

NSW Health disability inclusion action plan 2016–2019

Snapshot 2021–2023





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The NSW Ministry for Health acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands across NSW. We acknowledge that we live and work on Aboriginal lands. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal people.

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the NSW Health webpage www.health.nsw.gov.au

The NSW Health Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The NSW Health Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is our agency's framework for ensuring people with disability have equitable and dignified access to services and employment within our health system. It reflects NSW Health's commitment to removing barriers and elevating the voices and choices of people with disability.

The DIAP centres on four focus areas, each with supporting strategies.

Focus area 1 Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours



1. Communicate and reflect the importance of a culture of disability inclusion across the NSW Health system
2. Review, amend and develop training resources to build disability confidence in our staff

Focus area 2 Creating liveable communities



3. Embed disability inclusion as a priority in the planning and design of new and refurbished facilities
4. Elevate the voices of people with disability, their carers and families in facility design and planning processes
5. Identify and address key shortfalls in facility design identified by people with disability

Focus area 3 Providing equitable systems and processes



6. Provide support to consistently improve disability inclusion and extend existing good practice in delivering person centred care to people with disability across the system
7. Service delivery organisations will engage meaningfully with people with disability, carers and families, and relevant key partner agencies
8. Deliver enhanced services and build greater accountability by improving data collection and reporting on disability inclusion
9. Ensure all users have the same access to information regarding their treatment and care

Focus area 4 Supporting access to meaningful employment opportunities



10. Review recruitment practices to support inclusion and increased employment of people with disability and support our employees with disability to advance their careers within NSW Health

This Snapshot presents examples of NSW Health's achievements during the sixth and seventh year of implementation. It covers the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023.

DIAP FOCUS AREA 1:

Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours regarding disability inclusion

DIAP Strategy 1: Communicate and reflect on the importance of a culture of disability inclusion across the NSW Health system.

Everyone has a role to play in creating a culture of inclusion. From the resources we develop, to the ways we engage with patients – every interaction counts. NSW Health is committed to constantly improving the experience of and accessibility for people with disability.

Communication for Safe Care

An estimated 1.2 million Australians have a communication disability. This includes impairments at any point on the communication pathway: giving, receiving, processing or understanding information (verbal or nonverbal).

A communication disability can range from mild to profound. It may also be temporary and associated with a short term clinical situation. It includes consumers who have:

- intellectual disability
- neurological injury/degeneration
- autism spectrum disorder
- communication disorders, such as developmental language disorder or speech sound disorder
- psychosocial disability.

Research shows that people with a communication disability report their access to community and health services is impacted. Communication failures (verbal or written) can result in errors, misdiagnosis, inappropriate treatment and poor care outcomes. Creating communication accessible healthcare environments:

- increases consumer and carer engagement
- provides consumers with greater choice and control over their own health care
- supports the delivery of safe, timely and high quality patient care
- improves staff capacity and satisfaction.

NSW Health launched **Communication for Safe Care**, a project aimed at enhancing healthcare access for people with communication disabilities across metropolitan, regional and remote locations, as well as telehealth.

A partnership between South Western Sydney Local Health District (LHD), Western Sydney LHD and the University of Sydney, the project aims to support people with communication disability in healthcare settings through codesign, implementation and evaluation of approaches to making healthcare services more accessible and effective.

The project connected with four key NSW Health sites:

- metropolitan Emergency Department
- metropolitan Oral Health Service
- regional Oral Health Service
- regional Perioperative Service.

The project team included health professional students, who also helped expand the project's reach and develop the future health workforce's skills.

During this reporting period, the project gathered information about the barriers and facilitators for communication in healthcare services. This included inviting the perspectives of people with communication disability, carers, health care workers and support staff. This information will enable the co-design meaningful solutions to communication access issues in the solution design and implementation phases.



Easy read and accessible mental health information

[Easy read and accessible mental health information - Consumers \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

NSW Health recognises inclusion in the health system means patients being able to make informed decisions about their care. For some people with communication disabilities, simple written information can be key to understanding, accessing and navigating services.

To improve inclusion in our mental health services, NSW Health partnered with UNSW Sydney and 3DN to develop the following Easy Read resources:

- [Navigating the mental health service sector](#)
- [The Mental Health Act](#)
- [Introduction to inpatient mental health services](#)

This partnership also produced [Making mental health information accessible for people with intellectual disability – A Toolkit](#). This toolkit provides guidance on how to make information accessible for people with intellectual disability and other cognitive disorders, and how to support individuals to use and understand Easy Read information.

Enhancing Inclusion in the health setting

NSW Health is dedicated to providing inclusive healthcare that meets the unique needs patients.

Enhancing Inclusion in the Health System project was a collaborative project between Blue Sky Community Services and Mid North Coast LHD, funded through an

Information Linkage and Capacity building grant. The project was launched in 2021 to develop best practice models and resources to:

- strengthen the skills of health staff in supporting people with disability
- improve coordination between health and local NDIS providers.

The goal of the project is to create and share resources and learnings that can be utilised more widely within the NSW health system.

