

# THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 22 Oct 2021

Contact us: 1800 700 600

## Message from the CEO

Welcome to the September-October edition of The Advocate.

### Celebrating Seniors

October is Seniors Month, and this year we celebrated with the launch of our Queensland Seniors Calendar for 2022.

You may recall our Queensland Seniors Diary. This year we have produced a Calendar which includes key contact points for support and services available to older Queenslanders and information to help them understand their rights.



Now more than ever it's important older people know how they can reach out for support and stay connected.

The calendar is free of charge. [Contact us](#) to find out where you can collect a copy or to arrange a supply for your senior clients or network groups.

Our advocates have also been out and about at many events and expos for Seniors Month talking directly with older Queenslanders about their needs and challenges and exchanging a story or two.

### Welcome to new Board member

I am delighted to welcome Professor John Devereux to the ADA Australia Board of Directors. John is Professor of Law at the University of Queensland. He is a Barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia and is also currently serving on the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. John brings a wealth of expertise in health law and ensuring fairness and natural justice across social services. I would like to extend a warm welcome and look forward to working together.

### Good practice

ADA Law, our specialist community legal service, recently underwent its first audit and successfully received certification against the National Accreditation Scheme (NAS). The NAS is an industry-based certification process for community legal centres which supports and recognises good service delivery practice, and a quality assurance process which ensures that Community Legal Centres are operating according to good practice and industry standards.

ADA Law provide legal advice, representation and advocacy with guardianship and administration matters, including support before the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT); and enduring powers of attorney and advance health directives. Call 1800 232 529 or visit [www.adalaw.com.au](http://www.adalaw.com.au)

### Elder Abuse Awareness campaign new video

Do you know where the line is? Our partnership with Griffith University on raising awareness of financial elder abuse and acting appropriately as an enduring power of attorney continued with the launch of a new video. The video [Be Aware of Financial Elder Abuse. Stay in Control of Your Life](#). was released via a social media campaign on 1 October, International Day of Older Persons.

### Aged care reform

We are pleased to see that implementation of aged care reform measures announced in the 2021-22 Federal Budget is underway.

- *\$94 million additional investment in aged care advocacy* – six new advocates have joined ADA Australia.
- *Council of Elders* – nominations have now closed for the first ever [Council of Elders](#) to represent the views and experiences of older Australians in the aged care reform process. While the Council will have only ten members, this is a great step. Older people having a seat at the table to have a say on what they need from aged care is long overdue.
- *Legislation changes for restrictive practices in aged care* – from 1 September providers will now need to put a Behaviour Support Plan in place for anyone that needs behaviour support; where the use of a restrictive practice has been assessed as necessary or where a restrictive practice is being used. An important part of ensuring restrictive practices are used only when absolutely clinically necessary.

- *A new rights-based Act for aged care* – work has commenced on a new Aged Care Act based on human rights. This work is expected to take time and we are expecting opportunities for consultation. Getting this right will be critical to developing a new aged care system that's built around the needs, goals and preferences of the older person.

Increased funding is one part of the aged care equation, but it's also about culture and attitudes to ageing and about good service design. A human-rights based approach will support dignity, choice, freedom, independence and quality of life, which is what we know older Australians in aged care want.

In September I had the pleasure of providing a keynote address at the [Brisbane North Annual Aged Care Forum](#), where I talked about the conundrum of human rights in aged care. Currently, older people must fit into the system, rather than the system being centred around the older person and empowering them. Now is the chance for us to build an experience of aged care we can all look forward to – the baby boomers are coming!

On a final note, in recognition of **Carers Week**, just past, I would like to acknowledge and thank all the carers out there who provide outstanding care and support to their loved ones.

Go well. Until next time.

Geoff Rowe

## Meet the newest member of our Board

### John Devereux

John Devereux is Professor of Law at the University of Queensland. He is a Barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia. A Rhodes Scholar, John has degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Queensland, and a Doctorate of Philosophy of Law from Magdalen College, Oxford.

John has spent the last 30 years working in different areas of law, with a special focus on health law. As a Law Reform Commissioner for Queensland, a member of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal and the Assistant Commissioner (Legal) of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission. He currently serves on the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. John has taught medical law at Universities in Australia and abroad. His book *Australian Medical Law* is in its third edition. He recently co-authored a book for Cambridge University Press, *Health Law: Frameworks and Context*.



## Get your copy of the Seniors Calendar 2022

On Friday 1 October, we kicked off our Seniors Month celebrations with the launch of the Queensland Seniors Calendar with the Honourable Craig Crawford, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services, and members of the seniors social program at the MultiLink Community Services centre in Logan.

The calendar features iconic Queensland landscapes and is a handy reference guide to support and services available to older Queenslanders.

The calendar is free of charge. [Contact us](#) to find out where you can collect a copy or to arrange a supply for your senior clients or network groups.



# Meet Liza Watkins your Aged Care Navigator

How does aged care work? What support is available to help me stay at home? How do I apply? Can I afford it?

These are some of the questions we know older people and their families have when it comes to aged care. ADA Australia is your aged care navigator in the Wide Bay and South Brisbane regions.

Liza has recently joined the ADA team, based in Hervey Bay, and is available to help older people and their families make their way through the aged care system:

- understand how the system works and the types of support available
- contact My Aged Care
- apply and get an assessment, including help filling in forms
- find organisations who can deliver services in your area.

Referrals from service providers are welcome. Call Liza on 1800 700 600.



