

Final Progress Report 2017–2021

National Disability Strategy 2010–2020



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Final Progress Report closes the journey under the original *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* (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 to replace the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020*.

This Final Progress Report combines the Strategy’s third and fourth progress reports, covering 2017–18 and 2019–20. It also includes the additional calendar year 2021, during which all levels of government remained committed to the Strategy while Australia’s Disability Strategy was finalised.

The Strategy saw a range of achievements and reforms introduced to better support and include people with disability. These included:

- The full implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This was one of the most important social policy innovations in Australia’s history.
- The Australian Government continued to increase its financial investment in improving outcomes for people with disability, including through the Quality Schools Package.
- The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program ensured people with disability could connect with their communities by making them more accessible and inclusive. ILC is for all people with disability, regardless of whether they are a NDIS participant.
- The introduction of new disability legislation, such as state Disability Inclusion Acts, to strengthen legal protections for people with disability.
- State and territory governments actively contributed to the Strategy by developing and implementing their own disability plans or strategic plans. As part of this, most governments convened disability advisory groups so they could actively engage with people with disability.
- Many Australian organisations introduced disability inclusion plans and disability discrimination action plans.
- Local initiatives focused on creating inclusive communities, accessible transport and improving access to health and education services.
- Significant shifts in government, social and community services towards rights-based approaches to remove barriers for people with disability.
- In April 2019, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Disability Royal Commission) was established in response to community concern about widespread reports of violence against, and the neglect, abuse and exploitation of, people with disability.

There have also been challenges. COVID-19 had a major impact on Australia in 2020 and 2021 and all levels of government have had to respond to the constantly evolving pandemic. Natural disasters like the 2019 bushfire season also highlighted the need for disability-inclusive approaches to handling emergencies and ensuring the safety of people with disability.

During this time, Australia's Disability Strategy was developed and finalised. It involved 2 rounds of public consultations plus formal evaluations and collaboration with state, territory and local governments.

Collaboration and engagement with people with disability, their families and advocacy organisations has provided in-depth insights into disability matters and how they view the Strategy. While the Strategy was built on good principles, implementation could have been better. This feedback has resulted in strengthened governance, reporting and engagement processes for Australia's Disability Strategy.

The Strategy has helped achieve many positive outcomes that have improved the lives of people with disability. This Final Progress Report demonstrates the commitment of all governments in delivering on the vision of the Strategy.



TIMELINE OF ACHIEVEMENTS

-
- 2017**
- Over 100,000 people supported by the NDIS
 - New participant pathway for NDIS participants announced
 - Australian Government Senate Inquiry report into the delivery of outcomes under the National Disability Strategy
-
- 2018**
- Independent evaluation of the NDIS trial released
 - New model for Disability Employment Services commenced
 - Disability Ministers agreed to developing a new Strategy
-
- 2019**
- Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability announced
 - United Nations hearing on implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; United Nations releases Concluding Observations on combined second and third periodic reports of Australia
 - Establishment of the Hearing Assessment Program – Early Ears
 - People with Disability in Australia 2019 report released by Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
 - Transport Ministers agreed to modernise the Transport Standards
 - National Disability Strategy 2016 Progress Report released
 - Social Policy Research Centre Review of implementation of the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 released
 - Stage 1 public consultations for the new Strategy
 - Reports on Stage 1 public consultations for the new Strategy released
-
- 2020**
- Productivity Commission's Review of the National Disability Agreement released
 - National Disability and Data Asset pilot commenced
 - National roll-out of NDIS completed
 - People with Disability in Australia report updated
 - APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 released
 - NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission establishment completed
 - National Disability Strategy Third Implementation Plan 2019–2020 released
 - Stage 2 consultations for the new Strategy
 - Statement of Continued Commitment to the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 endorsed
-
- 2021**
- Commencement of national NDIS Worker Screening
 - 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 released
 - Premises Standards Review 2021 released
 - Report on the third 5-year review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 released
 - National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability launched
 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy launched
 - As of 31 December 2021, 502,413 participants had a NDIS plan
 - Employ My Ability – the Disability Employment Strategy launched on 3 December 2021
 - Disability Reform Ministers agreed to Targeted Action Plans on employment, safety, emergency management, early childhood and community attitudes
 - Reports on Stage 2 consultations for the new Strategy released
 - Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 launched on 3 December 2021
-



INTRODUCTION

The National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 (the Strategy) was Australia's first overarching policy framework for disability reform. It provided a key mechanism for driving more inclusive policy and program design across all levels of government.

The Strategy was part of a broader journey that started with Australia's international obligations. Australia was one of the first countries to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which came into force in Australia on 16 August 2008. The Strategy played an important role in protecting, promoting and realising the human rights of people with disability in line with Australia's commitments under the Convention.

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. Actions under their disability plans were consistent with the goals of the Strategy, and worked alongside activities by the Australian Government.

At the local government level, many councils developed their own disability access and inclusion plans.

A range of other policies and frameworks also helped support people with disability. These included legislation like the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the Disability Standards, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Disability Royal Commission).



The Strategy reflected the social model of disability, which recognises that attitudes, practices and structures can be disabling and create barriers to people enjoying economic participation, social inclusion and equality. The idea that people with disability can be more disadvantaged by society’s response to their disability than by the disability itself is leading to a greater focus on policies that seek to remove these barriers.

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.



Strategy progress reports tracked achievements under the Strategy and indicated whether significant life outcomes were improving for people with disability.

This Final Progress Report combines the Strategy’s third and fourth reporting periods, covering 2017–18 and 2019–20. It also includes the calendar year 2021 following Disability Reform Ministers endorsing the [Statement of Continued Commitment](#) at the Disability Reform Ministers’ meeting on 4 December 2020. The Statement confirmed that Australian, state and territory, and local governments would continue their efforts and uphold the rights of people with disability while *Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031* was finalised.

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 included state and territory disability reporting, the *2018 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s *People with Disability in Australia* report, a number of reviews of the Strategy, and reporting to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The [Data Sources and Community Engagement](#) section of this report covers this in more detail.

The availability of these reports is one of the factors for combining the last 2 Strategy progress reports. The concise nature of this final report also reflects the complementary work undertaken in the last 5 years of the Strategy and feedback on previous progress reports.

Implementation of the Strategy is the shared responsibility of all government departments at local, state and federal levels. As such, all levels of government have contributed to the development of this report.



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

Arts organisations and institutions

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 Australia Council has also published research providing insights into [supporting pathways](#) for artists with disability and for [diversity](#) in the Australian arts sector.

Six National Collecting Institutions – [Bundanon Trust](#), [National Film and Sound Archive](#), [National Portrait Gallery of Australia](#), [National Gallery of Australia](#), [National Museum of Australia](#) and [National Library of Australia](#) – have implemented or maintained Disability Access Plans, Disability Frameworks or Disability and Diversity Action Plans to remove barriers to access and promote inclusion for people with disability through services, staff training, policies and infrastructure. During the reporting period, the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) actively promoted its commitment to increasing the diversity and cultural awareness of its staff and volunteers, including through its corporate plans.

Support to increase the participation of people with disability in sport across Australia

Between 2017 and 2021, the Australian Government provided over \$59.4 million through the Australian Sports Commission to National Sporting Organisations for People with Disability (NSODs) and other community groups to increase the participation of people with disability in sport across Australia.

This included:

- \$1.2 million each year in annual core funding grants across 8 NSODs to increase participation in sport for people with disability (\$6.2 million in total).
- \$41.1 million to Paralympics Australia.
- \$4.2 million to 36 projects under the Community Sport Infrastructure Grants Program, to improve the accessibility of sporting facilities.
- \$2.3 million to 11 projects under round one of the Move It AUS – Participation grant Program, to increase and improve participation opportunities for people with disability.
- \$2.0 million to Get Skilled Access to deliver the Disability Inclusive Clubs and Disability Inclusive Schools Sport Pilot Program.
- \$1.6 million to Special Olympics Australia for the Unified Sports Program and hosting the National Games in 2018.
- \$2.0 million to support the INAS Global Games in 2019 for athletes with intellectual disability.

The Australian Sports Commission also supported the establishment of the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with Disability – a collective of 9 NSODs (including Paralympics Australia) which have come together to form a key peak agency for sport and physical activity for people with a disability in Australia.

From 2020 to 2022, the Department of Health's Driving Social Inclusion through Sport and Physical Activity grant program funded 23 projects to support people with disability to participate in community-based sport and physical activity.

2021 Review of Premises Standards

In September 2021, the Australian Government released the second review of the Disability (Access to Premises – Building) Standards 2010 to help ensure people with disability have equal and dignified access to public buildings.

The review identified opportunities for action that would support the Premises Standards continuing to meet its objectives. These included opportunities for regulatory reform, information sharing and changes to governance arrangements.

The Australian Government and state and territory governments will work together to progress appropriate reforms based on the review findings.

Reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Transport Standards)

In August 2019, Australian Government and state and territory Transport Ministers agreed to modernise the Transport Standards, guided by 4 principles:

1. People with disability have a right to access public transport.
2. Accessibility is a service, not an exercise in compliance.
3. Solutions should meet the service needs of all stakeholders and be developed through co-design.
4. Reforms should strive for certainty.

