

03 Disability Services

SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS

706

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

WHO HAD AT LEAST ONE STAY DURING 2021–2022 WITH THE DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMMODATION AND RESPITE SUPPORT SERVICES

3,070

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY

ASSISTED BY THE ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL TEAM (ART) TO ACCESS THE NDIS

86,852

CLEARANCES FOR PEOPLE TO COMMENCE WORK IN NDIS ROLES THROUGHOUT QUEENSLAND

232

ORGANISATIONS WERE IN-SCOPE OF INDEPENDENT AUDITS

RELATED TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE HUMAN SERVICES QUALITY FRAMEWORK

DELIVERED DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES

IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY BY:

- **PROMOTING** INCLUSION AND ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
- **INCREASING** ENGAGEMENT THROUGH CO-DESIGN
- **INFLUENCING** SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES
- **FOSTERING** SAFE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Strategic Overview

The department improves social and economic outcomes of people with disability through the delivery of quality accommodation support and respite services, access to opportunities provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and by contributing to systems that safeguard and protect the rights of people with disability.

NDIS Full Scheme Agreement and participation

The department continues to work with the Commonwealth Government to ensure equitable access to the NDIS for all eligible Queenslanders. It also chairs a Queensland Government inter-departmental oversight committee, which monitors the ongoing implementation of the NDIS in Queensland and other priority matters relating to disability reform.

The department is working with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to grow the NDIS market in areas where it has not developed as expected, and to identify opportunities for growth in the local workforce.

The department receives complaints and concerns by NDIS participants about NDIS issues impacting them, including plan funding and approval of necessary supports, and provider service delivery. The department ensures that NDIS concerns are escalated to the NDIA or the NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission for necessary action. This includes identifying potential systemic issues affecting Queensland NDIS participants.

Through this work, and our relationship with funded advocacy services and peak bodies, the department monitors systemic issues impacting participants, families and guardians and escalates concerns through the relevant governance mechanisms, including the national Disability Reform Ministers Meeting.

The Disability Connect and Outreach Program (DCOP) has continued to deliver a suite of projects to increase NDIS participation in Queensland. This included the Assessment and Referral Team (ART) work to assist 3,070 Queenslanders with disability to access the NDIS since February 2020. The total value in NDIS plans for the 2,867 people supported by ART who already have a NDIS plan in place is almost \$332 million. More than 43 per cent of these people had previously tried to access the NDIS but were unsuccessful.

The department continued to partner with the Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) to provide assertive outreach services to vulnerable Queenslanders who are hard to reach and often experience multiple layers of disadvantage. The Targeted Outreach Project (TOP) worked to build trusting and positive relationships with clients, and provide referrals to ART for assistance to apply to the NDIS. Over the course of the project almost 18 per cent of all referrals made to ART were from the TOP.

DCOP delivered the First Nations NDIS Business Development Seminar Series, which included online and in-person seminars to 131 people across the state. The seminars provided business intelligence and advice about NDIS business development opportunities for existing or potential First Nations providers who are considering entering the NDIS market.

DCOP has also commissioned research to better understand the barriers and enablers of NDIS plan utilisation in Queensland for First Nations participants and those living in rural and remote areas. Once finalised, the findings from this research will contribute to a wider study seeking to understand the factors influencing plan utilisation across Australia.

In this reporting period, over 20,000 Queenslanders with disability received a plan of funded NDIS supports, with 96 per cent receiving funded disability services for the first time.

Key achievements

During the reporting period, the department:

- completed 86,852 worker screening clearances through the new NDIS Worker Screening system
- prevented 289 high-risk individuals from working with people with a disability through screening processes in Queensland
- assessed, and where necessary, referred 218 complaints about NDIS-related matters to the NDIA and/or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, or another relevant entity
- continued to work with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission to support service providers with the requirements of the co-regulatory system, ensuring robust safeguards for authorisation and use of restrictive practices
- managed the short-term approval of restrictive practices in accordance with the *Disability Services Act 2006* and supported the safety and wellbeing of people with disability through the development of positive behaviour support plans
- safeguarded the human rights of vulnerable adults with cognitive or intellectual disability by ensuring that appropriate authorisations were in place for the use of restrictive practices. The department received 572 applications for short-term approval of the use of restrictive practices from service providers, and 344 of these applications were approved.

Representing the views and interests of Queenslanders with disability

As the lead agency supporting the shareholding Minister for the NDIS in Queensland, the department worked to ensure the views and interests of people with disability and the disability sector were at the forefront of relevant inquiries and inter-governmental negotiations processes.

