



Towards a Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan

Discussion paper

November 2025

Contents

Acknowledgment of Aboriginal People and Country	4
Acknowledgment of People with Disability and Community	4
Help and Support.....	5
Accessibility.....	6
Language.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Act Objects (Purpose)	8
Act Principles.....	8
Did we hear you correctly?	10
Are we doing the right things in response to what you have told us?	10
What else do you think we should know?	11
How to have your say	11
The Context for our work	13
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).....	13
Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031	13
Tasmania’s Disability Strategy 2025 – 2027	13
Tasmania’s Department of Health - Disability Health Strategy	13
Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission)	14
NDIS Review	14
Closing the Gap.....	15
National Disability Advocacy Framework.....	15
What have we heard already?	16
What are we doing?.....	16
What else do we need to know?.....	16
Theme 1 - The Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review.....	16
Theme 2 - What we heard in Tasmanian Disability Consultations	17
Theme 3 – Disability Supports and the Market.....	29

Theme 4 - Safeguarding.....	29
Theme 5 - What else do you want to tell us about disability inclusion?	33
Contact Us.....	33
Appendix 1	34
Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024 – Objects and Principles	34
Appendix 2	38
All Questions	38

Acknowledgment of Aboriginal People and Country

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the original and continuing Custodians of the Land, Sea, and Sky. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Acknowledgment of People with Disability and Community

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the lived and living experience of people with disability and their family members, carers and supporters.

We acknowledge the contribution of people with lived and living experience of disability in shaping this document and Tasmania's disability inclusion framework.

We acknowledge the work of people with disability, and their allies, in promoting the human rights of people with disability.

Help and Support

Reading this Discussion Paper (this paper), taking part in the consultation or providing feedback may bring up strong feelings for some people.

If you have immediate concerns for your safety, the safety of another person, or there is an emergency, dial Triple Zero (000).

The following support services can also give you help and support:

- Lifeline (13 11 14) – National crisis support and suicide prevention services, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- 13YARN (13 92 76) – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis support line, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800) – National crisis support tailored for children and young people (aged 5 to 25), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- 1800ELDERHelp (1800 353 374) – National support line for the abuse and mistreatment of older people
- National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1800 880 052) – Free, independent and confidential service for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability
- Translating and Interpreting Service (13 14 50) – If you are a non-English speaker, you can use the Translation and Interpreting Service for assistance
- National Relay Service TTY/Voice Calls (133 677) or Speak and Listen (1300 555 727) – if you are d/Deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech impairment, you can call the National Relay Service for assistance
- 1800RESPECT – provides confidential information, counselling and support services to people who are experiencing or have experienced sexual assault or domestic violence. The service is also available to family members and friends of those who have experienced violence. You can visit their website at www.1800RESPECT.org.au, or give them a call on 1800 737 732
- QLife (1800 184 527) - Nationwide LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about sexuality, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships. Available 3pm – 12 am, 7 days a week.

Accessibility

We have also made accessible versions of this paper. These are available in Easy Read, Auslan video, audio files, braille ready format (.brf), and a one-page summary. These documents can be found on our website at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/disability-inclusion-plan

If you are having any difficulty accessing this document or providing feedback please email disability@dpac.tas.gov.au.

Language

In this Paper, when we use ‘we’ we mean the Tasmanian Government.

We use ‘disability community’ to mean people with disability, and the people and organisations that support them.

Introduction

We want to make sure Tasmanians with disability are treated fairly and included in everyday life. We also want to make sure that people with disability are safe and that their human rights are protected.

To help make this happen, a new law called the *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act* was made in 2024 and started on 1 July 2025.

The new law says the government must create a plan that makes sure people with disability are more included and supported in Tasmania. This plan will be called the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan (the Plan). The Plan will be for four-years.

The Plan must:

- Include policies and actions for all areas of the Tasmanian Government so that the objects (the purpose) and the principles of the Act are achieved.

We explain more about the objects and principles of the Act below.

- Ensure that all areas of the Tasmanian Government work together to provide universal services for people with disability.

The first Plan must be prepared by 1 July 2026.

When we ask people for their views on the Plan, we need to use methods that take into account the needs and experiences of people with disability.

In preparing the Plan we will consult with:

- People with disability
- Disability advocacy organisations
- Disability peak bodies
- Disability representative organisations
- Defined entities – all areas of the Tasmanian Government (such as State Government Agencies or Government Business Enterprises)
- The public
- The Disability Inclusion Advisory Council
- The Tasmanian Disability Commissioner.

Consult means asking what someone thinks and listening to their answer.

This paper is about how we are consulting with the Tasmanian disability community to develop the Plan.

Act Objects (Purpose)

The purpose of the Tasmanian *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024* (the Act) is to protect the rights of people with disability and support their full inclusion in all areas of life. This purpose is called the 'Objects' of the Act. We will do this by:

- Recognising we all have a responsibility to support people with disability in using their human rights; and
- Supporting and making changes to uphold:
 - The human rights of people with disability which are included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international laws about human rights; and
 - *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031*; and
- Putting in place rules for all parts of the Tasmanian Government so that everyone understands what and how they are responsible for disability inclusion and what they need to do to be inclusive; and
- Putting in place rules about the use of restrictive practices by disability services providers; and
- Creating the positions of Disability Commissioner and Senior Practitioner; and
- Setting up the Disability Inclusion Advisory Council; and
- Making way for a community visitor scheme in the future; and
- Putting in place rules about funding to support the above objects.

