

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Wednesday, 20 December 2017

Community input sought on Tasmania's Guardianship Laws

Current informal arrangements which aim to support Tasmanians with disability in decision-making are under review, and community input is being sought.

The Tasmania Law Reform Institute (TLRI) today released its latest Issues Paper on a *Review of the Guardianship and Administration Act 1995 (Tas)*.

The paper is the first comprehensive review of the Act since it was introduced more than 20 years ago.

The Act covers the laws relating to people with disability who, because of their disability are unable to make decisions about their personal and financial matters, or medical treatment.

"Community attitude towards disability has changed since Tasmania's Guardianship laws were first introduced," review author Kate Hanslow said.

"This review is aiming to ensure that reforms are consistent with the international human rights framework and are responsive to the needs of all Tasmanians.

"The paper will present a range of options for reforming the laws in Tasmania including new ways to provide people with disability with support to make their own decisions."

The TLRI review of the Act will focus on the decision-making and other human rights of people with disability.

It will examine the roles of administrators, guardians, persons responsible, the Guardianship and Administration Board and the Public Guardian in making substitute decisions for people who are unable to make their own decisions.

The review was commissioned by then Attorney-General, The Hon. Vanessa Goodwin MLC in December 2015, in response to developments in law and policy nationally and internationally that promote the human rights of people with disability, including the right to be treated equally before the law.

The Institute welcomes community responses to the paper until 9 March 2018.

Copies of the Issues Paper and a user-friendly summary are available [here](#).

For more information contact the TLRI on (03) 6226 2069.

At a glance:

- According to the ABS, approximately ¼ of the Tasmanians report having a limitation, restriction or impairment which has lasted or is likely to last for at least 6 months and restricts everyday activities;
- Almost 20% of the Tasmanian population is over the age of 65;
- In 2016-2017, more than half of applications the Board received related to people over the age of 65;
- Consistently since 2012, the most commonly identified disability of people who were the subject of an application to the Board has been dementia.
- In the last financial year, the Board managed its largest workload to date.

Information released by:

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office

Phone: 6226 2124

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au