NSW Ombudsman

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Improving service delivery to Aboriginal people with a disability

NSW Ombudsman Bruce Barbour today tabled a report to Parliament entitled *Improving service delivery to Aboriginal people with a disability*.

This report followed a review of the implementation of Ageing, Disability and Home Care's (ADHC) *Aboriginal Policy Framework* and *Aboriginal Consultation Strategy*. The framework and strategy outline ADHC's approach to improving service delivery to Aboriginal communities.

During the review, we met with more than 460 people across NSW, including frontline staff from ADHC, funded service providers and Aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal people are one and a half times more likely to have a disability than non-Aboriginal people. **'One of the greatest challenges facing ADHC is ensuring Aboriginal people with a disability know about and are able to access the support services they are entitled to and need'** the Ombudsman said.

The review confirmed ADHC's commitment to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people with a disability. The report acknowledges efforts already made and outlines a range of areas where ADHC can strengthen its focus. These include:

- employing more Aboriginal workers to provide 'face to face' assistance to Aboriginal people to access the services they need
- taking a more flexible approach to service delivery, and
- strengthening overall accountability of ADHC's work to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.

'It is also critical that ADHC effectively engages with Aboriginal communities when planning and delivering services' said Mr Barbour.

ADHC has responded positively to the review. A significant outcome is the development of a new 'Aboriginal service model' using feedback obtained from the review about the needs and preferences of Aboriginal people.

We will continue to monitor ADHC's progress in this important area of service delivery.