Resources included:

- advice to use the Top 5 inclusively
- person first language posters
- health literacy screensavers
- reasonable adjustment posters
- accessible COVID Testing information posters distributed within the COVID clinics.

Regional Consumer Working Group

The project was guided by the Regional Consumer Working Group, made up of members with lived experience of disability. Their valuable insights and first hand experiences within the health system shaped the focus and development of the project's resources. Under their direction, the project is driving positive changes in the NSW health system, facilitating better inclusion and care for all people with disability.

DIAP Strategy 2: Review, amend and develop training resources to build disability confidence in our staff.

Our staff are dedicated to providing world class, person-centred and inclusive care. As a system, we are committed to ensuring our staff can access the resources, training and experiences they need to confidently deliver respectful care to all patients.

During this reporting period, we partnered with people with lived experience, researchers and advocates to deliver meaningful, up to date and engaging education to our hospital staff.

Building our staff's confidence to identify, understand and respond to people with disability is at the core of improving disability inclusion. NSW Health recognises that the best people to educate our staff about helping people with disability are people with disability.

Get Skilled Access Training

Four hospitals from across NSW participated in the Disability Inclusive Practices in Health project delivered by Get Skilled Access (GSA). The project delivered increased awareness of inclusive care practices by health professionals and hospital staff through education and training designed and delivered by people with disability.

The following hospitals participated in the program:

- Northern Sydney LHD – Ryde
- South Eastern Sydney LHD – St George
- Western Sydney LHD – Auburn
- South Western Sydney LHD – Bankstown.

In addition to staff training the program provided the opportunity for participating sites to undertake reviews of their current disability inclusion practices and identify potential areas for improvement at both a local and statewide level.

Let's Talk Disability

'Let's Talk Disability' online training aims to enable our health care workers to meet the diverse needs of people with disability who use NSW Health services.

The course helps staff:

- identify people with disability
- implement a person-centered approach when caring for people with disability
- promote dignity and respect for people with disability
- use a variety of strategies to communicate effectively with people with disability
- provide access to fair and equitable services for people with disability.

In Hunter New England LHD, 'Let's Talk Disability' was made a Chief Executive-directed training for all clinical staff. The result was shift from under 1% to around 50% engagement rate for clinical staff. Staff reported improved understanding of the needs of people with a disability, improved ability to provide the most appropriate treatment, and confidence to deliver person centred care that is respectful, collaborative, equitable and accessible.

Partnering with the Council for Intellectual Disability

We delivered training in various ways this reporting period, making resources and education available wherever our staff were.

Northern Sydney LHD produced a series of webinars attended by a range of health professionals including GPs, Paediatricians, Nurses, Allied Health Professionals, and disability support workers and their managers.

These were a collaboration between the Northern Sydney Intellectual Disability Health Service (NSIDHS), the Centre for Disability Studies and 3DN. The webinars featured topics such as:

- ageing and intellectual disability
- end of life and palliative care for people with intellectual disability
- foetal alcohol syndrome
- intellectual disability mental health
- dementia and intellectual disability
- management of anxiety in children with intellectual disability
- transition to adult services for people with intellectual disability.

NSIDHS also recorded a webinar on the health complexities of adults with intellectual disability at the Coffs Harbour Regional Medical School for use by UNSW medical students. The team has been asked to create a similar training package for paediatrics with intellectual disability.

