



Congratulations Monsignor Cappo And the Social Inclusion Office team

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The tabling in Parliament yesterday of the Cappo Social Inclusion Report is applauded.

Titled "Strong Voices" the insightful, detailed report represents a highly professional, factual summary of a system in collapse as expected.

Most importantly the report highlights 34 key recommendations including as priority action

1. Enact a new Disability Act in Parliament
2. Clear the critical and evident risk crisis waiting lists
3. The monitoring and reporting to parliament on a regular basis disability standards and services
4. The reshaping of disability service provision
5. The concept of consumers selecting their own service models

Having taken submissions from over 2000 South Australians either with disability or supporting those with same the report has presented a clear picture of the scope of the problem and more importantly the pathway forward. A copy of the report can be found at www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au

Many within the disability sector will say there is nothing new in this report. The information contained has been public knowledge and known to the government for 10 years. Such commentary is undoubtedly true and the failure to act earlier by

outgoing Premier Mike Rann remains a mystery to so many. His reputation has been tarnished by his lack of action.

What has changed is that no longer can any state government, Labor or Liberal, dispute the scope, depth or solutions to the problem. The talking must now finish and the rectification and rebuilding must start.

In many ways the Cappo Report is significantly better than the Australian Productivity Commission, National Disability Insurance Scheme Report.

While the NDIS report takes a holistic and often big picture approach to disability need the Cappo report through the provision of the 34 key recommendations provides real, tangible and doable solutions to the problems identified within the report.

The major ingredient missing is the costing of the proposed solutions. The need to increase budget contribution appears in virtually every section and paragraph. We will wait with some interest the future release of these important numbers and the governments priority in attacking them. Disability Speaks estimates that it will cost between \$60- 80 million dollars per annum in additional recurrent funding to begin to implement the major recommendations. The report demands this action occur in the next budget cycle.

Many in the disability sector will be disappointed that there is no mention of the broken promises and chronic and systematic underfunding of the last decade. Maybe it is polite to allow Mr Rann to put his own spin on history. Mr Rann leaves the report and the unresolved issues to incoming Premier Jay Weatherill who is known to many in the disability sector from his time as Disability Minister. Jay is widely recognised as a highly intelligent, professional politician who consulted widely and cared. He asked people what services they wanted and how they should be delivered. His qualities of being a family man and a decent bloke were often evident, but he was also as tough as they come. We still have the scars to prove it. We all expect the new Premier to do a better job than his predecessor, but we should not expect that Mr Weatherill will be able to rectify decades of systematic and chronic underfunding overnight.

The sector must improve its own performance, band together and work on the big issues without the petty philosophical divides that have stifled progress for decades. That will be a serious challenge. Those who fantasise about utopia must become more realistic, those who constantly criticise must work on solutions and those who think they can tell others how to live their lives should jump in Mike's suitcase.

We wish Mr Rann a long and healthy life after politics. We truly hope that neither he nor any one he loves ever has a serious disability befall them. If tragically that happens, we hope he is living somewhere with a better Premier, more focused on disability support, than he was. If not, he may well yet come to understand the pain, grief and suffering that so many have felt, that he could have elected to address but chose not to do so.

The Cappo report will need a champion to drive it forward and ensure its success. With Mr Cappo's retirement from public office let's hope either the new Premier

makes it a personal project or appoints a high profile, government savvy executive to steer the program.

In summary the SA Disability Community is in a better place with the release of this report. The way forward is clear and we must all strive to make it sooner rather than later.

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