

*Sharpening*  
THE FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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2018-19 Annual Report

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## About ADA AUSTRALIA

Aged and Disability Advocacy (ADA) Australia is a not-for-profit, independent, community-based advocacy and education service with nearing 30 years' experience in supporting and improving the wellbeing of older people and people with disability in Queensland.

With headquarters in Brisbane and advocates in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast, ADA Australia provides advocacy services to older people and people with disability in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote Queensland.

Our mission 'to enable people to be heard, informed, and exercise their rights' is achieved through provision of accurate information, education and valuable individual advocacy support across a range of programs that have a consumer directed focus.

This financial year ADA Australia established new Disability Advocate positions in Rockhampton and the Gold Coast funded through the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP).

ADA Australia is a member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) funded through the Australian Government's National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) to deliver individual advocacy, information and education services to older people (and their representatives) who receive or are eligible to receive, Australian Government funded aged care services.

ADA Australia operates a Human Rights Advocacy Service, funded through Legal Aid Queensland, which supports people with a decision-making disability and people over 65 years, to express their views, wishes and preferences at QCAT and in relation to guardianship, administration and Enduring Power of Attorney matters.

ADA Australia also received funding from the Queensland Government to inform and support people with a disability or condition that restricts their day-to-day living, to access support and resolve concerns pertaining to the Queensland Community Care Services (QCCS). Its noted here that as at 30 June 2019, this program was replaced by the new Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS).

Our services are free, independent, confidential, consumer-directed and reflective of our core values of respect, collaboration, empowerment and creativity.

### OUR MISSION

To enable people to be heard, informed, and exercise their rights

### OUR VISION

Our vision is to give vulnerable people a voice

### OUR VALUES

#### RESPECT:

We show respect for the wellbeing of our clients and their communities.

#### COLLABORATION:

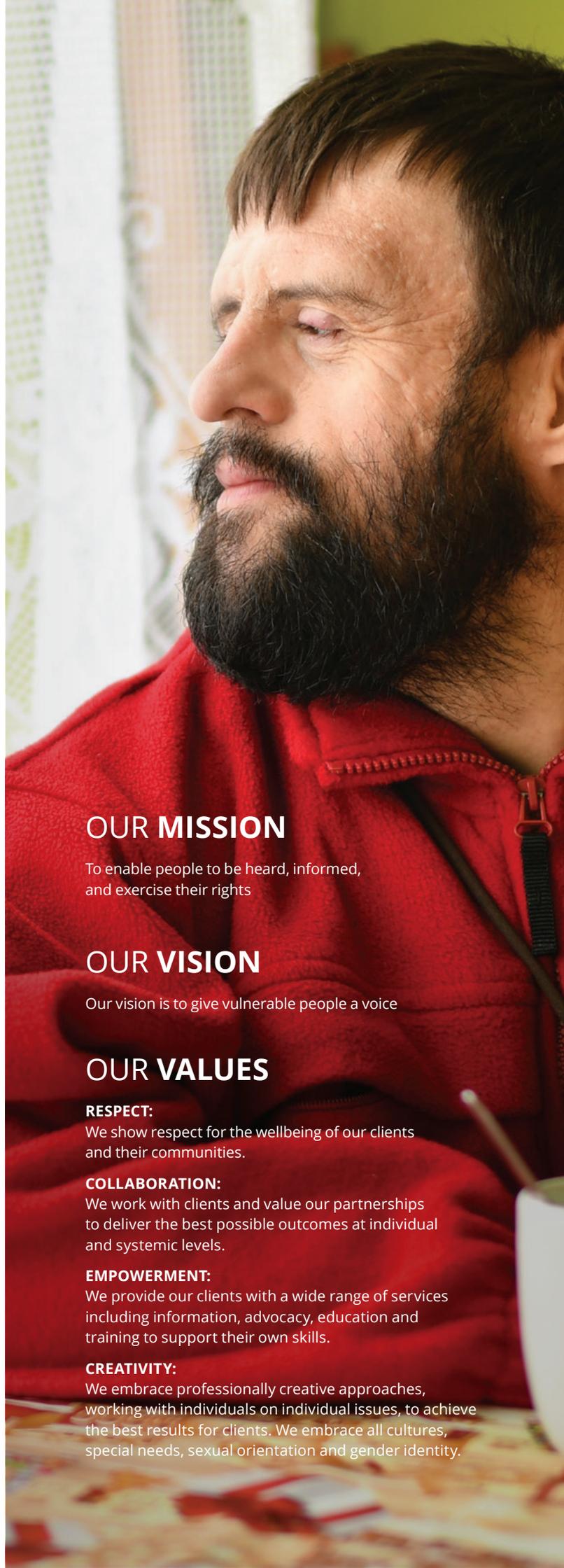
We work with clients and value our partnerships to deliver the best possible outcomes at individual and systemic levels.

#### EMPOWERMENT:

We provide our clients with a wide range of services including information, advocacy, education and training to support their own skills.

#### CREATIVITY:

We embrace professionally creative approaches, working with individuals on individual issues, to achieve the best results for clients. We embrace all cultures, special needs, sexual orientation and gender identity.





## Chairperson's REPORT

ADA Australia's Board of Directors have overseen another year of highly focused activity ensuring that the organisation adapts to the rapidly evolving Community Services sector. Both the aged care and disability sectors have continued to evolve with reforms to the existing service delivery framework and rollout of new initiatives.

A function of the Board is offering strong stewardship during this period of significant change. Positioning ADA Australia such that revenue streams for existing activity remain secure and ensuring the organisation remains well placed to capitalise on new opportunities to diversify its suite of services where they align with organisational objectives, has made for a dynamic year from the Board's perspective.

ADA Australia's Board exemplifies the adage of "the whole being greater than the sum of its parts" in so much as the expertise of each individual Board Director combining to deliver strong strategic oversight of this ever-evolving organisation. While ADA Australia is widely respected as a leading-edge provider, past reputation alone is no guarantee of the organisation's continued relevance, as sectors evolve and thus the Board has maintained a strong focus on the proactive pursuit of new initiatives which complement ADA Australia's core advocacy services, to ensure the organisation remains at the leading-edge of service delivery and continuously fit for purpose.

The announcement by the Australian Government of a Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety in October 2018 with its broad scope to explore aspects of the current aged care system, was significant for ADA Australia. Following the commencement of the Commission's sittings around Australia, as a member organisation of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), ADA Australia became an active contributor via written submissions, to ensure that the issues faced by the older Australians whom we've supported, are brought to the attention of the Commission. By this means, the adversities faced by the older people whom we've assisted are put to some greater good by highlighting weaknesses and deficits in the current aged care system.

The Royal Commission has provided the ideal environment for ADA Australia to represent our constituents through the sets of recommendations made to the Commission around vital structural reform.

Both as an OPAN member and as a stand-alone advocacy service, ADA Australia has taken full advantage of every opportunity to draw upon over a quarter of a century of professional experience with assisting older people and their representatives and harnessing this as an agent for positive change. In this way, ADA Australia has been able to fulfill a vital function in respect to advocating for systems reform.

Its anticipated that the activities of the Royal Commission, set to conclude in November 2020 will remain a key focus for OPAN and ADA Australia, into the next financial year as we continue to provide a consumer voice at every opportunity.

A further illustration of the dynamic nature of the sector was the cessation of the Queensland Government's – Queensland Community Care Program (QCC) and it being replaced as of 1 July 2019 by a smaller program – the Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS). This reform looked likely to have a significant impact on ADA Australia, as the funding provided by the Queensland Government to provide advocacy support to people under 65 years was set to cease as at 30 June 2019.

Rather than passive acceptance of the evolving service landscape negatively impacting ADA Australia's on-going capacity to provide state-wide advocacy support to its constituent groups, the Board in conjunction with its CEO advocated strongly in terms of our wish to avert the unintended negative consequences for vulnerable Queenslanders, that would otherwise result. The likelihood of ADA Australia having to shed advocacy positions commensurate with the reduction in funding from the Queensland Government was eventually averted. It has been a great relief to learn that the Queensland Government has seen fit to maintain its investment in advocacy services at the current level, in the interests of ensuring that Queenslanders with a disability will have continued access to free advocacy support.

ADA Australia's success in securing funding to provide disability advocacy support on the Gold Coast and in Central Queensland with funds received through the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP), has seen the establishment of disability advocates across these two regions, representing a further diversification of ADA Australia's suite of program deliverables.

The announcement of a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability in April 2019 will have implications for the NDAP advocates who's role will now include supporting individuals with a disability wishing to make a submission to the Royal Commission. As with the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, this Royal Commission will also afford ADA Australia an opportunity to make written submissions on areas of interest identified by the Commissioners and allows us to fulfill our mandate to be a voice for people with a disability and to help shape the future of disability services.

It has been my privilege to work with my colleague directors and our CEO over the last five years and I believe that it is time for a new Chair to take ADA through further change and development as the aged care sector moves in response to the challenges of an ageing population, a diminishing workforce and fiscal pressures. As I prepare to vacate the Chairperson's position, I take this opportunity to thank each of the individual Board Members for their unequivocal support during my time as Chair. Thanks also to ADA Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rowe and Corporate Services Manager, Kathy Chandler for their support of the Board's functions and enthusiasm for being the key interface between the executive and service delivery arms of the organisation. To the new Chair I wish every success and I am confident that the Board will continue to steward the organisation in a successful and consumer oriented direction.

*Richard Olley*  
Chair



## CEO's REPORT

Reflecting on ADA Australia's activities has reminded me just how dynamic the organisation has been on many different fronts over the past twelve months. Its useful to take stock every so often to appreciate both the challenges and the successes and to acknowledge the breadth of our accomplishments. Although there is isn't scope to detail them all in my short report, mention will be made of one or two and I invite a thorough read of this year's Annual Report, to learn in more detail about more of these achievements.

The provision of individual advocacy is and will remain ADA Australia's primary focus with older people and people with a disability, our target populations. Service delivery information provided in the body of this report bears out how demand for advocacy support from individuals, as they engage with service delivery systems, has increased significantly over 2018-19. The unwavering commitment of ADA Australia's workforce to respond to and support such ever-increasing numbers of vulnerable people, in the absence of any commensurate increase in resources to support them to do so, warrants mention because it's a testament to the passion and commitment of the team.