GeneEQUAL Toolkit

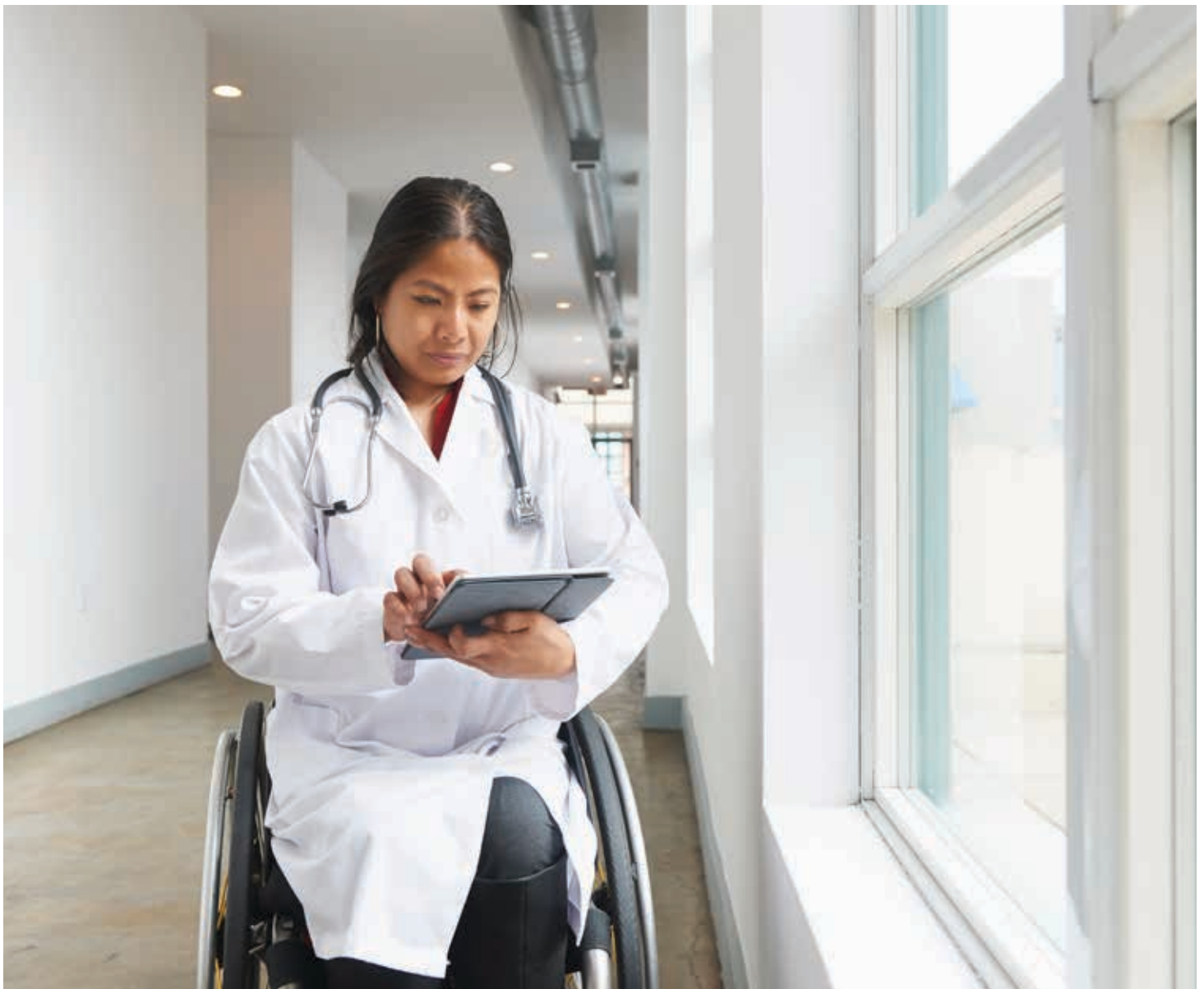
[Communicating with People who have Intellectual Disability: The GeneEQUAL Educational Toolkit](#)

The GeneEQUAL Toolkit was designed to support health care professionals [make reasonable adjustments](#) to ensure that patients with intellectual disability receive inclusive, person-centred and respectful care (in alignment with [NSW Health policy](#)).

The GeneEQUAL Toolkit includes:

- three key learning principles for best practice, inclusive, person-centred, and respectful genetic health care
- videos demonstrating best practice to support inclusive practice and assist health care professionals meet their [mandatory requirements](#)
- Easy Read booklets about clinical genetic appointments and key concepts in genetic counselling
- an explanatory background on how the GeneEQUAL recommendations and Toolkit were developed.

The Toolkit was developed as part of the GeneEQUAL program of research in partnership with NSW Health and the Centre for Genetics Education, HETI. It was co-designed with people with intellectual disability, who provided recommendations for how they would like to receive genetic health care



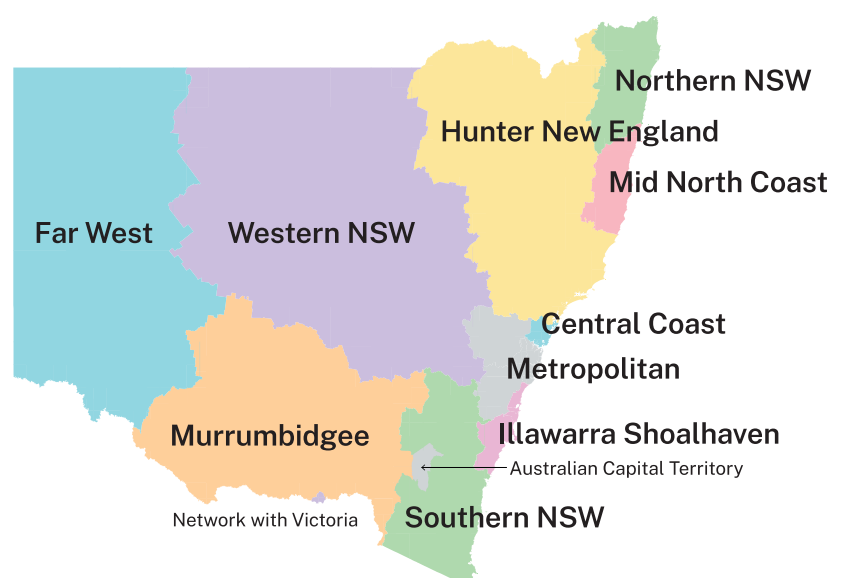
DIAP FOCUS AREA 2 : Creating liveable communities for people with disability



DIAP Strategy 3: Embed disability inclusion as a priority in the planning and design of new and refurbished facilities.

