

Final Progress Report 2017-2021

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Introduction

This document is a summary of the Final Progress Report 2017–2021 under the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, also called 'the strategy.'

The Final Progress Report closes the journey under the Strategy, which laid the groundwork for all levels of government to work together to improve the lives of people with disability.

The Australian Government launched Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 on 3 December 2021. It replaced the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020. The Strategy set out 6 outcomes for all governments, and the Australian community, to work towards to improving outcomes for people with disability.

Outcome 1: Inclusive and accessible communities

Outcome 2: Rights protection, justice and legislation

Outcome 3: Economic security

Outcome 4: Personal and community support

Outcome 5: Learning and skills

Outcome 6: Health and wellbeing

All levels of government implemented the Strategy. Three separate implementation plans guided the implementation, covering the periods 2011–2014, 2015–2018 and 2019–2020.

Implementation of the Strategy at the jurisdictional level was driven by state and territory disability plans. This approach allowed state and territory governments to address disability priorities specific to their region. At the local government level, many councils developed their own disability access and inclusion plans.

The Final Progress Report combines the Strategy's third and fourth progress reports, covering 2017-2018 and 2019–20. It also includes the additional calendar year 2021. Through that year

all levels of government remained committed to the Strategy while Australia's Disability Strategy was finalised.

Implementation of the Strategy is the shared responsibility of all governments. As such, all levels of government have contributed to the development of the report. The Final Progress Report demonstrates the commitment of all governments in delivering on the vision of the Strategy. The full Final Progress Report is available through the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

The Strategy saw a range of achievements to better support and include people with disability. The following provides a summary of governments' progress under the Strategy during 2017-2021. The following is a select sample of governments' achievements, with further examples provided in the full Final Progress Report.

Australian Government

Outcome 1 — Inclusive and accessible communities

Since 2018, the Australia Council for the Arts has invested \$750,000 in promoting the development of artists with disability through the Arts and Disability Mentoring Initiative and the National Arts and Disability Awards. The Australian Government has also provided over \$59.4 million to National Sporting Organisations for People with Disability and other community groups to increase the participation of people with disability in sport.

In August 2019, Australian Government and state and territory transport ministers agreed to modernize the Transport Standards. In September 2021, the Australian Government released the second review of the Premises Standards. The Australian Government and state and territory governments will work together to take action based on the review findings.

Launched in 2021, the Australian Government's Disability Gateway is a free, Australia-wide service dedicated to helping people with disability, their families and carers find trusted information and connects them to services in their area. The Disability Gateway was developed in consultation with people with disability, their families and carers and the disability sector.

Outcome 2 — Rights protection, justice and legislation

The NDIS Commission completed establishment of all functions of the NDIS Commissioner across Australia in 2020. The NDIS Commission works to uphold the rights of people with

disability through building awareness of their rights by providing participant resources, including the Speak Up campaign, advice, information, and education resources.

The NDIS Commission delivers a nation-wide approach to protect and improve the rights, health and wellbeing of NDIS participants in accordance with the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework agreed to by all Australian governments.

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service. 1800RESPECT has resources to support people with disability, include the Sunny mobile app, an accessible service directory, and a Disability Support Toolkit for frontline workers. In 2018 a Working with Women with Disabilities workshop and accredited e-Learning was added to the DV-alert training program for frontline workers who work with women with disabilities. The Australian Government has also provided \$1.5 million to develop and deliver resources on technology-facilitated abuse for women with intellectual and/or cognitive disability and the frontline workers supporting them.

Outcome 3 — Economic security

In December 2020, the Australian Government launched the Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25.

A new model for Disability Employment Services commenced on 1 July 2018 to help people with disability obtain long-term open employment in the mainstream workforce and to improve participants' flexibility and choice of their preferred provider.

In 2021, through the Women's Leadership and Development Program, the Australian Government provided \$820,899 to Women with Disabilities Australia to ensure diverse women's voices are heard in the policy-making process. The program also committed over \$3.7 million to projects supporting women with disability into employment and leadership opportunities.