Those close to me know that I'm partial to using analogies and to this end, I compare ADA Australia's service response capacity to a piece of elastic that has been stretched ever tighter as we've absorbed the significant growth in demand for our services. Just as any piece of elastic will ultimately reach a point where it can stretch no further, I remain present to the tension that exists in the current environment in which consumer demand is seriously testing ADA Australia's capacity to respond in a timely manner. Our capacity to continue to create organisational efficiencies that allow us to do more with the same inputs, has a natural limit. I remain mindful of what constitutes reasonable expectations of the team and acknowledge my obligation to ensuring safe and sustainable boundaries around individual and collective workloads.

As CEO, in conjunction with ADA Australia's Board, and as a member organisation of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) we've utilised all avenues available to us, to impress upon our funding sources, that our determination to meet the present and future demand for individual advocacy remains unwavering, but that it can't happen in the absence of additional resources that support growth in our service capacity. It is my sincere wish that the Commissioners presiding over the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety and the more recently announced Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, in the course of their deliberations, develop a keen appreciation of the vital role that advocacy services play; the inadequacy of current advocacy responses, relative to the levels of vulnerability and unmet need of care recipients;

the increased scope for advocates to make recommendations regarding care within a human rights framework; and the potential of advocacy services to partner with and better inform the work of agencies whose focus is on quality, safety, and consumer rights.

It's my sincere hope that government commits to full-implementation of all recommendations made by the Royal Commissions regarding improved access to an adequately resourced advocacy system by the care recipient population.

Over the past twelve months ADA Australia has sought additional resources at every opportunity and to this end, met with some success. Our fledgling National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) funded disability advocacy services, established in November 2018, are now operational on the Gold Coast and in Rockhampton and advocates employed in these two locations, continue to raise the profile of these services. ADA Australia's Human Rights Service has continued to operate beyond what should be considered full capacity and has maintained its support to individuals with impaired capacity as they navigate the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

In partnership with Caxton Legal Service we jointly hosted the National Elder Abuse Conference (NEAC) in Brisbane in July 2019. Most of the planning and organisation of the conference have occurred during this reporting period and I'm pleased to advise that a diverse range of national and international speakers have been engaged to share divergent and potentially provocative views about how best to address elder abuse in our country. I'm very proud of ADA Australia's involvement in this important initiative. The right of every older Australian to live a life free from abuse and neglect, is a goal worth striving for.

Brief mention is made of my being awarded the 2018 Paul Tys Churchill Fellowship to investigate world's best practice in preventing and responding to elder abuse in aged care and in the community. It's intended that what's learned through my international travels will contribute to current discussions in respect to how Australia might better plan and respond to the increasing incidence of elder abuse in this

country. My sincere appreciation to both the Board of Directors and the entire ADA Australia team for your support of my almost two month absence overseas.

ADA Australia as a stand-alone organisation and as an OPAN member has, at every opportunity, provided written submission, both to the Australian and Queensland Governments in response to a diverse range of issues. A thread common to each of these written responses is for human services to be viewed through the lens of Human Rights. A reformed service system premised upon upholding obligations set out in International Treaties and Covenants such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which Australia is a signatory, and potential need for a similar Convention on the rights of older people have been advocated for.

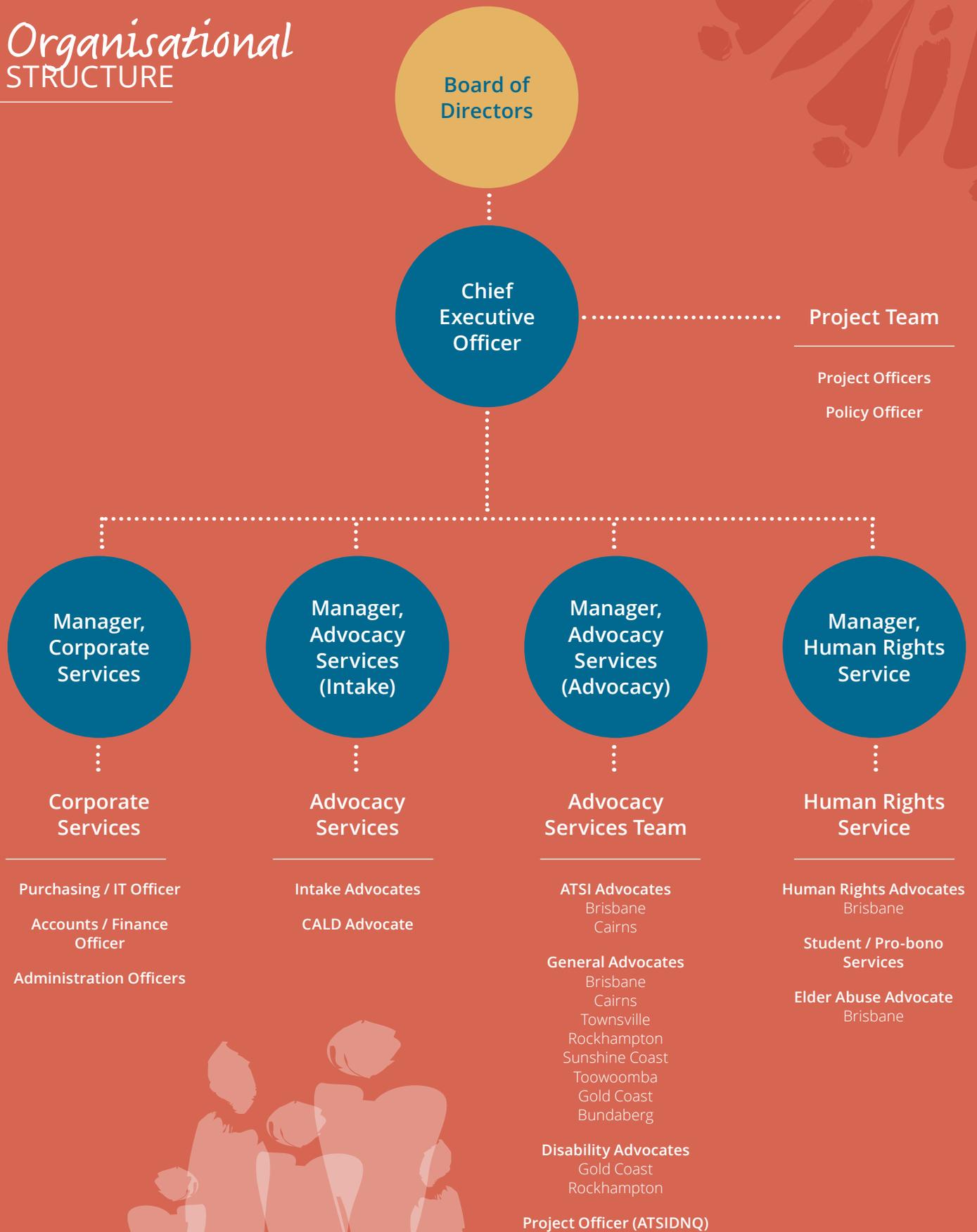
As those who've been following the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety will be aware, even at this early stage in what's a much longer process of inquiry, serious human rights abuses of vulnerable individuals, perpetuated by systems and agents whose primary obligation was to support and protect them, have already been highlighted. Thus, ADA Australia's consistent call for a paradigm shift whereby proposed reforms of current systems are premised on a well-articulated human rights framework.

My role as CEO affords me opportunities for membership in state and national working groups and committees and without going into detail about what each of these are, I can advise that ADA Australia isn't a lone voice for systems reform. Working with a range of diverse stakeholders who are in positions of influence, with an obligation and the will to make a positive difference, gives cause for optimism that ADA Australia as a stand-alone agency, an OPAN member and as an industry partner, is having an impact.

To the readership of this Annual Report, I trust it satisfactorily addresses your level of curiosity and engenders confidence in our past, present and future activity. Thank you for your interest.

*Geoff Rowe*  
CEO, ADA Australia

# Organisational STRUCTURE



## Board MEMBERS



### Richard Olley

**Chair – Elected to Board 2014**

*JD, MHA, BAppSc, DipAppSc*

Richard has more than 40 years' experience in the aged care and health care sectors, including holding executive positions at Blue Care, RSL Care, Royal Brisbane and Women's District Health Service, Gold Coast District Health Service and Logan-Beaudesert District Health Service. He is currently an academic at Griffith University, teaching and researching in the areas of health services management with a specific research and practice area of aged care quality and safety.



### Ian Edwards

**Treasurer – Elected to Board 2015**

*MHA, BBus (HRM), AssocDip Bus (Mgt)*

Ian has over 30 years' experience in health and education sectors, including holding positions at Griffith University and various Queensland Health Units (Central Area Health Service, Health Service Directorate, Princess Alexandra Hospital and Organisational Improvement Unit). He has also contributed to a number of commissioned reports, publications and conferences. Ian is currently the Program Director for Health Services Management On-Line and Graduate Certificate in Health Informatics at Griffith University, and is responsible for managing these programs.



### Liz Kearins

**Deputy Chair – Elected to Board 2012**

*Cert Journalism, DipBusStud, MPRIA, AFAIM*

Liz is a qualified senior executive, engagement and change professional, with 20 years' experience in leadership across the public and private sectors, including utilities, healthcare, environment, tourism and media. She has a strong track record of driving organisation-wide strategy, engagement and culture change to achieve superior performance. Liz is currently a Senior Consultant with performance culture partners, Actrua.

Liz was previously General Manager, Strategy, People and Safety at Seqwater, leading the authority's strategy, risk, quality, culture, people, safety, communications and engagement functions. She also held an executive role at Queensland's Health Quality and Complaints Commission, where she led strategy and culture, stakeholder and community engagement, and complaint triage, early resolution and conciliation services.

In addition to her ADA Australia Board role, Liz serves as a Director of the Board for the Older Persons Advocacy Network.

