

THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 8 October 2024

Contact us: 1800 700 600

Message from the CEO

It's Seniors Month but will older people finally have their day?

October is a dedicated month to celebrating seniors in Queensland. It begins with the International Day of the Older Person on the 1st and culminates in Grandparents Day on the 27th.

It can be easy for the meaning and purpose of such occasions to be lost amongst the myriad of awareness days and months now marking our calendars but most are about keeping important societal issues in front of the collective and policy makers' minds. And some are for fun – think International Talk Like a Pirate Day.

Queensland Seniors Month is both. It's a celebration of the many contributions older people make to our lives – as volunteers, as workers, as community leaders, parents, carers, friends and grandparents. But it is also about creating and maintaining age-friendly communities, increasing social connectedness of older people, combating ageism and recognising the human rights of older people.

This year there is kismet with the theme for the International Day of Older Persons 2024 - AGEING WITH DIGNITY: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide - as we finally welcomed the introduction of a new rights-based Aged Care Act into Parliament on September 12.

This legislation is the key to improving Australia's aged care system – providing better quality care, increasing protections for older people and making it more financially sustainable. The government also released its response to the Aged Care Taskforce recommendations together with a package of reform to the way it funds aged care and what older people will be expected to pay.

The legislation does not include everything older people and aged care advocates asked for, but critically, older peoples' rights are enshrined in the Act through a Statement of Rights, which service providers will now have a positive duty to uphold.

But as the saying goes, the devil is in the detail. We are now reviewing the subordinate legislation, or Rules, as this will detail how the Act is implemented, and there



are questions to be answered on the safety nets and financial protections for older people. [The Stage 1 release for consultation on the new Rules contains the service list which outlines the care and services that will be available to older people under the new laws.](#)

The Bill is now under Senate inquiry with a report due by 31 October 2024. The [Older Person's Advocacy Network](#) has put forward a submission and expects to have an opportunity to give evidence at the upcoming Public Hearings.

Changes to the NDIS

At the same time, there is also significant change and reform underway in the disability sector. New NDIS laws are in effect from 3 October 2024, which will mean some changes to how the NDIS works, including eligibility assessment, supports that can be funded, how plans are managed and funding allocated and spent. We know many people with disability have concerns about how these changes will impact them, and in this edition we have included links to further information, and outlined how advocacy services can help as you navigate these changes.

Queensland State Election

Recently, as part of the Queensland Disability Alliance, we hosted the Online Election Forum. It was a chance for Queensland MPs to share their plans for supporting Queenslanders with disability in the lead up to the upcoming 2024 State Election.

It's important that all older people and people with disability are able to exercise their rights to vote. We have included some information from the Queensland Electoral Commission about various options and support for voting so everyone can participate.

Until next time.

Geoff Rowe

Queensland Seniors Calendars 2025!

The Queensland Seniors Calendar 2025 is here! We look forward each year to providing this free handy reference guide to supports and services available to Queensland seniors. This year the Calendar's theme, "Things our Mums used to say", celebrates the knowledge and wisdom of older women.

Contact info@adaaustralia.com.au to request a copy or supply.



Queensland Seniors Month

Love getting older in Queensland is the theme of this year's Seniors Month. Throughout the month community groups and organisations are hosting inclusive events and activities across the state.

Visit www.qldseniorsmonth.org.au to find events happening in your area.



Aged Care Rules Consultation

The Department of Health and Aged Care is progressively inviting feedback on some of the Rules that will be made under the new Aged Care Act.



The Stage 1 release contains the [service list](#). This outlines the care and services that will be available to older people under the new laws.

You can submit feedback on the service list via an [online form](#).

Submissions close 31 October 2024.

Support at Home Pricing Consultation



The Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority is currently undertaking public consultation on Support at Home pricing. [Have your say on the pricing approach for the aged care Support at Home service list 2025–26 consultation paper.](#)

Submissions close 5pm AEDT Friday 25 October 2024.

Aged Care Act Update

Aged Care Act Highlights

- Statement of Rights for older people
- Response to Aged Care Taskforce's recommendations
- New Support at Home program
- Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards
- Stronger powers for the regulator, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- New regulatory model



Proposed Fees, Charges and Charges Highlights

- Existing Home Care Packages transition to Support at Home on 1 July 2025 together with current package funds and any unspent money
- There will be a new care classification system for Support at Home
- Government to pay for clinical care and participant contributions for independence and everyday living supports dependent on income/assets.
- No worse off principle to people receiving a Home Care Package, on the waitlist or assessed as eligible.
- Lifetime cap of \$130,000 for Support at Home and Residential Aged Care
- Residential Aged Care Fee changes



Further Information

[About the Aged Care Bill 2024 plain language fact sheet](#)

[OPAN Webinar – New Aged Care Act Update](#)

[Support at Home Factsheet](#)

[Support at Home Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Support at Home program questions and answers session](#)

Further Information

[OPAN Factsheet](#)

[Information on residential aged care accommodation charges](#)

[Information on residential aged care contributions](#)

[Residential care case studies](#)

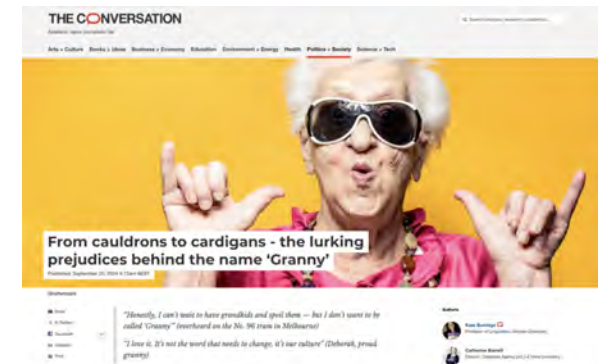
#Embolden2024, Symposium on The [un]Silencing of Older Women

Systemic advocacy is an important part of our role here at ADA Australia and we were proud to again be a partner in the Embolden 2024 Symposium on The [un]Silencing of Older Women.

