

23 July 2025

The Hon. Amanda Camm

1 William Street

Brisbane QLD 4000

Email: families.services@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister Camm

Letter of support for the Queensland Public Advocate report: Supporting parents with cognitive disability in Queensland's child protection system

We are the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN), which is a network of nine member organisations who are funded by the Queensland Government to provide independent disability advocacy to Queenslanders with Disability. We are part of the National Advocacy Collective (NAC), a group of people from around Australia who support the rights of parents with intellectual disability.

The NAC was started by a small group of allies and supporters of parents with an intellectual disability in 2022. Today, NAC is a [strong group of people from across Australia](#) who work together to uphold the rights of parents. Many of NAC's members are parents with intellectual disability working hard to uphold the rights of all parents with an intellectual disability. NAC often make submissions to Government, whose work [can be found here](#).

We welcome and strongly support the Queensland Public Advocate's report [Supporting parents with cognitive disability in Queensland's child protection system](#). The report was [tabled in the Queensland Parliament on 9 June 2025](#), signalling a clear call to action and

Working together to achieve positive change for people with disability

Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADAA) + AMPARO Advocacy + Capricorn Citizen Advocacy (CCA) + Mackay Advocacy + People with a Disability (PWDA) + Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI) + Rights In Action (RIA) + Speaking Up For You (SUFY) + TASC National

leadership on this important issue. NAC is calling on the government, and governments across Australia, to act on the two recommendations of the Queensland Public Advocate's report to:

- Establish a dedicated Ministerial Advisory Committee with the responsibility to review the policies and procedures that apply, and the current practices that occur, when parents with cognitive disability interact with the child protection system.
- Fund a dedicated advocacy program for parents and soon-to-be parents with cognitive disability.

The Queensland Public Advocate's report clearly sets out the barriers that parents with cognitive disability face in child protection systems and offers practical recommendations for change. Importantly, the voices and experiences of parents, including NAC members in Queensland, are reflected throughout the report.

In Australia, parents with intellectual disability make up around 0.41% of the Australia population (around 21,000 people). [Across every state and territory](#), parents with intellectual disability face inaccessible services that do not meet their needs, ableist assumptions about their parenting capacity, systemic discrimination, and overrepresentation in child protection systems, which very often results in child removal. As the Minister for Disability Services and for Child Safety, we understand you are aware of the importance of this report for people with intellectual disability in Queensland. NAC members believe that these recommendations are so important they should be rolled out across Australia. Your role in the Disability Reform Ministerial Council is an opportunity to request the implementation in of these recommendations more broadly, including as foundational supports.

We have 80 years of research that consistently demonstrates that parents with intellectual disability can and do parent positively with the right support and equal access before the law, and [with foundational supports](#) being developed across states and territories with the Commonwealth, now is the time to address the barriers and inequities disproportionately experienced by parents with intellectual disability. NAC members

across the country are ready to be part of the conversation about what needs to happen now – and how we can work together to make the system fairer for parents with intellectual disability, and ensure their human rights are respected and upheld. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to talk about the Queensland Public Advocate's report and how its recommendations can be implemented in our state. Thank you for your time and consideration. We hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Caitlin de Cocq van Delwijnen
Principal Advocate, Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion
On behalf of the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) and the National Advocacy Collective (NAC)

| National Advocacy Collective – Supporting the rights of parents with intellectual disability | |
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| State/Territory | Members |
| ACT | ACT Disability and Aged Care Services (ADACAS) ACT Down Syndrome and Intellectual Disability |
| NSW | Family Inclusion Strategies in the Hunter (FISH) Family Inclusion Network, Southeast Queensland Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) Dr Susan Collings, Western Sydney University Dr Margaret Spencer, University of Sydney Prof Iva Strnadová, University of NSW |
| NT | Inclusion Northern Territory |
| QLD | Community Living Association Family Inclusion Network (FIN) Southeast Queensland Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) Moreton Bay Ability Parent2Parent Queensland Disability Network (QDN) Dr Kathy Ellem, University of Queensland Linda McKey, Family Support Services |

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| SA | South Australian Council on Intellectual Disability (SACID) |
| TAS | Speak Out Advocacy |
| VIC | Independent Family Advocacy and Support (IFAS) Positive Powerful Parents (PPP) Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALID) STAR Victoria Victoria Legal Aid Dr Kate Fitt, RMIT |
| WA | Developmental Disability WA (DDWA) Prof Melissa O'Donnell, Australian Centre for Child Protection |
| National | First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) Inclusion Australia Life Without Barriers Dr Catherine Wade, Parenting Research Centre Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) |