She is a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders, a certified Change Management Practitioner, an affiliate member of the Australian HR Institute, and a member of the Public Relations Institute of Australia and the International Association of Public Participation.



### Jo Bryant

**Director – 1 July to 8 October 2018  
(Retired from Board October 2018)**

*B Bus (HRM), Assoc Dip Bus (Mgt), Dip Comm Serv (Mgt),  
Commissioner for Declarations*

Jo has more than 25 years' experience in both the government and not-for-profit sector, including 16 years employment within the Queensland Public Service in a range of administrative, clerical, managerial and executive roles involving supervising staff, managing complex projects and responding to legislative reforms.



### Paul Johnson

**Director – Elected to Board 2014**

*BSocSc (HumServ), DipBus (Frontline Mgt),  
Cert IV TAA*

Paul's career in the ageing industry has spanned two states, over two decades and across the spectra of service provider, industry adviser and public servant. With qualifications in human services, training and management, Paul is passionate about exceptional customer service, redefining ageing, and enjoying life. Paul is currently the Chief Opportunity Officer at BallyCara where he provides leadership in strategy, communications and business growth. Paul actively engages with key stakeholders across Australia and continues to contribute to national policy development and reform of Australia's aged care system through his involvement with Leading Age Services Australia. Paul is an ADA Board Director and chairs the Quality & Compliance sub-committee.



### Dan O'Sullivan

**Director – Elected to Board 2009**

*BBus (HA), MACHSM, Commissioner for Declarations*

Dan has more than 30 years' experience in the Commonwealth Government, particularly in aged and community care, as well as previously holding positions at Wesley Mission and Blue Care. He is currently a Project Director with the Capital and Asset Services Branch of Queensland Health.



### Stephanie Gallagher

**Director – Elected to Board 2017**

*MHA, BBus (HRM), AssocDip Bus (Mgt)*

Stephanie has acted for Queensland Health and other health industry clients over the length of her career, which spans more than 20 years. Her experience includes acting in; matters arising from the public and private health sectors as both a solicitor and barrister, in an advisory capacity, in relation to and appearing on behalf of QH to defend claims, in litigation and before regulatory bodies and tribunals.

For more than 15 years she sat as a member of institutional ethics committees of tertiary hospitals.

Her extensive experience in the regulation of health professionals was recognised when she was asked by the Minister for Health to chair the interim Medical Board (in Queensland) upon his dissolution of the existing Board (in Queensland).

Her experience and expertise extends to matters of health service management. Her Master in Health Administration enables her to bring additional insight into advising clients in relation to matters involving the legal implications arising from clinical service delivery, policy and procedure and matters of public health and clinical governance.



### Jennifer Pouwer

**Director – Elected to Board 2017**

*B Occ Thy, GAICD*

Jennifer has extensive senior executive experience in the government (Commonwealth and State) and non-government health and social services sector and since 2002 this experience has been supplemented with interest in corporate governance and Board roles.

As Chief Executive Officer of Mental Illness Fellowship Queensland, Jennifer navigated a merger with Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) and June 2019 saw the merger transition and associated projects completed. Presently Jennifer is Deputy Chair, Checkup, a not for profit, non-government organisation assisting communities to address health inequities.



# Advocacy SERVICES

The last 12 months have been very busy and productive for ADA's advocates. The team has seen an increasing demand for individual advocacy support with case numbers rising from 898 in 2017-2018 to 1,431 in 2018-2019. Each regional location experienced an increase in casework, and this led to the implementation of wait lists for some areas. The most impacted being Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

The advocacy team has also been able to reach over 3000 consumers to provide education and information regarding advocacy supports. This, together with key sector changes such as the introduction of the new Aged Care Charter of Rights and Quality Standards have made an impact on the number of people seeking advocacy support. Increases in case numbers can also be attributed to the Aged Care Royal Commission (ACRC) which commenced in October 2018. The ACRC has resulted in the increased profile of OPAN and the work advocates do to ensure aged care consumers' rights are respected and upheld. Changes to the QCCS program as part of the transition to the NDIS also stimulated an increase in requests for advocacy support.

A key initiative for this year has been the formation of a dedicated intake team, led by the Manager of Advocacy Services - Intake. Trialled with success throughout the last 12 months, this team has now become embedded within the advocacy service. Intake advocates are skilled in providing a first response to all enquiries, which includes the provision of information and referrals. This has allowed all other advocates to focus on case work and the provision of community and service provider education.

This year the team has been committed to reaching out and supporting consumers in regional and remote parts of Queensland. Advocates have provided support across the state including: South West, Central and Central West Queensland, Mt Isa, Cape York, Gulf Country and Torres Strait.

Throughout the year, the advocacy team has reported key trends and concerns for consumers of both Commonwealth funded aged care services and Queensland Community Care Services. Utilising this feedback at both policy and government level ensures that ADA can represent the voice of the consumer at the systemic level.

Advocates continue to play a significant role in supporting consumers to navigate the system by registering with

My Aged Care, attending assessments and provider meetings to ensure their right to choice is maintained. This is achieved by understanding what providers should offer, the services available and the structure of fees and charges. Advocates receive numerous requests for support to access services via My Aged Care, particularly for people who have communication or sensory impairments. This year has seen long delays for consumers waiting for their ACAT assessments.

### Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

Advocates supported older people to understand and access CHSP services in 2018-19. Many more requests were made to access these services as wait times for Home Care Packages extend beyond 12 months. Many consumers have raised issues of respite services not being covered by their Home Care Package and this has resulted in people being reluctant to take the package support they require.

Consumers also expressed frustrations about the timing and staffing of the supports they receive under this program. Common reports regarding poor communication by the service provider and the ongoing use of agency staff impacted on these issues.

Service availability was also of increasing concern, particularly in the home maintenance area and this appeared to be further heightened in rural and remote areas where there is a lack of services available.

### Home Care Packages

In the community aged care space ADA Australia has welcomed the addition of further Home Care Packages (HCP) as well as greater fee transparency. While these are positive changes, we continue to support consumers requiring higher level packages with long wait times and assisting them to access top up services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) where available. There are frequent

### Cases by Program Area:



GENERAL ADVOCACY

**1,011**



DISABILITY ADVOCACY

**2**



ELDER ABUSE

**81**



HUMAN RIGHTS

**223**



NDAP

**85**



SYSTEM NAVIGATOR

**29**

reports that consumers are often rejecting lower level packages, therefore going without any services, in the hope of trying to speed up their allocation of a higher level funded package.

Advocates report extremely long waiting times for eligible consumers to receive not only level 3 and 4 home care packages, but level 1 and 2 packages also. Reported wait times for lower packages being as long as 12 months in some instances. ADA Australia has been supporting people to confirm their place on the waiting list with My Aged Care and assisting them to find options to access some services whilst they are on the waiting list.

**2,832**Number of  
intakes**42**Number of  
EXPO's**3,198**Number of consumers  
receiving education**706**Number of  
education sessions**21**Number of  
Forums**3,648**Number of aged care  
staff receiving education

There continues to be ongoing challenges for consumers to receive clear and timely statements as these continue to be difficult to interpret and lack transparency. Statements are frequently poorly documented, overly complicated or widely fluctuate between a deficit and surplus month on month. These issues continue to result in many HCP recipients going into package deficit. Advocates are required to spend extended periods of time unpacking and then interpreting fees and charges for consumers. Advocates work with consumers to try to resolve these issues and will refer onto relevant financial support services where appropriate or support consumers to raise their issues with the ACQSC.

Those in rural and remote regions face ongoing issues with lack of choice of service providers and service options.

### Residential Aged Care

Consumers of residential aged care continue to seek advocacy support to address issues relating to quality of care. Inadequate staffing levels and nursing care were frequently reported to contribute to these issues.

Issues with access to the community was also a trend over the year with consumers requesting advocacy support to enable them to leave the aged care facility and participate in community activities. Often this was related to issues with transport, equipment and health risks. Advocacy has supported the consumers' right to leave the facility.

Other advocacy case work issues have been related to skills and attitudes of aged care staff particularly in relation to the management of consumers with complex behaviours or cognitive impairments.

### Queensland Community Care Services (QCCS)

Transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continued in 2018-19 to a full scheme roll out in Queensland, resulting in this being the final year for the QCCS program to provide support to consumers. From July 2019 consumers not eligible for the NDIS can access a range of services under the new Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS). QCSS aims to provide support services that maintain and promote independence and quality of life.

ADA received numerous requests for support in the lead up to the cessation of the QCCS program. This support was typically to assist consumers test their NDIS ineligibility (a requirement of the new QCSS program) or to provide support to those consumers whose service providers were no longer providing services under the new scheme. This transition significantly impacted on transport and home nursing services which were not originally included under the QCSS program. An extension of these services under the QCSS program into late 2019 will assist government to ensure that people continue to have access to these vital services regardless of whether they have NDIS funding or not.

The changes to the QCCS program will also impact on the scope of disability support ADA advocates will be able to provide in the new financial year. Advocates will now be able to support people with disability with a much wider range of issues including access to services (NDIS, QCSS etc), housing, employment, service provider issues as well as support with government departments. The focus of funding will be to support people with disability facing issues of discrimination, neglect or abuse.

### Aged Care Navigator Trial

In January 2019, ADA entered into a partnership with COTA Australia and the Brisbane South PHN to deliver two information hubs over an 18 month period under the newly federally funded Aged Care Navigator Trial scheme. Location of these information hubs are Wide Bay and Brisbane South regions. Service delivery mode chosen was a mobile option to allow for greatest coverage of both regions.

The purpose of the trial is to test 3 different modes of delivering supports to the community regarding accessing aged care services, being:

- Community hub (Volunteer led model)
- Information hub (Paid staff member led model)
- Specialist Worker (provision of one-on-one support to complex cases)

The trial is targeted to any community members seeking support to understand and access the aged care system.

The Aged Care Navigator Trial Service provides:

- Information on the aged care system
- Practical support to access aged care services in the home or in residential aged care
- Group information sessions about aged care

Activities involved in delivery of the trial include group seminar sessions, individual information support and assistance to complete forms.

