

THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 27 August 2026

Contact us: 1800 700 600

Message from the CEO

The latest in aged care

The most recent ABC 4 Corners investigation into aged care, [The Waiting Game](#), put the spotlight back on what advocates have been saying for some time about the aged care reforms – the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) isn't working, but more importantly, the Support at Home system is not meeting the needs of older people.



The system is not providing enough choice for older people to stay in their homes. Whether that is due to the long wait times to be assessed or reassessed, the automated assessment tool that is not accurately reflecting their needs, or less purchasing power to get the support they need because of recent price increases.

In 2025-26 the [Older Persons Advocacy Network](#) members delivered more than 64,500 information and advocacy cases. More than half of these were in relation to the support at home program, covering a range of issues as older people were increasingly seeking support to navigate the changing aged care system.

In fact, it appears that it is easier to access residential aged care rather than support at home, even though we know residential places are also limited. This mismatch in the system costs everybody more. On average it costs around \$30,000 per year to support someone at home, versus \$130,000 per year for a residential aged care bed. It also costs older people more personally – residential aged care often being

a last resort option.

Echoing the former Inspector-General of Aged Care, Natalie Siegel-Brown's warnings, we need to rethink the way we are administering the aged care budget. Supporting people to age at home must become the priority for investment, not just more aged care beds.

In terms of the IAT, we also need a pathway in place, for when things are not right, to have it escalated to a human being with clinical knowledge for review; we need a better priority system to move people up the list; and a commitment for those on interim funded support at home packages, as to when they can get their full package funding. The right care at the right time at the right level.

The latest government announcement that the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) will remain as a stand alone program until 30 June 2029 is a good start. CHSP currently supports 830,000 people but we hope increased investment in CHSP will accompany the 2029 commitment.

The latest NDIS news

The NDIS Amendment Bill has passed, which will mean the most significant changes to the scheme we have seen to date. We know many in the disability community will be feeling disappointed, angry or worried about this outcome.

The changes are expected to commence from 1 October 2026 and will be introduced in stages so different changes will affect different people at different times.

Our independent disability advocates are here to support anyone who is impacted or worried by the changes to help you understand your rights and options. On a systemic level we will also be monitoring and gathering information on the impacts of the changes.

We are particularly concerned about cuts to social and participation budgets which will be applied to any participants having their plan renewed or reassessed.

I am also aware that Queensland has not yet finalised a foundational supports program for those people who will no longer be eligible for the NDIS, which is a concern. We have to make sure that they don't fall through the gap.

Every Australian Counts is holding a [community debrief on Friday the 28th of August](#), and has advice

about [where to get help](#) if you are affected.

Events wrap up

In this edition, we wrap up two memorable events we were proud to host on the Gold Coast recently: the Australian Elder Abuse Conference 2026 and the Seniors Got Talent Multicultural Lunch. While the conference focused on the serious and important work of ending the abuse and mistreatment of older people, the multicultural lunch was all about bringing people together, celebrating diversity, reducing social isolation and, of course, having some fun.

Until next time.

Geoff Rowe

Seniors Got Talent!

Well what more can we say. Seniors definitely got talent!

Thank you to everyone who joined us at our annual [Multicultural Seniors Lunch on the Gold Coast](#), celebrating Multicultural Queensland Month.

This year we showcased the many talents of older people along with different cultures with our first Seniors Got Talent! event. Older people have a lot more capabilities than they are given credit for, and just because you are older it doesn't mean that your talents just disappear.

Thank you to all of the seniors who took part in the talent show - you were all wonderful and it was very hard to pick winners, and thank you to our judges Wayne Sticher, Gold Coast Senior Australian of the Year 2025 and Nasrin Vaziri, Director of Gold Coast Multicultural Arts.

A special thank you also to the Honourable Sam O'Connor, Queensland local member for Bonney, and Councillor Joe Wilkinson, Gold Coast City Council, for your support of the event.

Congratulations to our Winners



AEAC 2026 was a bustling three days of sharing lived experience, projects and new ideas that we could take back to our organisation and the work we do in upholding the rights of older people.