To make our facilities truly accessible, NSW Health recognises the need to build accessibility into every design from the start through consultation and co-design. Our aim is to provide facilities and environments that are accessible to all, easily navigated, and reduce disorientation. This includes providing clear wayfinding so patients and visitors can move between various places with minimal confusion.

To cater for people with different abilities, considerations include level access, wide paths, grab rails and handrails, frequent seating and rest spaces, and shelter from the elements. Colour, lighting, materials and texture can all aid and improve accessibility.





Examples of disability inclusion planning and design by NSW Health include:

The Rusty Priest Building, Concord Hospital – this new eight storey, 214 bed building includes a comprehensive cancer centre, an aged health and rehabilitation centre and The National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare. To support people with disability, the hospital includes single inpatient bedrooms with a carer zone to allow space for family and carers to stay overnight should patients need support during their hospital stay.

BreastScreen NSW, North Sydney and Central Coast – this screening and assessment service is now a permanent fixed site. Upgraded from a mobile van, the site features bathroom facilities designed for wheelchair users, people with low vision, and people with cognitive impairment. Specialist Bariatric seating now also provides safe access for patients whose body size restricts mobility, as well as those caring for them.

Acute Services Building, Prince of Wales Hospital – the design of this new building was informed by people with disability through a Consumer Advisory Committee and associated focus groups. The groups input into decisions about furniture and equipment, wayfinding (both signage

and electronic) and the patient entertainment system. The new facility also features additional, quality accessible bathrooms and parking spaces, low stimulation rooms, beds with ceiling mounted hoists and accessible signage and wayfinding options, including a wayfinding kiosk with voice enabled app.

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital – Planning and design for the Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) redevelopment, includes:

Accessible Bathrooms

Planning and design for the RPA Redevelopment includes:

- accessible bathrooms for staff and visitors.
- accessible patient bedrooms with adjoining ensuites for patients.

Changing Places

Without Changing Places toilets many people are unable to fully engage with their community.

Planning includes a Changing Places toilet facility, which allows people with high support needs to participate in community life, without having to limit their time out due to concerns about being able to access a suitable toilet.

Changing Places facilities include:

- a height-adjustable adult-sized change table
- a constant-charging ceiling track hoist system
- an appropriate toilet
- additional circulation space more than standard accessible toilets
- an automatic door with a clear opening
- and a privacy screen.

Bariatric Patient Bedrooms

All new inpatient units, including intensive care services includes a purpose designed bariatric room including the amenity of overhead hoist and larger ensuite.

Wayfinding & Signage

Wayfinding and signage strategy for the RPA redevelopment incorporates Building Code of Australia and Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

Transport

An on-demand shuttle service is planned to support increased accessibility across the campus for patients and visitors with a physical disability. This will be a suitable vehicle with lifter and capacity for two wheelchairs that can transport people to frequently accessed areas. The shuttle service is planned to operate via an 'on demand' model which provides direct transport to areas otherwise only accessible by walking from the car park on the other side of the campus.

The Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program

[Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program \(SWMHIP\) - Health Infrastructure NSW](#)

The Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program (SWMHIP) is a 10-year \$700 million funding commitment to support mental health reform and change and increase capacity in the NSW mental health system. The Program is investing in construction of new, or refurbishment of existing, mental health units including adult, child and adolescent, mothers and babies, older persons, intensive care, and forensic units. This Program supports the delivery of contemporary mental health services for consumers, carers, staff, and the broader community.

The planning and design of SWMHIP projects in the last two years includes a focus on providing therapeutic, safe, and welcoming areas to support mental health consumers with psychosocial disability. Dedicated spaces such as de-escalation rooms and sensory rooms are co-designed in a targeted approach, commensurate with the needs of the consumers.

To improve responsiveness to the needs and wishes of future users of the service, the SWMHIP engages with consumers, carers and families and uses this information to adapt the approach to design of units. In the last two years, the design of a new unit planned for Tamworth and a new mothers and babies unit opened in Sydney are good examples of where consumers have informed design. The SWMHIP also ensures that standards (guided by the AusHFG) for bedrooms, sensory rooms, exercise rooms, activity areas and courtyards are accessible for all people, including people with physical disabilities. This extends to any staff spaces (where required). Specific Fixtures, Furniture, and Equipment Post Occupancy Evaluations have been completed to ensure that the selected items are fit for purpose.

In the last year, the SWMHIP has developed Design Principles and produced Design Guidelines for each mental health unit type (adult, child and adolescent, older persons, forensic, mothers and babies) which addresses infrastructure and design nuances specific to the consumer groups who utilise these services.





DIAP Strategy 4: Elevate the voices of people with disability, their carers and families in facility design and planning processes.

NSW Health is committed to involving patients, carers, families and experts in the development of our facilities. We understand the value of engaging people with disability and carers in the design and planning process, and the power of their advice to ensure our buildings and services are world-class, inclusive and effective – now and into the future.

Carer advisory group – Far West LHD

In Far West LHD, a Carer Advisory Meeting (CAM) group was established to inform facility and process designs. Their valuable input shaped the design of projects such as the Broken Hill Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit and Emergency Department. CAM members were actively involved in this facility's design, and continued to provide feedback on other projects across the LHD. CAM members also participated in the development of improved health processes such as the Improving Allied Health referral process working group.