## Human Rights Service (HRS)

2018-19 saw a small reduction in the number of adults whom HRS assisted (223), however there has been a significant increase in complexity of many cases, which reflects our community's more complex family, health and lifestyle situations.

HRS has continued to develop strong networks with stakeholders and has forged ahead with new connections in the financial capability sector. There is a recognised and significant benefit to collaborative approaches, for our clients' benefit. During the year HRS played an extensive role in the development of the program for NEAC2019. HRS also worked with current and former advocacy clients who had concerns about the use of chemical restraint in aged care, to see if they would consider being interviewed by Human Rights Watch (HRW), for their research on use of chemical restraint in Aged Care.

QCAT referred 52 clients to HRS and appointed ADA as the Separate Representative for 14 adults. Many of these cases have required multiple QCAT attendances, written submissions, and referrals to other services.

Commencing in late 2018, Karen Williams, HRS manager has provided legal representation for 30 adults attending hearings in the Mental Health Review Tribunal. These representations are funded by Legal Aid Qld.

ADA Australia was funded by Ecstra Foundation to develop and deliver video resources aimed at adults with intellectual disability and their supporters, to raise awareness of their rights in relation to their finances. HRS led this project and reference groups were formed across industry and consumer stakeholder groups to ensure the end results were both comprehensive and user friendly. These resources are freely available to all via Youtube and the ADA website. This project was delivered on budget and ahead of schedule.

HRS has also collaborated with Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) to develop and produce a 'legal information and referral website "MHLaw Qld". This project is funded

by the Department of Justice and Attorney General and overseen by Legal Aid Queensland to assist mental health workers when engaging with their clients. It was recognised that many mental health consumers have other legal issues and do not know where to seek help, or what their rights are. This stress can affect their recovery. This 18-month project is due for delivery in early 2020.

HRS continues to deliver Supported Decision-Making Workshops, providing 20 workshops across Queensland during this period. Many aged care organisations are recognising the benefit of upskilling their workforce around their client's legal and human rights, and for some organisations, we are now delivering these workshops as part of their annual staff training. This training incorporates changes to legislation based on the impending introduction of the Human Rights Act, and Guardianship and Administration Act.

HRS has provided input into several pieces of legislation and policy for both State and Federal government, including state review of Enduring Power of Attorney, and Advance Health Directive forms (Department of Justice and Attorney General - Guardianship Bill Working Group); amendments to Qld Guardianship and Administration Act, Aged Care regulations in relation to restrictive practices and use of chemical restraint.

HRS benefits from final and penultimate year law students on practical placement each semester. The students work with our vulnerable clients to help them understand and access their rights, and where necessary assist in negotiations with their formal or informal decision makers.

**223**  
Total Cases

**75%**

75% with a disability and/or mental illness

## Elder Abuse ADVOCACY

An important development in the area of Elder Abuse over this past year has been the release of the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019–2023 [The Plan].

### The Plan outlines five priority areas:

- Enhancing understanding of Elder Abuse
- Improving community awareness and access to information
- Strengthening service responses
- Planning for future decision-making
- Strengthening safeguards for vulnerable adults.

While the Plan is a positive resource, State, Territory and the Federal Government must fully commit to its implementation as without decisive action, the Plan remains just that.

Since the end of the Elder Abuse Prevention Project trial in June 2018, ADA Australia has continued to provide valuable information, education and advocacy support to older people who are at risk of, or who have experienced elder

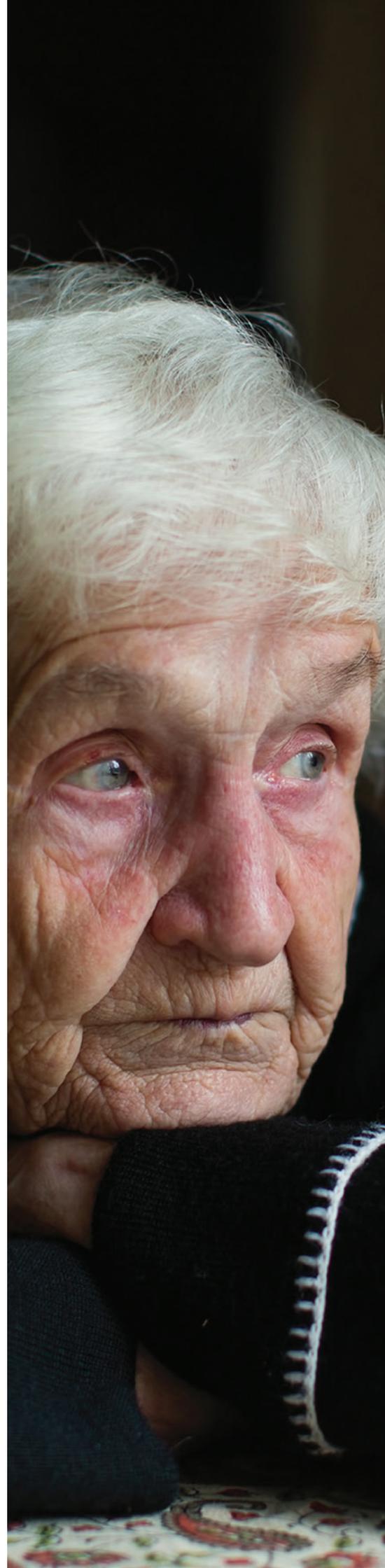
abuse and who seek our help. The Elder Abuse Service, managed by ADA Australia's Human Rights Service, has continued funding until June 2020. The service focuses on provision of support to older people who live in a residential aged care environment in the Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Moreton and Redlands Council regions.

The Elder Abuse Service helps people to protect their rights and be heard in cases of potential or actual elder abuse. Elder Abuse advocates do this by supporting the older person to understand their rights, negotiate with formal or informal decision makers, create an action or safety plan to reduce a person's distress and assist with referrals to appropriate support services.

The past twelve months have been exceptionally busy for the Elder Abuse Advocacy Service, who have successfully delivered information and advocacy support to 81 people experiencing or concerned about the potential for elder abuse. The elder abuse advocate also delivered 19 elder abuse prevention information sessions to residents, family members, volunteers and aged care workers. These sessions helped to raise awareness of the types and prevalence of elder abuse, the roles and responsibilities of EPOA's, safeguards for preventing elder abuse and the range of supports and services available to those who may be experiencing elder abuse.

### The advocates identified some key trends in the support provided:

- 64% of people seeking elder abuse information and support were female
- 35% of people seeking elder abuse information had a cognitive impairment
- 89% of people seeking support had an EPOA in place
- 73% of cases involved family conflict.



## Advocating FOR DIVERSE NEEDS

ADA Australia has a longstanding commitment to providing advocacy support that is accessible, and responsive to the differing needs of Queensland's increasingly diverse population. This commitment is reflected in the adoption of flexible advocacy practices that recognise the additional challenges faced by people from diverse backgrounds. Utilising professional interpreters to communicate in a client's primary language, providing relevant information in a range of languages and accessible formats, creating opportunities to engage with key representatives from diverse cultures and employment of dedicated Multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advocates are some of the ways that the organisation honours its commitment to provide culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate support. ADA Australia's workforce, including its team of state-wide advocates is broadly reflective of the diversity of the broader population and plays an important role in educating and supporting people from diverse cultures who experience additional challenges in engaging with the aged care and disability service systems.



ADA Australia's advocacy team displayed due diligence in respect to provision of support to people who identified as having diverse characteristics, whether these pertained to the community members cultural background, personal and professional lived experience, or characteristics ascribed as an outcome of whereabouts in Queensland they reside. One of the strengths of ADA Australia's practice model is the strong affiliations with other agencies with specialist cultural knowledge and skill and our ability to develop culturally appropriate, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary responses to supporting people from diverse backgrounds.

ADA Australia's specialist CALD advocate has noted the growing complexity of cases involving people from diverse backgrounds. While their issues may be similar to their lesser diverse peers, the additional time involved in addressing factors such as: mobilising interpreters at critical times, dealing with the overlay of mental health issues that may have its origins as an outcome of having lived through extreme adversity, persecution and in some cases genocide in their country of origin, respecting cultural norms and values that influence who can be spoken to within a family and the differing hierarchies of familial decision-making, together with gendered expectations and taboos, make supporting people from diverse backgrounds challenging, rewarding but from a practical standpoint, complex and time consuming.

It is not just people from diverse backgrounds who may be new arrivals to Australia that require assistance, but also longer-term migrants who seek support. Issues arise as language has changed over

the years such that when Europeans who migrated shortly after the end of WW2 revert to speaking their first language, it may not be the version of that language spoken today. Language difficulties arise over the individual not being understood by family members and care professionals. There may be a general reluctance to admit that they now require additional assistance linked to pre-migration trauma where those who were weak, frail or unwell were discarded. These memories being re-lived, create fear and mistrust of professional supports and government. These aspects of seniors mental health are commonly overlooked by aged care providers.

ADA Australia's growing expertise in how to support individuals from diverse backgrounds will hold it in good stead, given the increasing diversity of successive generations of older Australians, signifying that demand for specialist advocacy skills to meet the needs of diverse individuals are set to increase over time.

In 2018-19, 296 individuals who identified as being from a CALD background received support.

The graphics in this section of the report reflecting the numbers of individuals with diverse characteristics who were assisted, bears out the earlier comment about increasing diversity. Acknowledging how each group of diverse Australians pose additional challenges to advocates, in respect to the delivery of culturally sensitive and appropriate care, it speaks to the capacity of advocates to be flexible, adaptive and committed, no matter the characteristics of the person who seeks their support.

67

PEOPLE FROM  
ABORIGINAL AND  
TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER  
COMMUNITIES



10

CARE LEAVERS



296

CALD  
BACKGROUNDS



40

VETERANS  
(incl. ADF and Allied ADF)



1,887

PEOPLE WHO LIVE  
IN RURAL & REMOTE



4

PARENTS  
SEPARATED FROM  
THEIR CHILDREN  
BY FORCED ADOPTION  
OR REMOVAL



71

PEOPLE HOMELESS  
OR AT RISK



# Disability ADVOCACY

In September 2018, ADA Australia was successful in securing National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) funding to begin providing disability advocacy to people with disability in the Gold Coast and Fitzroy regions. This new federal funding saw the establishment of a new team of disability specific advocates, two being located at the Gold Coast and one part time advocate working from Rockhampton.