One of the ways the department obtains the views of people with disability is through the Queensland Disability Advisory Council (QDAC).

The Disability Reform Ministers Meeting (DRMM) was established after National Cabinet endorsed the report of the Review of Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Councils and Ministerial Forums on 23 October 2020.

The DRMM was created to continue to provide a forum for Ministers to drive national reforms in disability policy. The department supports the Honourable Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, to represent Queensland's interests at the DRMM.

Key achievements

During the reporting period, the department:

- actively sought the views of people with lived experience of disability by convening meetings of the QDAC to provide advice to the Minister and department
- contributed to submissions for key inquiry processes, such as the Queensland Parliament Health and Environment Committee's Inquiry into the provision of primary, allied and private health care, aged care and NDIS care services and its impact on the Queensland public health system
- continued to contribute to the Queensland Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure Queenslanders with disability continued to receive critical health and disability supports
- ensured the interests of Queenslanders were represented in considerations regarding the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability through DRMM
- championed the interests of Queenslanders through the development of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031*, which was released on 3 December 2021—the International Day of People with Disability.

The department continued to support the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services to work with Disability Reform Ministers to advocate for improvements under the NDIS to ensure Queenslanders with disability can access the supports they need. This included supporting the independent review of the NDIA forecasting model and drivers of scheme costs in an effort to better understand scheme sustainability. The department supports the Minister to ensure discussions about financial sustainability are balanced by consideration of the wide-ranging benefits of the scheme, such as improved outcomes for participants and the broader community.

The department also led the Queensland Government response to the Queensland Productivity Commission's (QPC) inquiry into the NDIS market in Queensland, which was released in October 2021 along with the final report. The QPC final report and the Queensland Government response are valuable resources in working to ensure the state's annual \$2 billion investment in the NDIS results in improved outcomes for Queensland NDIS participants, as well as realising the potential for job creation, economic stimulation in regional locations and workforce and skills development.

The department is working with other Queensland Government agencies to implement recommendations for which the Queensland Government is responsible. The department is also advocating to other NDIS governing partners to highlight the findings and recommendations.

Improve the wellbeing of individuals requiring disability services

The department is developing the next state disability plan, supported by Queensland Government agencies Disability Service Plans. The plan will be the primary mechanism to give effect to Queensland's commitments under *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031*.

Peak and Advocacy Services

During 2021-2022, the department provided \$3.9 million to extend funding to nine disability peak organisations to maintain ongoing service delivery to support people with disability during the reporting period. This funding enabled the peak and representative bodies to provide:

- information and referral services for people from specific cohorts with disability
- opportunities for greater community and economic engagement for people with disability
- capacity-building initiatives across the disability sector.

The department also completed an open grant round process to allocate \$4.2 million over three years to nine organisations, commencing from 1 July 2022, under the Disability Peaks and Representative Bodies—Inclusion Program.

In 2021-2022 the department provided:

- \$2.1 million and a six-month extension of funding to 14 existing advocacy organisations while an open grants round process was finalised to allocate funding under the new Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (QDAP)
- \$6 million to 11 organisations to deliver advocacy services to Queenslanders with disability under QDAP for the period 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In the first six months of QDAP service provision (1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022), 10,175 hours of advocacy service were provided to 2,837 service users.

Safeguards

The department has maintained a program of service quality audits under the *Human Services Quality Framework* (the Framework). The Framework provides the quality assurance and safeguarding framework for 372 human services organisations funded by five Queensland Government departments.

The Framework includes a set of standards and assesses the quality of service delivery to clients through independent audits, self-assessment and recognition of other accreditation. In 2021–2022, 232 organisations were required to demonstrate the quality of their service delivery through independent audits, which are completed every 18 months.

Key achievements

During the reporting period, the department:

- developed and implemented the Queensland Disability Advocacy Program delivering individual advocacy services state-wide for people with disability, their family members and carers that support them
- undertook a co-design process with a working party comprised of people with lived experience of disability to develop the next state disability plan
- redesigned the peak body funding arrangements and conducted an open grant process to fund organisations to deliver state-wide services to support the inclusion of people with disability.

During the reporting period, the department's Accommodation Support and Respite Services:

- provided in-home accommodation support to 479 clients, and 266 clients accessed respite services
- maintained its certification status against the Human Services Quality Standards
- provided 706 accommodation and respite supports to clients that contribute to the goals in their NDIS plans
- supported 35 clients over 65 years of age to access specialist allied health supports to enable them to continue to live independently
- facilitated access to comprehensive annual health plans for 433 clients
- ensured that 91 per cent of Accommodation Support and Respite Services' clients had comprehensive annual health plans during 2021–2022
- achieved 89 per cent satisfaction by families and guardians with the quality of services.

