

# Advocacy and policy

**Advocacy and Policy are an important part of our work at lifeAssist. Our staff engage in individual advocacy as well as high-level advocacy and policy work to support important change in the community.**

We aim to translate the experience of our clients and our workers into positive change to improve the lives of all those with disability, those who are ageing and of the community in general.

We engage in a range of activities in support of our Advocacy and Policy goals, including:

- Working with other organisations and groups who are doing similar or related work.
- Providing submissions and reports to Government and other bodies to encourage improvements or changes in how services are delivered and how people are treated.
- Running regular forums and other consultative activities with clients to identify issues and areas of concern.
- Advocating on behalf of our clients and other communities which deserve better.

## Projects

Some of the recent work undertaken by lifeAssist in Advocacy and Policy includes:

### **An active campaign for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

A campaign that argued for the introduction of a comprehensive national insurance scheme for people with disability, regardless of how they are acquired. Our work on the campaign included policy-level work through our individual and UnitingCare submissions to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into Disability Care and Support along with a forum we held with Productivity Commission staff, clients and representatives from local organisations. We were also involved in work to publicise the need for a National Disability Insurance Scheme through visits to

local politicians, ongoing discussions with the Uniting Church and other organisations and groups, and through work to communicate information amongst the general community.

### **Human Rights Charter**

We are strong advocate for the human rights of every individual, and we believe that upholding human rights in how services are delivered and people are treated is foundational to a 'good life'. lifeAssist has been actively contributing to the review of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and works with other agencies to ensure the Charter remains a powerful tool and becomes a part of how we treat people in our services every day.

### **Aged care reform**

The Australian Government (through the Productivity Commission) has been investigating how aged care services are delivered and how this could be improved. lifeAssist has been involved in these discussions and worked with UnitingCare organisations from across Australia in providing our opinion and experiences on how services could be improved.

### **Child Protection and Disability**

Our staff have responded to the gap in the system where children with disability suffer inadequate protection. We are working with other organisations to lobby for improved programs and policies, as well as determining the training needs of staff who are working with these clients.

### **Housing Accessibility**

We are involved with the housing sector, and understands how critical housing is to the welfare of anyone who is ageing or with a disability. We are working on innovative approaches to housing and are involved with many public housing organisations and committees to ensure that housing is provided to the most vulnerable in our communities.