Under NDAP funding, Advocates can support people of any age, with a permanent or likely to be permanent disability who may be facing issues related to abuse, neglect or discrimination.

**Advocates help people to protect their rights. This may include support in the areas of:**

- Service Provision
- Assistance with government agencies
- Accessing and using services or supports
- Decision making
- People being unfairly treated or discriminated against
- NDIS access, planning and reviews and NDIS-related services (excluding NDIS Appeals)
- Assisting people to exercise their rights and freedoms.

Considerable time was required for the initial setup of the two new NDAP services, including recruitment, office relocations and setup, training and induction of new staff and intake team, development of policies, procedures and data tracking systems, development and dissemination of materials and resources and promotional activities.

The NDAP team spent a large proportion of their initial time developing community networks and informing a wide range of government and non-government services and the community in general, of the existence of the service and what supports it could provide. This was crucial in the establishment of the service and ensuring that the local communities both knew about the service and how to access its supports.

Activities have been put in place to support the new service within the organisation, including weekly intake case conference discussions so that advocates can respond correctly to all calls at this early developmental phase of the service and fortnightly NDAP team meetings.

The NDAP service participated in its first external quality audit in June and achieved compliance against the requirements of the National Standards for Disability Services and ISO 9001:2015

Advocates have supported 85 cases to date, with many more people receiving information and referral support. There has been a high level of complexity in this casework with a high proportion of cases requiring at least 40 + hours of support and many which have required over 60 hours.

Systemic issues from this initial year of service have been identified and fed back via relevant policy and government pathways.

One key trend has been the lack of referral options particularly for social work support and case coordination. The introduction of the NDIS has seen these services rapidly diminishing and consumers turning more to advocacy to fulfill this need. Sourcing appropriate referral pathways has become increasingly difficult for advocates.

Advocates have been spending much time supporting consumers to access NDIS funding or to go through the review process for those not satisfied with their NDIS outcomes. This can become a very lengthy process for people, which in many cases means a lack of any type of support until the matter is resolved.

Consistency of advice and support provided by NDIA and partners is also a commonly reported issue. Inconsistent advice between and within the same office causing consumer frustration with the mixed messages being received from the NDIA. There also appears to be limited provision of appropriate information and support, particularly for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and those with mental health issues.

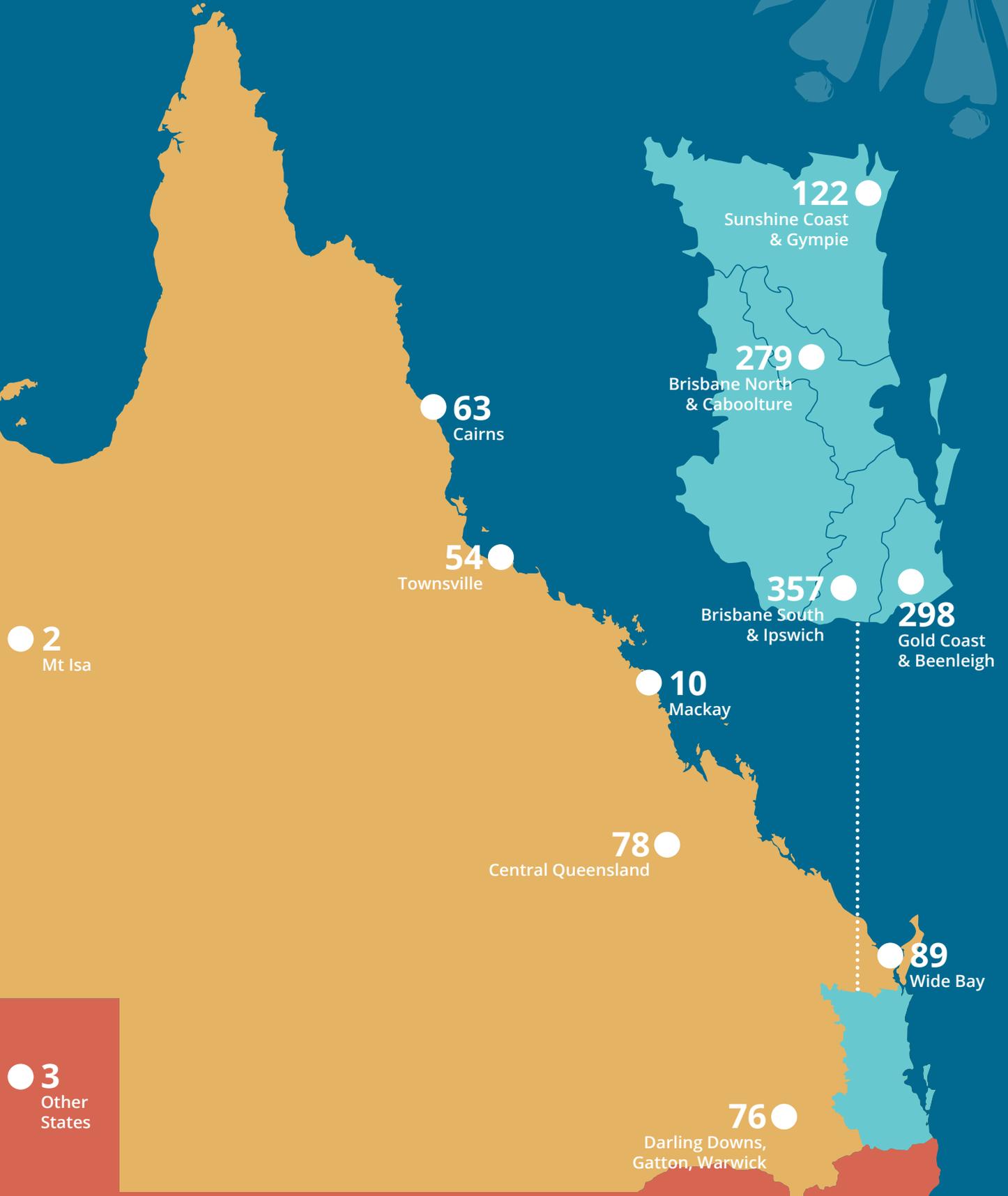
The intersection of disability, health and aged care services also appears to be creating gaps in service provision for people with a disability. A key area of concern being the limited knowledge by health services, particularly general practitioners, regarding access and support to apply for NDIS funding. Advocates are required to provide increased support to clients during the information collection period to ensure the correct medical documentation and level of information is collected to ensure the best possible outcome when lodged with the NDIS.

The NDAP team have been in attendance at many interagency, community and government forums and have had input into policy reform submissions, such as the draft Terms of Reference for a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, the National Disability Agreement Review, Reshaping the Disability Services Act 2006 and taking part in the Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) Advisory Committee.



# Individual Cases

## REGIONAL BREAKDOWN



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander DISABILITY NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND

ADA Australia provides the auspice for the ATSIDNQ. ATSIDNQ is a growing network of over 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families, carers and supporters.



The Network offers a culturally safe space for members to connect, share and raise awareness of the issues they are facing. It also gives members the opportunity to celebrate their strengths, share their stories and contribute to the conversation about disability in positive ways. The Network employs Indigenous staff who work with members to understand the variety of issues Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability face and ensure this information is fed back to government policy makers.

Growth of the Network is reflective of the investment in its community engagement strategy, visiting rural and remote regions (including: Dalby, St George, Oakey, NPA – Bamaga, Siesia, Umagico, Injinoo, New Mapoon, Horn Island, Thursday Island and Normanton) and in re-engaging and promoting the project within the local Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Ipswich regions. The Network has also been actively involved in Disability Network meetings and other community meetings/projects which has been vital in promoting awareness and outcomes for the project.

The Network engaged with members in a variety of ways including newsletters, Facebook, website and emails. A range of information was shared across these platforms including member's stories, community engagement updates, NDIS information and frequently asked questions. Members were also invited to provide feedback directly into policy submissions and reports.

The Network engages the services of a dedicated Project Officer employed by ADA Australia, who works with other Indigenous employees from ADA to support the work and growth of the Network across Queensland. ADA has ensured that the Network is supported by the ATSIDNQ Team which is made of up Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff and management, who meet bi-monthly. Meetings specifically include the following:

- Informing ATSIDNQ of Systemic Issues
- Feedback for submissions to policy
- Networking and Regional Information sharing
- New Memberships
- Event organisation and attendance.

Network staff engaged with communities at a range of events including NAIDOC, which provided a great opportunity to promote the Network and grow membership. The team attended NAIDOC week events at: Rockhampton Cricket Grounds; Caboolture NAIDOC Family Fun Day; Northside NAIDOC Community Fun Day; North Stradbroke Island; Musgrave Park Family Fun Day; Townsville NAIDOC Deadly Day Out.

Yarning groups continued and occurred across five regions (South West; Brisbane; Logan and Wide Bay) which included seven organisations. The Network has a number of ongoing and new Yarning groups planned for 2019-20 including new areas such as Dalby, Oakey and St George.

The Network has participated in a range of industry consultations, providing input on the issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in Queensland. Over the past year the Network reflected member feedback and experience through participation in the Productivity Commission's National Disability Agreement Review Issues,



the National Disability Agreement Review, Reshaping the Disability Services Act 2006, the UN Special Rapporteur expert workshop ‘the rights of older persons with disabilities’ and the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health. The Network also provided a response to the consultation on the Draft Terms of Reference for a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

In May, the Network was funded to work on the National Disability Strategy beyond 2020, for submission in July 2019. As part of this submission the Network conducted a consultation engagement strategy to receive input from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the state including: Torres Strait Islands-Badu, Horn, Moa, St Paul's and Thursday Island; Northern Peninsula Area-Bamaga, Seisa, Injinoo, Umagico and New Mapoon; Burringilly Respite Centre, Woodridge; Nalingu Respite Centre Zillmere; Dalby, Oakey and St George.