Outcome 4 — Personal and community support

The NDIS is Australia's first national scheme for people with disability and represents a fundamental shift in the way Australians with a significant and permanent disability access supports.

The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building program (ILC) provided grant funding to organisations to deliver projects that benefit all Australians with disability, their carers and

families. Over \$196 million was awarded through grant rounds focussed on economic participation, social and community participation and individual capacity building in 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The Australian Government committed over \$770 million over 4 years to support Australia's 2.65 million unpaid carers through Carer Gateway – a free, Australia-wide dedicated carer support service.

Outcome 5 — Learning and skills

In 2020, the former Department of Education, Skills and Employment completed a review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005, with the final Review report released in March 2021.

In 2021, Australian Government in partnership with SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, launched the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy.

In December 2021, the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET), based at the University of Tasmania (UTAS), launched the e-Learning module Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Tertiary Education, through its Disability Awareness site. The Australian Government provides universities with support to assist students with disability to access, participate and succeed in higher education. This includes annual funding of approximately \$150,000 to UTAS to host the ADCET.

Outcome 6 — Health and wellbeing

Established in 2019, Hearing Assessment Program – Early Ears ensures that all young First Nations children have access to free hearing assessments.

In early April 2020, the Australian Government established the Advisory Committee for the Health Emergency Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) for People with Disability. Committee membership includes people with lived experience of disability and carers, representatives from disability sector, health professionals specialising in disability health, researchers in disability and health, and Australian Government representatives. State and territory representatives also participate in Committee meetings.

State and Territory Governments

New South Wales

The NSW Government and NSW local councils support the implementation of the Strategy through targeted Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAPs). The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) directed state agencies and all 128 local councils to establish and maintain a DIAP setting out how they will improve access to mainstream services and supports for people with disability. The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan and DIAPs are available online and are subject to regular review and reporting.

NSW Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- State Disability Conference to promote disability inclusion and employment.
- Improving accessibility across NSW Government services, including transport, play spaces, national parks and Service NSW service centres.
- Establishing the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission in 2019.
- Release of the NSW Youth Justice Disability Action Plan 2021–2024.
- Disability employment campaigns ‘Don’t Dis My Ability’, ‘See the Possibilities’ and ‘Employable Me’.
- Supporting disability inclusion through the NSW Department of Education’s Disability Inclusion and Action Plans 2016–2020 and 2021–2025, and the department’s Disability Strategy.
- Expanding the specialised Intellectual Disability Health Service state-wide.

Victoria

Absolutely Everyone: State Disability Plan 2017–2020 (Absolutely Everyone) was Victoria’s 4-year plan to realise the vision of an inclusive community that supports people with disability to live satisfying everyday lives. Two annual reports and a final report were tabled in the Victorian Parliament outlining progress against the goals in Absolutely Everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted publication of the final report, tabled in early 2022, which covered the final 2 years of the plan.

Victorian Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Working in partnership to deliver 27 new Changing Places accessible public bathroom facilities.
- Strengthening disability advocacy through the Victorian disability advocacy futures plan, including sector improvements and an increase in core funding to agencies delivering services through the Victorian Disability Advocacy Program.
- Building economic independence and meaningful career pathways.
- Working to ensure Victorians with disability have access to the NDIS and mainstream services.
- Development of an inclusive education policy, and a \$1.6 billion Disability Inclusion package that supports the policy.
- Launch of the Disability Liaison Officer program in metro and regional health services to support access to COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccination, as well as other essential health service.

Queensland

Queensland Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Increasing accessibility and promoting inclusivity in communities, including supporting transport accessibility, social housing accessibility and inclusive arts.
- Allocating \$2.9 million per year between 2018 and 2020 to improve service delivery to people with disability in contact with the corrective services system.\
- Increasing employment for people with disability through the Back to Work employment program, and providing skills, qualifications and experience through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to support people with disability to enter and stay in the workforce.
- Supporting the transition to the NDIS through establishing the Disability Connect and Outreach Program to help hard-to-reach people with disability access the NDIS.
- Supporting learning and skills development through programs such as the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme and Skills Disability Support program.