The Objects are included in full at Appendix 1 of this paper.

Act Principles

The Act Principles are like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Act Principles say people with disability should have the same rights as people without disability.

The Act says that the way we consult and write the Plan 'must have regard to' the Act Principles. This means we have to follow the Principles when we are writing the Plan.

The Principles say why the Plan is being developed (to increase the human rights of Tasmanians with disability) and how the Plan should be developed.

In developing the Plan, we will use the Act Principles to make sure:

- Services or programs are developed using what people with disability have told us are important to them
- The voices of families, friends and carers of people with disability are considered in the development of services and programs
- Consultation with people with disability is:
 - Designed and delivered together with people with disability; and
 - Done in different ways so people with disability can participate in the way that works for them.

What are we consulting about?

The Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan will be developed together with people with disability.

This means we need help from the Tasmanian community, particularly Tasmanians with disability, to share ideas, and work with us to create the Plan.

We need to hear from you so that we can get the Plan right.

In the Plan consultation, we want you to think about what we have already heard and if the information is still relevant and correct. We also want you to tell us about anything new or different.

In this paper we will ask you some questions to help you think about what you want us to know.

Did we hear you correctly?

Over the last few years there has been a lot of work in Australia and in Tasmania to improve the lives of people with disability such as:

- The Disability Royal Commission
- The Tasmanian *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024*
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme Review
- The establishment of the Disability Commissioner Tasmania

In doing this work the disability community has been asked many times about their views and experiences. We have heard that people feel like they are sharing the same information over and over.

So that you don't have to tell us the same thing again, we have included information that we have heard over the past few years in this discussion paper.

We have tried to include as much feedback as possible, without making the paper too long. We use examples and summaries rather than listing out every piece of feedback we've received.

Are we doing the right things in response to what you have told us?

The last few years have seen some important changes for people with disability. Many of these changes are in response to what you have told us.

What else do you think we should know?

Think about what you have already told us and what we are already doing.

- What is no longer correct or needed?
- What else should we be doing?

How to have your say

By being part of this consultation, you will be helping to ensure that Tasmania has a strong plan for an inclusive future for all Tasmanians with disability.

You can share your thoughts in writing, through audio or video, or in person at consultation events. You don't need to answer every question, just tell us what matters most to you.

There are different ways that you can give us your feedback on this Discussion Paper:

- You can make a submission responding to the questions in the Discussion Paper. You can do this as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
- You can participate in any of the many consultation options, which will include a mix of on-line and in person sessions such as:
 - Webinars
 - Survey
 - Focus Groups
 - Forums/Meetings.

Details of these events will be available on www.dpac.tas.gov.au/disability-inclusion-plan or email us (disability@dpac.tas.gov.au) and we will send the information to you.

Consultation will be open until 10 March 2026.

Important information about making a submission

A submission can respond to some or all of the questions in this Paper.

Anyone can send a submission. A submission can be from a person, a group or an organisation.

We encourage you to be as creative as you like. A submission can be a written statement, a telephone conversation, an email, a video or an audio file. For example,

in the past we have received poems. Whatever helps you to say what you want to say.

If you have a written submission, please send your submission to:

disability@dpac.tas.gov.au

Publication of submissions:

We will read all submissions to help us develop the Plan.

When making a submission you must tell us which level of privacy you want for all or parts of your submission. The privacy levels are:

(1) Public – means you are happy for us to put your submission online and use your name

(2) Anonymous - means you are happy for us to put your submission online, but not to publish your name

(3) Confidential - means you don't want your submission to be put online.

If you choose confidential, please let us know why.

Unless you tell us your submission is confidential, all submissions will be published on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's website as per the Tasmanian Government's [Public Submission Policy](#).

While confidential submissions are not published on the website, they are not any less important than public ones.

We will remove these items from submissions before they are published on our website:

1. Personal residential addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers
2. Derogatory or offensive (rude) language
3. Comments impugning the personal character and/or professional reputation of individuals and organisations – meaning rude or mean comments about people or organisations
4. Information that is confidential or not legally allowed to be shared
5. Any other materials not allowed by law.

The views in submissions belong to the individuals or organisations who submit them. Putting a submission online does not mean that we accept or agree with these views.

The Context for our work

To provide some context for our new Plan we have provided some information about some of the important local, national and international things we are already committed to.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The [UNCRPD](#) is an international human rights treaty. The UNCRPD aims to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and freedoms by all people with disability.

Through Australia's commitment to the UNCRPD, we share responsibility for ensuring the rights of people with disability.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031

[Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31](#) says all Australians should ensure people with disability can participate as equal members of society.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31 is a plan for continuing to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia.

We have signed the *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31* which says we agree with the values of respect, inclusion and equality and are committed to supporting every Tasmanian to achieve, to have a fair go and to have real choices.

Tasmania's Disability Strategy 2025 – 2027

The [Tasmania's Disability Strategy 2025-2027](#) is a short-term plan to build inclusive policies and practices across Tasmanian Government agencies. The Strategy is aligned with Australia's Disability Strategy. Tasmania's Disability Strategy will be replaced by the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan when the Plan is finalised.

