Australian Government

National Autism Strategy

National Autism Strategy 2025–31:

Review of Peer Support Models

Status:

Complete



Related Action:

Commitment 2, Action 1 – Review of government-funded peer support models

Who



- Government funded Whereto Research Based Consulting who established an Independent Review Panel including Autistic-led organisations, autism peak bodies, disability sector representatives, and researchers and academics.

Community engagement

- **770 participants engaged** in **54 activities**, with strong representation from all priority cohorts.



What they did

- Review of government-funded peer support models for Autistic people, families and carers.
- Undertook a comprehensive literature review into peer support programs in Australia and internationally.
- Conducted targeted consultation with Autistic people and families, including those facing intersectional disadvantage and living in regional, rural and remote areas.

What we learned

- **All stakeholders** viewed peer support as an essential service as it reduces isolation, builds belonging, and offers reassurance, normalising experiences through shared lived experience.
- **Priority investment** should focus on Autistic young people, late-identified Autistic adults and parents and carers of Autistic children and Autistic people with very high support needs.

Challenges

- No single model meets all needs; a national framework should be developed to support multiple peer support approaches, including for regional and remote communities.
- Peer workforce capacity is limited, with gaps in training, supervision and sustainable resourcing

Next Steps

- Findings directly informed design of Commitment 2, Action 2 – Improving Social Connections Grant.
- Up to $19.88 million over four years committed to establish a coordinated national peer support approach including:
  - Development of a national best practice framework to support capacity building
  - A self-service peer support hub
  - Community Partners to deliver locally tailored peer support programs from 2027
  - Aspect will deliver the project, in partnership with Autistic-led organisation Reframing Autism.

OFFICIAL