- Supporting the health and wellbeing of people with disability, including through the COVID-19 pandemic, through such initiative as establishing the Long-Stay Rapid Response to discharge long-stay patients with disability from hospitals.

Western Australia

In 2019, the Western Australian Government undertook community-wide consultation to create the vision for an inclusive Western Australia for people with disability. Since the launch of 'A Western Australia for Everyone': State Disability Strategy 2020–2030 and the accompanying Action Plan in December 2020, a number of actions have been completed.

Western Australian Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Expansion of the Changing Places network, supporting accessible public bathroom facilities.
- Between 2017 and 2021, investing \$11.1 million in advocacy organisations to promote, protect and ensure human rights of people with disability in Western Australia.
- Increasing people with disability in public sector employment through the Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025.
- Supporting the transition to the NDIS, including transitioning many state-funded initiatives to the NDIS and investing \$43.3 million in the WA Sector Transition Fund.
- Supporting education pathways for all students, through initiatives such as incorporating universal design into forward planning for new schools and targeting funding through the Student-Centred Funding Model.
- Improving health outcomes for people with disability through the WA Disability Health Framework 2015–2025: Improving the health care of people with disability.

South Australia

South Australia has delivered a number of key achievements under the Strategy between 2017 and 2021. South Australia passed the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA) to promote the full inclusion of people with disability across the state. South Australia released the state's first disability inclusion plan, Inclusive SA 2019–2023, supporting disability access and inclusion planning and reporting by state agencies, state authorities and local councils.

South Australian Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Supporting inclusive communities across South Australia, including play spaces, public transport, sport and recreational facilities.
- Passing legislation to protect the rights of people with disability and convening a Safeguarding Taskforce to examine and address gaps in oversight and safeguarding for people with disability.
- Supporting employment of people with disability through the Capacity Building Placement for People with Disability service and Disability and Employment Practices Guidelines.
- Increasing participation of children with disability in sports and cultural activities by expanding the Sports Voucher program and providing extra support for children with disability to participate in VACSWIM water safety program.
- Supporting learning opportunities for students with disability through personalised learning plans, the Vocational Education and Training for School Students policy, and development opportunities for educators.
- Supporting the development and trialling of Health Liaison Officers, a NDIA initiative in South Australian public hospitals.

Tasmania

Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action 2018–2021 (Accessible Island) is the Tasmanian Government's implementation plan for the Strategy. Accessible Island guides the work of Tasmanian Government agencies and aims to remove barriers and enable people with disability to enjoy the same rights and opportunities as all other Tasmanians. All Tasmanian Government agencies have a Disability Action Plan and report annually on the implementation of Accessible Island to the Premier's Disability Advisory Council (PDAC).

Tasmanian Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Supporting inclusive communities across Tasmania, including parks and outdoor spaces, the arts, public transport, and accessible events and information systems.
- Updating policing manuals, practices and training to respond appropriately and respectfully to people with disability and development of supports for people with disability in contact with the corrective services system.

- Supporting public sector employment of people with disability through public agencies providing support, advice and resources to agency staff and engaging with Disability Employment Service providers.
- Releasing key plans, including Rethink 2020, Tasmania's state mental health plan, and Supporting Tasmanian Carers: Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021–24.
- Developing evidenced-based VET pathways for people with disability and appointing Inclusion and Access Coordinators to work with schools to ensure students with disability have equitable access to learning opportunities.

Australian Capital Territory

Inclusive and accessible communities is demonstrated through the central knowledge repository Involved. This website, launched in 2019, contains disability-focused information to support a more accessible community and make information accessible and public.

Australian Capital Territory Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Supporting adoption of a minimum accessibility standard in housing through the National Construction Code in 2021.
- Addressing access to justice for people with disability through the ACT Disability Justice Strategy.
- Implemented initiatives to support the employment of people with disability in the ACT Public Service (ACTPS).
- Investing \$580.3 million over 4 financial years in the NDIS, and advocating for and improving outcomes for people with disability accessing the NDIS.
- Launching the Future of Education Strategy in 2018, and supporting professional learning opportunities to support educators creating inclusive learning spaces.
- Supporting people with disability, their families, carers and the disability sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, through the ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy and COVID-19 – An ACT Operational Plan for People with Disability.