Patient and consumer working group – Southern NSW LHD

The Goulburn Hospital Redevelopment established a patient and consumer working group during the detailed design phase. Patients with disability who had recent admissions or had engaged with outpatient services were invited at random to join the user group. Members were presented with the broad overview of the hospital's main works design and had the opportunity to provide input into the design and feedback on the design process. Specific feedback incorporated included:

- chairs in corridors
- wheelchairs space in waiting rooms
- separate access points to the Emergency Department for members of the public, staff and Ambulance presentations to improve waiting experience.

DIAP Strategy 5: Identify and address key shortfalls in facility design identified by people with disability.

We are committed to improving our facilities and ensuring access for all patients, carers and families. Where our facilities are undergoing redevelopment, we are committed to working with patients, carers and families to remove barriers and create safer, more accessible services.

Access

Access equity starts before patients enter the hospital. In Southern NSW LHD, design for the redevelopment of the Queanbeyan based Community Health Centre incorporated:

- accessible parking
- automatic doors
- ramps for alternative access.

Wayfinding

The new NSW Health Guideline [Wayfinding for Healthcare Facilities](#) is being used across the state. The Guideline reduces the focus on signage as the single tool for wayfinding, providing a broader, system focused perspective based on experiences of patients and families.

In Hunter New England LHD, audits of complaints received led to updates to signage across multiple campuses including Wallsend, Raymond Terrace and Eastlakes Community Health, Tomaree, Belmont and Inverell hospitals. Wayfinding apps are under consideration for new services buildings and wayfinding officers were employed at the new Maitland hospital.

Lighting and Environment

In South Eastern Sydney LHD, patients with visual disability informed the improvements to the Sydney Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital. A group of people with disability provided their advice on the lighting and physical environment of the current facility, and whether there were any key issues or obstacles that they had encountered.



DIAP FOCUS AREA 3: Providing equitable systems and processes

DIAP Strategy 6: Provide support to consistently improve disability inclusion and extend existing good practice in delivering person-centred care to people with disability across the system.

World-class, person-centred care is constantly evolving. NSW Health is committed to continually reviewing and improving service delivery models and expanding best practice examples across the state. From bespoke services for certain cohorts to system-wide responses, we are working to ensure our services are right for people with disability.

SERVICES

Vulnerable Person Pathway

At Westmead Hospital, the Vulnerable Person Pathway helps patients with disability presenting to the Emergency Department in social crisis. This pathway allows a rotating roster of medical teams to admit vulnerable patients under their teams for ongoing support and management for discharge planning, to prevent long stays in the Emergency Department. This was designed in response to a gap identified in a case presenting to the Emergency Department for a social crisis presentation relating to a breakdown in NDIS and family supports.

One Stop Shop

At Westmead Hospital, the One Stop Shop helps people with a complex developmental disability receive greater support for their overall health. The clinic was established in response to the rising number of people with a disability presenting to Western Sydney LHD Emergency Departments with preventable conditions.

The clinic currently supports patients being cared for in the District's Developmental Disability Service and is accessed via internal referrals from Westmead's outpatient clinics.

The Quiet Pathway

At Sydney Childrens Hospital, the Quiet Pathway for Special Kids delivers peri-operative services for children with anxiety, autism, and other behavioural and intellectual disabilities. This individualised stewardship program makes the peri-operative journey safe and stress-free for these children.

Treatment goals are shared, and plans tailored to suit the individual circumstances of each child, making it a winning patient experience. The program has transformed peri-operative care for this vulnerable group of children and their carers.

RESOURCES

[All of Us: A guide to engaging consumers, carers and communities](#)

All of Us was developed through extensive collaboration, consultation and review of existing guides and frameworks by Patient Experience at the Ministry of Health.

People with disability helped develop the All of Us guide, an evolving toolkit which focuses on inclusion in the way NSW Health works with consumers. The toolkit shares resources on creating and maintaining safety, ensuring and accessibility and welcome, and increasing diversity and inclusion in consultation.

All of Us: A guide to engaging consumers, carers and communities across NSW Health was released in May 2023.

Ask Away

The Ask Away educational video series was developed as part of the 'Enhancing Inclusion in the Health Setting' project in Mid North Coast LHD. These multimedia resources were co-designed and produced with people who have lived experience of disability. These resources aim to improve the hospital experience and health outcomes for people living with a range of disabilities.

Ask Away Educational Video Series
 Person-first messaging and tips for Health staff to help build their capacity, direct from people with disability.

101 → Health staff completed Ask Away training on My Health Learning June–August 2023
 1238 → Ask Away views on MNCLHD YouTube Channel May–August 2023

blue sky community services | NSW | Mid North Coast Local Health District

- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Brent](#)
- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Sam](#)
- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Rob](#)
- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Des](#)
- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Chantal and Sera](#)
- [MNCLHD Ask Away - Amy](#)

These videos have now been added to My Health Learning as state-wide resources and can be accessed by all NSW Health staff.