Tasmania's Department of Health - Disability Health Strategy

The [Disability Health Strategy](#) provides a roadmap for the Department of Health to improve the delivery of high quality, accessible health services for all people with disability in Tasmania. Through the Strategy, the Department of Health is working to improve how healthcare is provided to people with disability in Tasmania, and how their families and carers, advocates and providers of disability support are engaged.

The Strategy, which is informed by community consultation with the Tasmanian disability community, will be implemented through a series of action plans that will outline a range of actions the Department will deliver against each of the priority areas. The priority areas include providing quality health services, improving the accessibility of health services, empowering decision making, building the health workforce and improving information systems and processes.

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission)

The Disability Royal Commission investigated:

- Preventing and better protecting people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Achieving best practice in reporting, investigating and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability
- Promoting a more inclusive society that supports people with disability to be independent and live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

On 31 July 2024 we published our [response](#) to the Disability Royal Commission's 222 recommendations.

Tasmanian Government departments are taking the lead in responding to specific Disability Royal Commission recommendations. However, it is the responsibility of every area of the Tasmanian Government, and the Tasmanian community, to act on what people with disability told us through the Royal Commission.

NDIS Review

The [NDIS Review Final Report: Working Together to Deliver the NDIS](#) made 26 recommendations to improve the NDIS.

Australian and state and territory governments have agreed to work together to:

- Make changes to the NDIS to improve the experience of participants and make the NDIS one part of a system of different supports for people with disability.
- Jointly design and commission Foundational Supports. Foundational supports will help people with disability – for example by providing information or referrals to services or supporting children who might have delays or disability through early intervention.

The Tasmanian Government is working with the Australian Government and other states and territories to design Foundational Supports.

Closing the Gap

The [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) sets out how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments will work together to make life better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The [Disability Sector Strengthening Plan](#) under Closing the Gap lists priorities and actions to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. The Disability Sector Strengthening Plan is aligned with Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31.

National Disability Advocacy Framework

The [National Disability Advocacy Framework 2023-2025](#) is a plan to make it easier for people with disability to access advocacy services and to improve consistency of advocacy services across Australia.

The National Disability Advocacy Framework 2023-2025 is an Associated Plan under Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031.

What have we heard already?

What are we doing?

What else do we need to know?

This section of the Paper includes a summary of information we have heard from consultations over the past few years.

We have also provided information about some of the things we have already done or are currently doing in response to what you have already told us.

We have included some questions to help you think about what else we should be doing.

We have used themes to help structure the information.

We would like you to:

- Read through this summary
- Let us know if you particularly agree or disagree with something and tell us why or why not
- Let us know if there is anything which isn't relevant anymore
- Let us know what else we should be doing that is new or fills a gap.

Theme 1 - The Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review

The **Disability Royal Commission** and the **NDIS Review** gathered feedback from thousands of Australians with disability over several years.

Across both projects, people with disability consistently asked for:

- Safe, high-quality support services
- Better housing and living options
- Inclusive access to everyday services like health care, education, and transport.

Disability Royal Commission (Final Report: Sept 2023)

Key findings:

- Inclusion is essential to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- People with disability face high rates of mistreatment—especially women with intellectual or mental health disabilities, First Nations women, and young women.

- Many people are excluded from everyday life due to their disability.
- Major changes are needed across Australia, including Tasmania, to make society more inclusive and safer.

Tasmania has started addressing these issues through:

- The Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024
- Updates to the Guardianship and Administration Act 2023
- Work related to youth justice and child safety reforms.

NDIS Review

- The NDIS Review received over 3,850 submissions. The Review reflected on improving the connection between mainstream services such as health education, transport, and housing and the NDIS to create a more inclusive society.

Question:

1.1 How can we strengthen disability inclusion and safeguarding?

Theme 2 - What we heard in Tasmanian Disability Consultations

Autonomy, Inclusion and Access

Across all engagement with the disability community, inclusion and accessibility were raised by many people.

The disability community told us that:

- Education and descriptions of what inclusion looks like should be provided to the Tasmanian Government, including sharing of previous local, national and international lessons and examples.
- Once Government Departments have had education and are aware of what inclusion looks like, they should be kept accountable to make sure they are making changes to ensure inclusion for people with disability.
- The focus should also be on the human rights of people with disability.

The disability community provided examples of lack of accessibility and inclusion in the community:

- Lack of pools with sloped entrances

- Playgrounds that are not accessible to children with disability
- Footpaths not wide enough, cracked, sloped or obstructed
- Not enough accessible parking.

People told us inclusion wasn't just about addressing physical barriers such as the examples above, but also attitudinal barriers.

Building positive community attitudes helps to address barriers like ableism, stigma, unconscious bias and lack of understanding about disability. Attitudinal barriers include:

- Ableism and unconscious and conscious bias, meaning people discriminate against people with disability.
- Stereotyping, misunderstanding and making generalisations about people with disability.

Some examples of work already in progress to improve attitudinal barriers include:

- The disability inclusion planning requirements that are part of *the Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024* includes a focus on the impact of attitudinal barriers.
- The inclusion of images of people with disability in Tasmanian Government advertising and promotional materials.
- Many Tasmanian Government Departments and Local Governments celebrate and host activities for the International Day of Disability.

Questions

2.1 What does true inclusion look like to you, and what changes would help make your community more inclusive and accessible?