Northern Territory

In 2021, the Northern Territory commenced consultation on the first 10-year Northern Territory Disability Strategy and 3-year Action Plan, which will be key to improving outcomes for people with disability into the future.

Northern Territory Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- Supporting inclusive communities across the Northern Territory, including national parks, public transport, and information systems.
- Continuing to promote the rights of service users and their families through the Talk Up initiative.
- Launching the Disability Employment Program in 2021, and training for public servants to ensure the Northern Territory has a disability-confident workforce.
- Establishing the Northern Territory Disability Advisory Committee in 2019, a forum to advise the Minister for Disabilities on issues impacting people with disability and their interactions with government services.
- Releasing and implementing the 10-year Framework for Inclusion and Action Plan for education.
- Supporting initiatives and programs aimed at identifying developmental delay, improving awareness of the signs of neurodevelopmental impairment, and hearing and ear health of children and young people.

Local Governments

Local government has worked together with the other levels of government throughout the Strategy to improve outcomes for people with disability in their communities. Local governments prepare a range of plans responding to the unique and specific needs of their communities, including strategic plans, economic plans, environmental plans, social inclusion plans and disaster management plans.

While many councils have stand-alone disability plans, others include disability priorities within other plans, such as their health and wellbeing plan or social inclusion plan. Disability plans are developed in consultation with people with disability and their advocates, often through specially formed Disability Advisory Groups. In some states, local governments are

required by legislation to develop Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (disability plans) and report on progress to their State Governments.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has encouraged all local governments to develop disability plans and to consider the needs of people with disability in their planning processes. In 2016, the ALGA, in partnership with the Australian Government Department of Social Services, produced Disability Inclusion Planning – A Guide for Local Government to assist all councils to plan and implement improvements in their communities for people with disability and to drive change and create inclusive communities for all people.

Local Government highlights under the Strategy during 2017–2021 include:

- In New South Wales, Penrith City, Hawkesbury Shire and Blue Mountains City Councils worked together on Nepean Jobs For All, a joint project to encourage businesses to employ people with disability.

- In Victoria, the City of Greater Bendigo's Inclusive Towns project commenced in 2017 and now employs 6 support officers with lived experience of disability to work with business operators to help them understand that inclusion goes beyond addressing physical access.

- In Queensland, Brisbane City Council developed a comprehensive 10-year plan, A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019–2029, which supports people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to travel, work, live, enjoy and connect in Brisbane.

- In Western Australia, delivered in partnership with 30 Local Government authorities and 10 private sector partners, This Bay Is Someone's Day is a unique community awareness campaign to reduce the misuse of accessible parking bays.

- In South Australia, the City of Tea Tree Gully developed its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020–2024 in conjunction with a reference group of people with lived experience of disability. The disability plan has already led to the inclusive design of 3 sporting clubs, installation of 2 Changing Places toilets, and an audit of several council facilities and leased buildings to assess universal design compliance.

- In Tasmania, the City of Clarence has developed a comprehensive Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021–2025.

- In Northern Territory, the City of Darwin Access and Inclusion Plan 2019–22 builds on previous work undertaken with the Community Access Plan 2012–2017. It provides a framework to continue to support people with disability to engage with Council and access all areas of the organisation’s operations.

Data Sources and Community Engagement

In addition to the Strategy’s progress reports, other reports and reviews have been undertaken and demonstrate the efforts of all levels of government in supporting people with disability. These documents have provided significant public information about government efforts under the Strategy and captured the views of people with disability on how they saw the Strategy working. These include:

- Some states and territories report on their own disability plans.
- The Senate Inquiry report into the delivery of outcomes under the Strategy to build inclusive and accessible communities.
- The Social Policy Research Centre’s independent review of the implementation of the Strategy.
- The Productivity Commission Review of the National Disability Agreement.
- The Disability Royal Commission’s public hearings and Interim report.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reporting

Australia periodically reports to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Reporting in the last years of the Strategy included the Australian Government Report; the Civil Society Shadow Report, Disability Rights Now 2019, produced by disability representative organisations; and the Committee’s Concluding Observations.

