



**Public
Accounts and Estimates
Committee
Easy English Report
about
Services for people with an
intellectual disability**

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Copies of the full report can be obtained from the secretariat

Address: Level 8

35 Spring Street

Melbourne Victoria 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3556

Facsimile: (03) 9651 3552

Email: paec@parliament.vic.gov.au

Internet: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/paec>

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP – 55TH PARLIAMENT

Hon. C Campbell, MP (Chair)

Hon. B Forwood, MLC (Deputy Chair)

Hon. B Baxter, MLC

Mr R Clark, MP

Mr L Donnellan, MP

Ms D Green, MP

Mr J Merlino, MP

Hon. G Rich-Phillips, MLC

Ms G Romanes, MLC

This inquiry was undertaken by a Sub-Committee consisting of the following Members:

Hon. C Campbell, MP (Chair)

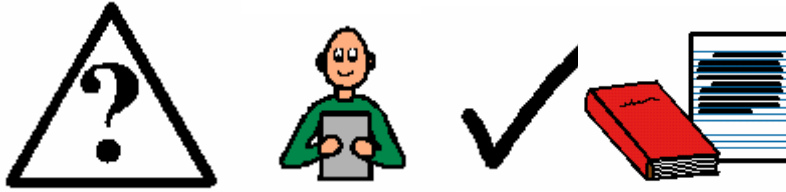
Hon. B Baxter, MLC

Mr R Clark, MP

Hon. B Forwood, MLC

Mr J Merlino, MP

Ms G Romanes, MLC



HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

- This report is written in 'easy to read' language
- Pictures and symbols highlight key points
- Read the report with a friend
- The key pictures are explained on pages 31 to 35

To assist the person to understand the information effectively you may also use:

- clear, simple language
- natural gesture and mime
- key word sign (MAKATON)
- pictures, photos or real objects related to concepts discussed

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Society can too readily overlook the intrinsic humanity and human rights of people with an intellectual disability.

This report builds on the Auditor-General's report and the Victorian State Disability Plan and its implementation plan.

Victorians must work towards one community where every person's special qualities and contributions are celebrated and promoted.

Society must continue to invest in improvements in disability services.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Campbell".

Hon. Christine Campbell, MP
Chair

Background



In November 2000 the Auditor-General in Victoria wrote a report about services for people with an intellectual disability.



The Auditor-General does not work for the Government but checks to see that the Government spends money properly on services for the public.



There were recommendations in this report of how the Government could make things better for the lives of people with an intellectual disability.



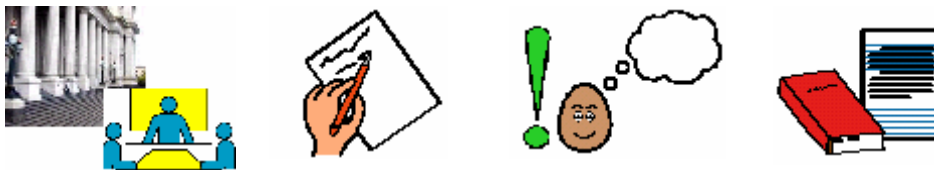
In 2003 the Auditor-General checked with the Government to see if it had done any of the recommendations in the first report.



The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee is a group of people whose job it is to check how the Government spends its money. They are politicians. Some are members of the Government and some are not.



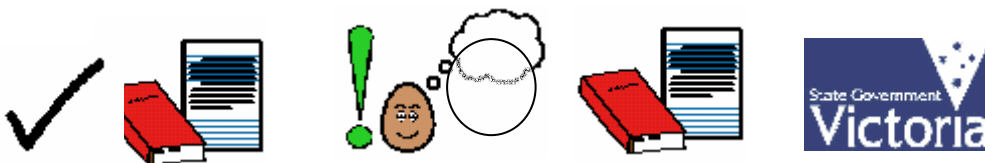
In 2004, members of the Committee checked the latest information and made some more recommendations to the Government.



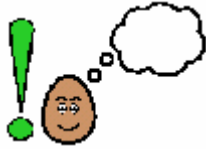
The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee wrote down these recommendations in a report.