2.2 What can we do to build positive attitudes about people with disability?

Accessibility of information

Regarding the accessibility of information, the disability community told us that:

- Tasmanian Government Departments should know how to make information fully accessible to people with disability.
- Full accessibility of all information is required, not just in one form – for example ensuring documents can be read by screen readers, but also including Easy Read versions, Auslan, etc.

- Documentation should be accessible the first time it is distributed – for example, the Easy Read version should be released at the same time as other versions.
- Government websites are not always where people find/receive information.
- People with disability are more likely to receive information from Google, Facebook, TikTok, forums, expos, service providers and word of mouth.
- People with disability are increasingly using artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, to easily understand information.

Suggestions to improve accessibility of information included:

- Using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 recommendations for making web content more accessible and for improving accessibility of other documents.
- Establishing a user testing group of people with disability to ensure Tasmanian Government information is accessible to people with different communication needs.
- Monitoring and reporting on compliance with the WCAG 2.2 standards for government websites.
- Developing a government accessible information and communication technology procurement policy and procedure, to ensure that systems government uses are accessible from the beginning.

Communication teams within the Tasmanian Government have increased their focus on accessibility, and ensuring information is released in accessible formats. This is a requirement of the new Act and we have already committed to developing an Accessible Formats Guideline. We also want to include the consistent provision of accessible information as an outcome in the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan.

Questions

2.3 What does accessible communication look like for you?

2.4 What more can we be doing to make getting and understanding information easier?

How we have consulted in the past

The disability community has told us that:

- One of the main barriers to inclusive consultation with people with disability is that not enough time is provided to think about issues and provide a meaningful response.
- True inclusion requires co-design with people with disability.
- The disability community want more feedback on how consultations were used and acknowledgment as contributors.
- People can experience 'consultation fatigue' where they feel like they keep being asked the same things and share the same information without anything changing.
- The voices of carers, support workers and organisations are sometimes important to create a full picture of the disability community, but other times the focus should be on the feedback of people with disability only.

We were provided practical feedback about ways to improve the involvement and contribution of people with disability in consultation processes, including:

- Using the [Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability](#) as it describes how to engage with people with disability.
- Using AI and assistive technology, and different ways to communicate to assist in engagement, for example voice memos, drawings, etc rather than just having to provide a written response.
- When planning an event, ensuring everything, from the invitation onward, is accessible.
- Ensuring people with disability are the most important people in the room and feel welcome and safe to say what they want. This could include more one on one engagement and proper remuneration to participate.

We have been using this feedback in consultations we have been undertaking. We continue to think about how we can balance consultation fatigue with the importance of including voices of people with disability.

In September 2025, a new Toolkit to help people with disability in evaluations was released on the [Disability Gateway](#) website. The Toolkit includes guidance for people with disability about how to get involved and advice for evaluators and decision-makers on how to be inclusive.

Question

2.5 What else should we be doing when we consult with the disability community?

Education

Some people in the disability community, particularly parents of children with disability, told us that they felt there was a lack of curiosity and creativity from the education system in how to work with students with disability. Some people said that some schools do not provide a safe or inclusive learning environment.

People shared that:

- It is hard, or impossible, to appeal or complain about decisions made by school principals, particularly regarding exclusion
- Principals often aren't informed regarding inclusion
- Bullying from other students is a common barrier to inclusive education for children.

Some specific suggestions on how to improve education outcomes for children with disability were shared, including:

- Establishing a maximum timeframe for students with disability to obtain a cognitive assessment in schools (i.e., 12 months).
- Reassessing learning disabilities in the transition from primary to high school and sharing the reports with family.
- Sharing resources with private schools and parents whose children are being home schooled.

Lack of education and learning for adults with disability was also raised, particularly literacy skills, including digital and health literacy.

A range of supports have been developed in response to feedback about the education system. These include:

- Resources for education staff regarding disability and disability adjustments
- Online disability awareness training with groups such as the Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
- Disability Awareness training for all new Department for Education, Children and Young People staff as part of the induction program.

Question

2.6 How are education and learning systems working for students with disability from early childhood to adulthood?

Employment

We heard that employment is important for people with disability as it can:

- Provide increased income and greater financial and general independence, contributing to a sense of identity and self-worth.
- Lead to more positive mental and general health impacts for people with disability.

People with disability shared the difficulties they face in gaining employment and/or progressing in their careers if they are successful in gaining employment.

The disability community also highlighted that it was important to include employees of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) when discussing employment for people with disability.

We heard that the focus of increasing employment of people with disability should be on upskilling employers' attitudes and increasing their understanding of the benefits of employing people with disability.

The Tasmanian Government was highlighted as an employer that should lead the way, suggestions included:

- Encouraging Departments to use Disability Employment Agencies to target the employment of people with disability.
- Funding a Disability Employment Officer within government to progress the employment strategy.
- Identifying alternative recruitment processes and options to support people with disability, in consultation with people with disability
- Implementing mandatory ableism awareness training in the Tasmanian Government. This could address the issue of unconscious bias in the workplace and build awareness of the social and mental health benefits of people with disability being in the workforce. The preference is for face-to-face training by people with disability.

In 2024, Business Tasmania's Better Workplace Employer Resources Toolkit was updated in partnership with National Disability Services (NDS). This Toolkit helps young Tasmanians with disability to gain employment.

