

Annual Report 2022-23

Delivering more services to more Queenslanders



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



About ADA Australia



Aged and Disability Advocacy (ADA) Australia is a not-for-profit, independent, community-based advocacy and education service that supports and improves the wellbeing of older people and people with disability in Queensland.

With headquarters in Brisbane and advocates located in many locations across Queensland. ADA Australia provides advocacy services to older people and people with disability in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.

Our vision is that older people and people with disability exercise their rights and make choices about how they live their lives.

Our purpose is to empower older people and people with a disability through information, education and advocacy.

ADA Australia Funding and services

National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP)

- Australian Government funded program through the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)
- Delivery of aged care advocacy, information & education services across Queensland

National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP)

- Australian Government funded program
- Delivery of disability advocacy in Gold Coast and Central Queensland regions
- Delivery of advocacy support for Disability Royal Commission in Gold Coast and Central Queensland regions (until 31 June 2023)

Mental Health Legal Support

- Queensland Government funded program
- Delivery of legal support to people with mental health conditions including representation at the MHRT and at QCAT, legal information and advice and referrals
- Delivery in the Townsville region

National Care Finder Program

- Australian Government funded program through the Primary Health Network
- Delivery of specialist support for those older people who need extra help to navigate and access aged care
- Delivery in Primary Health Network regions: Darling Downs & West Moreton, Brisbane South, Western Queensland, Northern Queensland

Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (QDAP)

- Queensland Government funded program
- Delivery of disability advocacy in Gold Coast, Logan, Redlands and Beenleigh regions
- Delivery of Side by Side First Peoples Advocacy service statewide, as part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland (ATSIDNQ)

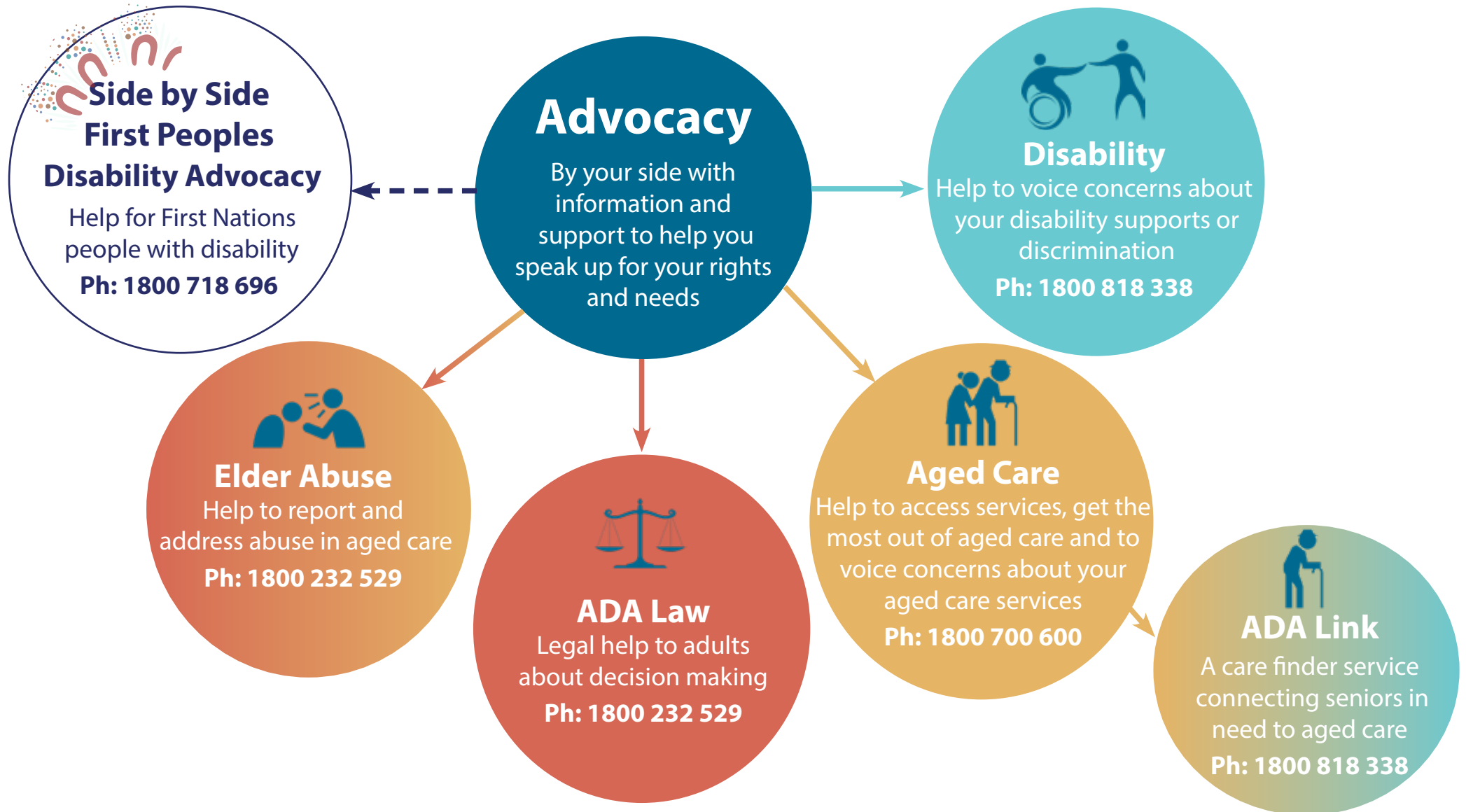
Queensland Community Legal Centre (QCLC)