## Financial Elder Abuse Do you know where the line is?



Preventing and responding to Elder Abuse is everyone's responsibility. Elder Abuse can be difficult to navigate. The situation can be unclear and most often involves people the older person is close to.

Visit the ADA Law website to find information and resources to help you recognise elder abuse, raise it and refer for help.

[Find out more >>](#)

## TOP Locations

### Need help to access the NDIS?

The Targeted Outreach Project (TOP) is now helping people access the NDIS in:



- Townsville
- Cairns (including Mareeba, Cassowary Coast, Douglas, Cook, Torres, Tablelands, Hinchinbrook, Etheridge, Weipa)
- Mackay (including Whitsunday Regional, Charters Towers, Isaac, Flinders, Burdekin)
- Mount Isa (including Cloncurry, McKinlay, Richmond, Croydon, Burke, Boulia, Carpentaria)
- Beenleigh (including Logan and Redlands)
- Ipswich (including Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim and Somerset)

Targeted Outreach Project (TOP) and ART will rollout across Brisbane and Robina NDIS regions in late 2021.

[Find out more >>](#)

## Survey about LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy Ageing and Caring



The Queensland Council for LGBTI Health is working with communities and partners to help build a picture of LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities and



Many people need assistive technology to live,

folks around ageing and aged care.

They want to hear from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Gender Diverse, Non-Binary, Intersex, Sistergirl and Brotherboy Queenslanders, including older people and their carers, about views on their experiences, hopes and concerns about ageing and living in Queensland.

- What are your concerns for your health and wellbeing now and into the future?
- What support do you currently need or might need as you age?
- What is working well in aged care support services?
- How could aged care support services be improved?

Survey link here:

<https://surveys.usq.edu.au/index.php/931762?lang=en%20%E2%80%8B>

For more information contact [gfarmer@quac.org.au](mailto:gfarmer@quac.org.au)

## Are all Australians with disability treated equally?

Apparently not. We're supporting the Assistive Technology for All campaign to improve support for people with disability of any age who are excluded from the NDIS.

We believe all Australians with disability should have equal access to the life-changing assistive technology they need. The campaign is calling on the Australian Government to establish a national assistive technology program to meet the needs of people with disability who are excluded from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Please join us and show your support.  
#assistivetechforall

[www.assistivetechforall.org.au](http://www.assistivetechforall.org.au)

## Systemic change

### Submissions & Contributions

**To:** *Parliamentary Community Support and Services Committee*

**Issue:** the Committee is investigating the prevalence and impacts of social isolation in Queensland. ADA Australia highlighted the impacts of ageism and ableism to describe how discrimination is a key driver of social loneliness.

**Submission:** <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/CSSC-0A12/IQ-DD31/submissions/00000158.pdf>

**To:** *Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce*

**Issue:** ADA Australia is engaging with the Taskforce and has provided feedback on the experiences of women and girls with the criminal justice system, as well as the possible introduction of a new criminal offence for coercive control. In our submissions, we highlighted the experiences and impacts to older women, and women and girls with disability.

**Submissions:**

[https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/692643/wsjt-submission-ada-australia.pdf](https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/692643/wsjt-submission-ada-australia.pdf)

[https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/692650/wsjt-submission-dp2-ada-australia.pdf](https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/692650/wsjt-submission-dp2-ada-australia.pdf)

**To:** *NDIS Act Review Consultations*

**Issue:** The Department of Social Services sought feedback on a bill which will make changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013. The changes are intended to implement some of the recommendations made by the Tune review into the legislation, including the introduction of the Participant Service Guarantee. ADA supports some of the proposed changes, including recognising that psychosocial disabilities can be fluctuating in nature. However, we raised concerns with the length and manner of consultation, as well as with some aspects of the bill.

**Submission:** [20211007\\_NDIS PSG Bill\\_ADA Australia.pdf](#)

**To:** Australian Department of Health

**Issue:** ADA provided feedback to the Australian Department of Health about the expansion of the Serious Incident Response Scheme to aged care services that are provided in a home setting. ADA recommended that the Quality of Care Principles relating to incident management and prevention should also apply to providers of in-home services.

### COVID fears for people with disability

As Queensland approaches opening up to other states, and in the likelihood that community transmission rates of COVID-19 infections will rise, many people with disability will be at risk if vaccination rates do not increase. We will be calling on state and federal government to urgently step up efforts to ensure that all Queenslanders with disability are prioritized for vaccination, and that barriers for people with disability to accessing the vaccine are addressed.

We will also be calling on Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) to step up with urgent health advice for parents and families with children who are immunocompromised, including children with disability. This



should include ATAGI providing a predicted timeline of when approval of COVID-19 vaccines is expected for children under the age of 12.

This information is critical for families and carers of children with disability who may need to consider what personal safety measures will be necessary for their sons and daughters, including coordination with schools and support services, until such time that vaccination becomes available.

## Reconnecting in the far North

This Seniors Month, our advocates in the far north, Barry Fewquandie and James Keightley, were able to reconnect with communities in the lower Cape York region, and attend the Cooktown Seniors Big Day Out.

We met with community agencies and the NDIS in Cooktown and caught up with disability and aged care service providers in Hopevale and Wujal. A recurring theme across the visits was the lack of support services available, particularly where support is needed for more complex needs.

This is not a new issue, and more local workforce development and training is needed to increase local capacity.

Around 70 people attended the Cooktown Seniors Big Day Out, including some grey nomads from other areas giving us an opportunity to share information about advocacy services for older Queenslanders far and wide.



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