We also engaged with local employers through the Employer of Choice Program to help them understand how to engage with diverse groups, including people with disability.

Employment and financial security are an area of focus under Australia's Disability Strategy.

Questions

- 2.7 How can our workplaces improve so that people with disability can fully participate and feel secure in their jobs?
- 2.8 What needs to change so people with disability can work safely and successfully in Tasmania?

Health and Wellbeing

We have heard that strong health and wellbeing can shape a person's quality of life, and this is especially true for people with disability. People with disability have a significantly higher risk of poor health outcomes than people without disability. This includes experiencing higher levels of health conditions and comorbidities that are preventable.

Feedback we received from the disability community regarding the health system is that:

- People sometimes face challenges in accessing the health and allied health professionals they need.
- There are sometimes long waiting lists, or the health service doesn't exist in Tasmania and some people need to travel interstate to access essential health services.
- The accessibility and cost of general practitioners is a barrier to receiving the health support they need.
- People sometimes find it hard to know what counts as a disability support or service compared to health, mental health, aged care, etc service or support.
- The definition of 'disability' can change between services, for example chronic health conditions sometimes are and sometimes aren't considered disability.
- The health sector can assume they know what's best for a person with disability and can use old, paternalistic models of 'care'.

Examples to improve health outcomes for people with disability included:

- Implementing an education program on the needs of people with disability as part of the induction processes for new Health staff.

- Increasing capacity of the Tasmanian Autism Diagnostic Service.
- Hiring speech pathologists, psychologists and social workers to deliver on the commitment of being available in every child and family learning centre.

In February 2025, the Tasmanian Department of Health released the Disability Health Strategy. The Strategy outlines activities for the Department to improve the experience of people with disability in engaging with the health system through the key focus areas of quality, accessibility, decision making, workforce and information systems.

The *Long-Term Plan for Healthcare in Tasmania 2040* is a commitment to improving health outcomes for people with disability by expanding access to integrated, home-based and community care, including supported accommodation or other suitable community-based locations, and supporting the development of the Department of Health's *Disability Health Strategy*.

We have Disability Confident Workforce Training for Department of Health staff, which provides information on disability, and creating inclusive and enabling environments.

The Department of Health has also partnered with Primary Health Tasmania to support the delivery of the Primary Care Enhancement Program. This Program supports health professionals in caring for people with intellectual disability, provides practical training and resources to general practitioners and other primary healthcare professionals to improve their capability in this area.

Question

2.9 What should we do to improve health and wellbeing for people with disability, and what does inclusive health care mean to you?

Housing and Inclusive Communities

The disability community has shared:

- There needs to be more accessible social housing options for people with disability.
- Existing accessible houses need to be improved and maintained.

People with disability particularly shared that it is important to have the choice of:

- Where they live

- Who they live with
- Having visitors whenever they want
- Having pets.

Some specific examples to improve housing for people with disability, included:

- Developing a checklist in consultation with people with disability to ensure that the location of social housing is appropriate (for example, close to services, avoiding flood and bushfire risk areas).
- Imposing a minimum percentage of accessible homes built and controlled by community care providers (contractor clause).
- Reviewing the MyHome shared equity scheme to identify how people with disability can be supported to purchase accessible public housing.
- Developing a monitoring and compliance process for the implementation of the National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 Liveable Housing provisions.

As of 1 October 2025, Stage 2 of the phased implementation of the Liveable Housing Design Standard is now in effect in Tasmania.

This staged approach is designed to give building service providers enough time to adjust to the new requirements and apply them effectively within the Tasmanian context. The implementation stages are:

- Requirements in effect since 1 October 2024:
Minimum clear opening width for entry doors to dwellings
Hobless or flush entry showers
Reinforced walls in bathrooms and sanitary compartments to support future installation of grab rails
- Requirements that commenced on 1 October 2025:
Minimum internal door and corridor widths to improve accessibility
Circulation space requirements within sanitary compartments
- Final phase of implementation (from 1 October 2026):
All remaining provisions under Part 8 of the Livable Housing Design Standards.

We will review our social housing policy in 2025-26.

Australia's Disability Strategy also includes a focus on Inclusive Homes and Communities. In addition to accessible and well-designed homes, Australia's Disability Strategy includes a focus on participation in the community, access to the built and natural environment, transport accessibility and the accessibility of information and communication.

Question

2.10 What further changes could we make to ensure that people with disability can access liveable homes and live in their community?

Intersectionality

The disability community told us it is important to remember people with disability are not just one group. Feedback about this included that:

- The separation of support for older people and support for people with disability is difficult, when people are often both.
- 'People with disability' is not the same as National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants, and that there is an over-focus on people with NDIS packages.
- There needs to be more inclusion, representation and understanding of neurodiverse people.
- The general public often consider 'disability' to be physical disability.
- Services need to understand how to provide culturally safe supports to cohorts such as LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and First Nations people with disability.

Question

2.11 What would help us better understand and support people with disability who have many and overlapping identities—for example, due to age, culture, neurodiversity, gender, or identity?

Justice

Regarding the justice system, the disability community shared that:

- People with disability are treated as unreliable witnesses, like children, ignored, disbelieved or targeted when engaging with the justice system.

- Inaccessible information can mean that people with disability don't fully understand what they are reading / signing / agreeing to, possibly leading to severe consequences.

