

Key statistics



In NSW, there are **1.35 million** people with disability, or 17% of the population.¹



Disability rates increase substantially as people age, with close to **40% of people** having some form of disability by the time they are 70 years old.¹

What are we doing?

This report card provides an overview of the progress achieved during the first year of the [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021–2025](#) and [NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021–2025](#).

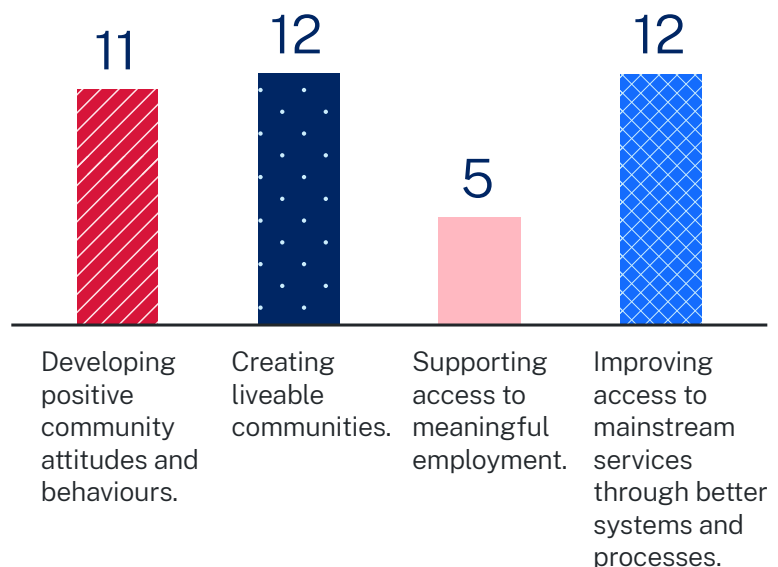
The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021–2025 (the Plan) provides a whole of government strategy, aligned to the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (the Act). The Plan has four focus areas that set out how the NSW Government will improve the lives of people with disability:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

Under these focus areas are 40 actions being delivered by NSW government agencies. 38 actions are being led by individual agencies. Two actions are being delivered by all agencies.

Public authorities (NSW government departments, local councils and some other agencies) also have individual Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAPs). The progress of these DIAPs is reported separately.

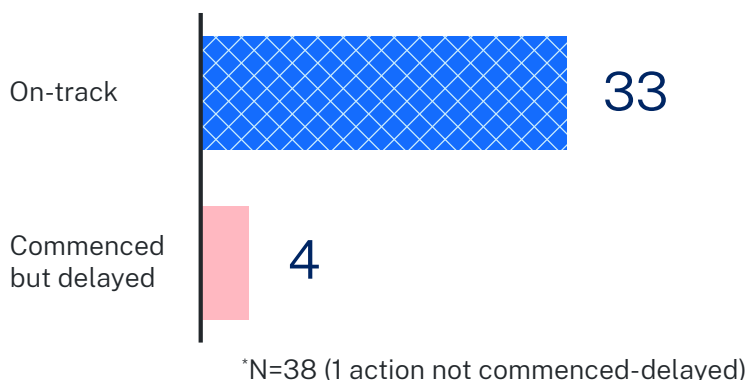
Number of actions in each focus area



¹Australian Bureau of Statistics 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018

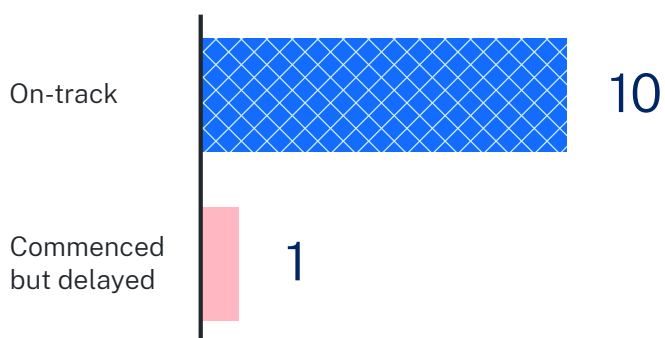
What have we achieved so far?

Status of actions* in 2022

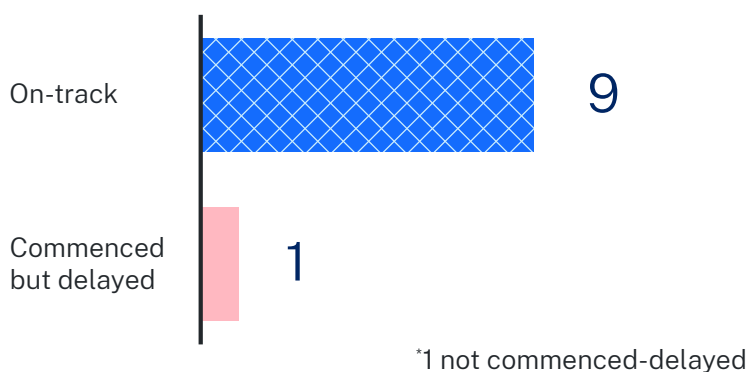


Status of the 2 actions delivered by all 11 agencies in 2022

🚩 ACTION: Ensure departmental buildings, facilities and services are accessible and inclusive for all people.