The Inclusive Hospital Care Resource

Mid North Coast LHD also developed the Inclusive Hospital Care Resource provides prompts for discussion between people with disability in hospital and the health staff. This tool encourages staff to provide updated and accurate information within the electronic Medical Record (eMR) which informs staff and promotes improvement to care and outcomes for patients on admission and discharge.

The My Health Journey Hospital Passport

The My Health Journey Hospital Passport was developed by Mid North Coast LHD to provide a template for people with disability to record important information about themselves that is useful to share with the health staff who support them during their hospital journey. This booklet was designed as an alternative to Admission2Discharge (A2D) and requires less time to complete.

NDIS Pathway Navigation

In Hunter New England LHD, two resources were developed to provide staff with practical information to assist NDIS participants moving through the system. These resources – **NDIS Pathway Navigation Guide for Inpatients** and **NDIS Adult Emergency Department Flowchart** – explain processes and linkages to reduce the number of inappropriate hospital admissions and delayed hospital discharges.

Virtual Care

NSW Health developed the [NSW Virtual Care Strategy 2021-2026](#) that outlines the steps NSW Health will take to further integrate virtual care as a safe, effective, accessible option for health care delivery in NSW. The strategy aims to achieve patient-centred care, equity of access to care, and building the confidence of consumers and virtual care providers.

In a recent report from Health Consumers NSW people with a disability said that virtual care is a “game changer” that has significantly improved or even increased access to healthcare appointments. Virtual Care Starey p.12

HOSPITAL AVOIDANCE AND TIMELY DISCHARGE

Emergency Department to Community

The Ministry of Health Emergency Department to Community program identified and supported frequent attenders at Emergency Departments across the state, enrolling them in an inter-disciplinary, inter-agency supported case management intervention.

People with disability were supported through this program, including through coordination with the NDIA. The clinicians delivering this program were upskilling through Community of Practice sessions to ensure they can support people with disability identified by this program and link with NDIS funded services.



Hospital Discharge Exemplar Project

The Hospital Discharge Exemplar Project is a joint NDIS and NSW Health project in progress across three LHDs (SESLHD, SWSLHD and MLHD) that aims to:

- reduce discharge delays for NDIS participants
- improve the hospital journey for NDIS participants
- improve confidence of staff to work with people with disability.

The pilot phase of the projects is complete and roll out options are under consideration.

In South Eastern Sydney LHD the project targeted the longest window for delay: the time between NDIS plan approval and discharge. The project introduced models such as early and active involvement of Hospital Liaison Officers and Support Coordinators in the Multi-Disciplinary Team discharge planning phase which have already reduced the average length of stay between plan approval and discharge from 40.6 days to 24 days.

In South Western Sydney LHD the project focused on identifying NDIS participants at the beginning of a hospital admission, clarifying discharge pathways and educating staff. The project has shown a reduction in the time to identify NDIS participant status and in beginning the discharge delay planning which has resulted in a reduction in length of hospital stay.

In Murrumbidgee LHD the project focused on developing consistency in NDIS hospital discharge planning practices. The project introduced easy to access information on the hospital intranet site relating to NDIS hospital discharge planning processes, policy, and delineation in responsibilities. The length of time between admission and identification of participant's NDIS status has improved and the intranet site has improved consistency and confidence of staff.

DIAP Strategy 7: Service delivery organisations engage meaningfully with people with disability, carers and families and relevant key partner agencies.

NSW Health continues to engage with people with disability, carers and families in the design of our services. We are committed to listening to them so we can provide effective person-centred care.

CASE STUDY:

Access Strategy for People with Disability

The NSW Health Sexual Assault Services (SAS) and New Street Services [Access Strategy for People with Disability 2021-2025](#) was released in 2022. To support implementation of this strategy, NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) established a co-design advisory committee to provide strategic advice from people with lived experience expertise of sexual violence and disability.

Co-Design Framework

The co-design framework is central to embed a co-design approach for the strategy. It sets out the strategies and processes utilised to operationalise ECAV's co-design approach. The key components of the co-design framework draw on existing evidence of current best practice in co-design and co-production in disability and were established through consultations with peers from three disability organisations: Council for Intellectual Disability (CID); Disability Diversity Alliance (DDA); and Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH). This co-design framework draws on two key bodies of experts.

Co-Design Advisory Committee (CDAC)

The CDAC includes people with a range of disabilities across the age spectrum, including representation from Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ+ communities. The role of the CDAC is to provide overarching strategic advice on the implementation of the strategy as well as the co-design framework and process, centring on:

- applying a human rights framework to the design and operationalisation of the strategy
- monitoring and evaluation of strategy priority outcomes
- linking and connecting with the disability community
- identifying membership of the co-production expert panel.

Co-Production Expert Panel (CPEP)

The CPEP consists of a panel of people with a range of disabilities, skills and expertise, and/or lived experience of disability. The role of the CPEP is to contribute to the production and implementation of key strategy resources and activities.