Feedback was that the criminal justice system should be reviewed to improve how the system responds to the complex needs and vulnerabilities of people with disability.

We have started a review of the policy and procedure related to admission of young people to Ashley youth detention centre. The reviewed procedure will consider how to ensure young people with disability receive appropriate support.

The Department of Justice's People, Culture and Inclusion Disability Action Plan 2024-2027 builds on previous work in reducing barriers for people with disability.

Question

2.12 What else could the criminal justice system be doing to improve how it responds to people with disability?

Supported Decision Making

Supported decision making is when people with disability have the help they need to make decisions.

Feedback we received on supported decision-making is that:

- It is important to remember that the focus of decision making should be on the dignity, choice and control for people with disability.
- Work on supported decision making should happen at a whole of government level and that any related legislation aligns and intersects as necessary.
- Some people think it is important to have an appropriately funded supported decision-making scheme as soon as possible.
- Dispute resolution pathways (such as complaint procedures) should go hand in hand with supported decision making, so that people with disability can disagree with/complain about decisions made on their behalf.

We have made changes to the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1995 (Tas)* to support people with disability to make decisions about their lives. This includes:

- Ensuring that the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1995* recognises and promotes the rights of people with disability and is consistent with the UNCRPD
- Introducing supported decision-making principles

- When a person is performing a function under the Act, they must do this in a way that is less restrictive of a person's freedom of decision and action
- Including a process for appointing a substitute decision maker that respects the decisions of the person with disability
- Protecting the confidentiality of information related to people with disability.

Question

2.13 What needs to change so that people with disability can participate as much as possible in decisions that affect their lives?

Transport

Transport is one of the most common issues raised by people with disability. They noted that:

- It does not matter how inclusive a service is if people with disability are not able to get to the service due to lack of transport options.
- People with disability often rely on public transport, but that public transport is often inaccessible, including timetables, shelters and the buses themselves.
- Public transport routes are limited.
- A person with disability may not be able to safely navigate from a bus stop to their location.
- If a person with disability is unable to access public transport, other options are limited and expensive – for example, there are not enough wheelchair accessible taxis.
- Community Transport, while cheaper than taxis, still has a cost and may not be available when needed.

Suggestions to improve transport for people with disability include:

- Ensure Metro timetables are accessible in accordance with WCAG 2.2.
- Improve the safety of road crossings, including through pedestrian / refuge islands having tactile indication.
- Review audible traffic and walk signals to ensure that they give sufficient time for people with mobility or sensory disability to get across roads safely.

- Increase the number of taxi operators and wheelchair accessible taxis through incentive schemes and implement an accessible feedback and complaints system for taxis and Metro users.

We are working to improve Tasmania's road network to ensure it is Disability Discrimination Act compliant, including tactile strips for blind and visually impaired people.

Question

2.14 What else could the Tasmanian Government be doing to improve the accessibility of Transport options?

Theme 3 – Disability Supports and the Market

Providers

People with disability in Tasmania, especially those in regional areas, say they don't have enough choice when it comes to service providers.

Rules and regulations, especially those related to the NDIS, make it feel like only large organisations are safe or viable, which can push smaller providers out. This often leads to one organisation delivering all services to a person, limiting their options.

Personal and Community Support is also an outcomes area of Australia's Disability Strategy. The goal is to ensure that people with disability have access to a range of formal and informal supports they need to live independently and engage in their communities.

Questions:

- 3.1 How can we improve so that it is easier to find information about the supports available for you and your family?
- 3.2 What community services are most important to people with disability?

Theme 4 - Safeguarding

Advocacy

The disability community shared that strong independent advocacy is essential for helping them make choices and have control over their lives. But right now, limited funding means many people are stuck on waitlists, which can make their problems worse.

Advocacy is important to help people with disability, particularly people with intellectual or cognitive disability to access and use complicated service systems.

Most people seek advocacy support for issues like:

- The NDIS
- Housing and living arrangements
- Discrimination and rights
- Legal matters
- Money and government payments
- Child safety concerns.

We are committed to continuing funding for disability advocacy in Tasmania. We are working with advocacy organisations to understand common issues, unmet needs, and the experiences of culturally diverse people with disability.

Through the National Disability Advocacy Framework, we are also partnering with other governments to improve how advocacy services are funded, coordinated, and made accessible.

Community Visitor Scheme

Community Visitor Schemes visit people with disability to ensure their rights are being respected and that they can make complaints. The creation of a community visitor scheme in Tasmania was recommended by the Disability Royal Commission and is broadly supported by the disability community.

The disability community noted that:

- Tasmania can learn from existing Community Visitor Schemes in other states and territories.
- The Tasmanian *Disability, Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024* should include provisions for establishing a scheme.

We have acted on this feedback and made provision in the Tasmanian *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024* for a creation of a community visitor scheme in the future.

Details of how the scheme will operate will be established in a future regulation consistent with national direction and practice.

Disability Commissioner

The disability community has told us that a Disability Commissioner is needed in Tasmania.

The primary feedback we heard from the disability community was that:

- How the Disability Commissioner role works with other Commissioners and Commissions, such as the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Commissioner for Children and NDIS Commission, needs to be considered.
- Any investigations undertaken by the Disability Commissioner need to work alongside, not repeat, existing processes.
- Information and community education is needed so people know 'which issue goes where', but with warm referrals to ensure people are not moved or lost between systems.
- All information from the Disability Commissioner's office needs to be the 'gold standard' of accessibility.