- Queensland Government funded community legal service through Legal Aid Queensland
- ADA Law supports people whose capacity is impaired or questioned with guardianship and administration matters including representation at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Queensland Seniors Legal and Support Service

- Queensland Government funded program
- Delivery of legal and social work support to seniors with concerns about elder abuse, mistreatment or financial matters
- Outreach service to western and outback Queensland.

How can we help you?



Chair's Report



We are now an organisation of more than 100 staff across the state, delivering advocacy and legal support to older people and advocacy support to people with disability, including a specialised First Nations advocacy service.

2022-23 was another year of growth and transformation, not only for ADA Australia, but for the aged care sector.

While COVID-19 impacts lessened during the year, the virus remains an ever-present concern and I encourage older people and their families to stay informed about vaccination and prevention measures and their rights in aged care during outbreaks.

We saw the first of many steps needed towards better aged care with the passing of two laws – the Aged Care and Other Legislation Amendment (Royal Commission Response Act) 2020 and the Implementing Aged Care Reform Act 2022. This legislation introduced measures requiring greater transparency and accountability of providers and better quality of care.

Significantly, the Fair Work Commission approved a 15% increase to award wages for aged care workers, effective 30 June 2023. Although not the 25% sought, we hope this increase goes some way to improving the status of these valuable roles and attracting more people to the sector.

At a systemic level, ADA Australia kept a close watch on aged care reforms to address any impacts and gaps for older Queenslanders. For example, we called on the government to invest in innovation and alternative models to residential aged care as part of the reform budget. We know that large institution-like facilities are not the best option for ageing well, not from a lack of effort and care, but from flaws inherent in institutional living.

ADA Australia's service delivery growth continued, as we implemented year two of the phased introduction of the Australian Government's \$94 million national investment in aged care advocacy. We also expanded into new areas of support for older Queenslanders, with successful tenders for the Australian Government Care Finder program, and the Queensland Government's Seniors Legal & Support Service. You will find more details about these new programs in this report.

The year also saw us release our new Strategic Plan, which will inform the organisation's growth, development and focus over the coming years.

I would like to acknowledge and thank CEO Geoff Rowe, Company Secretary Kathy Chandler and the executive team for their leadership in steering the organisation through this exponential growth, and the dedicated team at ADA Australia for continuing to make serving vulnerable Queenslanders their priority through this time of expansion.

As the organisation changed, so too did our Board. I would like to acknowledge Director Ian Edwards, who resigned from the ADA Australia Board during the year, and Paul Johnson and Jennifer Pouwer who resigned from the Board in September. These colleagues served a collective 22 years as volunteer directors and I thank them for so generously giving their time, energy and experience. The organisation we are today is a testament to the Board Directors and staff who have gone before.

I would also like to thank the serving Board for their collegiality, respectful challenge, and united approach to achieving our vision of older people and people with disability exercising their rights making choices about how they live their lives.

