

How to lobby your Federal candidates for Our Health Counts campaign

“Across Australia too many people with intellectual disability are dying too young and from preventable causes and we are not doing enough to fix this problem.” Shu Hua Chan, Chair Council for Intellectual Disability.

We need your help to persuade the Australian Government to take the health of people with intellectual disability seriously. You can do this by contacting your Liberal/National Party and Labor Party candidates.

1. Find your electorate and MP

If you don't know which electorate you are in or who your Federal MP is, you can go to the Australian Electoral Commission's website.

<https://electorate.aec.gov.au/>

Scroll down to the bottom, use the drop-down box and select 'locality or suburb'. Enter your suburb and press enter. The electorate will then be listed.

Use the following link to find the phone number and email of your Federal MP.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/~/_/media/03%20Senato rs%20and%20Members/32%20Members/Lists/MemList.pdf

It is important to lobby all candidates for your seat, not just your current MP. You can find all candidates for the main political parties on the links below.

- Australian Labor Party - <https://www.alp.org.au/our-people/our-people/?filter=cd>
- The Liberal Party of Australia - <https://www.liberal.org.au/our-team>

2. Contact your candidates

Don't forget to be polite when you phone or email your MP.

Explain why you are phoning/emailing:

“I am calling because I am concerned about the high number of preventable deaths of people with intellectual disability”.

“Up to half the deaths of people with intellectual disability are preventable”.

“People with intellectual disability die 27 years earlier than the general population. This isn't good enough and I want the Federal Government to take action”.

“I would like to speak to (candidate's name) because I want your party to address the health inequalities for people with intellectual disability”.

Tell your candidate what you would like them to do:

“We need new and current doctors and other health workers to get a lot more help and training on how to work with people who have intellectual disability”

“We need a national inquiry to find out how to make the health system work for people with intellectual disability”.

3. Go and meet with your local candidates

Write a letter or email to your local candidates

Ask to meet with them to speak about the health inequalities of people with intellectual disability.

Wait 48 hours then phone your candidate’s office

Ask if they have received your email and when a meeting can be arranged. If you sent a letter, wait 1 week before calling.

Once the meeting is arranged

Send the candidate the **MP Briefing paper** about a week before the meeting.

Tell the candidate who will be coming with you to the meeting.

At the meeting

- Introduce everyone.
- Have someone lead the meeting with others contributing agreed parts of the meeting. Have someone take notes.
- Explain why you have come / What the issue is / What you want the MP to do. Make requests of the MP (speech, write to the Health Minister etc).
- Refer to the briefing paper.
- Talk about why this issue is important to you.
- At the end, ask for a photo together.

Agree on a follow-up to the meeting

The candidate will email you/write you a letter outlining what they have done following your meeting. Phone the office to ask what the candidate has done following the meeting.

Email or write to thank the candidate

Thanking them for the meeting and outlining what the candidate agreed to do (with a timeline).

Some of the things you may want to ask the candidate to do

- I would like you to talk to of the health spokesperson in your political party about taking action on this important issue.
- I would like your party to commit to new and current doctors and other health workers getting a lot more help and training on how to work with people who have intellectual disability”.
- I would like your party to commit to a national inquiry to find out how to make the health system work for people with intellectual disability.

Please let us know how the meeting went

Email: advocacy@nswcid.org.au

Facebook: [facebook.com/NSWCID](https://www.facebook.com/NSWCID), or @NSWCID

Twitter: twitter.com/nswcid, or @NSWCID

Phone: 1800 424 065