We have acted on this feedback and created the first Tasmanian Disability Commissioner. Tasmania's *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024* formally establishes the role and provides powers under this legislation.

Restrictive Practices

Restrictive practices are actions that limit what a person with disability can do—like locking doors, stopping them from going places, or giving them medication to change their behaviour. These practices can be harmful if not properly managed.

Behaviour Support Practitioners help by creating plans that explain why someone might behave a certain way and suggest better ways to support them without using—or by reducing—restrictive practices.

The disability community raised several concerns about restrictive practices including that:

- Oversight of restrictive practices should happen in all settings, not just disability services—especially in schools.
- There's a difference between practices that protect people and those that are abusive and unacceptable.
- Tasmania doesn't have enough trained behaviour support practitioners or GPs who understand chemical restraint.

- Authorising restrictive practices must be balanced with human rights and may conflict with Australia's international obligations.
- These practices can take away a person's ability to make decisions about their own life.
- Plans to reduce and eventually stop restrictive practices are important for giving people more choice and control.
- We need to understand what's causing the use of restrictive practices and educate the community about what they are.

Tasmania responded by creating the *Disability, Rights Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024*. This law sets out how restrictive practices should be authorised, reviewed, and monitored. We have also committed to doing further work and scoping the legal frameworks for regulating restrictive practices in other settings.

A Senior Practitioner role was introduced in May 2025, and a new authorisation model began in July 2025.

Resources are available online, and further work is planned to expand this legal framework to other areas, guided by the Disability Royal Commission's recommendations.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

Regarding emergency management, the disability community shared that:

- People with disability feel overlooked during emergencies.
- Emergency services often don't understand their needs, which can make things worse—especially when support workers aren't treated as essential workers.
- Many in the disability community don't know how to get help from the government during crises like COVID-19, so local organisations have to step in to provide essentials like food and personal protective equipment.
- Emergency information can be hard to understand or not accessible, and misinformation—especially on social media—adds to the confusion.
- Advice during emergencies rarely includes what people with disability should do or where they can get support.
- As natural disasters become more common, it's important for emergency services and disability groups to work together to keep people safe.
- The government should learn from past disasters and take action.

We have worked over the last few years to improve inclusion of people with disability in disaster preparedness, and emergency responses. This has included employing people with disability and working with people with disability to develop communication strategies, plan and prepare for emergencies.

We launched a three-year project in 2024 to help people with disability better prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The project aims to improve long-term emergency planning and support.

Questions:

- 4.1 How else can we ensure that the human rights of people with disability are promoted, upheld and protected?
- 4.2 What other forms of safeguarding for people with disability should we be considering?

Theme 5 - What else do you want to tell us about disability inclusion?

We wanted to give you the opportunity to share with us anything else about disability inclusion we haven't asked about already.

Questions:

- 5.1 What would a truly inclusive Tasmania look like for people with disability, and what needs to change to get us there?
- 5.2 What would you like others to learn from your experience of living with disability in Tasmania?
- 5.3 How can the service system in Tasmania improve to better meet the needs of people living with disability?
- 5.4 What ideas do you have about how we might structure the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan?

Contact Us

If you would like to find out more about the consultation or activities you can join please visit our website – www.dpac.tas.gov.au/disability-inclusion-plan

Email: disability@dpac.tas.gov.au

Phone: 1800 431 211

Appendix 1

Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024 – Objects and Principles

Objects of the Act

The objects of this Act are to advance and safeguard the rights of all people with disability and to advance the full and effective inclusion of all people with disability, including by –

- a) recognising the responsibility of the State and the community to support people with disability in exercising their human rights; and
- b) supporting and effecting –
 - i. the human rights of people with disability under international treaties including, but not limited to, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and
 - ii. Australia's Disability Strategy; and
- c) establishing a framework for a whole-of- government approach to accountability and transparency in relation to disability inclusion; and
- d) regulating the use of restrictive practices by disability services providers; and
- e) establishing the positions of Disability Commissioner and Senior Practitioner; and
- f) establishing the Disability Inclusion Advisory Council; and
- g) providing for a community visitor scheme; and
- h) enabling the provision of funding to support the above objects.

Principles of the Act

- (1) The following principles, which reflect the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, are to be observed in the operation, administration and enforcement of this Act:
 - (a) people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to realise their potential for physical, social,

emotional and intellectual development;

- (b) people with disability have the right to participate in, and contribute to, social and economic life on an equal basis with others, and have the right to be supported to enjoy this right;
- (c) people with disability and their families and carers have the right to certainty that people with disability will receive the care and support that they need over their lifetime;
- (d) people with disability have the right to be supported to exercise choice, including in relation to taking reasonable risks, in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports;
- (e) people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to be respected for their worth and dignity and to live free from violence, abuse, neglect, coercion and exploitation;
- (f) people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to pursue any grievance;
- (g) people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to be able to make their own decisions, including the right to exercise choice and control in decisions that affect their lives, to the full extent of their capacity;
- (h) people with disability have the right to be supported in all their dealings and communications so that their capacity to exercise choice and control is maximised in a way that is appropriate to their circumstances and cultural needs;
- (i) people with disability who require support in decision-making are to be provided with access to the support necessary to enable those persons –
 - (i) to participate in those decisions; and
 - (ii) to express their will and preferences in relation to those decisions; and
 - (iii) to develop their decision-making ability;
- (j) people with disability have the right to receive innovative, high-quality, best- practice, contemporary and effective supports that are person-centred and trauma-informed;