These recommendations will help people with an intellectual disability have better lives.



This report contains some of the main recommendations from the report for the Government.



Recommendation 1

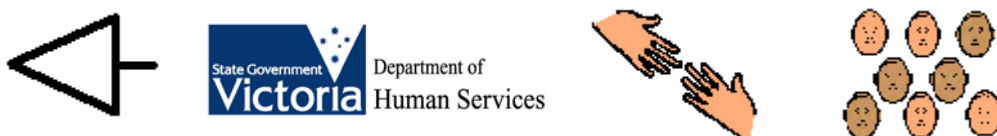
The Department of Human Services determine the underlying reasons for delays in completing eligibility assessments, as provided for in Part 3 section 7 (1-3) of the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986, and take action to reduce the time taken to complete assessments.



If you are a person with an intellectual disability the Department of Human Services assesses you to see if you can get help.



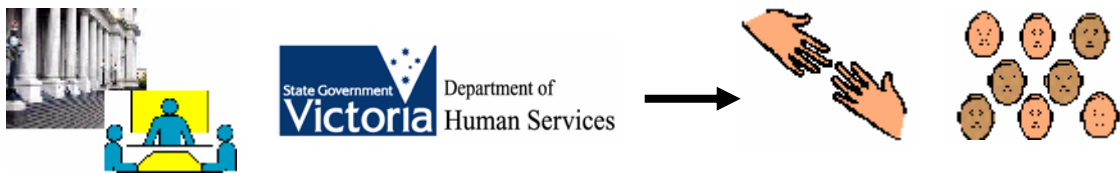
The Department of Human Services is part of the Government. It's their job to look after the health of people living in Victoria.



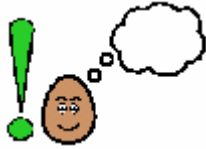
In the past the Department has sometimes been slow at seeing how they can help people with an intellectual disability.



The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee says that the Department should work out why they have been so slow.



The Committee also wants the Department to do things more quickly to help people with an intellectual disability.

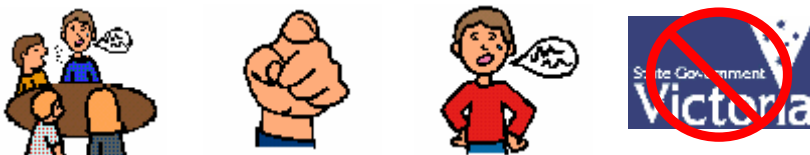


Recommendation 4

The Government further investigate and implement the most appropriate option for an independent external complaints mechanism to promote the concerns of and protect people with an intellectual disability.



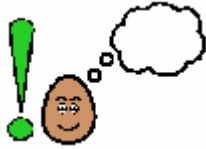
The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee wants the Government to set up a way for people to complain about services for people with an intellectual disability.



The people you complain to will not be a part of the Government.

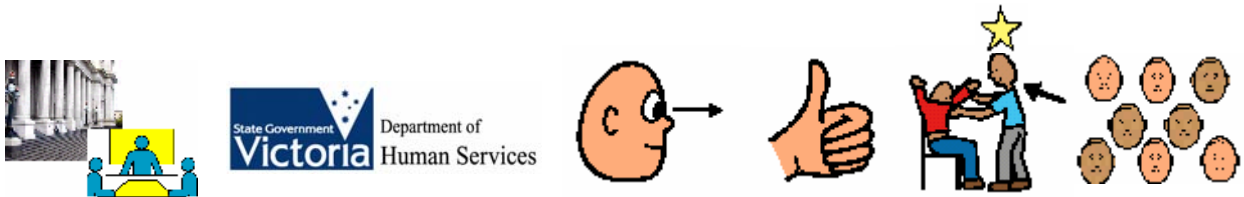


You can complain to these people if you have worries about services for people with an intellectual disability.

