

THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 9 December 2024

Contact us: 1800 700 600

Message from the CEO

Year ends with new beginning for aged care

We end 2024 with what we hope will be a new beginning for aged care as the new Aged Care Act has become a reality – passing through Parliament on 25 November and to start from 1 July 2025.

Older peoples' rights are now enshrined in aged care legislation through a Statement of Rights, which we see as the foundation for creating a better aged care system.

Ultimately, we hope that this will be the catalyst for a cultural shift in how aged care is delivered – creating a more individualised approach to care that respects choice and preferences and gives older people greater agency over their lives.

The government is now drafting the Aged Care Rules, which will provide instructions on how the new Act operates and is inviting feedback in stages between now and early 2025. You can stay across the consultations here - [Consultation on the new Aged Care Act](https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/consultation?language=en) - <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/consultation?language=en>

Reform of this scale will take time and meanwhile, advocates are here to continue to support older people with existing issues in aged care. OPAN recently released the [National Aged Care Advocacy Program - Presenting Issues Report for 2023-2024](https://opan.org.au/2024/11/06/presenting-issues-report/) - <https://opan.org.au/2024/11/06/presenting-issues-report/>. Each year this report takes a look at the top issues older people face when accessing home care or residential care. This report is based on 44,428 instances of advocacy and information support provided by nine state and territory OPAN member advocacy organisations across the country. This report is essential reading for the sector, and we take a look at some of the key findings in this edition.

Helping people with disability put words into action

Speaking of new beginnings, 2025 will see ADA Australia launch Words 2 Action – a new project supporting people with disability under the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program. We often say we hope we don't see our clients a 2nd time. What we mean by that is that our ultimate goal is to educate and empower people with disability to be able to advocate for themselves in the future. Words 2 Action will deliver specific strategies to build confidence and skills in self-advocacy. In this edition we introduce the Words 2 Action team which is starting to come together to deliver this project.



Season's Greetings and thank you

2024 has been an extremely busy year and on behalf of the team here at ADA Australia, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you for your support and working with us, and we hope you are able to enjoy some downtime with family, friends and loved ones over the festive season.

Keep well. Catch up with you in 2025.

Geoff Rowe

Christmas and New Year office closure

ADA Australia offices, including ADA Link and ADA Law, will be closed from 12pm Tuesday 24 December 2024 and will re-open on Thursday 2 January 2025. The Aged Care Advocacy Line will be available from 27 to 31 December 2024 to assist with aged care advocacy matters on **1800 700 600**.



2023-2024 Annual Report

The [ADA Australia Annual Report for 2023-2024](https://adaaustralia.com.au/resource/ada-australia-organisation-documents/) - <https://adaaustralia.com.au/resource/ada-australia-organisation-documents/> - is out now.

We know that annual reports are generally not high up on the reading list, but in addition to company requirements, they do provide a good opportunity to take stock of what's occurred in the year, and to take a moment to stand back and recognise our achievements. We invite you to read at your leisure. 😊

For ADA Australia, 2023-24 was about consolidating the operations of new services (Care Finder, SLASSS, Mental Health Legal), continuing to meet growing demand for advocacy and legal support (a 46% increase over the previous year), and gearing up for more new projects (Words 2 Action). All this against a backdrop of significant national reform in both the aged care and disability sectors.



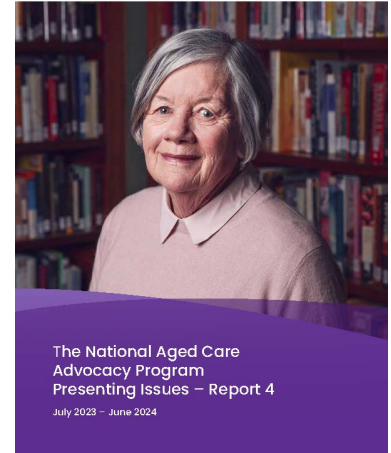
National Aged Care Advocacy Program Presenting Issues Report

OPAN's **Presenting Issues Report 2023-2024** is essential reading and provides great insight for service providers, governments and older people and their family and friends about the challenges in aged care and how they can be addressed.

Most common service delivery issues:

- Poor communication from access through to fees and charges and delivery of services.
- A lack of information and support to make choices and decisions, including not being engaged in care planning processes or views and preferences considered.
- Equipment and assistive technology issues including lengthy delays, contradictory advice from service providers.
- Complaints support including lack of response from providers contributing to unnecessary escalation to formal complaints processes.

[Read the full report here](https://opan.org.au/2024/11/06/presenting-issues-report/) - <https://opan.org.au/2024/11/06/presenting-issues-report/>



Introducing the Words 2 Action team

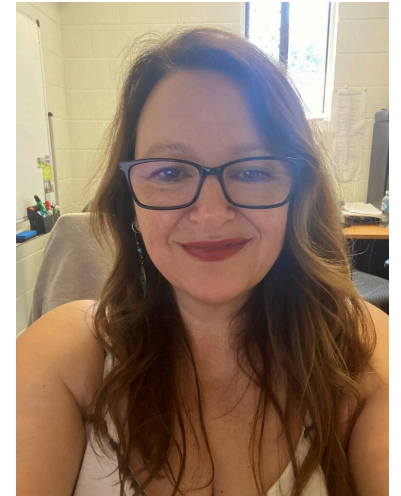
ADA Australia is excited to get this ILC project underway in 2025, and we are busy establishing the team and resources.

Meet Team Leader Nicola Shingler. Nicola is an experienced hand who has worked for us as a disability advocate on the Gold Coast since 2019. She has been recruiting new team members and we welcome Helen Haidle who will be joining us in Rockhampton, and Ruby Winter and Ricardo Garcia on the Gold Coast, on 16 December.

Nicola is a passionate disability advocate who brings valuable experience to the project.

"The ILC Team will have 5 staff in addition to me, who will cover 20 locations for information session delivery about peoples' rights and self-advocacy. I am very passionate about disability advocacy and what it's like to have lived experience overcoming barriers within the education system and beyond, when living with an invisible disability. Hence my motivation for wanting to be a voice in this new project. I am very excited to get the ILC Words 2 Action project up and running in 2025."

We will be setting up an advisory panel in the new year to co-design the program and resources, and are aiming to be on the ground delivering face-to face information sessions in April 2025. Words 2 Action is a three year project which will deliver 10-week self-advocacy courses, peer to peer support and online resources.



That's a wrap 2024!

What's most important to us is to get out in the community and talk directly with the people we support. Throughout the year we hosted and attended local events and expos, talked with people with disability, talked with seniors in aged care facilities and in the community, talked with service providers and community organisations and launched another fantastic Seniors Calendar. Thank you to all of those organisations who have partnered with us or made referrals and to those people that took the time to come along to these events. It was great to meet you and we hope that you walked away with some useful information and access to the support you needed.



ADA Australia

121 Copperfield St, Geebung QLD 4034

Telephone: (07) 3637 6000 or 1800 818 338

Website: www.adaaustralia.com.au