

ACT Neurodiversity motion

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) neurodivergent people experience, and interact with, the world in different ways, and that there is no right way of thinking, learning, and behaving;
 - (b) neurodivergent people in Australia often experience barriers to accessing appropriate and quality services and supports, education, employment, and broader social inclusion, due to social and institutional attitudinal issues, which can lead to poorer health, wellbeing and other life outcomes compared to other Australians; and
 - (c) the community benefits from being more inclusive of, and learning from, neurodivergent people;
- (2) acknowledges:
 - (a) that neurodivergent people are experts of their own lives;
 - (b) the importance of neurodivergent people being involved in decisions that impact them as per the principle “Nothing About Us Without Us”; and
 - (c) ongoing efforts by all governments to better support neurodivergent people, including:
 - (i) the Australian Government’s commitment to developing a National Autism Strategy (NAS). The NAS will cover key reform areas including access to services, healthcare, education and employment; help guide a more coordinated, national approach supporting autistic people at each stage of life; and be informed by autistic people, their families and carers, the autism sector and researchers;
 - (ii) the findings and recommendations of the final report of the Senate Select Committee on Autism;
 - (iii) the Senate Committee’s inquiry into assessment and support services for people with ADHD, which is scheduled to deliver its final report by 18 October 2023;
 - (iv) South Australia’s State Autism Strategy, and their commitment to funding the new Office for Autism;
 - (v) the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability which will deliver its final report to the Australian Government by 29 September 2023;
 - (vi) Australia’s Disability Strategy as Australia’s national disability policy framework to which Commonwealth, state and territory governments are all signatory to;

- (vii) the ACT Government’s commitment to developing and investing in an ambitious 10-year ACT Disability Strategy, and the extensive community consultation that has taken place. This Strategy will take a systemic, holistic and intersectional approach to supporting people with disability, including people with intellectual disability, psychosocial disability and neurodiversity;
- (viii) the ACT Government is also developing the ACT Inclusive Education Strategy, an ACT Disability Health Strategy and the ACT Disability Justice Strategy Second Action Plan; and
- (ix) the roles and functions of the Office for Disability and Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing within the ACT Government;
- (d) the NDIS provides a key role in supporting people with disability, including neurodiverse people, and that:
 - (i) the NDIS Review’s overarching goal is to “put people with disability back at the centre of the NDIS” and the Review Panel will provide its final report to disability ministers by October 2023;
 - (ii) National Cabinet has agreed to an 8 percent growth target for the NDIS to be achieved by the end the forward estimates period; and
 - (iii) the Commonwealth has indicated that 27,000 people with psychosocial disability could be diverted from the NDIS by 2026-2027 through the provision of additional psychosocial support services outside of the NDIS and across all levels of government; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to:
 - (a) consider developing an ACT Neurodiversity Strategy, in close consultation with neurodivergent Canberrans, their families and carers, and relevant stakeholders, that:
 - (i) upholds the social model of disability and human rights principles; and
 - (ii) aligns with NAS, the ACT Disability Strategy, the ACT Inclusive Education Strategy and other relevant policies;
 - (b) consider establishing an Office for Neurodiversity in the ACT Government; and
 - (c) report back to the Assembly on these matters by June 2024.” —

be agreed to—put and passed.