Accessible patient experience measures

Patient reported measures

Patient-reported measures (PRMs) are surveys that help us to understand what matters most to patients. They also help us to find out if the care we deliver supports the outcomes and experiences that patients expect.

There are two types of PRMs:

- Patient-reported **experience measures** (PREMs) capture patients' experiences of their healthcare and services.
- Patient-reported **outcomes measures** (PROMs) capture patients' views on how their illness or care has impacted their overall health and wellbeing.

NSW Health's Bureau of Health Information has started work to make PREMs more accessible for people with intellectual disability and cognitive impairment. They have partnered with Macquarie University to redesign the surveys in simple formats to improve healthcare and quality and outcomes for this patient group.



DIAP Strategy 8: Deliver enhanced services and build greater accountability by improving our data collection and reporting on disability inclusion.

High quality data is vital for measuring the effectiveness of our policies, services and procedures. NSW Health is continually working to improve data collection, usage and reporting for people with disability and NDIS participants across the health system.

Clinical Practice Improvement project

The Clinical Practice Improvement project, led by the Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD Disability team focuses on identifying people with a disability and recording the reasonable adjustments required during their stay in hospital.

This project aims to improve the overall patient experience of people with a disability by ensuring supports required for them to receive safe and equitable care in the district's hospitals are identified.

Identifying people with disability

Southern NSW, Murrumbidgee, Far West and Western LHDs in collaboration improved their identification and response to the needs of patients with disability by strengthening their formal recording of people's disability and their reasonable adjustment requirements. This included:

- **Intellectual disability flags** were created in the eMR to notify the Intellectual Disability Health Clinician when a person with a diagnosis of intellectual disability was admitted to hospital. This promotes timely access to specialised support for the patient and the staff.

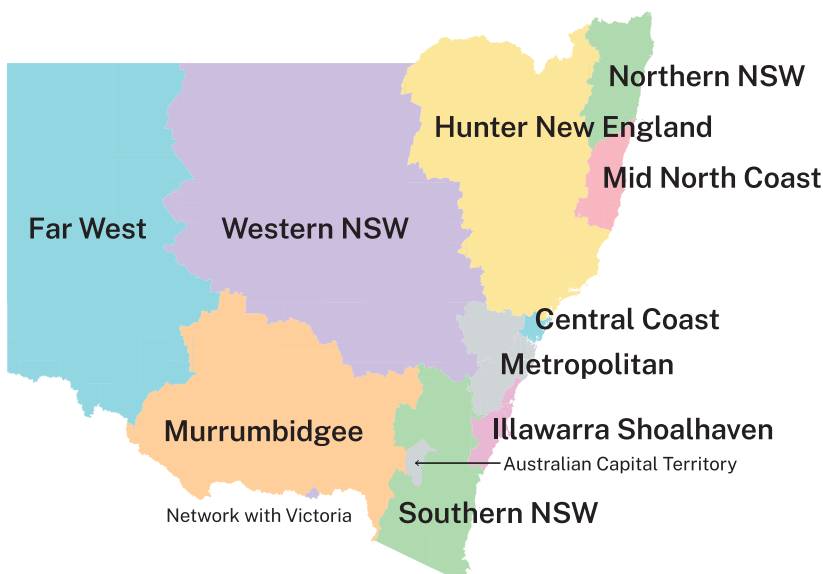
- **Automatic notification** was created for people with a disability. This early notification prompts outreach to the admitting unit to offer support and advice to facilitate timely discharge home. This was done in collaboration Southern NSW, Murrumbidgee, Far West and Western LHDs.

Surveys

NSW Health has been actively seeking insights from people with disability, their families and carers about their experiences in the health system. This feedback and advice is invaluable as we look to continually improve and enhance the services we provide.

Examples include:

- **Transforming Your Experience Strategy:** South Western Sydney LHD developed this strategy to focus on delivery of safe, quality care and positive experiences for patients, consumers, staff and communities. Under this strategy, the experiences of people with disability can now provide feedback in the:
 - “My Experience Matters” survey
 - Liverpool hospital's leader-patient rounding tool.
- **NSW Patient Survey Program:** The Bureau of Health Information asks thousands of people about their recent experience with the public healthcare system as part of the NSW Patient Survey Program.
- **Disability survey:** Royal Prince Alfred Hospital developed a disability survey which links with the facility's inpatient experience survey and is offered to patients who have been identified as ready for hospital discharge.



DIAP Strategy 9: Ensure all users have the same access to information regarding their treatment and care.

NSW Health is committed to ensuring people with disability can access the right information, understand and make informed decisions about their health.

Accessible Communications Unit

NSW Health established the Accessible Communications Unit within the Ministry of Health in recognition of the importance of improving the system-wide accessibility of our information. The Unit is leading a review of current processes and will be releasing policies, guidance and toolkits to help improve our information sharing and practices across the state.

Easy Read

Palliative care and end of life

Palliative care and end of life care resources in Easy Read were reviewed and uploaded to the Nepean Blue Mountains LHD internet site as part of a suite of resources for this area of practice.

