



# Disability Representative Organisations Program 2024–25

## 1. About this report

This is the first published document dedicated to providing information about disability advocacy programs funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

This report includes information about the Disability Representative Organisations (DRO) Program funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and is current as at the 2024–25 financial year.

The Program Reporting section includes information about the program using a consistent format to support comparison across reports, nationally. This includes:

- What the program is and what it does
- Who the program is for
- What funding the program receives
- Where the program operates (such as states or territories)

## 2. Program Reporting

### About the program

The DRO Program funds systemic disability advocacy organisations to promote an understanding of the lived experiences of people with disability, promote and advocate for the rights and dignity of people with disability, and foster support for the participation of people with disability in aspects of community life.

The DRO program also provides the opportunity for people with disability, through their representative organisations, to have their views communicated to the Government in a range of engagement activities to ensure that they are represented in decision-making, legislation, policy development and implementation of programs and policies that may affect people with disability.

# Program Details

Table 1 – DRO Program details

Item	Details
<b>Program start</b>	2015
<b>Program end date</b>	Ongoing
<b>Disability advocacy model/s</b>	Systemic disability advocacy
<b>Expected outcome/s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice to government results in positive changes to policy</li> <li>• Increased understanding of the issues affecting the lives of people with disability</li> <li>• More people with disability understand their rights</li> <li>• Better understanding of the rights of people with disability within Government</li> <li>• Increased capacity and knowledge of the sector, member organisations etc.</li> <li>• Easier and more inclusive access to community, programs and services</li> </ul>
<b>Target group/s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All people with disability</li> <li>• Specific cohorts of people with disability including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Autistic people</li> <li>○ children and young people with disability</li> <li>○ culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability</li> <li>○ First Nations people with disability</li> <li>○ LGBTQIA+ people with disability</li> <li>○ women and girls with disability</li> <li>○ people with brain injury</li> <li>○ people with intellectual disability</li> <li>○ people with intellectual disability with a focus on chromosomal variations</li> <li>○ people with physical disability</li> <li>○ people with psychosocial disability</li> <li>○ people with sensory impairments</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Regulatory requirements</b>	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
<b>Certification requirements for providers</b>	Working With Children Check (where appropriate)
<b>Additional information</b>	Nil
<b>Program design</b>	The design of the DRO Program is underpinned by a program logic with ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and is administered through program guidelines, grant agreements, and reporting requirements.
<b>Caveats</b>	Nil

## Program Funding

In 2023–24, the Australian Government undertook a targeted competitive (restricted by eligibility) grant round to fund systemic disability advocacy organisations under the DRO Program from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026. The following 11 organisations were selected for funding:

- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Autism Alliance National
- Children and Young People with Disability Australia
- Community Mental Health Australia
- Down Syndrome Australia
- First Peoples Disability Network
- Inclusion Australia
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance
- People with Disability Australia
- Physical Disability Australia
- Women With Disabilities Australia

In addition to the above 11 funded DROs, Disability Advocacy Network Australia is funded under the DRO Program to provide a National Coordination Function supporting collaboration between DROs and coordinated engagement with the Australian Government.

In 2024–25 the Australian Government provided \$8.566 million (GST exclusive) to organisations funded under the DRO Program.

### 3. Glossary

These are terms used in this document. Some terms may have different usage across programs and can be outlined for each program as required in their own glossary. Further work at a later date may be required by the Working Group to map how some of these terms are being used by agencies and programs.

Term	Usage
<b>advocate (noun)</b>	An advocate is a person or organisation who acts, speaks or writes to promote, protect, uphold and defend human rights of people with disability. An advocate can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a person with disability (speaking up for themselves or others)</li> <li>• an organisation</li> <li>• a person employed as an advocate</li> <li>• a relative, friend, carer, supporter, support worker or other person</li> </ul> Note: Disability advocacy programs may have their own definitions of this term.
<b>disability advocacy</b>	A term used in national reporting to mean Acting, speaking or writing to promote, protect, uphold and defend the human rights of people with disability. Note: Disability advocacy programs may have their own definitions of this term.
<b>disability advocacy model</b>	This is how the program refers to the advocacy it supports and includes any definitions.
<b>disability advocacy program</b>	A term used in national reporting. A disability advocacy program uses <b>disability advocacy</b> , or a/multiple <b>disability advocacy model/s</b> as the focus for most of its work (an example is more than 50%) to achieve its outcomes. Another way to consider it is if the disability advocacy component were removed from the program / grant, it would be a completely different program / grant and would not be able to achieve its outcomes.
<b>framework / National Disability Advocacy Framework</b>	The National Disability Advocacy Framework is a commitment by Australian, state and territory governments to work together to improve access to disability advocacy services across Australia.
<b>National Disability Advocacy Framework / framework / NDAF</b>	The National Disability Advocacy Framework is a commitment by Australian, state and territory governments to work together to improve access to disability advocacy services across Australia.
<b>ongoing</b>	A term used in national reporting to mean ‘in progress and without an end date (noting that this is subject to future decisions by governments)’.
<b>national reporting</b>	Jurisdictions’ commitment to publishing information and data about their disability advocacy programs from 1 July 2026.
<b>target group</b>	The people the services are targeted towards.

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All information in this publication is correct as at June 2026

