

THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 24 February 2025

Contact us: 1800 700 600

Message from the CEO

About us in 2025

This week we undertook our annual mailout to all Queensland MPs to provide information about how ADA Australia services can help their local constituents.

This is something we have done most years during the past decade I have been CEO here, however, this year I noticed that the answer to the question 'what do you do?' has gone well over the page.

As an organisation we have continued to expand our services and proudly, we are now supporting more vulnerable adults, seniors and people with disability than ever before, and in a number of different ways.

So, in this edition we are taking the opportunity to give you a brief overview of the services we can provide in 2025. A practical look at **how we can help**, **who we can help** and **where we can help**.

For those of you who already work closely with us, there are some new services for you to know about, and for all of our readers we hope this will be a useful summary you can pass onto family, friends and colleagues.

Most importantly, as a government-funded not-for-profit organisation, a reminder that all of our services are provided at no cost to our clients.

Help for North Queensland

My thoughts are with those in North Queensland communities affected by recent flooding, and as you go about the recovery effort. Our North Queensland team is available to provide support to older people in those communities who may need to resolve subsequent gaps in their care and community services.

The Aged Care Act

There is much anticipation, many questions, and some concerns as we get closer to the Aged Care Act becoming a reality from 1 July this year. As



the Queensland member for the [Older Persons Advocacy Network \(OPAN\)](#), we will help keep you updated on the changes and what they mean for older people and their rights.

I strongly suggest that if you have the chance to tune in OPAN's next webinar "What the new Aged Care Act will mean for you" on Tuesday 25 February 2025, 12 – 1pm AEDT. [Register here](#).

COVID-19 a serious risk in residential aged care

For older people in residential aged care, COVID-19 remains a serious risk factor. That's why I was taken aback when reading an [article in HelloCare](#) recently about COVID-19 deaths in facilities. Data interpretations and politics aside, what was clear to me was that a) sadly, older people are still dying from COVID-19 in aged care, and b) that the vaccine rates in facilities are disappointingly low – less than 10% in some facilities.

We encourage all providers to make sure that older residents have continued access to COVID-19 vaccines as per the latest [government health advice](#), and that their choices are respected. It is up to the older person to decide, not family members or attorneys.

Top 5 for Ageing Well

Earlier this month I had the pleasure of joining [Greg T Ross on The Last Post Radio Show podcast](#), an offshoot from The Last Post Magazine – a great publication for the veteran's community, of which we are proud supporters. I don't think I'll give up my day job, but it was a great thought-provoking experience to distill our collective knowledge as aged care advocates into the five most important things that we think help ageing well.

[It's well worth a listen](#), if you'll excuse the brief chat about Vespers and classic sports cars.







Until next time.











Geoff Rowe

ADA Australia - How can we help in 2025?

[Download](#) this handy two-page summary of our services for colleagues, family or friends.



	How we can help	Who is eligible	Where we work
 <p>Aged care advocacy</p>	<p>Help for older people to uphold their rights and be heard in issues related to their aged care services, ranging from information about options and applying, to understanding financial statements and fees and solving problems with your service provider.</p>	<p>People living in Queensland who are receiving, or are eligible to receive Australian Government funded aged care services.</p>	<p>Anywhere in Queensland. Statewide service.</p>
  <p>ADA Link Care Finder</p>	<p>Help for vulnerable people older people who are eligible for Australian Government funded aged care but who are facing challenges and need extra intensive support to navigate the system, and/or access other services in their community.</p>	<p>People eligible for Australian Government funded aged care but who are facing challenges that make it difficult to access supports. Organisations and community members can refer people in need for help.</p>	<p>In the following Primary Health Network regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane South • Darling Downs and West Moreton • Northern Queensland • Western Queensland
 <p>Disability advocacy</p>	<p>Help for people with disability who are experiencing issues with their support services, including NDIS access, plans and services; disability discrimination or unfair treatment.</p>	<p>People with permanent or likely to be permanent disability of any age living in areas where we work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redlands • Beenleigh • Logan • Gold Coast • Central Queensland
 <p>Yarn 2 Action</p>	<p>Help for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability who are experiencing issues with their support services, including NDIS access, plans and services; disability discrimination or unfair treatment.</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability of any age living in Queensland, and their carers and representatives.</p>	<p>Anywhere in Queensland. Statewide service.</p>
 <p>Words 2 Action</p>	<p>Resources, information sessions and individual coaching to support people with disability to understand their rights and build confidence and skills in self-advocacy.</p>	<p>People with disability and their supporters living in the areas where we work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Queensland • Central Queensland • Brisbane • Gold Coast • Tweed & Richmond Valley Coastal NSW