In closing I would like to highlight the work of the Disability Royal Commission, which finalised hearings and submissions in December 2022. ADA Australia is proud to have supported more than 350 people with disability and their families and carers to share their stories with the Commission. We acknowledge their courage and strength in sharing their experiences. The Commission's Final Report was released on 29 September 2023, with recommendations calling for sweeping changes across all areas of society. We are hopeful there will be a renewed focus on building an inclusive future for people with disability in the year ahead. We look forward to playing our part in that future.

Liz Kearins
Chair

CEO's Report



During the 2022-23 financial year ADA Australia continued to expand service delivery, including in our aged care advocacy footprint and the addition of three new services to our support portfolio.

In 2021-22 the Australian Government made a \$94 million additional investment in aged care advocacy nationally. For ADA Australia the investment has resulted in an additional 29.5 positions over two years, with 10 positions appointed in 2022-23, the second year of implementation.

These roles included an additional 2 financial advocates, 4 Team Leader roles, and 4 Lead Practitioner roles to lead practice across LGBTIQ, First Nations and CALD communities and Quality Complex Care.

With this full team complement, we have increased aged care advocacy delivery by 51% and elder abuse support by 28%.

In response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety's findings that the complexity of the aged care system makes it difficult for some older people to navigate and access aged care, the Australian Government introduced the Care Finder program. Care finders would provide individual support to help vulnerable older people access aged care services and other support in the community.

ADA Australia was successful in tender applications to deliver care finder services in the Brisbane South, Darling Downs and West Moreton, Northern Queensland and Western Queensland Primary Health Network regions.

We have been part of the development of the care finder service from its early beginnings, through the Aged Care System Navigator Trial, so were well placed to provide this service. The 'ADA Link' care finder service was successfully launched in June 2023, and now has a team of Community Connectors across the state.

In addition, our community legal service, ADA Law, successfully launched two new services, funded through the Queensland Government. A legal support service for people with mental health conditions in the Townsville region, and the Seniors Legal & Support Service (SLASS) outreach service for older people living in western and outback Queensland.

On a systemic level in 2022-23 we saw the start of aged care reforms, and ADA Australia made several submissions on key pieces of reform legislation and consultation papers, to represent the views and perspectives of the people we support. A list of submissions is available in this report.

We also reiterated that aged care reforms must be underpinned by human rights, and we welcomed Aged Care Minister Wells' explicit commitment to a new Aged Care Act in mid-2024, that would be underpinned by international human rights conventions and a Statement of Rights. But an Aged Care Act should not stand alone, and we strongly supported calls for a national Human Rights Act, in a submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework.



On a personal note, I was proud to see ADA Australia receive recognition for our work, being selected as a finalist in the Human Rights category in the inaugural Queensland Community Impact Awards.

I was also appointed Chair of the Public Trustee Advisory and Monitoring Board, which was established to provide an independent oversight mechanism for the Public Trustee, to improve transparency and public accountability, and to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board, whose role it is to oversee, monitor and report on the operation of voluntary assisted dying in Queensland.

I know that many people hold different views and beliefs about voluntary assisted dying in particular, but also the role of public administrators appointed for those that need help with decisions. My aim for both Boards is to make sure that the voices of older people, and people with disability are heard and their rights upheld.

On a final note, I would like to again extend my sincere thanks to Liz Kearins, ADA Board Chair and all Board Directors for their wisdom and guidance. A special farewell and thank you to Ian Edwards, Paul Johnson and Jennifer Pouwer for their many years of service to ADA Australia. My thanks also to my Executive Management Team and staff of ADA Australia, for their commitment to the organisation and our clients during this time of growth and change.

Geoff Rowe
CEO



ADALink
Connecting seniors in need to services and support.

Your link to practical outcomes for seniors in need

1800 818 338
adalink.com.au

 If you require an interpreter, please phone: 131 450

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

Advocacy Services Snapshot










Overall, there was a significant increase of 28% in 2022-23 in the number of advocacy cases and 43% in information and referrals over the previous year. We see this as a result of a number of factors including:

- Full implementation of additional investment in aged care advocacy, including new roles of community development officers, financial advocates, team leaders and lead practitioners.
- Ongoing high demand for advocacy services.
- Continued focus on awareness building of ADA Australia's range of services with three community development officers.