The Network recognises and is grateful for the continued support of Uncle Willie Prince (Brisbane) and Aunty Semah Mokak-Wischki (Brisbane) who were retained as Network Champions. The Network Champions participated in regular Network meetings and represented the Network at a range of events. The Network is committed to further developing this key role. Network Champion priority areas are to identify how to ensure members to have a ‘voice’ and how the Network can best inform policy to assist in achieving real outcomes. ADA Australia would like to thank both Champions for their ongoing commitment to the Network.

**46**

FACEBOOK POSTS



**26,000**

PEOPLE REACHED  
VIA FACEBOOK



**821**

MEMBERS AS AT  
30 JUNE 2018



**1,024**

MEMBERS AS AT  
30 JUNE 2019



**11**

EMAIL BLASTS  
SENT TO ATSIDNQ  
FULL MEMBERSHIP



**2,325**

KLMS TRAVELLED  
AROUND QLD



**1,344**

ATSIDNQ PUBLIC  
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



## Report on the NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE CONFERENCE (NEAC) 2019

Throughout much of 2018-19 Project staff from ADA Australia in collaboration with Caxton Legal Centre invested considerable resources planning the National Elder Abuse Conference (NEAC) 2019 scheduled for 23rd & 24th July 2019 in Brisbane. It is acknowledged that the conference took place early in the 2019-20 Financial Year however, because almost all the work involved in planning the event occurred in 2018-19, NEAC 2019 is reported on in this Annual Report.

The Brisbane Convention Centre welcomed over 500 delegates from Australasia. The Conference was themed “Rock the Boat” and the diversity of views shared about effective ways of responding to elder abuse created the ideal environment for participants to have their thinking on the subject challenged (rocked), perhaps in ways they may not have anticipated.

Conference attendees who completed a Satisfaction Survey revealed that almost 96% of delegates who responded were either Very Satisfied 63.7% or Satisfied 32.2% and those who responded offered valuable feedback about several aspects of the Conference. The International Keynote speakers – Paul Greenwood (former San Diego County Deputy District Attorney and lead prosecutor in elder abuse cases) and Bethany Brown (researcher from Human Rights Watch) were both very well received and contributed in no small way to the mix of ideas about how best to frame and respond to elder abuse. The broad range of National Keynotes were similarly well received for the same reason.

A universally well received feature of the Conference was hearing directly from older people impacted by elder abuse and who wanted their lived experience of abuse to contribute powerfully to the conversation. Their stories reminded everyone present just how devastating elder abuse is. Their testimonies ensured that no matter whether the session was about human rights, legislative reform, structural reform of the aged care sector or the many other threads to this complex issue, these ideological exchanges were anchored by the lived experience of those courageous and resilient individuals.

Unsurprisingly delegates were divided in respect to which approaches to responding to elder abuse they favoured. There was widespread support for elder abuse to be regarded as a crime which carries mandatory reporting obligations

and the perpetrators of abuse dealt with mandatorily through the criminal justice system, as advocated by Paul Greenwood.

Conversely there was widespread support for a human rights approach which affords older people the right to decide how their individual experience of elder abuse might be responded to. For these delegates, the autonomy and dignity of older people must be respected above all else and advocate its victim’s right to decide whether the perpetrator is brought before the law.

A stronger human rights framework in Australia which underpins all legislation, and which could potentially be enshrined in a Charter of Rights of Older People was identified as a possible strategy for empowering older people and minimising the risk of abuse.

There was widespread agreement about a fundamental need to address Ageism in all its manifestations as this widespread, entrenched and insidious attitudinal phenomenon currently makes permissible elder abuse by a range of other stakeholders, in a variety of settings.

Many delegates supported the need for a greater emphasis at future conferences on primary prevention strategies which might limit the number of older people impacted by elder abuse, and regard this as a vital element of any national elder abuse prevention strategy and any conference convened around elder abuse.

A message which resonated strongly was the power inherent in the act of listening, believing and supporting an older person when they divulge information about abuse. Delegates heard about the transformative power of being listened to and believed, as often the abuser demeans the individual with messages about their not being believed should they tell someone about their situation. This may contribute to their remaining silent and effectively keeping an older person trapped in an abusive relationship.



Widespread support was garnered for the implementation of a Supported Decision-Making framework to replace the current system of Substitute Decision-Making. A supported model argues that people who are vulnerable to abuse as a result of their having greater difficulty than most, making their wishes known, can, if granted access to the appropriate support, convey their wishes and preferences and remain in control of their own lives.

While there may always be a role for attorneys, it's argued that presently there are many capable older people who are having decisions made for them on the presumption of incapacity. This introduces the element of risk of an autocratic attorney abusing their power. Current evidence about who the perpetrators of elder abuse point to attorneys being implicated as abusers in a concerning number of cases.

If the purpose of convening a conference was to bring together speakers with divergent views about a topic, stimulate thinking and to progress the work that's currently being done to tackle elder abuse, then delegate feedback affirms the conference met its objectives.

Delegates were challenged to have the conference serve as a "call to action". What more can each person do individually and collectively in their immediate sphere of influence, to bring about the changes required that will ensure every older Australian is:

- Better informed about elder abuse
- Provided with information about how to protect oneself from abuse, and
- Know who to reach out to for support if they're at risk or indeed impacted by elder abuse.

ADA Australia as the co-convenor of the 2019 Conference can feel justly satisfied with this year's Conference. It was announced at the conclusion of the conference that the next NEAC has been tentatively scheduled for early 2021 in Tasmania.



# ADA Australia

## RESOURCES UPDATE

While ADA Australia has always had a large collection of branded resources, we have now expanded our collection and resources as outlined below.

### ADA Australia Aged Care and Human Rights Flyers



**ADA Australia**  
Your aged and disability advocates

### Aged Care Advocacy

- Do you receive government funded aged care services?
- Are you concerned about the quality of care you receive in your home or aged care facility?
- Are you finding it difficult to access aged care services?

**Our advocates can:**

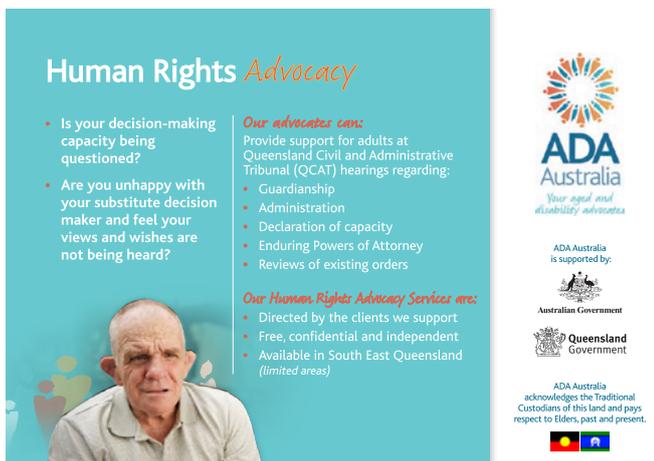
- Assist you to explore care options and access new or additional government funded services
- Support you to express your views and wishes to work through care related issues with your service provider

**Our Aged Care Advocacy services are:**

- Directed by the clients we support
- Free, confidential and independent
- Available to care recipients or their representatives
- Available throughout Queensland

**Contact ADA Australia**  
Freecall: 1800 818 338  
(07) 3637 6000  
www.adaaustralia.com.au  
info@adaaustralia.com.au

Interpreter Ph: 131 450



**ADA Australia**  
Your aged and disability advocates

### Human Rights Advocacy

- Is your decision-making capacity being questioned?
- Are you unhappy with your substitute decision maker and feel your views and wishes are not being heard?

**Our advocates can:**

Provide support for adults at Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) hearings regarding:

- Guardianship
- Administration
- Declaration of capacity
- Enduring Powers of Attorney
- Reviews of existing orders

**Our Human Rights Advocacy Services are:**

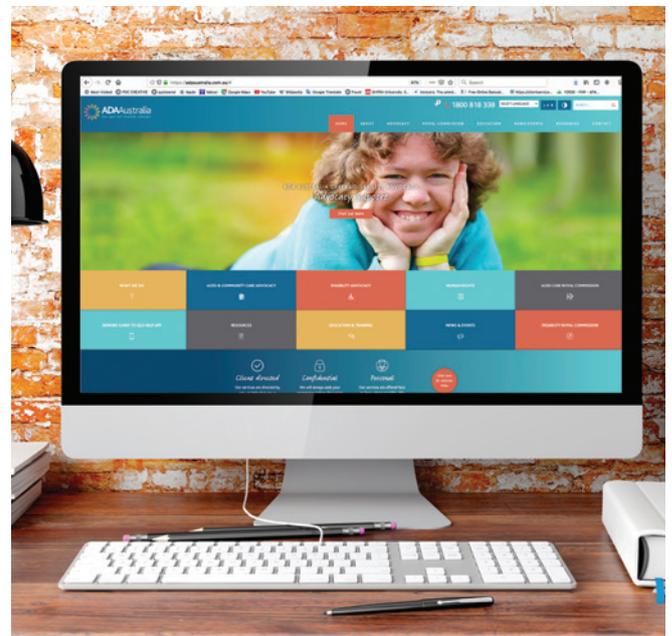
- Directed by the clients we support
- Free, confidential and independent
- Available in South East Queensland (limited areas)

ADA Australia is supported by:  
Australian Government  
Queensland Government

ADA Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and pays respect to Elders, past and present.

New A5 flyers were developed in this last year to reduce paper use. In the SE Qld region, our existing ADA Australia Aged Care DL and Guardianship DL resources were replaced with a combined A5 paper resource (see below). This offers both services to potential clients on the one flyer. In other regions where the Human Rights advocacy service is not offered, the existing DL resources will still be used.

### ADA Australia Website Upgrade



To keep up to date with the changing scope of services that ADA Australia now offers, a comprehensive upgrade to the website was undertaken. This included improvements such as:

- Improved accessibility to commonly used sections of the website from the home page, with the use of large interactive tile buttons.
- A revamp of all of our advocacy pages to include scope overview tables. This assists in easier comparison of the various advocacy type and helps people to identify if they are eligible for ADA services.
- Additional events, education and resource tabs to reflect new information
- New online newsletter subscription functions.
- The addition of online enquiry forms to enable people to submit their enquiries electronically.

