



**Uniting Church in Australia**  
**ASSEMBLY**  
Assembly Standing Committee

27-29 August 2021

**DOCUMENT 11**

<b>Title</b>	<b>ASC Member Disability Royal Commission National Task Group</b>
Type of Paper (Information/Decision)	For information and decision
Assembly or ASC Minute	
Consultation	
Purpose	To provide information regarding the Terms of Reference of the Disability Royal Commission National Task Group, and for the ASC to appoint a member of the Task Group.
Rationale & Findings Summary	According to the Disability Royal Commission National Task Group Terms of Reference, membership of the Task Group includes an ASC Member appointed to the Task Group.  ASC is asked to identify an ASC member who is willing to be a member of the National Task Group, and appoint them to the National Task Group. The National Task Group meets during the day on a week day.
Attachments	Attachment A: National Task Group for the Disability Royal Commission Terms of Reference
Proposal/s	That the Assembly Standing Committee: 1. Identify an ASC member for appointment to the Disability Royal Commission National Task Group
Submitted by	Colleen Geyer Assembly General Secretary <a href="mailto:colleeng@nat.uca.org.au">colleeng@nat.uca.org.au</a> ; 0411 333 167

# NATIONAL TASK GROUP FOR THE DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Background

A Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Disability Royal Commission) has been established by the Commonwealth Government.

The Uniting Church offers a range of services to people with disability and their families, and there are people with disabilities in congregations and among staff and ministry agents. The Uniting Church is committed to social justice and supporting people to live life in all its fullness.

Key contacts with people with disabilities are:

- Community services agencies of the Church, including through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, family and child supports including the child protection system, employment services, community care, respite care, people with disabilities receiving support through aged care infrastructure, and other community services
- Schools
- Congregational participation
- Staff and ministry agents
- Community engagement and participation

### Purpose of the National Task Group

The National Task Group (the NTG) will provide leadership of the Church's engagement, response and contact with the Royal Commission, working collaboratively with the Church's community services agencies and schools (who may have separate engagement with the Royal Commission in their service contexts), along with Synods, congregations and Presbyteries.

The NTG will:

- provide leadership of whole of Church engagement with the Royal Commission, including direct engagement with the Royal Commission and communication into the Church
- document the Uniting Church's values in relation to people with a disability
- oversee development of whole of Church policy positions in response to the work of the Royal Commission
- monitor the work of the Royal Commission and oversee analysis of the work and learnings of the Royal Commission and its impact on the Church and the communities it serves and communicate the analysis across the Church
- harness the expertise within the life of the Church in relation to services to people with disabilities
- provide leadership into the Church in relation to the institutional safety of people with a disability
- provide leadership in the Church's response to people with a disability who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation in the Church

## **Principles**

The NTG will:

- work collaboratively and in partnership across the Church, including with Synod Task Groups
- draw on the expertise held across the Church in the provision of services to people with disabilities and in institutional safety
- seek the voices of people with a disability in the work of the NTG
- seek to understand the particular needs of people with disabilities from First Peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and reflect these needs in its work
- engage with ecumenical and community services partners

## **Membership of the National Task Group**

- Assembly General Secretary (Chair)
- Six persons nominated by the Synod Task Groups (ie one from each Synod) with provision for an alternate to attend meetings if the member is unavailable
- One person appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee
- Three persons nominated by the Board of UnitingCare Australia, including one person who is a participant in the UCA Disability Working Group
- Up to three persons co-opted by the NTG to ensure that representation includes a person with knowledge and skills in disability advocacy, a representative of schools, and any other skills or experience the NTG identifies as necessary to support the work of the NTG (for example, institutional safety, redress, governance, service delivery)
- The President as attendee

## **Accountability and reporting**

The NTG is accountable to the Assembly Standing Committee.

The secretariat will provide regular reporting to Church stakeholders, including Synod Task Groups as per the Communications Strategy. This will include a summary of the NTG's meeting outcomes where the NTG has met within the period.

## **Accountability and reporting**

The NTG is accountable to the Assembly Standing Committee.

## **Relationship with Synod Task Groups and UnitingCare Australia Disability Working Group**

The NTG will lead the Church's national response to the Royal Commission. Synod Task Groups and the UnitingCare Australia Disability Working Group will be invited to contribute to development of policy positions and to raise issues through the secretariat or NTG Chair for consideration at the national level. Approval of the work developed by the NTG will rest with the Assembly General Secretary.

## **Secretariat**

UnitingCare Australia will provide secretariat support for the NTG and will resource the work of the NTG.

## **Meetings of the National Task Group**

The NTG will meet at least five times per year. Meetings can be held face to face or in person. The meeting length will be determined by the Chair in consultation with the secretariat depending on the agenda.

*Approved by the Assembly Standing Committee, November 2019*