

Yooralla Case Study – A sad story of systemic failure

“There is much more to the Yooralla story than the jailing of a Yooralla disability worker for 18 years for rape and sexual assault,” said Max Jackson and Margaret Ryan, authors of a case study of the response to the uncovering of criminal sexual behaviour at a Yooralla home for people with disabilities. “This case study highlights the Yooralla situation and the wider context in which it operates, and raises serious questions as to the effectiveness of protective mechanisms.”

“Yooralla is a large and well-established service provider, yet the organisational response to abuse allegations does not inspire confidence that protection of staff and the organisation is not its overriding concern,” they said. “In particular, the case highlights the lack of adequate response by the Secretary of the Department of Human Services, the Disability Services Commissioner, and the Community Visitors.”

“The public needs to know that protective mechanisms are in fact effective in ensuring that all parties, not just those providing direct care and support, understand and meet their duty of care responsibilities.

“And when systemic problems extend to the so-called protective mechanisms such as the Department of Human Services, community visitors in the Office of the Public Advocate, and the Office of the Disability Services Commissioner, people have every right to demand the government take action to remedy system failures.”

“All is not well in the disability sector. It is not good enough to constantly make pronouncements about rights, sing the praises of standards and quality audits, establish a myriad of plans and promote the National Disability Insurance Scheme and individual funding as a panacea for the future.

“A much stronger approach must be taken, and the State government must be seen to tackle the hard issues, so that members of the public and people with disabilities and their families can have every confidence that services are free from neglect, abuse and exploitation.”

- [JacksonRyan case study on Yooralla systemic failure](#)

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