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Info Kit for Submissions to the 2022 Australian Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

About this Info Kit

This Info Kit is for sex workers with disability who are considering making a submission to the Australian Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (ADRC).

The ADRC is accepting submissions on what should be done to:

- better protect people with disability from being hurt, refused help or taken advantage of
- achieve best practice in reporting, investigating and responding to cases where people with disability have been or are being hurt,
- promote a more inclusive society that supports the independence of people with disability and their right to live free from being hurt, refused help or taken advantage of.

This Info kit covers:

- How you can contribute to the Royal Commission process
- Options for participating in sex worker peer-facilitated input to the Royal Commission
- Some points that you could include in your input

This process is open ONLY to sex workers with disability. This is inclusive of any sex worker who identifies as disabled or having a disability, whether or not they have been provided with a diagnosis by a medical professional. This also includes sex workers who experience mental health conditions and/or identify as neurodiverse.

Scarlet Alliance, supported by policy staff at SWOP NSW, is conducting a consultation process for sex workers with disability. The outcome of the consultation will be a report from Scarlet Alliance and our member organisations that is sent to the ADRC. This will include inputs from individual sex workers with disability who submit through our peer-only process.

How you can contribute to the Royal Commission

Sex workers with disability have provided us with input on the importance of creating a diverse set of accessible consultation inputs to support everyone to contribute in a way that's best for them. We have designed the following inputs to ensure that people can participate in ways that meet their capacity.

1. You can make a submission in whatever form suits you best, including:
 - A written submission
 - Audio/voice recording
 - Video recording
 - Art (poetry, music, drawing)
 - Phone call to the Commission (this call would be conducted by a staff member at the ADRC, not by a sex worker peer)
 - They can provide interpreting services.
 - Ph: 1800 517 199 한국어 - 中文 - ภาษาไทย - اللغة العربية
2. You can participate in a roundtable discussion hosted by staff from Scarlet Alliance and SWOP NSW. For more information, go to www.scarletalliance.org.au/ADRC/
3. You can participate in our online survey to share your experiences. [You can take the survey here.](#)

Options for making your own submission

Submit through the Scarlet Alliance process

Sex workers with disability who would like to provide their input to be compiled by Scarlet Alliance and sent to the ADRC as a package from sex workers with disability can submit through Scarlet Alliance. Those with privacy or reporting concerns may benefit from doing this.

See the details below for putting together your submission

1. You can send your submission (or arrange to do a file transfer if it's an audio-visual submission) to ellie@swop.org.au or npm@scarletalliance.org.au. Depending on the number of individual submissions we receive, our capacity to process long submissions may be limited. As a guide, you might stick to a 2000-word (or 20-minute) submission.
2. When you submit, you'll be asked whether you'd like to do so anonymously or with a name of your choice attached to your submission. You'll also be asked whether you'd like it to be accessible via the Scarlet Alliance website.

Submit directly to the Commission

Sex workers with disability who'd like to submit directly to the ADRC should be mindful of disclosing things that may be subject to mandatory reporting, such as working outside the law in their state, or if a person is in immediate danger of harm (e.g. suicide, facing ongoing violence, facing ongoing serious neglect).

If you want to share experiences that involve you or someone else doing something that is outside of the law, we recommend that you submit anonymously. You could also consider sending your submission to Scarlet Alliance instead and we will submit it for you.

Here are the options for consent to publication *for those submitting directly to the ADRC*:

- **Public** – published on website, including your provided name
- **Anonymous & published** – published on website and could be referenced by the ADRC
- **Anonymous & unpublished** – not published on website but could be referenced by the ADRC
- **Restricted** - the information that you give will not be referenced by the ADRC in any way

If you are submitting your story directly to the ADRC, you should clearly state in your submissions which option you want out of the above options.

You can seek free legal advice before sharing your story with the ADRC about the [special privacy rules](#) that apply, by [contacting Your Story Disability Legal here](#).

If you want to [name people or organisations](#) or discuss court cases or legal matters where you (or a friend) signed a non-disclosure agreement or similar, you may wish to seek legal advice first.

Preparing a submission

Your submission doesn't have to be in writing. You could record yourself (or have someone else record you) talking about your experiences or speaking to the prompts below, you could create an artwork, you could ask someone to interview you, write a poem, or something else creative that you come up with!

The Commission has also prepared a brochure available in multiple languages on ['Sharing your experience'](#).

If you're feeling stuck on where to start, this section provides a list of topic prompts that you could include in your submission. The scope of the Commission is very broad and you can choose what and how much information you provide. You can focus on your own experiences, talk about what you think should change, or a combination of both.

Scarlet Alliance's report to the Commission will highlight sex worker experiences of stigma and discrimination, including the systemic harms committed through the criminalisation and licensing of sex work.

Introduce yourself and give some context about your experience:

- Your identity: (e.g., gender, sexuality, state you live in, if you are on a visa, your ethnicity and/or religion, your family/home situation, whether you have dependent children, family or other care responsibilities, etc.)
- Your **financial** situation: (e.g., your experiences with employment, your experiences accessing government support like the NDIS, DSP or Centrelink)
- Your **disability** (anything you think is relevant for the ADRC to know about your disability, care needs, supports, etc)
- Your **sex work** experience: (e.g. kinds of sex work you have ever done, states you have done sex work in, etc.

This is where you should be particularly careful about disclosing doing something illegal, and make sure that your identity is protected if you do disclose that. One way to do this is to provide your submission to Scarlet Alliance to submit for you. You can seek free legal advice from [Your Story Disability Legal](#). You can also talk to SWOP NSW or Scarlet Alliance about it if you are not sure if you need legal advice.

- What state/s have you done sex work in?
- What types of sex work do you have experience with?
- Does your disability impact your decision to do sex work? If so, how?
- How does your disability impact your experience of sex work? If this could be better for you, what would need to change?

Experiences of discrimination, stigma, harm and barriers to accessing justice or support:

- If you have experienced discrimination, harm or abuse because of your disability or sex work when:
 - Accessing healthcare
 - Seeking other employment outside of sex work
 - Accessing 'justice'
 - Accessing government support (e.g. Centrelink or NDIS)
 - At home or somewhere else
- Barriers to reporting violence, crime or harm and/or seeking support
- The relationship between mental health, stigma, community representation, sex work and disability
- Experiences of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation relating to your disability and/or sex work.

Thoughts on what should change:

- Laws, policy or systems that need to change to better support sex workers with disability
- You might like to demand the full decriminalisation of sex work in every state and territory, as well as robust anti-discrimination protections for sex workers. Both of these work together to create a more enabling environment for sex workers to access our rights to housing, healthcare, justice, and equal protection under the law.
- Recommend best practice to support sex workers with disability who want to report harm, violence or neglect
- Any recommendations that you think the ADRC should make in its final report about sex workers with disability, for instance to promote a more inclusive society that supports the independence of sex workers with disability