Individual treatment communication supports

Nepean Blue Mountains LHD also provided training for Allied Health staff to use easy read in clinical communication and support of people with intellectual disability resulting in design of individual treatment communication supports.

Auslan

Basic Auslan Training for Health Staff – Face to Face

Basic Auslan Training sessions were attended by more than 100 staff in Mid North Coast LHD. Run in collaboration with Blue Sky Community Services, these sessions taught fingerspelling, how to introduce yourself and build rapport, and the use signs relevant to the health setting.

Basic Auslan Training for Health Staff – Multimedia Resource

A Basic Auslan Training video was developed as part of the 'Enhancing Inclusion in the Health System' project in Mid North Coast LHD. Health staff learned about the challenges Auslan users may face when accessing the health system, and how they can support them in a more inclusive and respectful way and minimise communication

barriers. The video guides Health staff through introductory Auslan including introductions, the fingerspelling alphabet, numbers, and common signs that could be used in the health setting.

This resource is available to all NSW Health staff and can be found on My Health Learning platform: Basic Auslan training for Health Staff.

Support for people who are blind or have low vision

People who are blind or have low vision have particular needs when they are in hospital.

It is important for health staff to understand these needs to ensure patients receive personalised care and experience the best health outcomes.

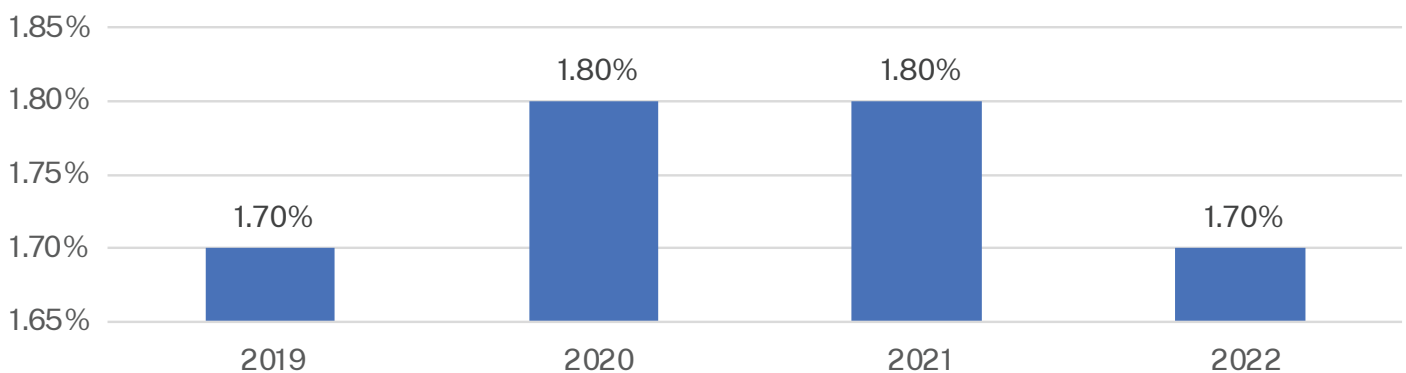
- NSW Health's Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) co-designed a suite of resources with clinicians and consumers to help improve the experience of people who are blind or have low vision while they are in hospital. They include guidance on identifying patient's needs, information for patients and clinicians and an implementation toolkit. The information is available in large print, audio and braille versions on the ACI website.
- In South Eastern Sydney LHD the Sydney Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital launched the GoShare platform. The platform helps facilitate information sharing with patients by sending multimedia resources to patients via SMS or email. These can then be accessed on individual devices, altered, zoomed and sized accordingly. For hearing impaired patient's audio resources can also be utilised.

DIAP FOCUS AREA 4: Supporting access to meaningful employment opportunities

DIAP Strategy 10: Review recruitment practices to support inclusion and increased employment of people with disability and support our employees with disability to advance their careers within NSW Health.

As the largest public health system in Australia, we are committed to building a workforce that represents the community we serve. We recognise the vital role people with disability play in helping our system deliver inclusive and responsive services that meet the needs of all members of our community.

Trends in the representation of people with disability in the NSW Health workforce



Recruitment policy

During this reporting period, NSW Health commenced a review of the NSW Health Policy Directive Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service.

It is essential that any assessment method does not unfairly disadvantage applicants who have a disability or are from a particular cultural or community group.

Appendix 5 of this policy outlines the standards and procedures in place to effectively recruit people with disability including: recruitment and selection training; advice about GSE Rule 26; citing disability; adjustments to the recruitment process; adjustments to the workplace; and further guidance and resources.

Paid internships

The Sydney Childrens Hospital Network continued its partnership with the Australian Network on Disability Stepping Into program, providing paid internships for university students with disability.

In 2021/22, the Network hosted two interns, with a further two hosted in 2022/23.

These internships present an opportunity for the network to engage young people with a lived experience of both disability and the health system. Interns contribute to projects within the network, providing a youth disability lens and continue to develop the network as a disability confident employer. The opportunity provides growth of our future workforce, with two previous Interns being offered employment opportunities with the Sydney Childrens Hospital Network on completion of their internship.