Across all presentations, a clear message emerged: preventing elder abuse requires more than responding when harm occurs. It requires challenging ageism, strengthening local communities, protecting human rights, ensuring older people remain connected to culture and belonging, and creating systems that value older people and support them to live safely, independently and with dignity.

Our sessions

As co-hosts of the conference, ADA Australia delivered a number of sessions:

Regional Success: Pathways, Local Strengths and Delivering Services in Rural and Remote Areas

This panel discussion showcased the ingenuity and resilience of services operating in remote communities and shared practical strategies for responding to elder abuse in these areas. The key theme was partnerships with local services – health, police, and community-controlled organisations for tailored responses. Leveraging technology where possible is also important.

Unique perspectives: denial of older people's access to culture

This panel discussion highlighted the importance of recognising that cultural needs and rights continue throughout life and that access to language, traditions, beliefs, community and cultural expression are essential components of wellbeing. ADA Australia Cultural Lead, Elsja Dewis, added a First Nations perspective to the discussion – in many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, relationships are governed by complex kinship systems that shape who speaks, who makes decisions and how conflict is resolved. Communities often have their own ways of addressing harmful behaviour, and those cultural processes need to be understood, rather than overridden.



Elder Abuse Prevention: Do we have a PR Problem?

Drawing on the Old is Beautiful project ADA Australia delivered in Queensland, the session suggested that shifting public perceptions of ageing could be one of the most effective long-term elder abuse prevention strategies. It's been done before, think Slip, Slop, Slap and how it changed our behaviour in the sun. Why not do the same to change ageist narratives and foster greater respect for older people?



Aged Care Reforms

Examined the opportunities and challenges emerging from major changes across the aged care system. Discussion focused on ensuring reforms remain centred on the needs, rights and preferences of older people, while also addressing increasing demand for services and called for the consideration of new and innovative approaches that support people to remain at home, strengthen community-based care.

Call for greater investment

We also had the opportunity to open day 2 of the conference, where we had the opportunity to raise the frustration many in the sector feel about how we move from talk to action when it comes to elder abuse prevention, and called on the Australian and Queensland governments for greater investment in response strategies and frontline response services.

Conference Highlights video



Words2Action

Check out our new **Words2Action videos** where program participants Ashley and Chris, share their self-advocacy learnings.

Brisbane Care Expo

If you have any questions or issues about aged care, for yourself, a family member, or a loved one, stop by and talk to us at the [Brisbane Care Expo](#). The expo runs from 9.00am to 4.00pm on Friday the 11th and Saturday the

<https://www.words2action.com.au/tools-and-resources/learn-from-others/>



The Last Post

Congratulations to The Last Post Magazine and editor Greg T Ross on their [15th birthday edition](#). The Last Post combines important information for veterans about their rights, health, mental health and other social issues, along with the things that simply make it a good read. We continue to be proud supporters. See us on page 44.

Wills Week

The [Queensland Public Trustee's Wills Week](#) is running from 7-13 September. It's all part of planning ahead while you are able so people know your wishes. Along with a Will you should make sure you have an [Enduring Power of Attorney](#) and an [Advance Health Directive](#) in place.



Out and About

As an organisation delivering services statewide, we like to make sure we get to visit as many places as

The Advocate. The latest news from ADA Australia

12th of September at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, and is a free event.



Small Changes

The [Small Changes, Big Difference](#) campaign supports people with disability to understand how home modifications can be requested and installed in private rentals, while also helping property owners adopt best practice in supporting tenants with disability.



we can across Queensland to talk with local communities and hear about the issues that are important to you. In July and August we managed to travel far and wide. Aged Care Conversations in Boonah, Gatton and Beaudesert, [NAIDOC events from Toowoomba to Townsville](#), and an outback adventure visiting seniors in Mt Isa, Normanton, Karumba and Croydon. This roadshow was in partnership with the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety; Services Australia; and the Office of Advanced Planning.



If you would like a printable copy, please visit www.adaaustralia.com.au or email info@adaustralia.com.au

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