National Forum – Preparedness for People with Disability Most at Risk in Natural Disasters

Australia has embarked on a journey of learning how to coordinate national effort to understand and address systemic disaster risk and build resilience. This journey has seen the release of a number of pivotal pieces, including the [Profiling Australia's Vulnerability](#) report (2018), the [Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework](#) (2018), the [National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework](#) (2019) and the [First National Action Plan](#) (2020). It also saw the establishment of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency following the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.

The National Forum – Preparedness for People with Disability Most at Risk in Natural Disasters, held in Melbourne in August 2019, drew 60 participants representing organisations from the emergency management sector, community support organisations, organisations representing people with disability and peak bodies, including those with lived experiences. Key questions explored at the forum included:

- What does being prepared for a natural disaster look like for a person with disability?
- What can we do together to improve cross-sector collaboration?
- How will this help remove the barriers to people with disability engaging with disaster risk reduction activities?
- What is the number one thing you can do to move us closer to our goal?

The outcomes from this forum have informed the development of the [Emergency Management Targeted Action Plan](#) in *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031*.

Disability Gateway

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 includes a website, a dedicated phone line (1800 643 787) and social media channels. Disability Gateway is for all Australians with disability, regardless of whether they are a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant or not.

The Disability Gateway was developed in consultation with people with disability, their families and carers and the disability sector. A pilot website was launched in 2020 and tested to refine its functionality, improve user experience and ensure content complies with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

The Disability Gateway aims to improve access to information and services and make searching less stressful. It is a central starting point, providing information people can trust that is accessible, easy and safe to use.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

Empowering NDIS participants to exercise their rights

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (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, education resources and regular engagement with the Commission's Consultative Committees.

The NDIS Commission has undertaken extensive activity to build quality and safeguarding practice for NDIS providers and their workers. The NDIS Commission adopts a rights-based approach, focusing on issues that impact on the rights, health and wellbeing of people with disability. This includes significant work to implement the findings of major reviews, including the Scoping Review on Preventing Avoidable Deaths of Australians with Disability and the Robertson Review.

Online Postal Vote Application system

Following the 2019 federal election, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) enhanced its Online Postal Vote Application system to maximise usability. Vision Australia provided the AEC with a Statement of Accessibility and verification that the system satisfies all conformance levels of A and AA success criteria of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 specification. The system's accessibility features include:

- Content that is presented and interpreted correctly by assistive technologies.
- A consistent layout and navigation system used throughout the application; including visual means of conveying information.
- Correct heading levels to assist people who are blind or have low vision to understand the structure of the page.
- All content and functionality are keyboard-accessible.

Increased access to justice through legal assistance

In the 2021–22 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$60 million over 4 years to increase access to legal assistance for people experiencing mental health issues. Legal assistance enhances access to justice by empowering people to resolve their legal issues and facilitating their participation in legal proceedings when necessary. Of the total funding, \$57.5 million is being provided through the National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020–25 to deliver increased frontline services. The remaining \$2.5 million is being used to deliver compassion-based training to legal sector staff to increase their capacity to assist people with mental health conditions.

National Oversight of Behaviour Support

The NDIS Commission works with providers and behaviour support practitioners to implement strategies to help reduce the occurrence and impact of behaviours of concern, and to reduce the use of restrictive practices. It also seeks to improve the capability of the sector through research and education to share best-practice advice with practitioners, providers, participants, their families and carers.

The [Positive Behaviour Support Capability Framework](#) has been developed by the NDIS Commission to help ensure providers and practitioners deliver high-quality behaviour supports.

The NDIS Commission continues to lead and support states and territories to align with the agreed Principles for Nationally Consistent Authorisation of Restrictive Practices.

DV-alert – Domestic and Family Violence Response Training

[DV-alert](#) is a free nationally accredited training program funded by the Department of Social Services under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (2010–2022). [DV-alert training](#) has been delivered by Lifeline Australia since 2011, to help frontline workers recognise the signs of domestic and family violence. In 2018, a 2-day accredited workshop, [Working with Women with Disabilities](#), and accredited [e-Learning](#) were added to the training program for frontline workers who work with women with disabilities. Between 2017–18 and 2020–21, over 600 frontline workers completed the 2-day workshop, and an additional 284 completed the e-Learning.

1800RESPECT

[1800RESPECT](#) is the national domestic, family and sexual violence telephone and online counselling, information and support service. 1800RESPECT was established in 2010 as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022.

The service has resources to support people with disability, including:

- The [Sunny](#) mobile application, which supports women with disability to recognise violence and abuse, understand their rights and take action to protect their safety.
- An accessible [service directory](#).
- A [Disability Support Toolkit](#) that provides frontline workers with resources to help them support people with disability who have been affected by violence.

Resources on technology-facilitated abuse for women with disability (including intellectual disability and/or cognitive disability)

The Australian Government provided \$1.5 million between 2019–20 and 2021–22 to fund eSafety to develop and deliver resources on technology-facilitated abuse (TFA) for women with intellectual and/or cognitive disability and the frontline workers supporting them.

The first tranche of resources on TFA (Easy Read guides: 'What you can do about abuse through technology' and 'What you can do about image-based abuse') was released in 2020.

A second tranche of resources, launched in August 2021, includes case study videos, conversation cards and wallet 'keep safe' cards and posters.

Tailored webinar-based training for disability workforces and domestic and family violence frontline workers who support women with intellectual disability or cognitive disability was launched in January 2021. As of 31 December 2021, eSafety had trained 270 participants from these sectors.

In 2020 eSafety commissioned research from the Queensland University of Technology to understand the experiences of technology-abuse among women with intellectual disability or cognitive disability. Published in August 2021, the report, 'For my safety' addresses a gap in the evidence base about the impacts of technology abuse on this group of women. The research report is also published in an Easy Read format.

Unfit to Plead

The National Principles relating to Persons Unfit to Plead or Found Not Guilty by Reason of Cognitive or Mental Health Impairment were finalised in 2019 and have been endorsed by all states and territories except South Australia. They contain a number of principles that address the risk of indefinite detention of people with disability. The Australian Government has committed to reviewing the National Principles in 2024 in consultation with states and territories to ensure they remain relevant and continue to represent best practice. The Attorney-General's Department will also consult with civil society and other stakeholders in the review process.

Outcome 3 – Economic security

Australian Public Service (APS) Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25

The APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25, released in December 2020:

- Supports APS agencies to attract, recruit and retain more people with disability, and to create more accessible and inclusive workplaces.
- Includes a target of 7% of APS employees with disability by 2025.

Initiatives include:

- strengthened affirmative measures recruitment
- support for networks including APS Disability Champions
- establishment of Disability Contact Officers
- improved accessibility
- understanding and addressing barriers to disclosure
- uplifting manager capability in recruitment and management of people with disability
- strengthened career pathways for APS employees with disability.

Disability Employment Services

A new model for Disability Employment Services (DES) 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.

From 1 July 2018 to 28 February 2022, 588,145 people received assistance from DES, with 126,817 employed for 6 months or more.

As part of the Australian Government's commitment to ensure disability employment supports are meeting the needs of people with disability, a new disability employment support model is being developed to ensure no Australian with disability is left behind.

Women's Leadership and Development Program

The Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) supports a range of activities to improve outcomes for women in Australia. The Australian Government has invested \$58.4 million (over 4 years) in 75 WLDP grant projects to assist around 50,000 women into employment and leadership opportunities.

In 2021, the WLDP provided \$820,899 to Women with Disabilities Australia to ensure diverse women's voices are heard in the policy-making process.

WLDP projects are designed to support a range of women, including those from diverse backgrounds and those at risk of long-term unemployment. Over \$3.7 million has been committed over 4 years to projects for women with disability including:

- \$355,600 for Accessible Arts to deliver a comprehensive arts and cultural leadership program for women with disability, providing personal and professional development opportunities.
- \$718,700 for Get Skilled Access to deliver a 6-month leadership program to support women athletes with disability to build their leadership capability.
- \$224,917 for Me Plus More to improve job readiness and provide employment opportunities for women with intellectual disability, developing of a suite of education and information products for use by women and their support workers.

Individual Placement and Support program

The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program supports the health and wellbeing of young people aged 12 to 25 with mental health illness to achieve employment and education outcomes.

IPS is delivered in 50 headspace sites nation-wide and uses an evidence-based model to integrate employment and vocational support with clinical mental health.

To complement the IPS program, headspace also delivers Digital Work and Study (DWS). DWS aims to improve the education and employment of young people aged 15 to 25 with mental illness by providing work and study support via a digital platform, integrated with clinical mental health services.

Disability Support Pension online claim

In 2019, Services Australia released an enhanced online claim for Disability Support Pension (DSP), including via mobile devices. The online claim is more accessible, especially for those customers who require assistive technology.

The claim has improved questions and messaging to help customers through the claiming process by providing additional information and content. The online claim only displays questions relevant to the customer's individual circumstance, based on their responses to previous questions. The online claim allows organisational and personal nominees to claim DSP on behalf of the customer.

Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (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 NDIS is founded on insurance principles that draw on the practice of commercial and government social insurance principles. It uses these principles to make evidence-based decisions about an individual's access to the NDIS. The NDIS takes a lifetime approach, investing early in people with disability and children with developmental delay to improve their outcomes later in life.

Under the NDIS, eligible Australians under the age of 65 years can get the reasonable and necessary supports they need. It provides funding directly to participants based on their individual needs and gives them the ability to choose and control the supports they use to get involved in their community, workplace and social life.