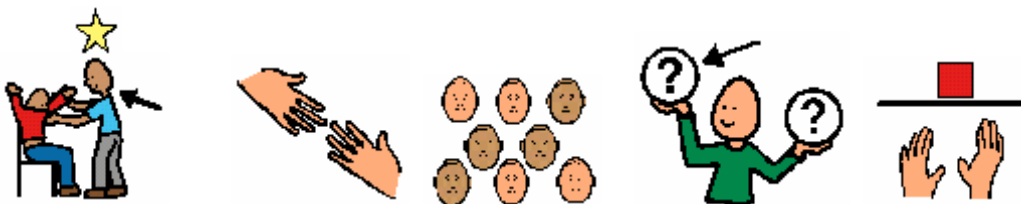


Recommendation 10

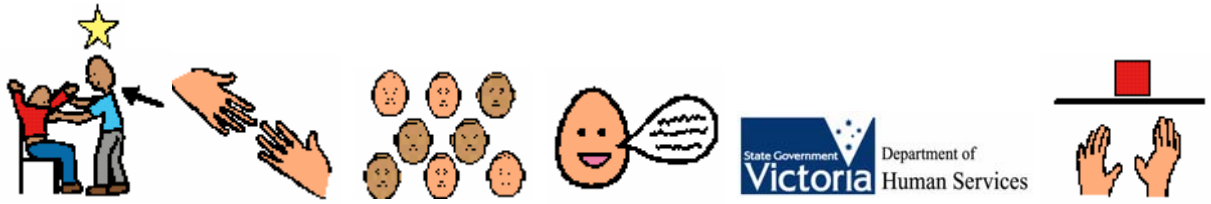
The Department of Human Services investigate the potential benefits of providing specialist independent support workers with the capability of working individually with a person with an intellectual disability to help identify and communicate the individual's needs, desires and decisions. The trained support worker should be independent of family, the Department of Human Services and government decision making processes.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to look into having special support workers for people with an intellectual disability.



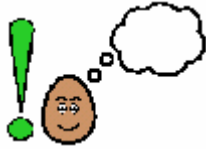
The support workers will help people decide what they want and need.



The support workers will help people tell the Government and the Department of Human Services what they want and need.

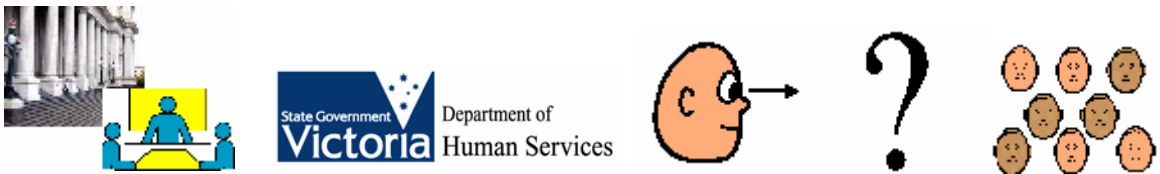


The support worker will not work for the Government, the Department of Human Services or be a member of the person's family.

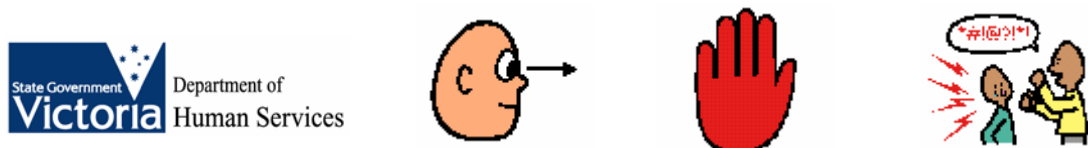


Recommendation 11

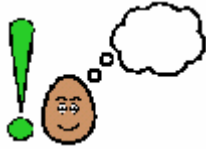
The Department of Human Services analyse the options for improving its ability to predict the needs of people with an intellectual disability and prevent crisis situations from occurring.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to look at different ways to work out what people with an intellectual disability will need.

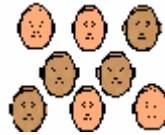


The Department will do this so they can stop bad situations from happening.

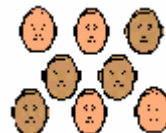


Recommendation 13

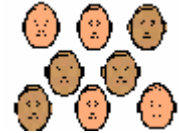
The Department of Human Services take into account the significance of General Service Plans in the delivery of quality services to people with an intellectual disability.



