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# Joint Select Committee on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - Oversight of redress related recommendations

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# SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY, PROGRAM AND LEGAL RESPONSE TO THE REDRESS RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION

Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the inquiry into the Australian Government policy, program and legal response to the redress related recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission), including the establishment and operation of the Commonwealth Redress Scheme and ongoing support of survivors. CYDA commends the Australian Government on taking steps to establish a National Redress Scheme in response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations regarding Redress. Such an initiative is an essential element of supporting people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

CYDA raised a number of concerns previously that remain relevant to the present inquiry, in providing feedback to the Senate Standing Committee regarding the *Commonwealth Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Bill 2018* and related Bill. CYDA’s submission to this inquiry is attached.

A concern held by CYDA, which was not raised in the attached submission, relates to people who are seeking a review of their redress application. Presently, if a person seeks a review of their application, it will be reconsidered by an independent decision maker. This independent decision maker may keep the original decision, change the original decision or make a new decision. It is stated that “*If a different decision is made, the previous offer will be withdrawn, and the new offer may provide a lower monetary payment[[1]](#footnote-1)”.* That is, if a new offer is made following a review, a person can no longer choose to accept the original offer. CYDA is of the view that this is problematic, as it has the potential to deter people from seeking a review.

CYDA also holds concerns regarding recommendation 9.3 of the Royal Commission’s Final Report, which states that *“the Australian Government and state and territory governments should fund support services for people with disability who have experienced sexual abuse in childhood as an ongoing integral part of advocacy and support and therapeutic treatment service system responses for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse*.[[2]](#footnote-2)” CYDA notes that the Australian Government has only accepted this recommendation in principle[[3]](#footnote-3), and is concerned as to how they will ensure all applicants with disability have access to support services that have the expertise to adequately support people with disability.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation. If you wish to discuss any of the issues further, please do not hesitate to contact CYDA.

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1. Department of Social Services 2018, *Fact Sheet: Responding to an offer or asking for a review*, viewed 15 August 2018 <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/document/416> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2015, *Final Report*, Sydney [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Australian Government 2018, *Australian Government Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, viewed 15 August 2018 <https://goo.gl/YVjncU> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)