These supports are in addition to the range of other government services – including education, health, employment, justice and family support – available to all Australians with disability. The NDIS is a key part of the ecosystem of support on which Australians with disability rely, and it works with all levels of government, people with disability and the sector to build a strong mutual understanding of:

- what is considered a reasonable and necessary support and whether these supports should be provided by the NDIS or by other mainstream or community services
- how the NDIS and other service delivery systems interact with and complement one another
- how to determine the most appropriate funding and service delivery approach.

The NDIS can provide all people with disability with information and connections to services in their communities, as well as information about what support is provided by each state and territory government.

As of 31 December 2021, 502,413 participants had a NDIS plan, including 77,287 children younger than 7, and 20,384 participants entered the Scheme between 1 October 2021 and 31 December 2021.

In its 8 years of operation, the NDIS has grown rapidly to support Australians with disability across the country to access the services and supports they need to live an independent life.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) remains committed to delivering a NDIS that provides true choice and control of reasonable and necessary supports in a way that is fair, consistent and equitable for all participants, regardless of their geography or socio-demographic circumstances.

Establishment of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

The NDIS Commission completed establishment of all functions of the NDIS Commissioner across Australia and made significant progress in moving the organisation from a focus on transition to full utilisation of the functions and powers of the Commissioner. The NDIS Commission's commencement in Western Australia in December 2020 and the commencement of national NDIS Worker Screening in February 2021 completed this transition. The NDIS Commission now 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.

Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program

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

- The Economic Participation 2020–21 grant round awarded \$17 million to 26 organisations.
- The Social and Community Participation 2020–21 grant round awarded \$19.3 million to 136 organisations.
- The Individual Capacity Building 2019–20 and 2020–21 grant rounds awarded \$160.5 million to 244 organisations.

These grants assist in delivering services associated with furthering outcomes 3 and 4 (improving economic security and improving personal and community supports for people with disability) under the Strategy.

Carer Gateway

The Australian Government has committed more than \$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. Carer Gateway provides services in-person, online and over the phone to ensure carers can access the support they need when they need it.

Through Carer Gateway, carers have access to tailored support packages, in-person and phone-based counselling, in-person and online peer support and coaching, emergency respite, online skills courses, information and advice and assistance with navigating relevant local services available to carers through government and non-government providers, including the NDIS and My Aged Care.

From April 2020 to December 2021, 78,750 carers registered with their local Carer Gateway service provider. As at December 2021, the Carer Gateway website had received 3,421,392 page visits and the Carer Gateway 1800 number has received 345,260 phone calls.

Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005

In 2020, the former Department of Education, Skills and Employment (now the Department of Education) completed a review of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#). The Review involved an extensive public consultation process with students with disability, parents and carers, educators and education authorities. The Review recommendations cover 4 reform directions:

1. empowering and supporting students with disability and their families
2. strengthening the knowledge and capability of educators and education providers
3. embedding accountability for the Standards throughout the education system
4. building awareness and capability in the early childhood sector.

The [final Review report](#) was released in March 2021. The Department of Education is implementing the recommendations in consultation with people with disability and the disability and education sectors.

The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training

The Australian Government provides annual funding of approximately \$150,000 to the University of Tasmania to host the [Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training \(ADCET\)](#). The ADCET website provides information, advice and online resources to disability practitioners, teachers and students with disability on inclusive teaching and learning practices.

On 3 December 2021, ADCET launched the e-Learning module *Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Tertiary Education*, through its [Disability Awareness](#) site. The UDL module provides a guide to enhance the knowledge and capability of tertiary educators and support staff in designing more accessible and systematic courses for students with disability.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy, developed in partnership with SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, was launched in December 2021. The strategy focuses on priority areas of disability, health, education, safety, housing, workforce and cultural connection.

It acknowledges that developmental delay and/or disability have a significant impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The strategy recognises the importance of all early childhood education and care services being culturally safe and having inclusive practices. It also outlines opportunities to improve support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with developmental delay and disability, and their families.

Higher Education Disability Support Program

The Australian Government provides over \$7 million in funding each year through the Higher Education Disability Support Program (DSP) to universities to assist with supporting students with disability to access, participate and succeed in higher education.

Universities are able to use funding received under the DSP for staff training in order to better support students with disability and can access partial reimbursement for the costs of education and equipment support for students with disability with high-cost needs.

Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

National Health and Medical Research Council Grants

Between 2018 and 2021, examples of relevant research projects funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council include:

- Genetics and Biology of Neurodevelopmental Disability, to identify disease origins and to decipher the underlying disease mechanisms using cutting-edge genetic and biology techniques and stem cell models. Grant funding of \$963,270 awarded in 2018.
- Developing a model of Preventative Healthcare for People with Intellectual Disability, to find out why there are gaps in preventative health care for people with intellectual disability, determine how these gaps affect people and develop a new model of health care. Grant funding of \$1,244,756 awarded in 2020.
- Promotion of Evidence-based Physical Activity for Older Adults and People with Disabilities by Health Professionals, to mobilise and empower health professionals to encourage and support physical activity among patients by targeting implementation barriers. Grant funding of \$1,440,375 awarded in 2021.

Establishment of the Hearing Assessment Program – Early Ears

Hearing Assessment Program – Early Ears (HAPEE), established in 2019, ensures that all young First Nations children have access to free hearing assessments, no matter where they live. The program is also upskilling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care and early childhood education services to better detect and manage ear disease and to improve community awareness of the importance of hearing health. In 2020–21 HAPEE assessed 12,016 First Nations children in some 240 communities across Australia. Some 30% of children seen for the first time were found to have undiagnosed middle ear infections and 25% had some form of undiagnosed hearing loss and required referral to clinical specialists.

Supporting the Australian Government response to COVID-19 for people with disability

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). This Committee:

- oversees the development and implementation of the Management and Operational Plan for COVID-19 for People with Disability
- provides expert advice on the health care needs of people with disability and the disability service sector during the pandemic.

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 government representatives also attend meetings on a regular basis. State and territory representatives also participate in Committee meetings.



NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

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 DIAPs align with the 4 priority areas established in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan:

1. developing positive community attitudes and behaviour
2. creating liveable communities
3. supporting access to meaningful employment
4. improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

The [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan](#) and DIAPs are available online and are subject to regular review and reporting.

State Disability Conference – Live – Work – Play in NSW the State of Inclusion

In 2017, the NSW Government sponsored a [2-day conference](#) to promote disability inclusion and employment and to explore exciting developments in accessible tourism, assistive technology and community engagement.

More than 650 delegates attended to see over 70 presenters and view the 30 trade and industry displays. The event was a test of accessibility for the recently completed International Convention Centre and hosted over 30 wheelchair users and delegates with a range of disability.

Governance and oversight

NSW has established a Deputy Secretary-level NSW Disability Board, a Disability Directors Forum and Disability Stakeholder Forum to oversee and inform NSW Disability Policy and guide implementation of the Strategy in NSW.

■ Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

Transport for NSW. The Transport Access Program is a NSW Government initiative delivering safe, modern and accessible public transport infrastructure across the state. Since 2011, over \$2.2 billion has been invested in around 520 projects, and almost 90% of customer journeys now begin from accessible locations. Further support is provided through the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme for customers with disability who have difficulty accessing public transport.

NSW Local Councils are key to ensuring local communities are accessible and inclusive. Councils engage with their local communities to identify the needs of people with disability and develop their Disability Inclusion Action Plans. The range of their activity is illustrated in the NSW Local Councils 2019–2020 progress report.

Everyone Can Play – Accessible Playgrounds. The NSW Department of Planning has funded 141 inclusive play projects since 2018, delivering on its \$20 million commitment to creating inclusive play spaces across NSW.

Accessible National Parks. Accessibility features such as access-friendly walking tracks, all-terrain mobility chairs for loan and accessible kayak launch facilities have been established at numerous parks across NSW, with maps and information provided on the NSW National Parks and Wildlife website.

Accessible Government Services. All Service NSW service centres are equipped with audio loops, are wheelchair accessible and have at least one accessible counter which incorporates microphone and headset. Service NSW Centres now offer real-time captioning and Auslan-to-English interpreting to customers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

■ Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

The office of the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner was established by legislation in 2019 to investigate and better protect older people and adults with disability from abuse, neglect and exploitation and to promote their fundamental human rights. The Commissioner has also expanded the Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline and coordinates the NSW Community Visitors Program.

The NSW Justice Advocacy Service provides support for people with cognitive impairment in contact with the criminal justice system as victims, witnesses or suspects/defendants. It supports people with cognitive impairment to report crimes to police, attend court or legal appointments and engage in diversionary programs where appropriate.

The NSW Youth Justice Disability Action Plan 2021–2024 will equip all Youth Justice staff to work effectively with young people with disability and will provide systems, resources and partnerships to ensure early identification of disability and timely referral for appropriate supports.

■ Outcome 3 – Economic security

Employment activity in DIAPS

The NSW Government announced a Jobs for People with Disability target in November 2017. It commits to doubling the number of people with disability in public sector employment by 2027. The target was supported by campaign messaging via ‘Don’t Dis My Ability’, ‘See the Possibilities’ and ‘Employable Me’ as well as a range of activities implemented by the [NSW Public Service Commission](#).

A number of NSW Government agencies, including Service NSW, became Australian Network on Disability (AND) silver members and also participate in the AND ‘Stepping Into’ internship program, offering talented students with disability meaningful work while developing key skills and work experience.

■ Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

NSW disaster response

NSW has experienced unprecedented bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years.

The NSW Government has established Resilience NSW, which works in collaboration with The University of Sydney to develop [disaster response protocols](#) that address the needs of people with disability and support their preparation and response to emergency situations in the community.

To address the needs of people with disability throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, NSW Health and the Department of Communities and Justice established emergency response protocols and a multi-agency oversight group to monitor implementation.

Auslan

In October 2018, the Auslan booking service was rolled out to all Service NSW service centres. Customers can book an Auslan video remote interpreting appointment online.

Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

The NSW Department of Education's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2016–2020 outlined the actions undertaken to support disability inclusion. In 2021, the Department refreshed this plan and committed to a [DIAP for 2021–2025](#).

The Education DIAP was supported by the 2019 release of the department's [Disability Strategy](#), which set out its plan for providing children and young people with disability, their families and the broader community with an education system that meets their needs. Annual progress reports are tabled with NSW Parliament and can be found on the [Department website](#).

The NSW Department of Education's Disability and Inclusion program began in 2018 and provides targeted funding to enable children with disability and additional needs to participate in a quality early childhood education. The Department continues to provide adjustments or support for learning needs for over 135,000 students with disability in NSW public schools.

In 2020, NSW TAFE produced its stand-alone [Disability Inclusion Action Plan \(2020–2022\)](#) which aims to embed a culture of inclusion for people with disability across all regional locations and TAFE Digital. The TAFE DIAP seeks to ensure a safe, respectful and fair place of learning and work for students and staff with disability.

Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

COVID-19 response

NSW Health, [Service NSW](#) and other agencies developed COVID-19 resources for people with disability.

The NSW Government has established a resources webpage that provides people with disability with:

- Easy Read resources.
- Resources for people who are blind or have low vision.
- Auslan videos and other resources for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Resources for carers.
- Quick links to services and contact numbers for the Disability Gateway, National Coronavirus Helpline, National Relay Service and Service NSW.

NSW Health also developed a COVID-19 webpage for people with disability, which provides accessible information and resources about COVID-19 prevention, vaccination, testing and health services.

NSW Health established a Disability Community of Practice with over 150 members as part of its COVID-19 response, to share strategies, local solutions and issues with respect to pandemic preparedness and the health response.

The NSW Government has developed emergency preparedness plans and protocols to support the safe continuity of disability services during the COVID-19 pandemic (refer 'NSW disaster response' above).

Intellectual disability and Health

In 2018, NSW Health expanded the specialised Intellectual Disability Health Service (IDHS) state-wide. The 6 specialised IDHS teams are located in key centres across NSW with 9 specialised IDHS clinicians in the other local health districts. The IDHS provides a health assessment and care plan for eligible people with complex care needs and intellectual disability. The IDHS builds the skills, confidence and knowledge of NSW Health staff and primary health clinicians in providing care for people with intellectual disability by providing training, information sessions, webinars, expert advice, partnerships and collaboration.

Employable Me

Employable Me was a 2-series Australian television documentary that followed the journey of job seekers determined to show that having a physical disability or neurodiversity should not keep them from getting a job.

Employable Me was an initiative of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, and Create NSW in partnership with the Australian Broadcasting Commission and Screen Australia.

Employable Me won multiple domestic and international awards including the Reality TV category at the Venice TV Awards in 2018, and 2 gold medals at the New York Festivals International TV & Film Awards. Season 1 won the 2019 United Nations Department of Public Information Gold Award, and the second season won the Gold World Medal for Documentary for its exploration of social issues affecting people with neurodiversity.

The 2 series screened to a total national audience of over 4 million on free to air TV and ABC iview and generated a national conversation on disability inclusion and employment.



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.

Absolutely Everyone delivered significant, wide-ranging outcomes for Victorians with disability across all parts of the Strategy's 6 outcome areas.

■ Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

Significant efforts have been made to ensure the built environment is more accessible and inclusive, including:

- working in partnership to deliver 27 new Changing Places accessible public bathroom facilities
- releasing the new Victorian Health Building Authority universal design policy to ensure the principles are included in the life cycle of all projects
- appointing a new Commissioner to oversee commercial passenger vehicles to identify disability specific service improvements and a Chief Accessibility Advocate to guide the implementation of accessible public transport approaches.

■ Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

Victoria has continued to lead efforts in promoting and protecting the rights of people with disability, with highlights from the past 4 years including:

- Work to improve attitudes towards disability, including a partnership with Melbourne University to survey community attitudes about disability; this resulted in a national forum on community attitudes, support for the documentary series Perspective Shift and the autism awareness campaign Change Your Reactions.
- 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.
- Development and implementation of the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme.
- Supporting access to equal opportunities for people with disability experiencing additional disadvantage through the Victorian Autism Plan, a key deliverable of the 2017 Parliamentary Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Outcome 3 – Economic security

Building economic independence and meaningful career pathways has been a priority over the past 4 years, including:

- Every opportunity: Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018–2020 was a sub-plan from Absolutely Everyone to improve the economic participation of people with disability by shifting perceptions of employees with disability and building the evidence base for effective employee pathways.
- Development of Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018–2025, which aims to build the capacity of the public sector to employ people with disability through internships, developing tools and resources and creating a disability roundtable with senior public servants. These efforts saw the number of government employees with disability increase from 3.8% in 2018 to 5.2% in 2020.
- The Victorian social procurement framework included an aim to support an increase in procurement from businesses that employ people with disability.

Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

Work to ensure Victorians with disability have access to the NDIS and mainstream services has included:

- Delivery of a Transition Support Package to help individuals and services transition to the NDIS through intensive individual support, capacity-building activities and workforce development through Keeping our sector strong: Victoria's workforce development plan for the NDIS.
- Funding to build the capacity of mainstream services to support people with disability, including improvements in addressing family violence and in access to the justice system and health care, including mental health services.

Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

Since 2017, there has been significant investment in delivering an inclusive education system for students with disability, including:

- Development of an inclusive education policy, based on consultation with academics, school staff and students that sets out obligations and aspirations for inclusive education in Victorian Government schools.
- A \$1.6 billion Disability Inclusion package that supports the policy and aims to provide targeted support to students and build capacity of school staff through support and training.
- Launch of the Victorian Autism Education Strategy, which aims to improve attitudes and outcomes for autistic students and their families.
- Delivery of over 340 innovative building projects under the Inclusive Schools Fund.
- The Building Blocks Inclusion Stream provided grants to funded kindergarten services to support upgrades to buildings and playgrounds and the purchase of inclusive education equipment.

- Since 2019–20, over \$7.6 million has been invested in 81 inclusion infrastructure projects at kindergartens across Victoria and over \$3.4 million invested to deliver 634 equipment grants to support early childhood education and care services purchasing inclusive equipment.
- Extension of all inclusion programs to the 4-year-old cohort of children with disability to the 3-year-old cohort with the roll-out of the funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program.

Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

The Victorian Government has worked to improve accessibility of health services, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic response, by delivering the following key projects:

- Launch of the Disability Liaison Officer program, funding 32 staff in 22 health services across metropolitan and regional Victoria to support access to COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccination, as well as other essential health services. As of early December 2021, the program had assisted over 7,600 Victorians with disability to book a vaccination that meets their needs.
- Supporting the delivery of disability-specific pandemic response and recovery work through partnerships with key stakeholders, including the establishment of the COVID-19 Accessible Communications Reference Group to guide the development of accessible and inclusive messaging for people with disability.
- Efforts to increase access to autism assessment as well as testing innovative models of care for children presenting at emergency departments with behaviours of concern through the Improved Support for Autism and Intellectual Disability project.

QUEENSLAND

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

The Queensland Government undertook a range of activities to increase accessibility and promote inclusivity in communities, including:

- Developing the disability awareness training program ‘Inclusion is within everyone’s ability’ for public sector employees. In its first year over 1,000 employees completed the training.
- Supporting transport accessibility through the Station Accessibility Upgrade Program, with 11 railway station upgrades completed or progressed and another 11 planned. Regular engagement with relevant disability stakeholders to guide this work occurred through the Accessibility Reference Group.
- Supporting partnerships between arts and disability organisations to increase engagement with, participation in and access to the arts by people with disability as audience members, participants and workers. This included 3 sensory-friendly events held in 2021 through the Queensland Museum Network and investment of over \$800,000 in 3 arts organisations to create engagement and employment opportunities for people with disability.
- Increasing the number of newly constructed social housing dwellings designed to Gold or Platinum level of the Livable Housing Design Guidelines to 78%.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

Queensland has continued to protect the rights of people with disability and improve service delivery across the justice system, including by:

- 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.
- Prioritising partnerships with disability sector peak bodies to support continuous learning and ensure policing strategies, policies and practices continued to protect and support persons with disability. This included a partnership with Autism Queensland to strengthen awareness of autism within the Queensland Police Service.
- Supporting prisoners to access the NDIS and ensuring NDIS supports are in place upon prisoners’ release from custody. As at 16 December 2021, at least 441 people in Queensland Corrective Services custody or under community supervision had acquired NDIS access.
- Providing funding and training under the Victim Services Funding Program to Working Alongside People with Intellectual and Learning Difficulties (WWILD) to help victims with disability understand their rights, access financial assistance and connect with services. WWILD has received over \$1 million in Queensland Government funding.

