



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME

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A major new report by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research has found people with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.

The report, released earlier this week, also found disabled victims of violence are about 17 per cent less likely to see their cases proceed either to court or see an outcome outside court.

Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Australia, Ms Monique Earsman, said the shocking figures confirm what many people working in the sector have always believed.

“The link between disability and becoming a victim of violence has always been an issue of concern for our sector,” Ms Earsman said.

“This report is a call to action to provide greater assistance and support to people living with disabilities who become caught up in the justice system.

“What is clear is that people living with disabilities need more support during the prosecution process than other people, and it seems like they are not getting it. It is also clear that the police may require additional support during their investigations,” Ms Earsman said.

The study, the first of its kind, links data from NSW and Commonwealth disability services with crime data to identify the disability status of individuals who came into contact with the criminal justice system between 2014 and 2018, either as victims or perpetrators.

The report also found being younger, female and Aboriginal are at increased risk, as are people with a cognitive disability or multiple disabilities.

The study found that while about 44 per cent of violent crimes proceeded to court or other outcomes, those involving disabled victims only did so in 38 per cent of cases.

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