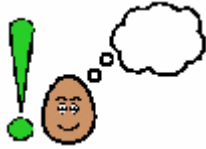
General Service Plans are very important when making sure that people with an intellectual disability get a very good service.



General Service Plans say what services or help people need. They also say what is the best way to get that help.

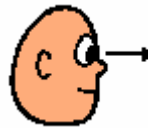


The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to use General Service Plans for all people with an intellectual disability.



Recommendation 17

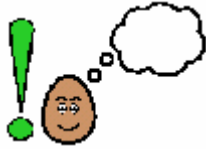
Residents in community residential units be assessed by the Department of Human Services as to whether alternative supported accommodation options would better suit their needs.



The Department of Human Services will check the places where people with an intellectual disability live.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to see if the person wants to live in a different place. The person would still be looked after but in a different way.



Recommendation 18

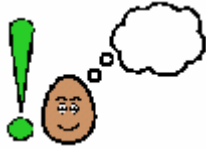
The Department of Human Services develop a policy and associated strategies to address the changed needs of ageing clients in community residential units.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure that older people with an intellectual disability will be cared for and supported properly in the community.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to write this down so that everybody can follow these rules.

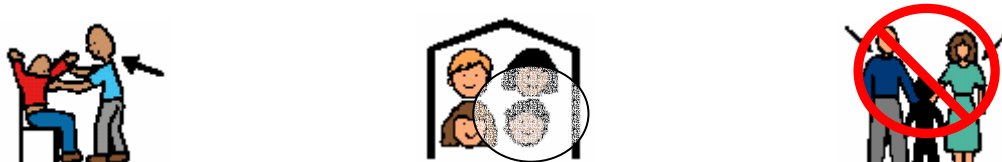


Recommendation 20

The Department of Human Services finalise and implement, where appropriate, the recommendations of the consultancy report commissioned in 2003 which includes addressing the future options for children with a disability presently in permanent respite care.



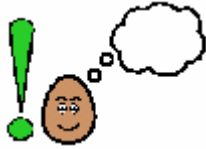
In 2003 a report was written. This report talks about different choices for children with disabilities.



At the moment carers look after some of these children, in special homes. They do not live with their parents.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to finish this report and make sure the recommendations in the report happen.



Recommendation 22

The Department of Human Services:

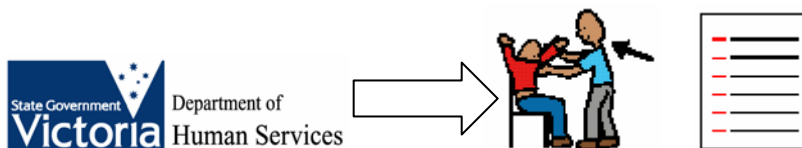
- (a) examine the reasons some service providers are not preparing and updating Individual Program Plans for people with an intellectual disability, in accordance with departmental guidelines; and
- (b) take action to redress this situation.



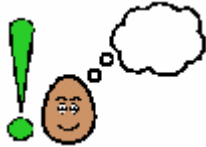
The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to do two things.



- a) Look at the reasons why some people who look after people with an intellectual disability do not write plans for each person. There are rules to say this has to happen. These rules are called guidelines.

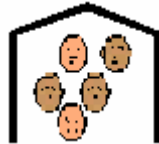
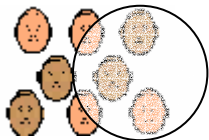


- b) The Department of Human Services has to do something to make sure people follow the guidelines.

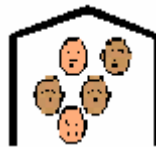


Recommendation 23

The Department of Human Services put in place systems to ensure that community visitors have access to incident reports in all residential services provided for people with an intellectual disability.



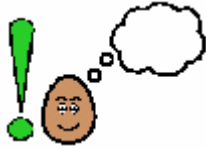
Some people with an intellectual disability live in places that have paid support workers. This is called a residential service.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure that staff at the residential service write down when something bad happens to a person with an intellectual disability. This is called a report.