■ Outcome 3 – Economic security

The Queensland Government continues to have a strong focus on increasing employment for people with disability, including through:

- Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which provides training to people who are unemployed or underemployed. Since 2015, the program has assisted almost 8,000 people with disability.
- The Back to Work employment program, which supports businesses to employ disadvantaged jobseekers in regional communities, with people with disability a specifically targeted cohort. Between 1 July 2016 and 31 December 2021, 2,831 people with disability were supported into employment with 1,831 employers, who received almost \$24.4 million through the program.

■ Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

Supporting the transition to the NDIS has been a key achievement of the Queensland Government, including through establishing the Disability Connect and Outreach Program to help hard-to-reach people with disability to access the NDIS.

The program includes a state-wide Assessment and Referral Team with a focus on rural, regional and remote areas, First Nations people and other vulnerable cohorts. Between February 2020 and December 2021, the program assisted over 2,300 Queenslanders with disability to gain access to the NDIS. In addition, a Targeted Outreach Project identified and supported potential NDIS participants in hard-to-reach cohorts.

■ Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

The Queensland Government took action to ensure people with disability have the same learning and skills development opportunities as others, through:

- The Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme, which supported kindergarten services to provide inclusive programs for children with disability. In 2021 the Queensland Government provided \$6.9 million to support over 460 community kindergarten services to deliver the program to eligible children.
- The Specialised Equipment and Resources for Kindergartens program, which provided kindergarten services access to specialised equipment and resources to assist participation by children with disability. In each year up to 330 kindergartens accessed support.
- Skills Disability Support, a free Queensland Government program that provided specialised services to pre-approved training providers so people with disability can access support to participate in accredited training. Over 1,070 new applications for support were received, alongside ongoing support for continuing students.

■ Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

Support for the health and wellbeing of people with disability, including through the COVID-19 pandemic, has included:

- Establishing the Long-Stay Rapid Response to discharge long-stay patients with disability from hospitals to protect those individuals and increase the capacity of the health system to respond to the pandemic. By November 2021, 154 patients were able to leave hospital and 61 patients were in the process of being supported to discharge.
- Investment in projects supporting brain injury and spinal research through the Motor Accident Insurance Commission’s research and grants program. This included a \$3 million contribution to the new Healthy Living Centre in Cairns owned by Spinal Life Australia and providing access to rehabilitation and respite care for people with spinal cord injury and other disabilities.



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In 2019, the Western Australian (WA) 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. Key achievements are highlighted under relevant outcome areas.

■ Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

In 2018, the WA Local Government Association received \$2.85 million to construct 34 [Changing Places](#) accessible public bathroom facilities across WA. In early 2021, a further \$2 million was invested to expand the network.

Investment in Auslan Masterclasses enabled greater access to accredited interpreter supports to people who are deaf and hard of hearing. This course has been accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters.

■ Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

Between 2017 and 2021, \$11.1 million was invested to fund advocacy organisations to promote, protect and ensure human rights and enhance the wellbeing, quality of life, community connection and social inclusion of people with disability in WA.

There was also significant investment in ensuring the successful transition to the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework on 1 December 2020. Under the framework, the WA Government is responsible for [authorising restrictive practices](#) in NDIS services in WA. Work continues on defining and developing a model and legislation.

[NDIS Worker Screening Checks](#) commenced in February 2021, with 32,000 applications within the first 12 months. Twenty exclusion notices were issued, indefinitely prohibiting people who present an unacceptable risk of harm when working with people with disability.

A Bill is being drafted to reform the *Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996* (WA), improving key aspects of the justice system for persons with mental impairment (including disability).

■ Outcome 3 – Economic security

The [Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025](#) seeks to increase the representation of people from diverse backgrounds at all levels across the public sector.

The strategy sets a target for representation of people with disability in public sector employment of 5% by 2025. The strategy is supported by the [People with Disability: Action Plan to Improve WA Public Sector Employment Outcomes 2020–2025](#), which sets out key actions and support for agencies.

The Peer Support Employment Project funded 30 microenterprises operated and owned by people with disability. Customised employment planning is also under way with 46 people with disability to realise their chosen employment goals.

■ Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

WA's work with the Australian Government, including the NDIA, and the implementation of many state-funded initiatives have ensured the successful transition to the NDIS.

44,733 people have been supported to transition to the NDIS, representing 10% of the total population in WA who identify as having a disability.

The WA Government invested \$43.3 million through the WA Sector Transition Fund, into the disability sector to ensure people with disability, their families and carers have access to a choice of quality disability support services, delivered by appropriately trained and skilled staff in the sector.

■ Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

The WA Department of Education remains committed to ensuring that every student has a pathway to a successful future. It incorporates the principles of inclusive education and the universal design of schools into forward planning for new school provision. This incorporates facilities to support both personal care needs and specialised educational needs of students with disability within a local school context.

Targeted additional funding is provided to support students with disability through 2 streams, the Educational Adjustment Allocation and the Individual Disability Allocation, under the Student-Centred Funding Model.

The School of Special Education Needs has been successful in providing a range of services to staff and students, including non-government schools, on behaviour and engagement, disability, medical and mental health and sensory impairments.

■ Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

The Mental Health Co-Response (MHCR) service, established in 2018, is a partnership between the WA Police Force, Mental Health Commission and the Department of Health designed to improve responses where members of the public experience a mental health crisis. The access to a MHCR team has resulted in earlier intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system and has led to a reduction in hospital admissions and attendance at emergency departments.

The WA Disability Health Framework 2015–2025: Improving the health care of people with disability provides direction to WA Health and its partners on policy development and service delivery to achieve improved health outcomes for people with disability.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

South Australia is proud to have delivered a number of key achievements under the Strategy's 6 outcome areas between 2017 and 2021.

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

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*, under which 99 state authorities, including 31 government agencies and 68 local councils, established their own Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs), and committed to reporting annually on their progress in implementing actions under their DAIPs.

The first *Inclusive SA Annual Report 2019–20* was made publicly available on the Inclusive SA website. The report aims to raise awareness about disability and provide key resources for people with disability and the community.

In addition, South Australia has:

- Launched *Inclusive Play Guidelines* for accessible and inclusive playgrounds and play spaces.
- Introduced Henley Beach as South Australia's first totally accessible beach.
- Developed an event toolkit promoting accessible and inclusive practices in community events.
- Included universal design principles within projects identified through the State Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Plan and in the design of new national park facilities and experiences.
- Ran Autism SA's autism-friendly charter training and an Auslan course at the South Australian Museum.
- Upgraded the Adelaide Metro Public Transport website to be accredited by Vision Australia.
- Fitted all new buses with the next stop information system, supporting customers with visual impairment.
- Upgraded public transport premises to meet or exceed accessible requirements under the Premises Standards.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

Under the Strategy's Rights protection, justice and legislation outcome area, South Australia has:

- Redeveloped court facilities, including addressing access issues with the inclusion of accessible amenities.
- Established an across-government committee to oversee engagement with the Disability Royal Commission.
- Commenced providing support to adults with disability through the *Adult Safeguarding Unit*.

- Passed the *Disability Inclusion (Restrictive Practices—NDIS) Amendment Act 2021* (SA) to provide for a Restrictive Practices Authorisation Scheme in South Australia.
- Passed the *Evidence (Vulnerable Witnesses) Amendment Act 2020* (SA) allowing canine companions to accompany witnesses giving evidence in South Australia’s courts.
- Convened the *Safeguarding Taskforce* to examine and address gaps in oversight and safeguarding for people with disability.
- Established a Disability Information and Legal Assistance Unit to provide specialised information and legal advice.
- Created the role of *Disability Advocate* to identify and address systemic issues affecting people with disability.

Outcome 3 – Economic security

Under the Strategy’s Economic security outcome area, South Australia has:

- Launched the *SA Public Sector Disability Employment Strategy 2020–23* and associated plan and toolkit.
- Developed a Disability and Employment Practices Guideline to encourage employers to employ people with disability and to understand anti-discrimination laws.
- Implemented the Capacity Building Placement for People with Disability service, to enable people with disability to achieve and sustain employment in the open market.
- Ensured that 75% of new public housing incorporates universal design principles.

Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

Under the Strategy’s Personal and community support outcome area, South Australia has:

- introduced a functional needs resourcing model for children and students with disability in preschools and schools
- established a pilot program to assist eligible prisoners gain access to NDIS supports upon release into the community
- developed Return to Sport accessible communications to support people with disability to play sport within a COVID-19 environment
- increased the involvement of children with disability in sports and cultural activities by:
 - expanding the Sports Voucher program for children with disability
 - providing extra support for children with disability to participate in the VACSWIM water safety program
 - promoting the availability of arts programs for children with disability.

■ Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

Under the Strategy's Learning and skills outcome area, South Australia has:

- Provided opportunities for young people with disability to embark on training pathways through the Vocational Education and Training (VET) for School Students policy.
- Launched personalised learning plans (One Plan) in all public schools, with children with disability recognised as a priority population.
- Provided skills development to VET educators supporting their capability to work with students with mental health issues and disabilities.
- Expanded Learner Support Services to on-board a Registered Training Provider specialising in providing supports for Aboriginal VET students, including those with disability.

■ Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

Under the Strategy's Health and wellbeing outcome area, South Australia has:

- Implemented the Coordination and Assessment Team and Transition to Home Program to facilitate the timely discharge of people with disability from hospital.
- Supported the development and trialling of Health Liaison Officers, a NDIA initiative in South Australian public hospitals to provide direct communication links with the NDIA.
- Updated the Drug and Alcohol Services model of care for treatment services to encompass specialist skills in disability care.