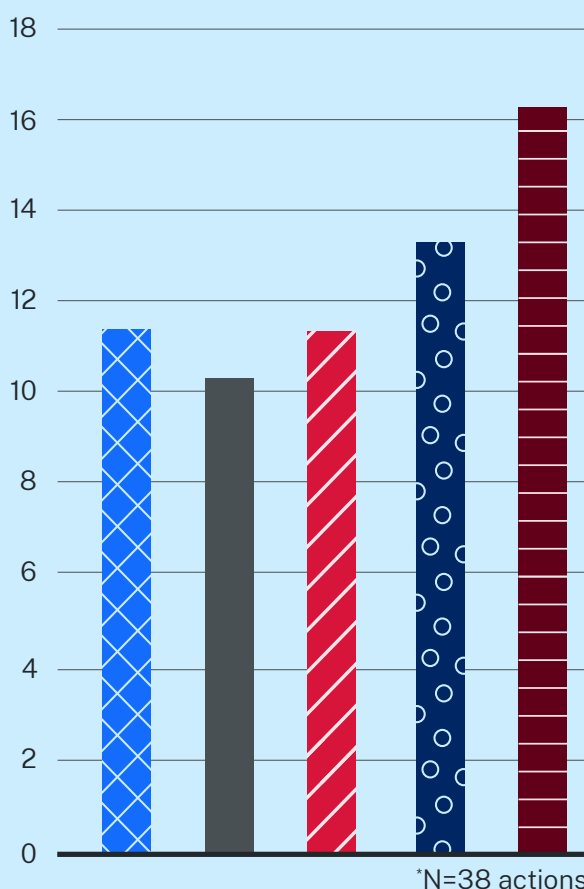
🚩 ACTION: Agencies to identify and remove barriers caused by our systems and processes to provide accessibility to employees and community.*








Priority populations

The Act recognises that some people with disability experience multiple disadvantage and/or additional barriers to accessing services and supports. Agencies were asked if their actions had specific mechanisms for including any of the priority populations. As the chart below illustrates, each priority population is being targeted by at least some actions.

Priority population inclusion*



-  Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer (LGBTIQ+) people with disability.
-  Children and young people with disability.
-  Women with disability.
-  People with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

How we are improving outcomes for people with disability in NSW

Over the following pages are some highlights of the progress made during 2021–2022 under each of the four focus areas.





1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

AIM: To build community awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability, and support the development of positive attitudes and behaviour towards people with disability.

! ACTION: Increase the visibility of Companion Card in the community.

During 2021–2022, over 3,000 applications for a [NSW Companion Card](#) were received.

The NSW Companion Card program is for people with significant and permanent disability who need a high level of care in the community. The Companion Card allows a cardholder's support person free entry into participating venues and events.



3,000

Applications for a NSW Companion Card were received during 2021-2022.

! ACTION: NSW Advocacy.

The NSW Government continued to work with the Commonwealth and other states and territories on a national approach to advocacy through [Australia's Disability Strategy](#).

The [Disability Advocacy Futures Program](#) was established to better support people with disability in NSW to access services and provide a voice for, and speak on behalf of, those they represent. The program provides valuable feedback to government and other areas of the community. Nineteen organisations are funded to provide individual, systemic and representative advocacy.



NINETEEN

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! ACTION: Rights-based community engagement and education activities.

The Ageing and Disability Commission (ADC) developed targeted communication strategies to promote the rights of adults with disability. These strategies, designed in a range of formats including Easy Read, helped people with disability better understand abuse and neglect and how to seek help.

In 2021–2022, 18,732 ADC resources were distributed across NSW. This includes the translated and culturally appropriate resources developed in consultation with Aboriginal and culturally diverse communities and stakeholders.

The ADC also participated in 57 community education and training events across NSW, working with the disability, ageing and community sectors. This was part of a proactive outreach plan to further raise awareness of ADC's functions and build the capability of providers in relation to abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults with disability.

! ACTION: Develop and promote a culture of inclusion and customer service among Transport for NSW staff and transport delivery partners.

Sydney Trains developed SpeechMagic, which assists customers who are deaf or hard of hearing by enabling announcements made by station staff to appear as text on platform screen indicators at stations.