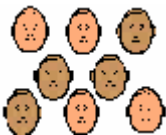


The Committee also wants the Department of Human Services to make sure that any Community Visitor to the service can see the report.

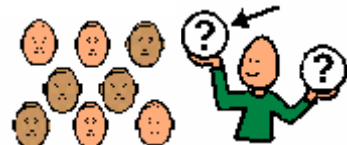


Recommendation 25

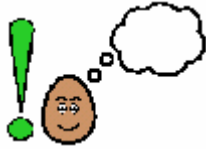
The Department of Human Services give consideration to introducing a formal assistant decision maker, where appropriate, for each person with an intellectual disability. The role of the assistant would be to facilitate communication and participation by a person with an intellectual disability in the decision making process to ensure the person's rights are being advanced.



Sometimes people with an intellectual disability find it difficult to communicate or to make decisions.



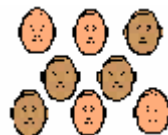
The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to have special people to help people with an intellectual disability to communicate and make decisions. This is to make sure that the person's wishes are heard.



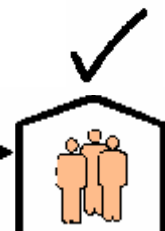
Recommendation 32

The Department of Human Services ensure that arrangements in place for independent monitoring of services provided for people with an intellectual disability, include provisions that strengthen independence such as:

- (a) an obligation on the department to report to the monitoring agency on instances where recommendations are not acted on within six months and publish the reasons recommendations were not accepted;
- (b) the monitoring agency having the power under legislation to enter service providers' premises and review client files; and
- (c) reports of the quality monitoring agency being publicly available.



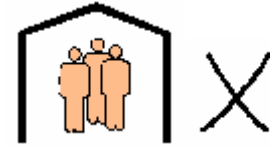
Some people help and support people with an intellectual disability. They are called service providers.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure there is someone who doesn't work for the Government checking that service providers are doing the right thing.



State Government
Victoria Department of
Human Services



- a) The Committee wants the Department of Human services to tell the people who are checking services when service providers haven't done what they were told to within 6 months.



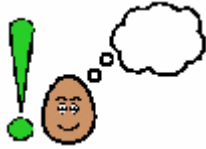
The service providers will write down their reasons if they have not done the right thing.



- b) The people who are doing the checking can go to the service providers and look at any information written down about the person with an intellectual disability.



- c) The public can read what the people who are doing the checking have found out. This information is written down in a report.



Recommendation 34

The Department of Human Services provide a consolidated report on services for people with a disability and report on the outcomes of the Victorian State Disability Plan. This report should:

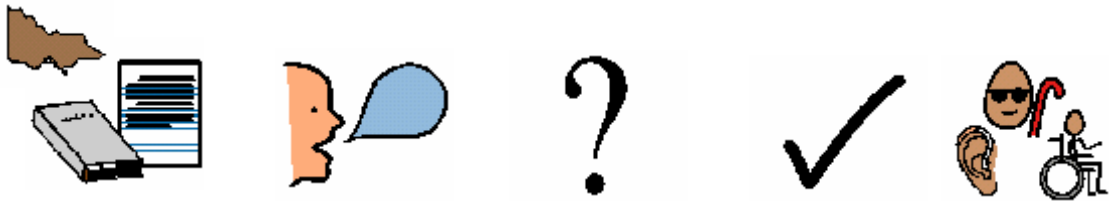
- (a) include a range of objective performance measures that relate to the outcomes of services provided (or not provided) to the department's potential clients; and
- (b) be publicly released on an annual basis in conjunction with the tabling of the Department of Human Services' annual report in Parliament.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to write about what services there are for people with a disability.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to write about what it said they would do in the Victorian State Disability Plan.



The Plan says what is going to happen for people with a disability.



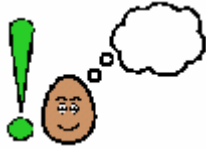
The Committee wants the report to:



a) Say how good the services were.

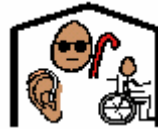


b) Be written every year at the same time the Department of Human Services writes its annual report for the Government.