TASMANIA

Accessible Island

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).

Accessible Island highlights are included below under the relevant outcome area.

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

- The new Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal premises opened in July 2020. Facilities include an accessible adult change facility, hearing loop facilities and a dog toileting area.
- The Parks and Wildlife Service, together with ParaQuad Tasmania, implemented a Ground-truth Project comparing online accessibility information with the on-the-ground reality, resulting in state-wide accessibility improvements.
- The Parks and Wildlife Service provided TrailRiders (all-terrain wheelchairs) for use at Cradle Mountain, Mount Field and Freycinet national parks, and a beach wheelchair on Maria Island.
- In 2021, Metro Tasmania completed an upgrade to all general access bus services vehicles with 100% now compliant with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).
- The Department of Premier and Cabinet distributed an e-Learning module to all agencies on the importance of accessible information.
- TasTAFE held 11 e-Learning sessions to assist staff develop accessible documents, with 106 employees attending.
- The Department of Treasury and Finance revised its Style Guide in September 2021, covering writing in Plain English, accessibility and instructions for creating online accessible documents, with an online training module also available.
- The Department of State Growth introduced a Workplace Adjustment Passport in 2018 to securely store employee adjustments, removing the need for employees to repeat requirements.
- Communities Tasmania introduced the Accessible Events Guidelines and Checklists to help organisations conduct events that are welcoming and accessible to people with disability.
- A Ministerial Disability Consultative Group, established in 2020, comprises members having lived experience of disability. The group has been consulted on the *Disability Services Act 2011* (Tas) review and the establishment of a Disability Commissioner.

- A review of the Transport Access Scheme resulted in administrative improvements to Disability Parking Permits and included providing an online tool for councils to address the misuse of cancelled permits.
- Arts Tasmania supported the creation of work involving people with disability as creative leaders, participants, and audience members, with one example being the all-abilities performance group Second Echo Ensemble.
- The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery opened a new children’s gallery called mapiya lumi | Around Here and hosted dedicated ‘sound down’ sessions for children with disability.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

- Tasmania Police updated its Police Manual with instructions to ensure that police practices are contemporary and increase the capacity of police to recognise, understand and respond appropriately and respectfully to people with disability.
- Tasmania Police improved its recording of the disability status of persons arrested and charged to ensure suitable adjustments are made, acknowledging that failure to recognise disability at the earliest point in the criminal justice process may cause disadvantage for that person.
- Tasmania Police added a training component to the Sergeants Qualifying Course on ‘Building Inclusive Teams’ that challenges biases and social awareness to highlight the barriers faced by diverse groups, including people with disability.
- The Tasmanian Government’s Witness Intermediary Scheme Pilot commenced on 1 March 2021 and includes adults with communication needs (other than linguistic diversity).
- The Tasmanian Prison Service issued a Director’s Standing Order in August 2020 to ensure prisoners with disability can, with reasonable adjustment and support, participate equally and without discrimination in all aspects of prison life.
- In partnership with key organisations, the Magistrates Court developed a Going to Court video detailing the experience for people with disability or with low, or no, literacy.
- The Tasmanian Electoral Commission’s ‘VI-Vote’ service enables people who are blind or have low vision to vote independently.

Outcome 3 – Economic security

- The Department of Treasury and Finance engaged disability employment service providers to identify candidates for a graduate vacancy targeted at diversity sub-groups including people with disability.
- The Department of State Growth conducted a ‘Disability – It’s Part of Our Diversity’ campaign for staff, with activities including a Human Library session on disability and screening of the ABC series *You Can’t Ask That*.
- The Department of Premier and Cabinet collaborated with Disability Employment Service Providers to employ 10 people with disability in the Tasmanian COVID-19 call centre.

- Multiple Tasmanian Government agencies partnered with JobAccess to provide support, advice and resources to become more inclusive of people with disability.
- Over 800 Department of Justice employees completed e-Learning modules in Disability Confident Workplaces, with new employees required to complete the module.

Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

- Communities Tasmania funded [Interpreter Training Scholarships](#) and included Auslan as one of the priority languages.
- Communities Tasmania released [Supporting Tasmanian Carers: Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021–24](#) in June 2021 to support the over 80,000 Tasmanians who provide support to family members and friends as unpaid informal carers.
- The State Service Management Office launched a [Carers Toolkit](#) to support carers in the Tasmanian State Service in October 2019.
- The Department of Health released [Rethink 2020](#), Tasmania’s state mental health plan, in December 2020 with a key focus on stigma reduction.

Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

- In 2021, Skills Tasmania funded the project Diversifying Disability Employment through the Training and Work Pathways Program to educate workplaces on how to attract, recruit and retain people with disability.
- TasTAFE has developed evidenced-based VET pathways for people with disability to improve employment opportunities by developing real skills for real jobs. Two students received [2021 Tasmanian Training Awards](#) and acknowledged the support of TasTAFE as contributing to their success.
- The Department of Education appointed Inclusion and Access Coordinators to work with schools to ensure students with disability have equitable access to learning, including through assistive technology, physical access and equipment, transport assistance and professional learning for staff.

Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

- The Department of Health worked closely with the disability service sector and key stakeholders to provide targeted information on COVID-19, including outbreak management and COVID-19 testing.
- The Department of Health stood-up additional support clinics across Tasmania to provide Tasmanians with disability the opportunity to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.
- The Department of Health established the [Disability Emergency Operations Centre](#) to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks and directly engage with people with disability, and the people and services who support them.
- Communities Tasmania provided advice and support to New Horizons in creating the Tasmanian Inclusive Sports Alliance, a gateway for people with disability and their carers to find out about and access sport and recreation opportunities.

- Communities Tasmania implemented a Sporting Competitions Access Fund to support athletes with disability to access sporting events.
- The Tasmanian Institute of Sport offers coaching scholarships to support athletes with disability.

Premier’s Disability Advisory Council

The Tasmanian Government continually seeks support and advice from the PDAC on key issues, including:

- Increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates for people with disability and identifying ways to overcome potential barriers to vaccination.
- Providing advice and ideas to TT-Line during the procurement of 2 new vessels to ensure they were accessible for people with disability (including upgrades to port facilities and surrounding transport options).
- Reviewing the Disability Employment Program and Register.
- Providing advice on accessibility issues regarding the Metro Tasmania online bus timetable.
- Providing advice and ideas to assist with a review of the Tasmanian Government Style Guide.
- Representation on the Hobart International and Launceston Airport disability consultative groups.

The Tasmanian Government has commenced planning for the next iteration of Accessible Island.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

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.

Housing accessibility

The ACT Government supported adoption of a minimum accessibility standard in housing through the [National Construction Code](#) in 2021 and is committed to implementing a minimum accessibility standard for houses built in the ACT.

ACT Disability Reference Group

The [ACT Disability Reference Group](#), comprising people with disability, advises ministers and the ACT Government on improving inclusion and accessibility in the ACT.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

The [ACT Disability Justice Strategy](#) aims to create equal access to justice for people with disability. It includes targeted actions focusing on 5 areas:

1. accessible information and communication
2. education and guidance to build capacity of justice agencies to support people with disability
3. improved screening and identification
4. better service delivery
5. data, research and review.

Examples of actions taken include development of a Disability Action and Inclusion Plan by ACT Corrective Services and creation of a community of practice of disability liaison officers working across the justice system to help people with disability navigate the system and to foster cultural change in justice organisations. See the [Disability Justice Strategy – Second Annual Progress Report](#).

The [Crimes \(Offences Against Vulnerable People\) Legislation Amendment Act 2020 \(ACT\)](#) introduced laws making it a criminal offence to abuse or neglect a vulnerable person, and for a person in authority to fail to protect a vulnerable person in their care.

The ACT Human Rights Commission introduced a [new complaints process](#) in 2019, enabling vulnerable people, carers, family members or others to make a complaint about any person or service provider who is putting a vulnerable person at risk of, or causing, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Legislation amendments passed in 2018 enabled better access by the Official Visitors for Disability Services (OVDS) operating as part of the [ACT Official Visitor Scheme](#) to monitor and investigate the welfare of potentially vulnerable persons living in visitable places.

■ Outcome 3 – Economic security

The ACT Government has implemented initiatives to support the employment of people with disability in the ACT Public Service (ACTPS), including:

- A dedicated Graduate Program positions for people with disability.
- The People with Disability Employment Framework.
- The ACTPS Reasonable Adjustment Policy.
- A commitment to mentoring, career development and leadership programs for staff with disability.

The ACT Inclusion Council implements a range of projects aimed at improving accessible housing and employment opportunities for people with disability, including the 2017 to 2019 Inclusion in Employment project.

■ Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

The ACT Government has committed to providing ongoing funding for individual and systemic advocacy services to promote the rights of people with disability and foster inclusive communities.

The ACT Government has demonstrated its commitment to the NDIS by investing \$580.3 million over 4 financial years, and by advocating for and improving outcomes for people with disability accessing the NDIS.

The ACT Government established the Integrated Service Response Program to provide short-term coordination support for people with disability and high and/or complex needs to resolve crises and highly complex situations.

■ Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

The Public School Infrastructure Upgrade program invested \$3.756 million in capital works supporting students with disability by improving access to buildings and creating facilities for learning support, withdrawal spaces, sensory gardens and accessible toilet facilities.

