

ACT Election 2020

This election, AFI wants...

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**Commitments
on equity in accessing
services, housing, and
health for people with
disability.**

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About Advocacy for Inclusion

Advocacy for Inclusion acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners of the land on which we work.

Advocacy for Inclusion provides national systemic advocacy and independent individual, self and systemic advocacy for people with disabilities in the Australian Capital Territory. We are a Disabled Peoples Organisation which means most of our board, members and staff are people with disabilities. We represent all people with disabilities and recognise diversity.

We act with and on behalf of individuals to act on their own behalf, to obtain a fair and just outcome.

Advocacy for Inclusion works within a human rights framework and acknowledges the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and is a signatory of the *ACT Human Rights Act 2004*.

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AFI Votes 2020

AFI has developed 3 key areas that we want the next ACT Government to act upon to make sure Canberra is a city that supports and promotes the rights of people with disability.

AFI wants actions on the following policy areas:

1. Access to services

We want People with disability need to have better and equitable access to mainstream services and supports.

2. Housing

We want the ACT Government to continue the ACT Housing Strategy with a disability lens.

3. Health

AFI supports ACTCOSS in calling for an ACT Disability Health Strategy to fill gaps where vulnerable Canberrans with disabilities and mental health are missing out.



Access to services

Improve and prioritise timely intervention to ensure supports and services are provided, and available over the long-term for people with disability to close gaps across health, housing, justice, and mainstream support.

What can the ACT Government Deliver?

- Expand and bolster frontline services that provide crisis intervention to increase disability awareness and response.
- Maintain and increase funding for individual advocacy organisations like AFI to support and represent people with disabilities at a greater capacity.
- Ensure that all persons with disabilities in Canberra have access to continuous, viable, and adequately resourced community services to bridge gaps, particularly outside the NDIS.
- Expand mental health projects that link to bridging gaps in individual advocacy between the Office for Disability and Office for Mental Health.
- **Improve the responsiveness of ACT's policies in areas such as health, education, justice, child protection and housing to ensure a disability liaison is placed to provide support. This will decrease pressure on advocacy services.**
- Commitment to fund dedicated supports for parents with disability to provide tailored support starting during maternal stage through a **child's development as a means of early intervention.**
- Ensure the sustainability and efficacy of individual advocacy funding is increased to meet the needs of people with disability and mental health to achieve access to appropriate services and supports.
- A commitment to continuing the Disability Justice Strategy. Providing people with disabilities exiting the AMC to have access to support services and advocacy before release, including housing, health services, employment, and training options.
- Increase of funding for advocacy and support organisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans to ensure these services are adequately supported to deliver the support under less pressure and burden of capacity.
- Invest funding into boosting the capacity of organisations to develop resources to enhance people with disabilities in the community to understand their disability human rights through self-advocacy.

Accessible Housing

People with disability in the ACT have a right to live in the community and participate fully in economic, social, and cultural life. Currently, people with disability and psychosocial disability are having trouble accessing affordable and accessible housing in the ACT private and public rental markets.

What can the ACT Government Deliver?

- Increase the range, affordability, and accessibility of public and social housing for persons with disabilities, including by implementing a quota for accessible social housing and by developing regulations and standards to guarantee the progressive application of universal design principles for accessible housing.
- The inclusion of accessible public and social housing in all new property developments **that does not 'lump' low socio-economic groups** into high-density arrangements.
- All social housing developed and purchased in the ACT to achieve minimum standards of accessibility and accreditation as per the universal housing design targets agreed to and in accordance with the Australian Building Code Board.
- Provide further investment in additional public housing and renewal of current stock. All new housing developments are designed for independent living, not institutionalised living in a community setting.



Investment in health

People with disabilities deserve the highest standard to health. Under Article 25 of the CRPD, AFI remains concerned about the adequate access to information, accessible health services and crisis and early intervention support for people with disabilities in ACT hospital and health settings.

What can the ACT Government Deliver?

- Implement a Disability Health Strategy to follow the ACT implementation of the national [Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability](#) post-COVID.
- ACT Government to establish a Disability Liaison role as a model of care (Provider of Last Resort) under ACT Health. This will close the gap between health and the NDIS to ensure people with disabilities and mental health are properly and adequately resourced so that they are not left without crisis intervention support.
- Invest in initiatives that will build the capacity of advocacy organisations like AFI to deliver individual advocacy, with increasing clientele with dual disability and mental health.
- Commit to funding early intervention structures to assist and enable parents with disabilities to develop parenting skills. In addition, fund support provisions for parents with disabilities to access parenting services that are accessible, fair, and inclusive.
- Ensure the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan implementation to the ACT includes targeted measures for persons with disabilities.
- Improve access to health care information dissemination for people with disabilities, making independent decisions of their health care choices.
- Audit and invest in local specialists to remove the high waitlisting times under ACT Health.