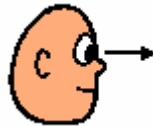


Recommendation 35

The Department of Human Services ensure that information provided to forums and focus groups as part of the review of the *Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act* 1986 and the *Disability Services Act* 1991 are available in large print format and 'easy English' versions.



There are laws that talk about services for people with a disability and people with an intellectual disability.



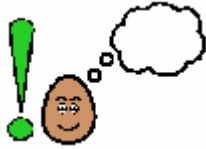
The Government is checking these laws to see if they still say the right things.



The Department of Human Services gives information to groups of people to ask them what they think about the laws.

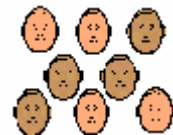
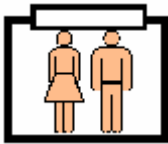


The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure this information is easy to read and understand. It has to be in large letters and plain English.

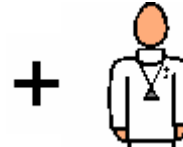


Recommendation 36

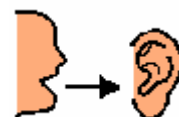
The Department of Human Services ensure that the Office of the Senior Clinician is supported by multi-disciplinary staff which includes specialists from non-medical backgrounds who support a rights-based approach for people with an intellectual disability, as outlined in the Victorian State Disability Plan.



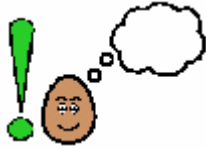
The Office of the Senior Clinician might decide what happens to people with an intellectual disability.



The Committee wants the Department to make sure there are special staff working in the office. There should not only be doctors in the office

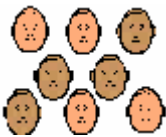


The special staff should make sure that the rights of the people with a disability are listened to.

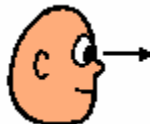


Recommendation 37

The Government ensure that the external review body to evaluate and monitor the systemic use of restrictive practices across all disability services, such as VCAT, be appropriately resourced with staff and Panels that have suitable specialist skills, are accessible to all and are affordable to clients and their advocates.



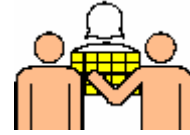
Sometimes people with a disability have to be held or stopped from hurting themselves or others.



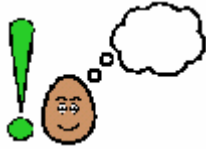
The Government has to make sure that there is a group that checks that all service providers do this only when really needed.



The Government has to make sure the group has the right special staff

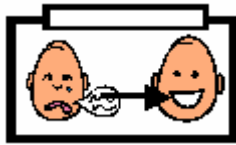


The group also has to be able to talk to the person with a disability or the person doing the talking for the person with a disability.

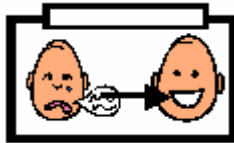


Recommendation 38

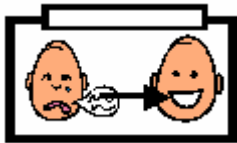
The Government ensure that the proposed Disability Complaints Resolution Office has the power to initiate its own investigations.



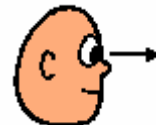
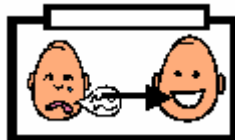
The Government will set up a new group. It will be called the Disability Complaints Resolution Office. If you are upset or unhappy about a Government service you can complain to this group.



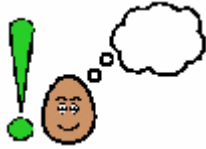
In the past this group could not look into what might have happened to you.



The group had to ask the Department of Human Services to do it.