The Future of Education Strategy, launched in 2018, maps the ACT's education strategy for the next 10 years and its commitment to work with people with disability to create education underpinned by inclusion and equity. An information paper, Inclusive Education for Children and Young People with Disability in ACT Public Schools, provides detail on work undertaken, and to guide future work.

The Everyone Everyday teaching program develops social awareness and social management skills to foster inclusive attitudes and behaviours in the classroom, from kindergarten to Year 8. The program includes professional learning opportunities, including 'Transforming Thinking for Inclusion', which provides insight into disability and inclusion and equips educators with tools to teach and model inclusive attitudes and behaviours.

■ Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

The ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy provided a suite of supports to people with disability, their families, carers and the disability sector through the COVID-19 pandemic. This included distributing Personal Protective Equipment and Rapid Antigen Tests at no cost to people with disability and their supporters; targeted accessible communication strategies; and Respite Effect and Recovery Grants to support people with disability, their families and carers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 – An ACT Operational Plan for People with Disability complements the Australian Government's Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability by outlining actions and responsibilities of the ACT health system, specialised disability services and people with disability and their formal and informal supports in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

December 2021 saw the release of the first scoping phase of the ACT Disability Health Strategy.



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.

Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

The Northern Territory has increased mobility access to parks through a new visitor centre at the George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, the Baawei viewing platform at Nitmiluk National Park and the roll-out of disability-compliant park furniture and toilets.

Public transport is essential to supporting inclusive and accessible communities. All Northern Territory urban bus fleets are compliant with the disability standards and over 40 disability compliant bus stops and shelters have been upgraded and installed since 2019. A free bus service for mobility-impaired seniors is provided to access nearby hospitals and medical centres, and work is under way to increase wheelchair-accessible taxi services.

In May 2021, the Northern Territory agreed to include accessibility provisions for new residential housing and apartments in the National Construction Code 2022. Dwellings should be designed to achieve silver standards of the Livable Housing Design Guidelines (2017) and meet the requirements of AS 4299, the Adaptable Housing Standard.

The Northern Territory aims to ensure people with disability find it easier to reach people, know what is happening and participate in community by implementing the [Northern Territory Digital Territory Strategy](#). Connectivity in rural and remote communities has been increased and a range of customer digital services improved.

Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

The Northern Territory commenced a review of the *Disability Services Act 1993* (NT) to ensure the legislation reflects current government policies and protects the rights of people with disability.

The Northern Territory's [Talk Up](#) initiative continues to promote the rights of service users and their families to raise worries and concerns in a safe and protected way, and to ensure people with disability feel confident that they can protect themselves from potential abuse and neglect.

Outcome 3 – Economic security

The Northern Territory consulted with stakeholders, young people with disability and their families to develop the *A Planning Guide for Youth People with Disability in Alice Springs: Exploring Post School Options* booklet. This resource assists with planning for post-school options in the workforce or related activities.

The Northern Territory Government launched the Disability Employment Program in 2021. The program focuses on long-term employment for participants, job matching, aligning abilities to workforce requirements and providing foundational learning options to allow career progression. In addition, the Disability Confidence Suite of Learning is recommended training for public servants to ensure the Northern Territory has a disability-confident workforce.

The Pathways out of Homelessness: Northern Territory Homelessness Strategy 2018–23 is being implemented and will realign the Northern Territory's homelessness system and improve outcomes for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including people with disability.

■ Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

The Northern Territory Disability Advisory Committee, established in 2019, provides a forum for advice to the Minister for Disabilities on issues impacting the lives of people with disability and their interactions with government services. Committee membership reflects the diversity of people with disability in the Northern Territory, including people from remote regions, Aboriginal people and young people.

The Disability and Development Team was established to ensure children and young people have access to appropriate supports and funding to complete daily activities, participate in their community and reach their goals. The team is instrumental in supporting children in out-of-home care to access specialist assessment services; strengthen understanding and knowledge of disability support services; and support transition from out-of-home care to independence and becoming an active member of the community.

The Northern Territory continues to provide Auslan sign language classes to families and staff of children who use signing as their main mode of communication. During the pandemic, these have mainly been held online.

■ Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

The Northern Territory has begun implementing the 10-year Framework for Inclusion and Action Plan. This includes:

- establishing the Building Collaborative Capacity project in 3 school networks to increase teachers' skills and capacity to support students with disability in mainstream classrooms
- delivering infrastructure works to 42 schools as part of the Building for Inclusion program
- enlarging the Teaching and Allied Health team to provide additional supports in language and communication, speech pathology and occupational therapy.

■ Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

The Healthy Under 5 Kids Partnering with Families Program provides a developmental assessment tool to empower families and service providers to identify developmental delay and enhance their awareness of the signs of neurodevelopmental impairment. The program is implemented across primary health care clinics in remote and urban communities in the Northern Territory and complements the developmental screening undertaken by the Families as First Teachers Program. A Hearing Health program also provides ear health and hygiene messaging in the Families as First Teachers Program.

A Hearing for Learning Initiative operates in 10 Aboriginal communities to promote hearing checks by trained Community Hearing Workers. The Department of Health has entered into a joint venture with the Menzies School of Health Research, the Australian Government and the Balnaves Foundation to research the Hearing for Learning Initiative.



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 4 jurisdictions, local governments are required by legislation to develop Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (disability plans) and report on progress to their State Governments. In Western Australia, disability plans have been mandatory for councils since 1995 under the *Disability Service Act 1993 (WA)*. Victorian councils have been required to produce disability plans since 2006. These plans focus specifically on the needs of people with disability. Since the commencement of the Strategy, councils in New South Wales, under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)*, and South Australia, under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA)*, have been required to produce disability plans.

In jurisdictions where disability plans are not mandatory, local governments often voluntarily develop plans or include disability planning in social inclusion or equal access plans. In Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory, disability plans are not mandated. However, there are excellent examples of councils in these jurisdictions preparing comprehensive disability plans.

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. It has also drawn councils' attention to developments in disability policy, such as access to premises regulations.

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. This is a tangible outcome of the Strategy. The Guide has been a valuable resource for councils across Australia, not only assisting councils to respond to the requirements of state, territory and federal legislation and policy, but also proactively addressing cultural change in relation to disability issues, as encouraged by the Strategy.

The Guide provides councils with the tools they need to set priorities and goals in partnership with their communities. It contains case studies, templates, checklists and information for councils either to prepare their first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, or to update an existing plan.

Some examples of council initiatives are included below.

New South Wales councils

Since disability plans were mandated in 2014, councils in NSW have launched a number of initiatives, including:

- The roll-out of the adult changing facility program in 11 councils across the State.
- Port Macquarie–Hastings Council's installation of an [accessible fishing platform](#) with accessible toilet facilities and carpark with a linking footpath.
- Waverley Council's [Access Bondi](#) project, which includes beach wheelchair access, beach matting, accessible storage and shower facilities and an accessible booking system.
- Penrith City, Hawkesbury Shire and Blue Mountains City Councils working together on [Nepean Jobs For All](#), a joint project to encourage businesses to employ people with disability.

Victorian councils

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.

Banyule City Council has developed an [Inclusive Employment Program](#), the first of its kind within local government, to support local people experiencing barriers to employment. This initiative provides a 6-month paid job opportunity with the council, tailored to an individual's areas of interest, goals, strengths and ability. While they gain local government experience, participants also have access to tailored coaching and development opportunities to help build their core skills for work and networks. This program has won a number of awards.

Queensland councils

Brisbane City Council has 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.

The [Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019–2041](#) provides a long-term framework for how the council and community will work together to advance the shared goal of a strong community. Principles underpinning council's commitment to access and inclusion are equity, respect, dignity and participation.

Western Australian councils

In WA, where the development of disability plans has been mandatory since 1995 under the *Disability Service Act 1993* (WA), councils are producing their third, fourth and fifth plans. The WA Local Government Association continues to work with Local Governments to support them to develop and implement disability plan outcomes and initiatives. For example:

- This Bay Is Someone's Day is a unique public awareness campaign to reduce the misuse of accessible parking bays. Delivered in partnership with 30 Local Government authorities and 10 private sector partners, a broad community awareness campaign highlighted what accessible parking bays mean to permit holders. The parking bays now feature eye-catching art installations and personal stories.
- Shire of Nannup all-abilities cycling and hiking trails have opened across the south-west in recent years, diversifying local tourism economies and offering healthy and nature-based activities for all.
- The City of Fremantle's 'Leighton for All' Community Beach Participation Project was a partnership between council and local organisations to obtain a \$50,000 grant to improve beach access and to support local clubs in their endeavours to provide more accessible events and services. The grant enabled the purchase of products including beach matting, a beach wheelchair, a beach walker and 2 sensory tents for events.

South Australian councils

In 2020, the Local Government Association supported South Australian councils to develop their legislated disability plans, which must set out measures to ensure people with disability can access mainstream supports and services and include strategies to support people with disability.

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 plan was launched in several formats and Communication Access Boards were developed with the reference group and Two Way Street, a company which provides communication solutions for children and adults with complex communication needs.

The disability plan has already led to the inclusive design of 3 sporting clubs, installation of 2 Changing Places toilets, reduced fees for disability service providers to use community facilities, Fair Treatment training for all staff, and an audit of several council facilities and leased buildings to assess universal design compliance.

Adelaide Hills Council has developed a comprehensive Access and Inclusion Plan 2020–24 – A brighter future for all. Adelaide Hills Council was one of 6 participating councils to train staff in universal design principles. Those same 6 councils conducted guided access audits of many facilities and gathered best-practice examples.

