

## Lobbying the Attorney General on retaining funding for CIDP

### What is the issue?

The NSW Government wants to cut funding on June 30 this year to the Cognitive Impairment Diversion Program (CIDP). This is a valuable program which helps keep people with cognitive impairment (including intellectual disability) out of prison.

CIDP was established in October 2017 as a pilot project working out of Gosford and Penrith courts. It is funded by Justice NSW and run by Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS).

CIDP is successfully keeping over two thirds of its participants out of prison through diversionary orders. CIDP is also strongly inclusive with 26 percent of its participants being Aboriginal Australians.

The CIDP is a critically important service for people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and other cognitive impairments. It helps them stay out of prison, get support and move on positively with their lives.

### Why do we need to lobby the Attorney General?

The CIDP is funded by Justice NSW. The Attorney General, Hon. Mark Speakman heads up Justice NSW. He will make the final decision therefore we need to talk to him.

### Lobbying the Attorney General during COVID-19

**There is more need for this program than ever with COVID-19.** The pandemic presents numerous challenges for people with intellectual disability. Understanding and complying with the restrictions placed on our movements is not easy. The program will help keep people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities out of the criminal justice system.

In addition, COVID-19 has created a significant backlog in the courts which will make the court system even more difficult for people with intellectual disability to navigate once restrictions are lifted.

**CID has written to Mark Speakman**, asking for a meeting and for the funding to be continued and the program to be extended across NSW. We also have an Open Letter signed by many eminent Australians to be Attorney General which you can read with our blog.

Can you please contact the Attorney General by email, by phone or both and tell him that you agree with the many eminent Australians who have signed CID's Open Letter and you join with them in calling for funding to be urgently reinstated to the CIDP program.

Please also ask the Attorney General to meet with CID to discuss this matter.

**ABN: 25 001 318 967**

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## How to contact the Attorney General:

Attorney General, Hon. Mark Speakman phone: (02) 8574 6390

Attorney General, Hon. Mark Speakman email: [office@speakman.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@speakman.minister.nsw.gov.au)

### What to say:

Always be respectful and polite!

### Some speaking points:

- I am concerned that the NSW Government is planning to cut funding to the Cognitive Impairment Diversion Program (CIDP).
- This is a valuable program which helps people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and other cognitive impairments stay out of prison, get support and move on positively with their lives.
- CIDP is successfully keeping over two thirds of its participants out of prison through diversionary orders.
- CIDP is strongly inclusive, with 26 percent of its participants being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- With COVID-19 is it more important than ever that this program is retained, as the pandemic presents numerous challenges for people with intellectual disability, such as understanding the restrictions placed on their movements.
- I join with the many eminent Australians who have signed the Open Letter to ask you to urgently reinstate funding for this critically important program.
- Thank you and I look forward to your reply.

Finally, remember to both phone and email if possible and to acknowledge the reply from the Attorney General and share this with us at [advocacy@cid.org.au](mailto:advocacy@cid.org.au). Also remember to engage on this issue on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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