

Submission to the National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces

26 February 2019



Speak Out Reach Out is an advisory group made up of people with an Intellectual Disability.

We are part of the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability (CID).

We say what we think and what CID should do.

We want to have our say and be heard by other people too.

We talked about the National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces.

This is our submission.

What are the places and times at work when sexual harassment might happen?



Times

- At lunch time or break time.
- Going home later at night.
- Any time.

Places

CID says that people with disability face higher rates of abuse than other people in the community.



Sexual harassment can happen

- In the office.
- On your way to the toilet.
- Someone can come up to you when you're doing your job.
- On a bus on the way to work or on the way home.
- Girls might get touched on the breast or bum.
- Construction site workers yelling out things to people walking by.
- If you are in a wheelchair or have a walking stick, people know you are vulnerable and will go after you. They are bullies. They prey on the most vulnerable people so they get away with it. It has to stop.
- It happens discreetly. Discreetly means you might not notice it.

Responses to Sexual Harassment

What do you think about making complaints?

Some people say 'Don't tell anyone about this'.

It can be hard, but if you can make a complaint, make it.

A complaint makes the message get out that this is not on, it shouldn't happen to anyone.

Tell someone you trust. Tell someone you trust at work.

People might not listen if you make a complaint, so get help.

Go to the supervisor or store manager.

Go to the union.

Go to Intellectual Disability Rights Service, they will fight for your rights.

They can write a letter to your company, to Human Resources.

Talk to a police officer or ask them to come to you. If you are female you can ask for a female police officer.

If you know someone it's happened to you can support them to go to the police.

If you go to court they (the lawyers) will make out you are in the wrong.

Court can be expensive.

It's harder if you have a disability and you don't speak English.

CID says it is important that people with intellectual disability have clear information about their rights, keeping safe and making complaints.