Transport for NSW hosted the Accessible Transport Advisory Committee (ATAC) involving over 20 peak disability and ageing organisations that operate throughout NSW. The forums provided an opportunity to engage with the community and improve accessibility in a meaningful way.

! ACTION: Increase public awareness of disability inclusion at a local level.

The Disability Council NSW, with support from the Department of Communities and Justice, continued to raise awareness about issues impacting people with disability in NSW. In particular, the Disability Council presented at a Local Government Ageing & Disability Forum about local councils' obligations under the Act and disability inclusion action planning.



2. Creating liveable communities

AIM: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, learning, transport, health, social and cultural engagement and wellbeing.

! ACTION: Helping local councils to assist their communities to better prevent and respond to abuse.

The Ageing and Disability Commission launched the Ending Abuse through Simple Interventions program to support local councils to prevent and protect adults with disability from abuse, neglect and exploitation in their local area. A handbook was developed to guide strategic initiatives such as establishing an abuse prevention collaborative, embedding formalised training for local staff, and developing localised communications strategies.

! ACTION: Build inclusive play opportunities.

Under the Everyone Can Play initiative, 102 projects across NSW were completed during 2021–2022. Everyone Can Play is a best practice resource for councils, community leaders, landscape architects and passionate local residents to create playspaces designed to include everyone in the community.



102

Everyone Can Play projects were completed across NSW.

! ACTION: Support the work of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) supported the work of the Disability Royal Commission through participation in hearings, provision of statements, attendance at roundtables and responses to the submissions of counsel assisting the Commission.

DCJ is leading the development and drafting of a whole of NSW Government submission to the Disability Royal Commission (which was submitted in December 2022).

! ACTION: Progressively increase the availability and accessibility of public and private transport options for people with disability, including people living in regional and rural areas.

Through the Transport Access Program, an initiative to deliver accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure, there were upgrades to 16 railway stations and one ferry wharf. Construction either started or continued at a further 21 railway stations, and planning is under way for upgrades to an additional nine railway stations and five ferry wharves.

Transport for NSW consulted with disability advocacy groups to help inform the new Mariyung intercity trains' design and proposed operating model.

The Bus Signage Rollout Program installed a further 3,400 bus stop signs across NSW. The new signs feature raised braille and tactile elements to assist people who are blind or have low vision in identifying the bus stop.



3,400

bus stops featuring braille and tactile elements installed across NSW.

! ACTION: NSW Health will continue oversight and delivery of the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative and Community Living Supports programs.

NSW Health continued to deliver the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) and Community Living Supports (CLS) programs. These programs support people with severe mental illness to build daily skills and independence to live and participate in the community.

HASI and CLS offer tailored, individualised supports based on a person's identified goals. During 2021–2022, HASI and CLS supported more than 1800 people across NSW with severe mental illness to live and participate in the community in the way they want to.

(The results of a 3-year longitudinal evaluation of HASI and CLS were published in November 2022).

❗ **ACTION:** Ensure departmental buildings, facilities and services are accessible and inclusive for all people.

The first stage of the Accessible Office Design framework, a joint initiative between the Public Service Commission and Property & Development NSW (PDNSW), was launched. It is a performance framework that aims to make workplace design and fit out more accessible in new and existing NSW Government buildings. The framework is for anyone who procures, designs, builds and refurbishes, manages or maintains NSW Government offices.

To help create the framework, the Public Service Commission engaged with NSW public sector employees through focus groups and the Accessible Office Design Survey. Feedback from over 690 public sector employees with disability helped to address the needs of people who experience cognitive, physical, psychological, psychosocial or sensory diversity.





3. Supporting access to meaningful employment

AIM: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future, exercise choice and control, and increase their economic security.

! ACTION: NSW government fosters an inclusive workplace culture that increases the number of government roles held by people with disability.

The NSW Government engaged Ernst and Young to identify opportunities to promote the achievement of the target that 5.6% of all government sector roles are held by people with disability by 2025. (The Review was completed in July 2022).

! ACTION: NSW Health Recruitment policies promote disability inclusion.

In 2021–2022, NSW Health continued to support access to meaningful employment for people with disability including by promoting best practice case studies, strategy resources and the [Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging guide](#).

The percentage of staff with disability increased from 4.2% the previous financial year to 4.9%.

! ACTION: Increasing employment of people with disability in the Ageing and Disability Commission.

During 2021–2022, the Ageing and Disability Commission provided internship placements to people with disability. People with disability were also appointed to the Official Community Visitors scheme and the Ageing and Disability Advisory Board.





4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

AIM: To ensure that people with disability can make informed choices about available services and to easily and efficiently access mainstream government services and other opportunities in the community.

! ACTION: More Jobs More Care.