Embolden is a national event dedicated to combating ageism and building respect for older people. The 2024 theme recognised the need to understand the unique ways older women experience ageism. It identified how a gender lens can enhance elder abuse strategies and a life span approach can help to prevent family violence.

Hosted by Celebrate Ageing, each year the event features a unique campaign which makes us really stop and think about how we view and talk about older women. This year it was **Cardigan Pride**. A show of solidarity with older women and a call for older women to be proud of who they are. In particular, discussion around the word Granny. [Read more here.](#)

Our CEO Geoff Rowe, joined the discussion on day 2 to share his thoughts about A Gender Lens for Elder Abuse prevention. To catch up on the program and campaigns visit www.celebrateageing.com.



Voting information for older people and people with disability

Voting accessibility is a priority to make sure everyone can have their say in the Queensland State General Election on 26 October 2024. For older people or people with disability who aren't able to, or don't want to attend a polling place, there are options.

Postal voting - request a postal vote on the ECQ website at www.ecq.qld.gov.au/postalvoting or phone 1300 881 665.

Telephone voting – available for eligible voters including people who need assistance voting because of an impairment or people who cannot physically visit a polling place. Register by calling 1300 912 782 from 9am on Monday 14 October until noon on Saturday 26 October 2024 and vote from 9am on Monday 14 October until 6pm on polling day, Saturday 26 October 2024.

Mobile voting will be provided to voters in certain locations such as aged care facilities which have been designated as 'declared institutions'. For elections where this service is provided, polling officials visit patients and residents of registered declared institutions, such as some hospitals or aged care facilities before election day. Visit the [Electoral Commission Queensland website](http://www.ecq.qld.gov.au) to find out more.

If you want to vote in person, you can check the **accessibility** of a polling place or early voting centre on the ECQ website. Early voting centres and election day polling places are open from 8am to 6pm. Each voting location also has support services available:

- Request another person (an election official or anyone else) to join you if you need help voting to act as an interpreter, read and explain the ballot paper instructions, complete the ballot paper according to your instructions and place the ballot paper in the ballot box.
- If you are unable to access a polling place or leave your vehicle a polling official can bring your ballot papers to your vehicle so you can vote and place your vote in a ballot box without leaving the vehicle.



A word about disability reforms

2024 marks a year of review and reforms for people with disability and the disability sector, which has created an undercurrent of uncertainty and concern for the disability community.

In July the government [responded to the Disability Royal Commission](#), accepting just 13 of the 222 recommendations put forward - a response that has been widely criticised as disappointing.

The [NDIS Review Report](#) released late last year paved the way for the NDIS Provider and Worker Registration Taskforce, Foundational Supports Strategy and the NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Act 2024.

The new NDIS laws in effect from 3 October 2024, have been highly debated and will see changes to how the NDIS works, including eligibility assessment, supports that can be funded, how plans are managed and funding allocated and spent.



At ADA Australia, we acknowledge that transformative change is needed, however we strongly believe that changes must be introduced following appropriate co-design and consultation with the disability community, and urgently backed by more concrete measures. The state government has recently announced the release of the [Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-design Strategy](#) promising to ensure people with disability are at the centre of the design and implementation of key disability reforms in Queensland. It is anticipated that advocacy organisations, like ADA Australia, will play an integral role in representing the views of the disability community, escalating systemic issues, and most importantly providing advice on the potential impacts of reform.

Our disability advocacy team are here during this time of change to empower people with disability to advocate for their rights, safety, inclusion and access to services. Please reach out to us if you need advocacy support or to report on systemic issues you are facing.

Useful information links

Changes to the NDIS Act: <https://www.dss.gov.au/changes-to-the-ndis-act>

Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Co-design Strategy: <https://qdn.org.au/qld-disability-co-design-strategy/>

Queensland Disability Reform Framework: <https://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/disability-services/queensland-disability-reform-framework>

How disability advocacy can help

A disability advocate can help with:

- Navigating systems, eg. NDIS, Centrelink
- Unfair treatment and disability discrimination
- Making a complaint and raising a service issue

Our advocates will:

- listen to you
- give you information about options
- help you understand and uphold your rights
- help you to express your views and and wishes



NDIS Pricing



Have your say on A fresh approach to NDIS Pricing. Or register for a workshop www.ihacpa.gov.au/events/ndis-pricing-workshops-2024.

Submissions close 5pm AEDT Friday 15 November 2024.

Meet Kimberly our Disability Team Leader

We would like to welcome Kimberly Denman, to ADA Australia as the Team Leader of our disability advocacy services.

Kimberly first worked in the disability sector when she completed a placement as part of her degree studies. She absolutely loved it and has been working in the disability sector ever since.

"The people and stories that I've had the privilege of being a part of are truly inspirational. I am passionate about pursuing equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities and supporting people to become more independent and confident in their own abilities.

No two days are the same and I continue to grow and learn each day in my new role with ADA Australia."

In her spare time you'll find Kimberly in the garden, or bushwalking, listening to Audible and trying her hand at creative projects at home. She loves dogs and has two - Honey and Cali.