We now actively encourage service providers and potential clients to complete the online enquiry forms on the website to reduce call waiting times and streamline services. To check out the website layout go to [www.adaaustralia.com.au](http://www.adaaustralia.com.au)

## A Focus ON HUMAN RIGHTS

For as long as ADA Australia has existed, the actions of this agency have been premised upon and driven by the desire to see all vulnerable individuals supported to understand their fundamental human rights as well as their rights as a care recipient and empowered to exercise them. Nowhere more so than in situations where older people's rights have been compromised by the actions of care providers and other institutions with a mandate to care and protect.

Considering how rights are at the heart of every transaction ADA Australia has with our diverse stakeholders, it may sound strange to reference the significant additional focus on human rights across all of ADA Australia's service delivery streams throughout 2018-19. This however was manifestly the case. Whereas the disability sector was strengthened by Australia becoming a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006, by contrast, the aged care sector has lacked an equivalent Charter which embeds the rights of older people in the same manner.

This lack goes some way toward explaining why ADA Australia has been so firmly focused on promoting a rights-based approach to care of older people, irrespective of who the care recipient is and which service they're receiving. ADA Australia's championing human rights has occurred at several strategic levels. In addition to the day to day role advocates play in championing the rights of recipients, advocates have played an intentional role in preparing aged care recipients and potential recipients for the release of the new Charter of Aged Care Rights to take effect as of 1 July 2019.

### Lobbying

While the new Charter was still in draft form, ADA Australia lobbied the government for the retention of key principles which had been left out of early drafts of the Charter. One key recommendation was retention of specific reference to every care recipient's right to access to an advocate of choice in the new Charter, to ensure older people are left in no doubt about their right to access free advocacy support any time they have concerns about the quality of care. The initial draft of the Charter had omitted this, and the expectation was that older people would read about advocacy in the supporting documentation to be released in conjunction with the new Charter. ADA Australia and the Older Persons Advocacy Network successfully argued this was unacceptable and succeeded in having reference to advocacy inserted in the Charter. The new Charter of Aged Care Rights now reads:

### I have the right to:

#### 11. have a person of my choice, including an aged care advocate, support me or speak on my behalf

The above represents just one way in which, at a strategic level, ADA Australia is advocating for an explicit, rights-based system of care, where previously there existed a more medicalised model of care, in which recipient rights were diffuse and thus more likely to be violated.

### Research

ADA Australia supported part of an international research project being undertaken by Human Rights Watch (HRW) involving interviews with individuals and family members with direct experience of the use of chemical restraint in aged care. HRW undertook 15 interviews with consenting ADA Australia clients who'd had direct experience of chemical restraint in care. ADA Australia's whole-hearted support recognises the potential of this research to influence both national and international best-practice around use of restraint in care.

### Human Rights Service (HRS)

Throughout 2018-19 ADA Australia's HRS Manager actively promoted a rights-based approach to service responses in a range of conference settings. A consistent message of these presentations, whether the theme was elder abuse, mental health, guardianship and administration or supported decision making was the imperative for service and systems responses to be premised upon fundamental human rights.

The HRS Manager and team continue to advocate in a range of strategic state and national fora for a re-visioning of service responses premised on a rights-based approach and supported decision-making for individuals with impaired capacity whose rights are most at risk.

### Systemic Advocacy

ADA Australia's CEO maintained a relentless drive to use the many state and national networks to help shape the political agenda around aged care and specifically drive home the need for service re-design premised on a system which understands, respects and upholds fundamental human rights.

As if there wasn't already sufficient evidence of need, the commencement of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety in February 2019, immediately began to highlight the sometimes gross violations of care recipient's human rights and successive Commission hearings around Australia have only served to underline the need for a comparable Charter of Rights of the Older Person to enshrine a rights-based approach in respect to each and every service and systems response.

### Submissions

Throughout 2018-19 ADA Australia took advantage of every opportunity to provide written submission to the Australian Government in relation to a diverse set of opportunities including but not limited to: the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, National Disability Strategy for Beyond 2020, NDIS Thin Markets Project along with a number of documents created on behalf of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN).

It's hoped that one of the outcomes of current Royal Commissions will be a clearer appreciation of the need for all service and systems responses to place the rights of the recipient at the centre of all responses and sets of recommendations to government to this effect. ADA Australia will continue its efforts to bring this about.

# 4,040

OLDER PEOPLE AND  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY  
THAT ADAA ENGAGED WITH



# Communications REPORT

Building on the communications work we did in 2017-18, the past year has seen ADA Australia's profile as an industry expert and authoritative voice on the topic of elder abuse grow significantly.

ADA Australia engaged key stakeholders to raise awareness of issues in the aged and disability sectors, highlighting initiatives on advocacy, improving service delivery and offering a voice for the most vulnerable. This included furthering ADA Australia's CEO Geoff Rowe's profile in mainstream and trade media, both nationally and in regional communities, to generate media commentary opportunities.

A major focus for the year was to boost ADA's national profile in the lead up to the National Elder Abuse Conference (NEAC) in July 2019 through integrated and strategic communication activity. This included numerous pieces of media coverage across trade publications, such as Starts at 60, Australia Ageing Agenda and Aged Care Guide, and mainstream media in the Sydney Morning Herald, Brisbane Times, Sunday Mail, ABC Radio Brisbane and 10 News Queensland. This coverage achieved a total audience reach of more than 992,000 and significantly raised the profile of not only the NEAC event and elder abuse in Australia but also ADA Australia as an industry leader.

Additionally, organisations Uniting Care, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and Brisbane North Primary Health Network threw their support behind the event by promoting it on their website, social media and email communication platforms. To drive ticket sales, ADA Australia strategically utilised social media and digital communications to engage readers and encourage them to attend the conference. Social media activations on a dedicated NEAC Facebook page reached 4,600 people, 7,000 impressions were made on NEAC

Twitter posts and 680 impressions were recorded across LinkedIn. ADA Australia also distributed tailored NEAC email communications to our client database and distributed targeted media alerts to relevant trade and mainstream media contacts in the lead up to the NEAC event. The combination of these communications activities resulted in ticket sales exceeding the original target of 430, with 510 people ultimately purchasing admission to the event.

Another crucial focal point for the past year was the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Following the announcement of the Royal Commission in October 2018, there was a fundamental need for ADA Australia to influence and facilitate conversations around elder abuse in Australia. A key win, which provided ADA Australia with significant exposure and publicity, was the CEO's interview on the Today Show where he spoke about the Royal Commission and NEAC conference, affirming ADA Australia's mission to put a stop to elder abuse. Additional media coverage relating to the Royal commission was secured on 2SER Radio, alongside coverage in partnership with Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) in the Australian Ageing Agenda, The Senior, ABC News and 6PR regarding OPAN's support of the Royal Commission into the aged care sector.

As always, we focused on engaging our clients, community and stakeholders through our bi-monthly newsletter, The Advocate, and through our regular social media activity. Our Facebook following grew 3.9 per cent in the past 12 months from 2,055 likes to 2,135 likes during 2018-2019. The Advocate continues to

serve as an informative communication platform which receives positive feedback from those who receive it.

Our ongoing partnership with Cole Lawson for strategic communications projects and initiatives, continues to enhance our communication with the community about the issues affecting ageing Australians and people with disability.

We're now looking forward to the year ahead with plenty of communication activity advocating for the rights of older Australians and people with a disability. We will also continue our focus on the discussions and findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, as well as the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability .

## 2,135

LIKES ON THE ADA  
AUSTRALIA FACEBOOK  
PAGE – increase of 3.9%



ALMOST

## 1 million

TOTAL AUDIENCE  
REACH FOR NEAC  
MEDIA COVERAGE



# Corporate Services REPORT

## Our Staff

This year ADA Australia increased its focus on supporting people with disability in Queensland with funding provided by the Department of Social Services National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP). Financial resources were allocated by the Department specifically for the Rockhampton and Gold Coast regions to allow people with disability access to effective advocacy support that promotes, upholds and protects their human rights while promoting their inclusion in community life. (See separate report for more detail)

While the 2018-19 year saw the cessation of the Queensland Community Care Scheme, from 1 July 2019 ADA Australia welcomed continued funding from the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors to provide disability advocacy support to people 65 years and under. This is a new state-wide service which is intended to support people with disability to uphold their rights and increase their control over decisions that impact them and increase their capacity for self-advocacy.

While upskilling of staff to support their new disability advocacy roles has been a focus, we have continued to enhance the skills, capabilities and knowledge of our valuable employees by providing regular training and development opportunities, including participation in planning workshops with our OPAN partners, focussing on elder abuse awareness and prevention, and building a nationally consistent advocacy framework. Our advocates continue to consolidate their practice skills across the disability, aged care and human rights sectors, drawing upon professional backgrounds in nursing, social work, human services, diversional therapy, rehabilitation, education, and law.

ADA Australia continues to pride itself on being an employer of choice, building a positive organisational culture, in which performance, learning and wellbeing are valued and supported, and actively promoting and supporting a positive work/life balance. ADA Australia has formalised two outpost worker arrangements with

Advocates in both the Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba regions. These arrangements have resulted in reduced operational costs and travel times and afford these advocates greater opportunity to utilise their time supporting individuals and engaging in community initiatives.

In July 2019 ADA Australia partnered with Caxton Legal Service to host the 6th National Elder Abuse Conference (NEAC) 2019 themed 'Rock the Boat'. This successful two-day conference generated a small surplus from registrations and corporate sponsorships. Delegates who provided feedback at the conclusion of the conference were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects with useful feedback offered in respect to the focus and format of future conferences. (see separate report for more detail)

Integral to ADA Australia's capacity to continue to respond to increasing demand for our services is the commitment of the team of volunteers and students, whose passion, enthusiasm, good heart and dedication are greatly appreciated in areas such as administration, information/referral and advocacy support.