As of 30 June 2022, over 2,500 participants had commenced the More Jobs More Care (MJMC) program, with approximately 1,100 completing it. MJMC aims to increase the workforce providing services to people with disability, providing an increase in access to services. It seeks to attract and retain new care sector workers (Phase One), and increase NDIS participant plan utilisation for people with psychosocial disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Phase Two).

Phase One resulted in up to 950 employment outcomes for program participants, including approximately 210 traineeships.



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2,500

people commenced the More Jobs More Care program.

! ACTION: Build disability confidence and capability: Streamline and improve the systems and processes by which families, children and young people access timely targeted support throughout their learning journey.

The Department of Education procured nine specialist professional learning courses to build the capacity of schools to support students with disability.

As at June 2022, the development of the disability module in a microlearning series for curriculum advisors and teachers was in progress. It will provide timely data that will inform the development of a coordinated and streamlined approach to continuous quality improvement of professional learning to support students with disability.

! ACTION: Strengthening domestic and family violence supports for people with disability.

NSW Health is implementing the NSW Health Sexual Assault Services and New Street Services Access Strategy for People with Disability 2021–2025. The Strategy focuses on building workforce capacity to support increased service accessibility and appropriate clinical practice in NSW Health sexual assault services and New Street services.

NSW Health's Education Centre Against Violence established a time-limited statewide, multiagency disability and sexual violence standards training committee to guide the initial implementation of the Strategy and development of evidence-based, best practice training and professional development. This included the delivery of specialist training for sexual assault services to identify and respond to sexual assault presentations for people with disability, delivered in partnership with People with Disability Australia and the Council for Intellectual Disability.

! ACTION: Agencies to identify and remove barriers caused by our systems and processes to provide accessibility to employees and community.

The Department of Communities and Justice launched the Accessibility for Digital Communications Policy in October 2021 and an eLearning module for Accessible Digital Communications - Basics in June 2022 to inform staff about their obligations in meeting the compliance requirements.

Accessibility Hub, a dedicated intranet space, was created for staff to easily access resources for making digital content accessible.

978 staff engaged with the eLearning module as of 30 June 2022. A pre and post course survey indicates a significant shift in awareness from 3.6% to 30.47%.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) partnered with Jigsaw, a social enterprise that trains and transitions people with disability into employment. Jigsaw worked alongside the People, Culture and Talent branch to support DPC's efforts to increase disability employment and to build a disability-confident workforce.

In June 2022, a dedicated disability advocate was employed to facilitate the process of introducing business areas to Jigsaw and their staff and vice versa. As of 30 June 2022, three people with disability were placed into targeted roles and provided with wrap-around supports. The managers of each of the individuals were provided with training and support so that they became disability-confident and could effectively support the staff that were transitioned into their teams.

Transport for NSW continued to participate in the reform and modernisation of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 being led by the Australian Government.

Under the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme (TTSS), Transport for NSW transitioned from paper dockets to a TTSS Smartcard state-wide. 24,776 Smartcards were issued to TTSS participants and 143,838 trips were taken using the TTSS Smartcard across NSW during 2021–2022.

! ACTION: The ADC implementing effective referral arrangements for complaints about mainstream and specialist services.

The Ageing and Disability Commission put streamlined arrangements in place with relevant complaint-handling and oversight bodies to make it as easy as possible for complaints by people with disability to get to the right place. Referral arrangements are in place with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), NDIA Quality and Safeguards Commission, Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC), Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, Office of the Children’s Guardian, Seniors Rights Service, Office of the Legal Services Commissioner, NSW Police, NSW Trustee and Guardian (including the Public Guardian) and Relationships Australia.

In 2021–2022, the ADC referred 150 complaints to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (146 accepted), 69 complaints to the NDIS Commission (66 accepted), 39 complaints to the HCCC (38 accepted) and 216 matters to NSW Police (210 accepted).

162 other referrals, including to mainstream agencies and other complaint-handling/oversight bodies (159 accepted), were also made.

! ACTION: Ensuring easy access to information.

In 2021–2022, NSW Health continued work to build positive engagement, attitudes and behaviours through system wide development and use of accessible communications. In particular targeted and accessible information for people with disability about maintaining health, wellbeing and supports during COVID-19 were developed.

! ACTION: Within NSW Government, improve compliance with level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) current standard.

The Department of Customer Service launched the Accessibility NSW Compliance Toolkit to ensure NSW Government has the resources and expertise to build, buy and deliver accessible products and services. The toolkit is a one-stop-shop for digital accessibility delivery excellence, providing practical tools and resources.

The accessibility scores for NSW government platforms were tested. The accessibility score of nsw.gov.au overall increased from 72/100 on 1 July 2021 to 78.8/100 on 30 June 2022. Accessibility features implemented include text-to-speech reading of content and specific Easy Read resources for COVID-19 information.

For further information

For further information about disability inclusion, please visit the Department of Communities and Justice [website](#).