One of Adelaide Hills Council's major projects was the redevelopment of Council's FABRIK Arts & Heritage Hub to make it accessible to all.

Tasmanian councils

Although councils in Tasmania are not mandated to develop disability plans, the City of Clarence has a comprehensive Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021–2025. Additionally, its Disability Access Advisory Committee, established in 1995, continues to be responsible for a range of projects to improve access, services and infrastructure for people with disability.

Northern Territory councils

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 disabilities and other access challenges to engage with Council and access all areas of the organisation's operations.



DATA SOURCES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over the last 5 years, key contributors completed various reviews and reports on the Strategy. 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. Disability Representative Organisations, in their role to provide systemic advocacy and representation for Australians with disability, had a key part in this process. These reviews and reports provide additional information that complements this Final Progress Report.

Key reviews and inquiries

The [Senate Inquiry report](#) into the delivery of outcomes under the Strategy to build inclusive and accessible communities. The Senate Community Affairs References Committee heard from the disability community that while support for the Strategy was high, issues on consultation and coordination had a negative impact on the effectiveness of the Strategy.¹

The [Social Policy Research Centre's independent review](#) of the implementation of the Strategy. While Disability Representative Organisations consulted in this review supported the Strategy, they advised implementation had been uneven and a consistent, systematic approach to implementation across Australia had been absent. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly critical of Strategy implementation processes and outcomes.²

The [Productivity Commission Review](#) of the National Disability Agreement (NDA). The Commission laid out a proposed model to improve effectiveness of the NDA and the Strategy, particularly in an environment where the NDIS is operational. It emphasised the importance of embedding genuine consultation and engagement processes with all relevant stakeholders.³

The Disability Royal Commission's public hearings and [Interim report](#). The Disability Royal Commission has outlined the importance of improving safety, rights, attitudes, access and inclusion.⁴

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](#) and the Civil Society Shadow Report to the Committee and the Committee's [Concluding Observations](#).

Disability representative organisations produced a Civil Society Shadow Report, [Disability Rights Now 2019](#). This report noted positive reforms, particularly the implementation of the NDIS and establishment of the Disability Royal Commission. It set out a number of issues raised in the previous Shadow Report that still needed to be addressed. More than 80 organisations endorsed the report, which incorporates the views of over 1,000 people with disability who responded to a survey.

Disability data reports

In 2018, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducted the [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers](#), the most comprehensive source of disability survey data in Australia. Data from the survey informed progress against key targets under the Strategy and continues to inform the baseline indicators for *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031*.

In 2021, the ABS conducted the [Census of Population and Housing](#) (Census). The Census collected information about people's need for assistance and information from those who provided care in the last 2 weeks. The ABS consulted with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that the 2021 forms and supporting materials were accessible for people with disability. Data from the Census will help service providers and governments plan what local facilities, services and support are required for people with disability and carers in Australia, with the results to be released in stages from June 2022 to mid-2023.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released its [People with Disability in Australia](#) web report on 3 September 2019 and updated it in 2020. The report consolidated much of the available data into one report and highlighted key data gaps as guidance for future data improvement. The report showed that some people with disability routinely face challenges in participating in everyday activities of life, such as employment.⁵

NDIA [annual reports](#) show how the number of participants with approved NDIS plans has increased over time. As of 30 June 2021, after 3 years of trial, participants increased from around 30,000 to 466,619.⁶ Many participants received supports for the first time.

Some states and territories provided reports on their own [disability plans](#).

Community engagement

The views of people with disability, their families and carers, and their representative organisations provide valuable insight into progress made and where further effort is needed, and on how consultations and implementation need to improve.

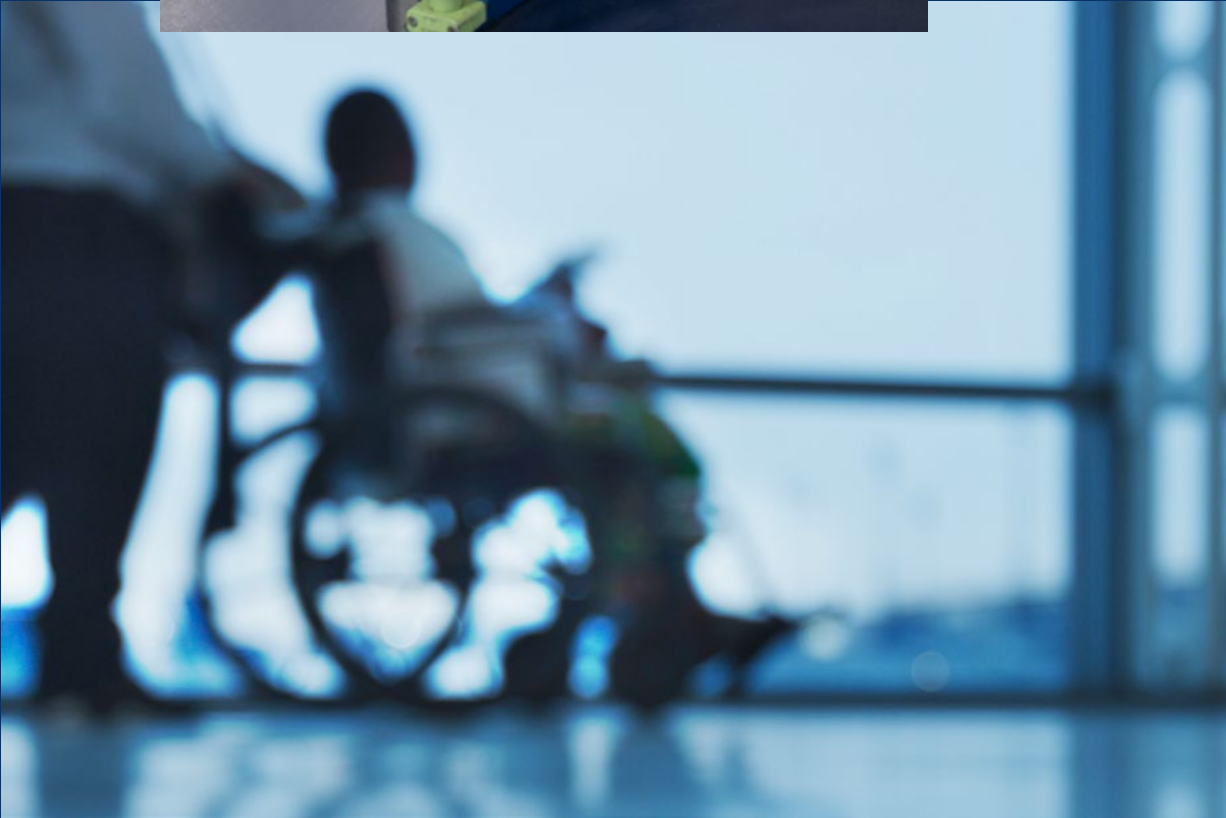
The Australian Government funds [National Disability Representative Organisations](#) to provide advice on how policies and programs will affect the lives and experiences of people with disability. These organisations provide the perspectives of the people with disability they represent.

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.

The Stage One consultation report, [Right to opportunity](#), outlining consultations held in 2019, was released in December 2019. In 2020, the second round of public consultations involved a public submission process on the National Disability Strategy position paper; targeted focus groups directly with specific cohorts of people with disability; cross-sector collaborative workshops; a series of dedicated workshops with disability representative organisations; and a webinar. There was also a separate public submissions process on the proposed Outcomes Framework for Australia's Disability Strategy. The [Stage 2 consultation reports](#) were released in May 2021.

The voice of people with disability guided development of Australia's Disability Strategy, particularly the National Disability Strategy Reform Steering Group, which provided advice during the development of Australia's Disability Strategy. Based on this input the policy priorities of Australia's Disability Strategy focus on delivering the changes needed to deliver an inclusive Australian society, with a stronger focus on implementation and improved reporting and accountability.



LOOKING FORWARD



Creating
an inclusive
community
together

This 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.

Australia's Disability Strategy will:

- Provide national leadership towards greater inclusion of people with disability.
- Guide activity across all areas of public policy to be inclusive and responsive to people with disability.
- Drive mainstream services and systems to improve outcomes for people with disability.
- Engage, inform and involve the whole community in achieving a more inclusive society.

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. This includes measuring the contribution key systems such as health care, housing, education and employment are making to achieve outcomes. It also tracks the changes in outcomes over time for people with disability.

Improving data to track progress against the Outcomes Framework will support evaluations and policy development, and will lead to improved outcomes for people with disability. As part of improving reporting, the Australian Government and state and territory governments are working together to develop a National Disability Data Asset (NDDA). The linked and shared data will provide a better understanding of how people with disability are supported through services, payments and programs across multiple service systems. The NDDA pilot commenced in April 2020.

Engagement Plan – outlines how people with disability will be involved in implementing Australia’s Disability Strategy over its term. This includes having a role in monitoring and reporting on its progress. The features of the Engagement Plan will give people with disability ways to influence the future direction of the policies and services that affect their lives.

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. The 5 Targeted Action Plans launched with Australia’s Disability Strategy focus on improving employment, community attitudes, early childhood, safety and emergency management.

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. Associated Plans were introduced to provide a more coordinated, long-term approach to how governments work to improve outcomes for people with disability.

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](#).

REFERENCES

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