Disability data reports

Over the term of the Strategy, data about disability has been released from several sources, including:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s People with Disability in Australia report.

- Australian Bureau of Statistics' Census of Population and Housing.
- National Disability Insurance Agency annual reports.

Community engagement

The Australian Government funds National Disability Representative Organisations to provide advice on how policies and programs will affect the lives and experiences of people with disability. These organisations provide the perspectives of the people with disability they represent. Most state and territory governments actively engage with people with disability through their disability advisory groups.

The development of Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 involved extensive engagement. Over 3,000 people with disability, their families, carers and representatives participated in the consultations. The First Peoples Disability Network Australia also hosted workshops with First Nations people as part of the public consultations. Reports on the consultations are available through the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Looking Forward

The report acknowledges the end of the Strategy and demonstrates the efforts undertaken by all levels of government. Launched on 3 December 2021, Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 replaced the Strategy.

The vision of Australia's Disability Strategy is an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential as equal members of the community.

Like its predecessor, Australia's Disability Strategy has Outcome Areas. Collectively, the 7 Outcome Areas represent the areas people with disability have said need to improve in order to achieve the new strategy's vision. Community attitudes and safety are seen as key issues for people with disability and have been given a stronger focus in Australia's Disability Strategy.

Australia's Disability Strategy's Outcome Areas are:

- Employment and financial security.
- Inclusive homes and communities.
- Safety, rights and justice.

- Personal and community support.
- Education and learning.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Community attitudes.

By delivering against the Policy Priorities under each Outcome Area, governments envisage all aspects of Australian life becoming more inclusive of people with disability.

Documents making up Australia's Disability Strategy

Documents that form and support the delivery of Australia's Disability Strategy include:

- Outcomes Framework – measures, tracks and reports outcomes for people with disability across the Policy Priorities under the Outcome Areas.
- Engagement Plan – outlines how people with disability will be involved in implementing Australia's Disability Strategy over its term.
- Roadmap – gives a simple overview of the key deliverables under Australia's Disability Strategy. This provides transparency of the road ahead and accountability for delivery.
- Evaluation Good Practice Guide Checklist – helps governments to evaluate disability specific and mainstream policies and services.
- Targeted Action Plans – governments have established Targeted Action Plans to make headway in achieving outcomes in specific areas of Australia's Disability Strategy.
- Associated Plans – these are strategies, plans, roadmaps and frameworks that focus on improving aspects of Australian life for people with disability and also work to deliver the vision of Australia's Disability Strategy.

Implementation

To deliver on the vision, there is an increased focus on implementation. Governments are committed to working together and with people with disability, communities, businesses and the non-government sector to implement Australia's Disability Strategy and realise its vision in a coordinated and targeted way. This includes ensuring that over the life of Australia's Disability Strategy, its design and implementation are responsive to changing needs.

The following key initiatives will facilitate this approach:

- Ensuring actions to deliver against the Policy Priorities address issues of intersectionality.
- A clear and easy-to-locate outline of governments' roles and responsibilities.
- Guiding principles for policy and program development that are based on and reflect the human rights principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The implementation of time-limited Targeted Action Plans and longer-term Associated Plans.
- The implementation of an Outcomes Framework to track progress against Australia's Disability Strategy, a data strategy to support regular reporting, and improvements to evaluation and research.
- The implementation of governance arrangements, including a centralised unit to drive implementation.
- The implementation of Australia's Disability Strategy Engagement Plan to ensure people with disability actively participate in implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- A clear roadmap to keep governments accountable for achievement of key deliverables and milestones.

[Further information](#)

Australia's Disability Strategy and supporting documents are available on the Australia's Disability Strategy Hub on the Disability Gateway.

Australia's Disability Strategy documents are available in Easy Read and community languages, including Auslan.