

OFFICE OF DISABILITY — NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

**602. Mr M.J. FOLKARD to the Minister for Disability Services:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to people with disability in Western Australia. Can the minister update the house about how the government is supporting Western Australians with disability and ensuring that our state receives a fair deal from the commonwealth on the National Disability Insurance Scheme?

**Mr D.T. PUNCH replied:**

I thank the member for Burns Beach for his excellent work, particularly in researching post-traumatic stress disorder and assisting people experiencing that very debilitating condition.

The McGowan Labor government is proud to establish the state's first office of disability as part of the 2021–22 budget to promote the rights and interests of people with disability and support the broader disability sector that exists in Western Australia. The establishment of an office of disability will ensure disability continues to be a key part of the state government's focus and there is a strong voice advocating for people with disability across government, the disability sector and the broader community. The office will act as a vital conduit of information and knowledge on the range and quality of services that people with disability require. I know members get frequent inquiries about disability matters, and this office will be a vital part of helping to make sure the system is fair, equitable and easy to follow.

Sitting within the Department of Communities, the office will provide disability sector stewardship and advice on state and commonwealth systems, and drive work and information to advance inclusion and the participation of people with disability in Western Australia. It will provide leadership through a dedicated team to implement and monitor our *A Western Australia for everyone: State disability strategy 2020–2030*, which my predecessor, Hon Steve Dawson, led the development of. Importantly, the office will have a role in informing and advising government on the experiences between Western Australians with disability and their families and carers and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The office supports the McGowan government to deliver better outcomes for the 411 500 Western Australians who live with disability, and is part of our commitment to investing in key services that will support all Western Australians.

The role and structure of the office of disability has been shaped by an extensive consultation engagement process undertaken across the state in 2020 that included people with lived experience of disability, and that is a key part of moving forward into the future. Its formation answers a call from peak and advocacy bodies throughout the disability sector in Western Australia that such an office be formed in WA. I am pleased to inform the house of that development, and I think the office of disability will make an outstanding contribution to the future of disability services in Western Australia.