

## Understanding the consultation process

Having your say is important. Your voice can help make important changes to the services and supports you and the person you care for use. This fact sheet contains information and advice to support you participate in consultation opportunities.

### What is a consultation?

A consultation is a broad term used to describe a formal opportunity where you can give feedback on a particular issue, policy, program or legislation. This may include providing written feedback, responding to a survey, participating in a focus group or forum, or providing evidence at a public hearing.

Consultations are an opportunity for you to have your say on current and future legislation, policy and programs or identified issues. This can impact on how government systems operate.

### Why participate in consultations?

As a carer, you are likely to engage with different government services and supports. Your use and access of these systems means you understand what works well and can also make suggestions where things can be changed or improved.

Responding to a consultation means you can use your voice to help change the systems, services, policies and legislation that may benefit you and other carers.

Alicia\* cares for her daughter living with a disability and has heard about the Government making changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). To stay up-to-date with new information, Alicia regularly checks the 'Have your say' webpage on the NDIS website. She recently read about an upcoming roundtable discussion in her local community for families and carers of people accessing the NDIS. Alicia is planning to attend the roundtable with her daughter and share her story.

*\*Not her real name*



# HAVE YOUR SAY

A guide to consultations and giving feedback

## Who runs consultations?

Consultations can be conducted by a number of agencies or bodies. Depending on the type of consultation, you may provide feedback to a government department or agency, Parliamentary Committee or an investigative body. Sometimes an organisation may be commissioned to run a consultation on behalf of the Government.

### Consulting bodies you may have heard of:

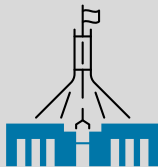
The **Productivity Commission** looks at social, economic and environmental issues that may impact on Australians.



The **Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme** is a Parliamentary Committee that monitors the implementation and performance of the NDIS.



The **Department of Social Services** develops, implements and reviews national programs and services like Carer Gateway.



A **Royal Commission** is an independent public inquiry into a high-profile or large-scale issue or concern.



The **Department of Health and Aged Care** develop and implement health and aged care policies and programs.



When a consultation is first established, the consulting body or agency will usually provide clear guidance on what they would like to receive feedback on. They will also provide information about the consultation timeline, including the consultation period or when the time to provide feedback will end, as well as any further opportunities to provide feedback. You can usually find this information on the consultation website.

## Where to find consultation opportunities

It can be difficult to stay up to date with consultation opportunities, but there are some key locations where you can routinely check for upcoming opportunities, including:

- [Aged Care Engagement Hub](#)
- [Department of Health and Aged Care Consultation Hub](#)
- [Department of Social Services – DSS Engage](#)
- [Parliament of Australia, Senate Committees Inquiries](#)
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme: Have your Say](#)
- [NSW Government Have Your Say](#)

This fact sheet is part of the Have Your Say Fact Sheet series, available for download on the Carers NSW website. For more information, please contact the Carers NSW Policy Team on 02 9280 4744 or [policy@carersnsw.org.au](mailto:policy@carersnsw.org.au).