

The most vulnerable ignored by the coalition

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) and Stakeholders today expressed disappointment that the Federal Opposition Leader Brendan Nelson has ignored Disability Support Pensioners (DSP) in his belated pension increase bid.

QAI Director Kevin Cocks called on Mr Nelson to include Disability Support Pensioners in his proposal immediately. He ponders “Why is the coalition continuing to ignore people with disability and condemning them to a life of abject poverty, isolation and heightened vulnerability.”

“There are over 730,000 Disability Support Pensioners across Australia who are doing it really tough to make ends meet. “

It is estimated that 50% of Australians with disabilities live in poverty, the World Bank estimates that 20% of the world's poorest people have a disability and recognized by their country as highly vulnerable.

“Not only do people with disability face the daily challenge of not being able to work, they also face many additional cost that most Australians do not including medical costs, aides and appliances on top of general living expenses. “

While aged pensions deserve attention and focus – Mr Nelson’s failure to include Disability Support Pensioners in his plan – at best suggests this is cynical policy on the run – at worst a fundamental lack of compassion.

We call on the Government to include Disability Support Pensioners in any future pension increase and urge them to expand the current focus of the debate to include people on the Disability Support Pension. Including the Cost of Disability.

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