- (k) people with disability have the right to have their privacy and dignity respected;
 - (l) the role of families, carers and other significant persons in the lives of people with disability is to be acknowledged and respected;
 - (m) people with disability have the right to access disability advocacy which plays an essential role in fostering the full and equal enjoyment of human rights, enabling community participation and the inclusion of people with disability by ensuring that their rights are maintained, promoted and valued;
 - (n) the voices of people with disability are central to the development of practical, effective and targeted services and programs;
 - (o) the voices of families, friends and carers of people with disability are to be considered in the development of practical, effective and targeted services and programs;
 - (p) consultation with people with disability should be –
 - (i) designed and delivered in collaboration with people with disability; and
 - (ii) adaptable to provide for the range of different ways that people with disability may use to participate;
 - (q) positive personal and social development of people with disability, including children and young people, is to be promoted.
- (2) In addition to any other principles set out in this section, if this Act requires or permits an act or thing to be done by or in relation to a person with disability by another person, the act or thing is to be done, so far as is practicable, in accordance with the following principles:
- (a) people with disability have the right to make their own decisions and to access support to enable them to make decisions;
 - (b) people with disability are to be encouraged to engage in the life of the community;
 - (c) people with disability have the right to have their own individual freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making respected;
 - (d) the intersectionality of an individual's circumstances are to be considered in the development of practical, effective and targeted

services and programs;

- (e) the supportive relationships, friendships and connections, with others, of people with disability are to be recognised;
 - (f) restrictive practices should only be used in very limited and specific circumstances as a last resort and utilising the least restrictive practice and for the shortest period of time possible in the circumstances;
 - (g) restrictive practices should only be used where they are proportionate and justified in order to protect the rights or safety of the person with disability or others.
- (3) In addition to any other principles set out in this section, if this Act requires or permits an act or thing to be done by or in relation to a child with disability by another person, the act or thing is to be done, so far as is practicable, in accordance with the following principles:
- (a) the evolving capacities of the child are to be respected;
 - (b) the right of the child to preserve the child's identity is to be respected;
 - (c) the wishes of the child, however expressed, are to be taken into account;
 - (d) the child is to be provided with disability and age-appropriate support in decision- making;
 - (e) regard is to be had, and appropriate weight given to, the views of the child;
 - (f) the best interests of the child are paramount, and full consideration must be given to the need to –
 - (i) protect the child from harm; and
 - (ii) promote the child's development; and
 - (iii) strengthen, preserve and promote positive relationships between the child and the child's parents, family members and other people who are significant in the life of the child.
- (4) Each person or body engaged in the administration, operation or enforcement of this Act must exercise their powers and perform their functions so as to give effect to the principles set out in this section.

Appendix 2

All Questions

Please Note - These questions are also included earlier in the document. This is a summary of the questions.

Theme 1 - The Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review

- 1.1 How can we strengthen disability inclusion and safeguarding?

Theme 2 - What we heard in Tasmanian Disability Consultations

- 2.1 What does true inclusion look like to you, and what changes would help make your community more inclusive and accessible?
- 2.2 What can we do to build positive attitudes about people with disability?
- 2.3 What does accessible communication look like for you?
- 2.4 What more can we be doing to make getting and understanding information easier?
- 2.5 What else should we be doing when we consult with the disability community?
- 2.6 How are education and learning systems working for students with disability from early childhood to adulthood?
- 2.7 How can our workplaces improve so that people with disability can fully participate and feel secure in their jobs?
- 2.8 What needs to change so people with disability can work safely and successfully in Tasmania?
- 2.9 What should we do to improve health and wellbeing for people with disability, and what does inclusive health care mean to you?
- 2.10 What further changes could we make to ensure that people with disability can access liveable homes and live in their community?
- 2.11 What would help us better understand and support people with disability who face multiple and overlapping barriers—for example, due to age, culture, neurodiversity, gender, or identity?
- 2.12 What else could the criminal justice system be doing to improve how it responds to people with disability?

- 2.13 What needs to change so that people with disability can participate as much as possible in decisions that affect their lives?
- 2.14 What else could the Tasmanian Government be doing to improve the accessibility of Transport options?

Theme 3 – Disability Supports and the Market

- 3.1 How can we improve so that it is easier to find information about the supports available for you and your family?
- 3.2 What community services are most important to people with disability?

Theme 4 - Safeguarding

- 4.1 How else can we ensure that the human rights of people with disability are promoted, upheld and protected?
- 4.2 What other forms of safeguarding for people with disability should we be considering?

Theme 5 - What else do you want to tell us about disability inclusion?

- 5.1 What would a truly inclusive Tasmania look like for people with disability, and what needs to change to get us there?
- 5.2 What would you like others to learn from your experience of living with disability in Tasmania?
- 5.3 How can the service system in Tasmania improve to better meet the needs of people living with disability?
- 5.4 What ideas do you have about how we might structure the Tasmanian Disability Inclusion Plan?

