



What a year it has been!

We know ASU members in community services and disability services have been working hard this year, and so have we.

We have spent a lot of time working hard to influence government policy in community services and in relation to the NDIS and we have had some big wins along the way. Every time we speak with decision makers we take ASU members with us, because our members are the experts in their area and can share the reality of working at the front line.

Here is just a taste of what we have been up to:

Government inquiries we have given evidence to

- Future of Australia's Aged Care Workforce
- Inquiry into the Federal Government's attempts to cut paid parental leave
- Gender segregation and its impact on women's economic equality
- NDIS services for people with mental health issues
- NDIS Price Controls Review run by the NDIA
- Productivity Commission inquiry into NDIS Costs
- Productivity Commission inquiry into encouraging more "competition" in family and community services
- Senate Committee inquiry into the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission legislation
- Joint parliamentary inquiry into the transitional arrangements for the NDIS
- Numerous submissions and feedback to the Department of Social Services in relation to the NDIS Code of Conduct and Quality and Safeguards Rules

Some of the wins we've had

- Stopped the cuts to paid parental leave
- Productivity Commission making a recommendation that funding contracts in the community sector should run for 7 years, to give organisations and employees stability
- Significant recommendations from the NDIS joint parliamentary committee on the NDIS and mental health:
 - The NDIS should adopt a recovery-based approach for mental health support
 - Mental health consumers should not have to prove they have a 'permanent disability' to be eligible
 - Current consumers of mental health services should be guaranteed continuity of support
 - Federal and state governments need to clarify how they will provide mental health support for people not eligible for the NDIS
 - The NDIA should adopt a more flexible approach in recognition of the fluctuating health needs of mental health consumers
- Amendments to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Legislation:
 - Guaranteed procedural fairness for workers who are subject to complaints or investigations

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- Consultation with your union about rules developed by the Commission
- A review of NDIS worker screening rules by 2019
- Additional significant recommendations from a Senate Committee on the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:
 - Adequate training and support is provided to NDIS workers to meet their obligations under this new regulatory regime
 - The Government must address our concern that NDIS pricing does not allow for adequate training and development for NDIS workers
 - Any investigations need to be concluded as expeditiously as possible, so the matters can be resolved in a timely way
- Significant recommendations on gender equity at work:
 - an extension to paid parental leave, and new provisions for the payment of superannuation during paid parental leave
 - recognition of career paths and qualifications for feminised industries, particularly the care industry
 - reforms to the Fair Work Act to make it easier to obtain equal pay for equal work

We look forward to continuing to work with ASU members to influence government policy in the New Year. If you're not already an ASU member, you can join online here: www.asu.asn.au/asujoin