Provision of disability supports outside of the NDIS

Under the Queensland Government's mandate for the continuity of services, Accommodation Support and Respite Services in conjunction with Queensland Health, provides accommodation and coordination of ongoing specialist disability supports for clients aged over 65 years.

During 2021-2022 Disability Accommodation, Respite and Forensic Services administered funding to 17 previous Disability Services' clients aged under 65 years, and who were deemed ineligible under the NDIS, to

ensure individuals were supported to achieve similar outcomes to those they were achieving prior to the introduction of the NDIS.

Forensic Disability Service

The Forensic Disability Service is a medium secure 10-bed facility at Wacol for the involuntary detention and care of people who have been found unfit to stand trial as a result of an intellectual or cognitive disability. The facility is operated by the department with oversight from the Director of Forensic Disability.

Key achievements

During the reporting period, the department:

- supported the successful transition of two clients from the Forensic Disability Service
- supported the participation of Forensic Disability Service clients in 590 Limited Community Treatment events in line with the conditions of their Forensic Order and assessed risk
- implemented the restructure of the Forensic Disability Service, providing a new suite of treatment programs and model of care.

Our Performance—Disability services

Service standards	Notes	2021–2022 Target/Est.	2021–2022 Actual
<i>Effectiveness measures</i>			
Percentage of approved accommodation support places used for people with disability	1,2,3	80%	93%
Number of people with disability receiving departmental accommodation and support services	4,5	762	706

Notes:

1. This service standard was previously presented as a measure of efficiency in the 2021–2022 SDS and has been reclassified as a measure of effectiveness as required by the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework policy, as it is measuring the utilisation of the service rather than efficiency.
 2. The wording of this service standard has been amended from the 2021–2022 SDS to clarify that it relates to people with disability.
 3. The variance between the 2021–2022 Target/Estimate and the 2021–2022 Actual is due to more clients electing to stay in Accommodation Support and Respite Services' (AS&RS) supported houses than anticipated. This figure is based on the overall clients supported during the year and (includes those who exited during 2021–2022).
 4. As a result of the review of the department's program structure, this service standard has been discontinued.
 5. The variance between the 2021–2022 Target/Estimate and 2021–2022 Actual reflects a significant decline in respite use due to COVID-19 impacts.
- Strategic Plan Performance measure: Percentage of funded services that meet the needs of people with disability. Following a review of the Disability Services Program, this measure has been discontinued.
 - Strategic Plan Performance measure: Satisfaction of industry partners with their engagement with the department. Following a review of the Disability Services Program, this measure has been discontinued.
 - Strategic Plan Performance measure: Increase in satisfaction with the effectiveness of the Human Services Quality Framework. Following a review of the Disability Services Program, this measure has been discontinued.

Future directions

Promote inclusion and access to programs and services, by:

- implementing commitments under *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* through the next state disability plan
- ensuring the voices of Queenslanders with disability are heard, and people with disability have access to employment opportunities and are supported to participate fully in their communities, by funding disability advocacy organisations and peak and representative organisations, and supporting the QDAC

- actively monitoring the performance of the NDIS in Queensland, and advocating for policy and operational changes, to ensure Queenslanders with disability can access the services and supports they need
- working with Queensland Health to continue to develop an improved service delivery model for forensic disability services in Queensland
- working with strategic partners, including disability and seniors service providers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to prepare for, respond to, and recover from pandemic and other disaster events.

Increase engagement through co-design, by:

- demonstrating commitment to the co-design of new departmental policies and programs with seniors, people with disability and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- providing a voice to government and mechanism for co-design through maintaining the Ministerial Advisory Councils on disability and carers.

Influence social and economic outcomes, by:

- supporting social and economic outcomes for Queensland NDIS participants by examining and reporting on plan utilisation and advocating for action on systemic issues
- delivering initiatives that help build the capacity of individuals and small businesses to provide NDIS services and related jobs within Queensland, including remote communities
- supporting the growth of employment opportunities in the disability care and support sector through the administration of an efficient disability worker screening system.

Foster safe and connected communities, by:

- safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people with disability by undertaking disability worker screening, preparing positive behaviour support plans and assessing the short-term use of restrictive practices
- supporting the implementation of the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*, and the strategies within *Queensland's Framework for Action — Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence*, and *Queensland's Plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with disability*.