	How we can help	Who is eligible	Where we work
  Legal Service	<p>Help for decision making issues - legal advice, representation, information and advocacy support for adults whose decision-making capacity is impaired or in question, including representation at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).</p>	<p>Adults with impaired or questioned capacity who have a QCAT hearing scheduled or about to be scheduled, and wish to make changes to their current guardianship arrangements or challenge the appointment of decision makers.</p>	<p>South east Queensland in the areas from Bundaberg to Toowoomba, and down to the Gold Coast. We may be able to offer support in other areas of Queensland on a limited case by case basis.</p>
  Elder Abuse	<p>Help for older people living in residential care who are experiencing, or are at risk of elder abuse, from family, carers or formal decision makers.</p>	<p>People who are living in residential aged care, in the areas where we work.</p>	<p>Greater Brisbane region including Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Ipswich, Logan and Redland Bay council areas.</p>
  MHRT Support	<p>Help for people mental health conditions with legal and advocacy support and representation with matters related to the Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT).</p>	<p>You must be referred from Legal Aid Queensland.</p>	<p>Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Ipswich and Sunshine Coast, Townsville.</p>
  Mental Health Legal Support	<p>Help for people mental health conditions to navigate the justice system including representation at MHRT, QCAT regarding guardianship and administration matters, and liaison with the Public Trustee or Office of the Public Guardian.</p>	<p>People with mental health conditions living in the areas where we work.</p>	<p>Townsville and surrounds, Innisfail, Charters Towers, Ayr.</p>
  Seniors Legal Service	<p>Seniors Legal and Social Support Service (SLASSS) provides advocacy and legal support for older people to uphold their rights and who are concerned about elder abuse including financial matters.</p>	<p>Older people across western and outback Queensland at risk or concerned about elder abuse, including financial matters, and guardianship matters.</p>	<p>Tablelands, Croydon, Mt Isa, Northern Highlands, Far Central West, Longreach, Barcaldine/Blackall, Charleville and Far South West council areas.</p>

Phone 1800 818 338

Top 5 for Ageing Well - a collective advocates' view



Listen to CEO Geoff Rowe share our collective thoughts on the key things people can do to help smooth the way for going down the path of life on the [The Last Post Radio Show podcast](#).

Have a plan and a person/s - don't wait until a crisis and you are unwell to think about the future. Decide on your preferred options for when you need support and talk about it with your family. Also, make sure you have nominated the person or people you would like to make decisions about your life if you become unable to.

Stay connected - as life changes and children or grandchildren grow up and maybe move away, or friends and family members might pass away, it can be very easy to find yourself alone and disconnected. It can be hard to get out of the comfort zone but it is important to make the effort to have some social connections. There are many interest and social groups available, or if you have challenges to getting out, consider signing up to a community visitor program.

Make peace with technology - interactions via technology is now a reality and in a lot of cases unavoidable. Your local library is a good place to go for technology support and to build your skills if you are not already proficient. However, essential services must provide a way for you to engage with them. Be persistent in demanding paper statements, or for a way you can talk with a representative face to face. We have seen bank branch closures cause real issues for older people and companies need to be kept accountable on their accessibility.

Know the basics of aged care - aged care is another national support system - like Centrelink and Medicare. As with all systems, it can be complicated to navigate but you should know the basics. Everyone over 65 (or 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) is entitled to aged care support. You can get support in your home to help with daily living, or there is Residential Aged Care. To access aged care, the starting point is My Aged Care where you apply and go through an assessment. You should also be aware that you have rights in aged care and that advocacy services like ADA Australia are here to support you with information and resolving issues.

Recognise and call out ageism - unfortunately our society tends not to value older people in the same way that other cultures do. We are making changes but it is slow, and it is up to everyone to call out ageism when they see it. The ageist views that beauty and value are limited to youth is harmful to older people. We need to reclaim the word "old" to reflect the power of wisdom, experience and freedom of ageing

Must Watch

LIVE WEBINAR AND Q&A

What the new Aged Care Act will mean for you

FREE online event

Tuesday 25 February | 12–1 pm

Australian Eastern Daylight Time

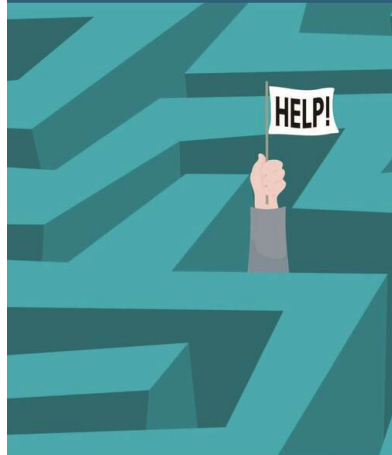


Register now - <https://opan.org.au/event/new-aged-care-act/>

Advocacy Information at GPs

We have information out at around 350 GP practices around Brisbane. If you would like a supply for your local GP let us know - info@adaaustralia.com.au

Are you lost in the
aged care maze?



Get help
to find
your way



Your side, your say

Free, Confidential, Independent

ADA Australia is your free aged care advocacy service here to help older people with all things aged care... from getting started to solving problems with your services.

- Are you finding it difficult to access aged care services?
- Do you feel like your aged care service is not listening?
- Do you need information about aged care costs and fees?
- Do you know your rights in aged care?

Chat with us
1800 700 600



Aged Care Conversations in Rockhampton, Gladstone and Yeppoon



We are coming to Rocky (16th), Yeppoon (14th) and Gladstone (15th) in April 2025 to host the next round of Aged Care Community Conversations. We hope you can join us. Let us know if you would like to receive an invitation - info@adaaustralia.com.au.

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