## Information Technology and Communication (ICT) Efficiencies

2018-19 has seen some major ICT developments for ADA Australia with the rollout of enhanced web conferencing facilities including web advocacy meeting trials with clients; dictation and live scribe device trials for more efficient case note writing; and the build of a new Salesforce Customer Relationship Management system to replace the organisation's outdated and unsupported client database and streamline human resource management functions.

All these initiatives have produced significant financial savings across the organisation particularly around labour costs, the funds of which will be better utilised supporting our clients to achieve a better quality of life.

## Quality Certification

ADA Australia has maintained its commitment to being a quality organisation in all respects and has been formally recognised as a certified quality organisation against the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) Quality Management System 9001 Standards since 2009.

In recognition of this 10-year accomplishment, in 2019 ADA Australia reviewed existing arrangements in respect to the appointed ISO Certification Body, both in the interests of due diligence and cost efficiency. After an extensive tendering process, ADA Australia appointed BSI Group as our new appointed ISO Certification Body as of March 2019 for the next three (3) years.

ADA Australia successfully passed its ISO 9001:2015 Re-Certification audit in June 2019. Additionally, ADA Australia was successful in achieving compliance against the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS), a new requirement as part of ADA Australia's new National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) services.

Attaining formal quality certification against both standards is an enormous accomplishment and validation of ADA Australia's continuing commitment to quality in all organisational respects which ultimately translates to quality support for all our stakeholders.



## 2018-19 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Financially 2018-19 was a very successful year for ADA Australia. Overall, actual income for the year was \$4,066,246 up by \$609,156 from the previous year.

2018-19 saw ADA Australia continuing delivery of advocacy services to clients of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP), in partnership with eight other service delivery organisations across the nation who make up the Older People's Advocacy Network (OPAN). This national partnership has not only ensured that vulnerable older people continue to be heard and supported but has allowed for greater consistency in respect to how advocacy services are delivered across the nation and reported to the funding body.

Through partnerships with OPAN, Council on the Ageing, and the Brisbane South Primary Health Network, ADA Australia established Aged Care Navigator services in the Brisbane South and Bundaberg/Wide Bay regions. These are trials funded by the Australian Government around information provision about aged care options, and/or assistance to access aged care supports by older people, their families, friends and others seeking to be linked to aged care support services.

This year ADA Australia increased its focus on supporting people with disability as a result of successful submissions to the Department of Social Services National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) for the delivery of disability advocacy services in the Rockhampton and Gold Coast Regions.

While the 2018-19 year saw the cessation of the Queensland Community Care Scheme and resultant loss of funding, ADA Australia warmly welcomed the reallocation of funding from the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors to deliver free disability advocacy services to people 65 years and under across Queensland from 1 July 2019.

ADA Australia has continued to partner with the Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) to undertake a range of key activities to support a dedicated statewide network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with disability – ATSIDNQ.

Through the successful work of the ATSIDNQ, ADA Australia was commissioned by the Department of Social Services to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families in remote communities on the development of a new National Disability Strategy for Beyond 2020. Content and quotes from ATSIDNQ's comprehensive report has been utilised in the Department's soon to be released Disability Strategy Consultation Report.

ADA Australia's Human Rights Service, funded by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, has continued to support adults with impaired decision-making capacity to resolve guardianship and administration issues. Despite an ever-increasing demand, ADA Australia has continued to meet the needs of consumers despite funding limitations, through self-generated income and retained earnings.

In July 2019 ADA Australia in partnership with Caxton Legal Centre and support from a broad range of industry partners, jointly hosted the 6th National Elder Abuse Conference 2019 (NEAC) themed 'Rock the Boat'. This successful two-day conference attended by over 500 delegates generated a small surplus from registrations and corporate sponsorships. Overall attendees and speakers provided very positive feedback, and useful suggestions about possible future conference themes.

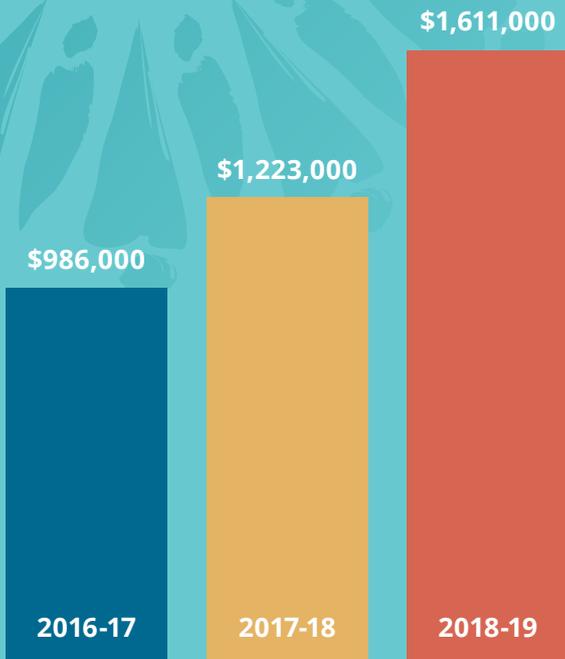
Total expenditure for the year was \$4,029,295, an increase of \$567,164 from the previous year. This increased expenditure is primarily attributable to increased staff wages and associated direct service delivery costs, to meet the increasing client demand for ADA Australia's services.

ADA Australia's cash position increased slightly with a closing cash balance of \$1,611,326 at the end of the financial year, up by \$388,289 from the previous year. The closing cash balance has been impacted due to grants and funding received prior to year-end being reflected in the financial report as unexpended funds carried forward.



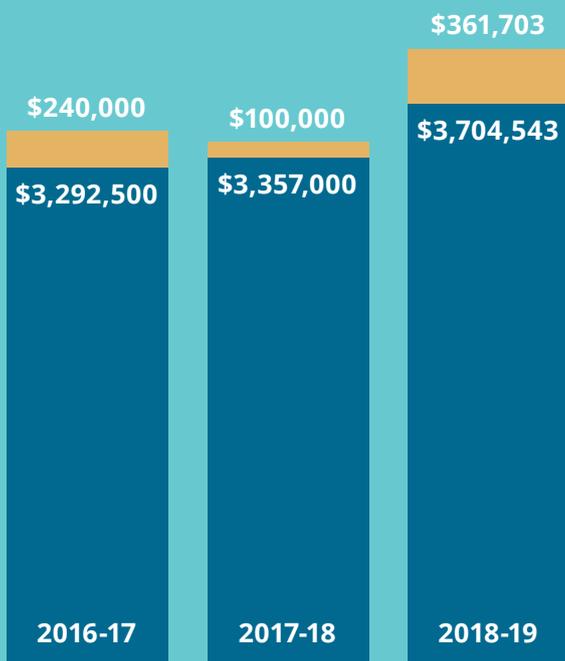
# 2018-19 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## Cash at end of financial year

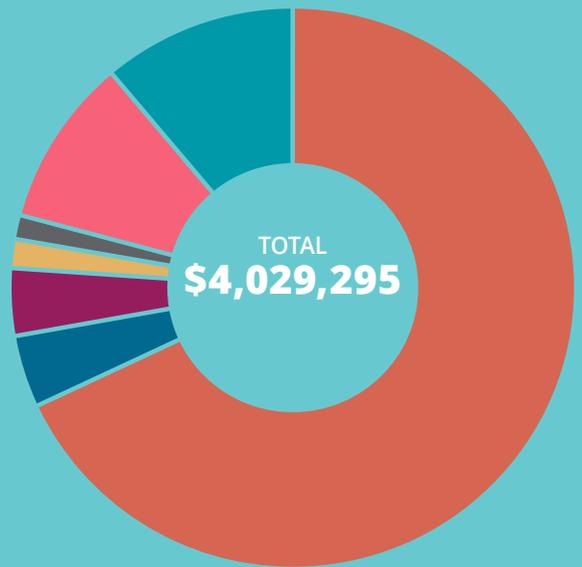


## Sources of income

● Government ● Self Generated



## Expenditure 2018-19



STAFFING (68.29%)  
**\$2,751,803**

TRAVEL (4.27%)  
**\$172,166**

PREMISES/ACCOMMODATION (3.98%)  
**\$160,485**

EQUIPMENT/FURNITURE (1.63%)  
**\$65,598**

PROMOTION (1.34%)  
**\$54,132**

COMMUNICATION (9.55%)  
**\$384,791**

CONTRACTED SERVICES (10.94%)  
**\$440,320**

# Glossary

## OF KEY TERMS

<b>ATSIDNQ</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland	<b>NAIDOC</b>	National Aboriginal & Islander Day Observance Committee
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	<b>NDAP</b>	National Disability Advocacy Program
<b>CDC</b>	Consumer Directed Care	<b>NDIS</b>	National Disability Insurance Scheme
<b>CHSP</b>	Commonwealth Home Support Program	<b>OPAN</b>	Older Persons Advocacy Network
<b>EPOA</b>	Enduring Power of Attorney	<b>QCAT</b>	Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
<b>HCP</b>	Home Care Packages	<b>QCCS</b>	Queensland Community Care Services
<b>LGBTI</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans,* Intersex	<b>RAP</b>	Reconciliation Action Plan
<b>NACAP</b>	National Aged Care Advocacy Program	<b>MAC</b>	My Aged Care

\* The term “trans” means “across from”. Currently in Australia, people are classified at birth as female or male. Female-classified children are raised as girls. Male-classified children are raised as boys. A female-classified person who identifies as a boy or man might describe himself as a trans man or simply as a man.

Similarly, a woman classified as male might describe herself as a trans woman or simply as a woman. Some trans people identify trans as their gender. We use “trans\*” in this document as a collective term to describe these diverse life experiences.

The term is also sometimes used as an umbrella term for anyone whose gender characteristics differ from their society’s expectations.

National LGBTI Health Alliance Health Information Sheet Inclusive Language on Intersex, Trans\* and Gender Diversity v3 July 2013



**Brisbane - Head Office**

121 Copperfield Street  
Geebung, QLD 4034

Email [info@adaaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@adaaustralia.com.au)

Phone (07) 3637 6000

Toll Free 1800 818 338

[adaaustralia.com.au](http://adaaustralia.com.au)