern, is the money it costs. Penny pinching can be the only explanation for why they have refused to do anything about this legislated age discrimination.”*

Anyone 65 years of age and over are banned from accessing the NDIS if they were to acquire a disability. Also discriminated against were the people with disability who were over 65 when the NDIS was implemented.

So, if Australians or their loved ones have a car accident or a fall and acquire a significant disability, they are instead thrown into the shambolic My Aged Care scheme.

Under that scheme, people only receive \$52,000 per annum for their care, equipment, and supports when the real cost of care could range from \$160,000 to \$300,000 per annum.

The recent Royal Commission into Aged Care, Quality and Safety recommended equity in funding for people with disability – a recommendation that the federal government continues to ignore.

Mr Townend said, *“It’s not simply about money, it’s actually about respect. Already many people and their families, have found themselves thrown into poverty as a result, all because of this blatant age discrimination.”*

Our two major political parties don’t really want to talk about this issue, but the Greens and prominent independent politicians Andrew Wilkie, Zali Steggall, Rebekha Sharkie and Dr Helen Haines all support the implementation of Recommendation 72.

Mr Townend stated, *“There are two things that all Australians can do to make a fairer Australia. The first thing to do is to hold your federal member to account – ask them where they stand on ending age discrimination. The second is 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.”*

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For more information on the Disability Doesn’t Discriminate campaign, please visit www.disabilitydoesntdiscriminate.com.au

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