**MEDIA RELEASE**

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NDS welcomes ACROD disability parking review

A review of the ACROD Parking Program eligibility criteria undertaken by the State Government will aim to create a more inclusive WA to support more West Australians with a disability.

National Disability Services, which manages the ACROD Parking Program, welcomes the initiative to ensure accessible parking bays are available for those who need them most.

Currently the program supports nearly 90,000 West Australians with a severe walking restriction to access the community by providing free permits for ACROD parking bays.

The review, to be undertaken by the Department of Communities, will examine the potential to expand the program’s eligibility criteria to include people with guide dogs, and investigate ways of working with private property owners, such as shopping centres, to limit the misuse of ACROD bays.

The current eligibility criteria has been in place since 2012 when WA adopted the agreed national criteria as part of a national harmonisation of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme.

NDS’s WA State Manager Julie Waylen said the review would ensure the ACROD Parking Program continued to meet the needs of the West Australian community.

“The ACROD Parking Program provides a vital service for people with severe walking restrictions by ensuring they can access the community and go about their daily lives, whether that might be going to work or attending a doctor’s appointment or catching up with a friend,” Ms Waylen said.

“This review will ensure the eligibility criteria is inclusive, contemporary and designed to provide accessible parking bays for those who need them most.

“We also recognise that demand for accessible bays often outstrips supply and consequently we have advocated for some time about this.

“We are very supportive of the need to have a stronger monitoring and fines enforcement regime for the misuse of bays on public and private property and continue to call for an increase of the number of bays in the community as specified in the Building Code of Australia.”

The review will be conducted using a co-design approach with people with disability and other stakeholders and in tandem with a public education campaign undertaken by NDS to reduce the misuse of ACROD bays.

ACROD permit holders and other people with disability are encouraged to participate in the review via the Department of Communities at access@dsc.wa.gov.au or phone 9440 2251.

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**About us:**

National Disability Services is the peak industry body for non-government disability services. It represents service providers across Australia in their work to deliver high-quality supports and life opportunities for people with disability. Its Australia-wide membership includes over 1,050 non-government organisations which support people with all forms of disability. Its members collectively provide the full range of disability services—from accommodation support, respite and therapy to community access and employment. In WA, NDS represents a diverse range of small to medium organisations and multiservice large-scale organisations that deliver the vast majority of specialist disability services to nearly 26,000 West Australians with disability, their families and carers. Our reach also extends to around 90,000 people with disability through the provision of ACROD Parking, Companion Card and the Changing Places network.