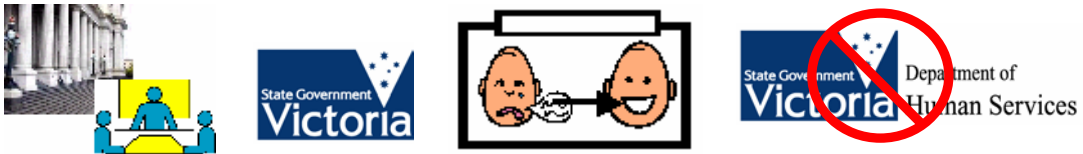


The Committee wants the Government to make sure the Disability Complaints Resolution Office can look into what happened.

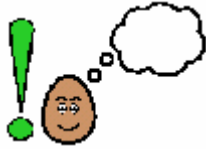


Recommendation 39

The Government ensure that the complaints body, such as the proposed Disability Complaints Resolution Office, is independent of the Department of Human Services.

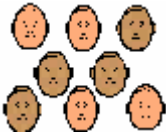


The Committee wants the Government to make sure that the group you can complain to, the Disability Complaints Resolution Office, is not a part of the Department of Human Services.



Recommendation 41

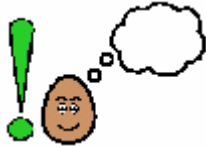
The Department of Human Services ensure that the new disability legislation gives people with an intellectual disability the right to seek an external review of their individual plans.



People with an intellectual disability have a General Service Plan for their care.



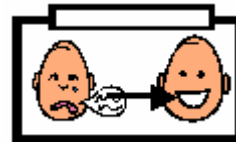
The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure that the new law for people with an intellectual disability says that people can get their plans checked.



Recommendation 42

The Government ensure that the proposed Disability Complaints Resolution Office has the power to:

- (a) examine the practices of service providers; and
- (b) interview people with an intellectual disability, their parents, families and carers about their satisfaction with the complaints handling process.



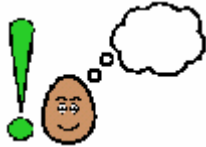
The Committee wants the Government to make sure that the Disability Complaints Resolution Office can:



- a) Look at how service providers look after people with a disability.



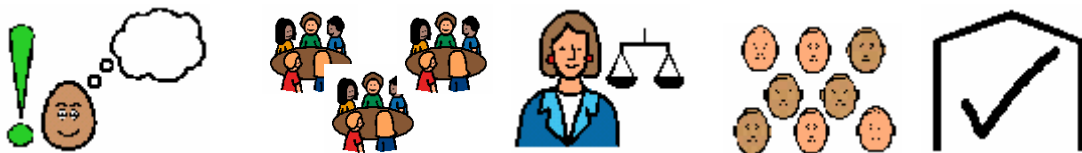
- b) Talk to people with an intellectual disability, their parents, their families and carers about making a complaint.



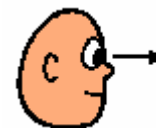
Recommendation 43

The Department of Human Services ensure that:

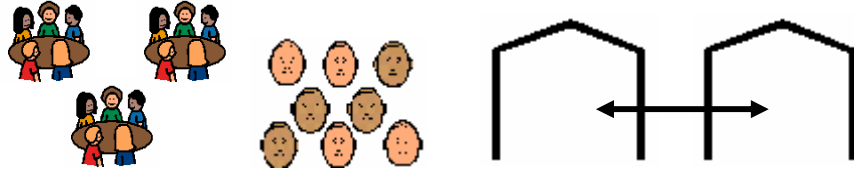
- (a) a proposal to establish a number of review and regulation bodies relating to services for people with an intellectual disability does not lead to fragmentation of the system; and
- (b) service users and their families are provided with clear information as to the appropriate review or regulation body to deal with specific issues.



There is a recommendation that a number of groups may be set up to make sure that the law works and people with an intellectual disability get the right services.



The Committee wants the Department of Human Services to make sure that:



a) Setting up these groups means that people with an intellectual disability will get a connected service.






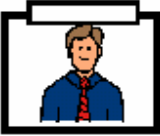



b) People with an intellectual disability and their families get clear information about the right person to talk to for their particular issue.

