



Urgent need to invest in advocacy

Independent advocacy services are essential for **protecting the human rights and wellbeing of people living with disability**. JFA Purple Orange is calling on all parties and candidates in the state election to commit to investing in these services through a **long-term funding model**.

We believe that all people living with disability should have **access to high-quality, well-resourced, independent advocacy services**. The **value** of these services for **both connecting people to community** and **providing an essential safeguard** cannot be overstated.

Equally, **self-advocacy capacity building programs should be funded** to increase knowledge, skills, and experience for people to advocate for themselves.

More broadly, a diverse range of systemic advocacy organisations should have the capacity to **independently monitor** the issues affecting people living with disability, promote their rights, and advocate for change to enhance their life chances.

Funding for advocacy services is a **joint Commonwealth and state responsibility** in Australia and **most governments are investing in these services**. The New South Wales Government's Disability Advocacy Futures Program (DAFP) receives \$13 million per year in funding and covers three main streams: Individual Disability Advocacy, Systemic Disability Advocacy, and Representative Disability Advocacy (for membership organisations). The funded amount is slightly below what the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner recommended in a 2019 review of disability advocacy in that state after undertaking extensive modelling.

Consecutive South Australian governments have **not provided meaningful support for independent advocacy services in this state for many years**. A recent government tender process whereby funding of \$400,000 per year was provided for one state-wide service falls well short of what is required to provide adequate services in the state.

The forthcoming state election presents an opportunity to **address this critical gap by significantly investing in independent advocacy services**. Based on the New South Wales investment of \$13 million per year, a **proportionate response** by population **would be a commitment of about**

JFA Purple Orange is an independent social-profit organisation that undertakes systemic policy analysis and advocacy across a range of issues affecting people living with disability and their families.

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\$3 million per year in South Australia. This figure represents a **reasonable initial investment** and a baseline from which demand for services can be **closely monitored** and the amount adjusted accordingly to determine an appropriate long-term funding level.

We urge all parties and candidates to **commit to urgently addressing the gap in independent advocacy services** in South Australia by:

- Transitioning to a **new long-term funding model** that **significantly increases state government investment in independent advocacy services** to meet current and future demand, while also providing **financial certainty for providers**
- Ensuring that **services are available in all regional and remote areas** and **providing culturally appropriate services** for people living with disability from First Nations communities and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensuring that **targeted services are available** for people living with disability who are socially isolated, including those with complex communication needs and those residing in institutional care and aged care facilities
- Making independent advocacy services available to support people living with disability when **dealing with NDIS related matters**
- **Transparent public reporting** of independent advocacy funding, service provision, and outcomes

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