- Additional services added to ADA Law scope, and new ADA Link care finder services.

The proportion of advocacy cases and information referral are generally reflective of funding levels for the year – aged care advocacy (NACAP), disability advocacy including for First Nations people (QDAP) and ADA Law (QCLC). ADA Link (care finder) was only operational for a short period in 2022-23 and service delivery under this program will increase significantly in the next financial year.

The regional breakdown remains consistent and is representative of the spread of population and ADA Australia resources.

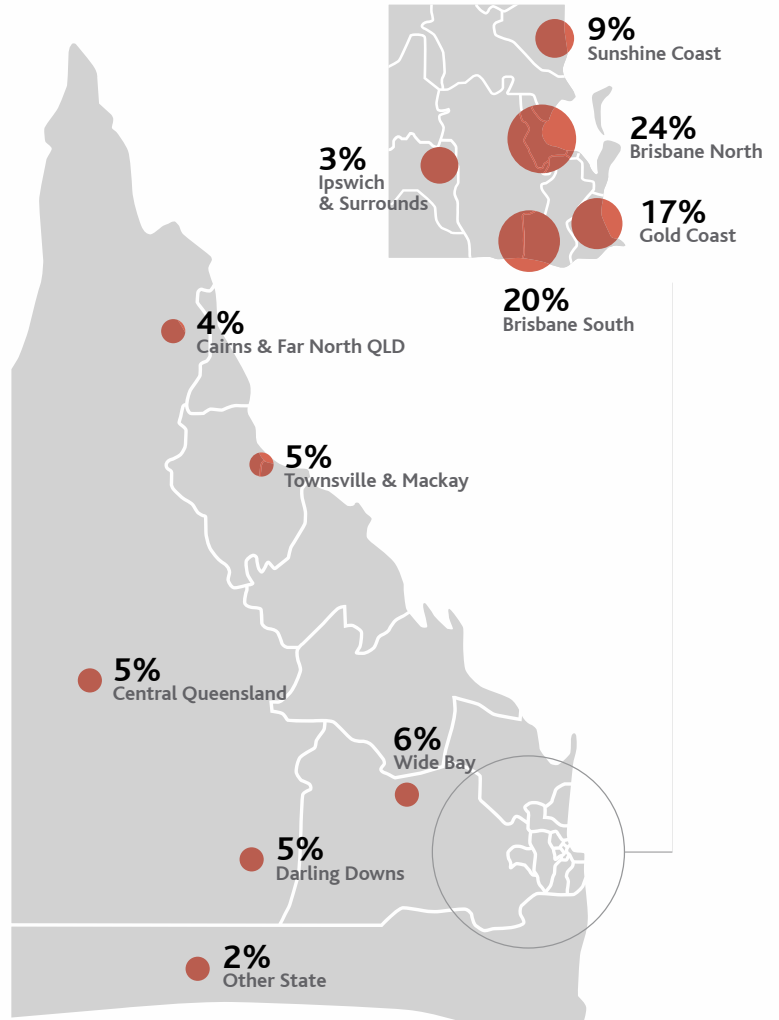
Information and Advocacy by Program Area		2021-2022		2022-2023	
		Advocacy Cases	Information & Referral	Advocacy Cases	Information & Referral
	Aged Care Advocacy	1,356	3,348	2,794	4,712
	Aged Care System Navigator	254	17	104	29
	ADA Link Care Finder	n/a	n/a	95	10
	Disability Advocacy	974	406	696	906
	Disability Royal Commission	236	11	60	12
	ADA Law	372	74	323	187
	Elder Abuse	171	200	239	300
	Side by Side First Peoples Advocacy	49	n/a	63	74
	Out of Scope - Referral	0	554	0	377
	Total	3,412	4,610	4,374	6,607
Total Information & Advocacy		8,022		10,981	

Intake

2022-23 Highlights

- Access to all support services is via ADA Australia's Intake team, who assess requirements and assign to the relevant area as an advocacy case, or who provide information and referral to the required services and supports.
- In 2022-23 ADA Australia expanded the Intake team to meet advocacy demand, including appointing a Team Leader.
- We now have an Intake team of 7 FTEs.
- During 2022-23 the call rate for requests for services was around 600 calls per week.
- 6,607 information and referrals provided for requests for support.

