

30 March 2023

## MEDIA RELEASE - The *full* Autism Voice on World Autism Day – 2 April 2023

World Autism Day is a day to appreciate the enormous contribution of autistic and autism communities.

An important milestone to recognise on World Autism Day in 2023 is Australia's commitment to develop a National Autism Strategy<sup>i</sup>.

We congratulate the Australian Government and Minister Rishworth<sup>ii</sup> for commencing this critical work in response to the unacceptable gaps identified in the report by the Select Senate Committee on Autism. This report stated that *"life outcomes for Autistic Australians are unacceptably poor... and that enormous personal, social and economic costs are unfairly carried by the Autistic person, their families and carers"*<sup>iii</sup>

The **Australian Advisory Board on Autism (AABA)** is the peak body for the not-for-profit sector serving the autistic and autism community.

*"Let us all celebrate World Autism Day with the aspiration that by 2024 Australia has a National Autism Strategy that will deliver for us all"* said **Pam Macrossan, AABA Chair**.

*"We are eager to see this work build on the two decades of work by the AABA as the national peak body serving the autistic and autism community, and in particular our goals for active collaboration with autistic people, their families and community to increase our collective impact"*.

*"Our expectation is that this work will bring together, recognise, embrace, and critically give voice **to all members of the autistic and autism community, through adopting a culture of full inclusion and by truly valuing lived experiences**. The AABA's cultural qualities should be adopted by the National Strategy committee working groups.*

<b>Deep evidence-based knowledge</b>	Individual lived experience is vital.  Collectively it generates the evidence to inform systemic changes.
<b>Respect for our communities</b>	Where the interests of these people are the same, we respect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All autistic persons.</li> <li>• The important voice of families and the expertise and experience they bring to the community.</li> <li>• All persons who play a role in an autistic person's life; and aspirations.</li> </ul>
<b>Empowering those without a powerful voice</b>	Truly listening to the incredibly diverse individual autistic experiences; and working collaboratively to ensure that individual experiences inform collective action.
<b>Operating with integrity at all times</b>	Recognise that no one person can accurately represent the experiences of another person

**CONTACTS: Pam Macrossan, Chair AABA. Media enquiries: Adrienne Costin, 0448 139137**

<sup>i</sup> National Autism Strategy - <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/national-autism-strategy>

<sup>ii</sup> Minister Rishworth - <https://www.dss.gov.au/ministers>

<sup>iii</sup> Select Senate Committee report on services, support and life outcomes for autistic Australians. [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Autism/autism/Report](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Autism/autism/Report)