

Human Rights Council – 40th Session

Annual Debate on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

6 March 2019

Australian Statement

Australia welcomes the current debate on strengthening and extending comprehensive Habilitation and Rehabilitation Services and Programs.

For many people, including people with disabilities, habilitation and rehabilitation are central to the realisation, on an equal basis, of economic, social and political rights,

A growing number of people will require rehabilitation during their lifetime, often due to injury, illness or ageing. When we get these services right, many people with disabilities are able to optimise their functioning and participate in education, employment and community life. With these services, genuinely participating in and contributing to their communities across the full spectrum of activities is possible. Without these services, people with disabilities are at risk of being left behind.

Habilitation and rehabilitation are important elements of community-based inclusive development strategies. We recognise that longer-term rehabilitation may require short periods of intense rehabilitation throughout an individual's life, and we are working to design and implement rehabilitation programs in this way.

Since 2011, Australia has partnered with the World Health Organization to support disability-inclusive health, rehabilitation, and provision of assistive technologies in the Western Pacific region. We were pleased to endorse the draft Western Pacific Regional Framework on Rehabilitation at the 69th Session of the WHO Western Pacific Region last year.

Can the panel share best-practice examples of habilitation and rehabilitation programs that one or more States are providing?

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