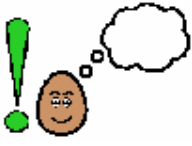
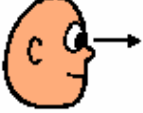





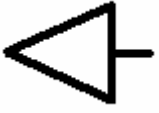






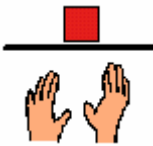



The Government now has until June 2005 to tell the committee what it plans to do about these recommendations.

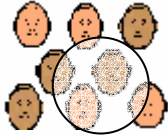

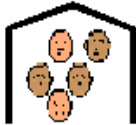






List of key pictures

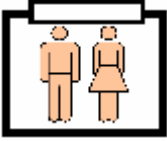


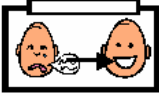

This list aims to explain the chosen pictures that help people understand the text. The list is ordered by when the picture first appears in the text and not in alphabetical order. It includes pictures that may not be readily or easily understood.

Picture	Word label	Meaning
	Public Accounts and Estimates Committee	Members of Parliament who monitor how government departments spend money and then report to the Parliament. The government must respond to the Committee's recommendations.
	Easy English report	Words accompanied by pictures to make them easier to understand.
	services for people with an intellectual disability	This is the house/shelter image with people with an intellectual disability inside.
	Auditor-General's Office	The Office of the Auditor-General reports on whether government services are being delivered effectively and efficiently. The Office monitors how government spends money and reports to the Parliament.
	Victoria	Outline map of Victoria
	report	Different reports are shown by different colours
	service	This can be any type of service.

	<p>recommendation</p>	<p>Recommendations are things that the Auditor-General or the Public Accounts and Estimate Committee think should happen.</p>
	<p>check</p>	<p>Someone who investigates what is happening or not happening</p>
	<p>Victorian State Government</p>	<p>logo</p>
	<p>better; easy; right; happen; done; do; properly</p>	
	<p>help</p>	
	<p>person with an intellectual disability</p>	<p>This is a face of a person who could be male or female</p>
	<p>assess</p>	<p>People with a disability are assessed for eligibility for services.</p>
	<p>in the past</p>	<p>an arrow pointing backwards (in time)</p>

	<p>not/don't do</p>	
	<p>complain</p>	<p>Speaking out</p>
	<p>support worker or carer The star means it is a special support worker.</p>	<p>Paid workers who help people with disabilities. Special support workers may be people who help specifically with planning.</p>
	<p>choice/decision</p>	
	<p>want/ need</p>	
	<p>bad situation</p>	<p>This is when someone with an intellectual disability gets hurt or abused or hurts and abuses someone else.</p>
	<p>General Service Plan</p>	<p>The document which states what services or help you need and how to get them. Everyone with an intellectual disability has to have a General Service Plan.</p>
	<p>Rules</p>	<p>A piece of paper with different coloured writing - like a set of procedures.</p>

	Some	A circle over part of a group which indicates not everyone – only some people.
	finish	
	Residential services	Service (shelter) in which people with disabilities live/s
	Community Visitor	This is an independent person who checks houses in residential services.
	service provider	A service provider is usually a group of people who get paid money to provide a service for someone else.
	people with a disability (services for people with a disability)	
	Victorian State Disability Plan	The document which states what the government will do to help people with disabilities.
	laws	-
	understand	

	<p>Office of the Senior Clinician</p>	<p>Government officials who decide how to help you.</p>
	<p>rights</p>	<p>Being treated fairly and justly.</p>
	<p>special people special staff</p>	<p>These are people with specific jobs who apply a rights-based framework to their work rather than a medical model of service provision.</p>
	<p>Disability Complaints Resolution Office</p>	<p>Where you go with a complaint that is very difficult to resolve.</p>
	<p>connected service</p>	

Translated by Communication Aids and Resource Materials carm.crc@scopevic.org.au

The Picture Communication Symbols©19812004 by Mayer-Johnson LLC. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Mayer-Johnson LLC P.O. Box 1579 Solana Beach, CA 92075 USA Phone: 858-550-0084 Fax: 858-550-0449
Email: mayerj@mayer-johnson.com
Web site: www.mayer-johnson.com

COMPIC is used with written permission from COMPIC, 830 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill Victoria 3128, Australia"