Regional Breakdown of Service Delivery



ADA Australia
Care Finder team DDWN Induction



Aged Care Advocacy

2022-23 Highlights

- Year two implementation of additional \$94 million national investment in aged care advocacy:
 - 2 x financial advocates
 - 4 x team leaders
 - 4 x lead practitioners
- New staff onboarding continued throughout 2022-23.
- Undertook restructuring to Implement Team Leader and Lead Practitioner roles, which has resulted in a greater quality approach to practice, including greater consistency, oversight and staff support.
- Established KPI targets and reporting systems for numbers of cases and educations to be delivered by individual aged care advocates. This has supported the growth of aged care advocacy services delivery.
- Advocacy cases have more than doubled and information and referrals have increased by 60%. This large increase is due to a number of factors:
 - Increase in number of advocates, and therefore advocacy capacity
 - Full year of Community Development Officer team's operation
 - Additional Financial Advocates and full year of the team's operation.
- Undertook review of aged care education program including resources, targets and implemented education booking system.
- Education sessions almost doubled, following this review and focused effort to increase education reach across aged care consumers and staff.

Service Delivery

Aged Care Advocacy		
	2021-22	2022-223
	1,356	2,794 Advocacy cases
	3,348	4,712 Information & referrals
Total	4,704	7,506



Financial Advocacy		
	2021-22	2022-223
	37	319 Financial advocacy case & information
	25	212 Consultation & information provided to other advocacy cases
Total	62	531






Key Issues

Advocates supported aged care consumers with a number of key issues during 2022-23 including:

- Concerns about cuts to home care services or increased fees, following the wage increase for aged care workers and the wage subsidy.
- Clarifications made by government in the home care package program operational manual regarding package inclusions and exclusions resulted in changes in the services some older people could access.
- Support with taking the next steps following approval for aged care services at home, whether that is Commonwealth Home Support Program or a home care package.
- A significant concern for many older people has been a lack of awareness of the income tested fee they are required to pay for home care packages when commencing, which has resulted in some people incurring a significant debt.
- Understanding fees and charges in residential aged care, in relation to an individual's circumstances.
- Continuing difficulties with limited availability of service providers for services at home such as domestic assistance and garden maintenance.

Community Development		
	No, Sessions	No, Attendees
	147	3,872
	Presentations to community groups and networks	
	177	13,436
	Public events and presentations	
Total	324	17,308

Education Snapshot		
	2021-22	2022-23
	461	800
	Number of education sessions	
	5,228	8,543
	Number of consumers receiving education	
	2,883	3,592
	Number of aged care staff receiving education	



Care Finder – ADA Link

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety identified that the complexity of the Australian aged care system presents long-standing challenges for older people seeking to understand and access the system, and that these challenges are exacerbated for some groups including those considered 'hard to reach' or with complex needs.

The Royal Commission recommended that the Australian Government should fund the engagement of a workforce of personal advisers to older people, their families and carers called 'care finders'.

Care finders would provide specialist assistance and support to assist vulnerable seniors understand and access aged

care and/or connect with other relevant supports in their community.

The new care finder program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, has been commissioned and managed through the Primary Health Networks across Australia to complement existing aged care advocacy services.

ADA Australia was successful in the tender process to deliver care finder services in Brisbane South, Darling Downs & West Moreton, Northern Queensland and Western Queensland Primary Health Network Regions.

ADA Australia was well positioned for this work having delivered the **Aged Care System Navigator Trial** in Brisbane South and Wide Bay regions for four years. The Navigator Trial program wrapped up on 31 December 2022.



Regional Service Delivery		
	Advocacy Cases	Information & Referral
Brisbane South	8	0
Darling Downs & West Moreton	81	10
Northern Queensland	6	0
Western Queensland	n/a	n/a
Total	95	10

Note services established and operational for approximately one month in the financial year. Western Queensland region did not commence in 2021-22.

ADA Australia
Care Finders Launch Ipswich



2022-23 Highlights

- \$10.5 million in funding for care finder program to June 2025
- Successful tenders for Primary Health Network Regions:
 - Brisbane South (ancillary provider)
 - Darling Downs & West Moreton (primary provider)
 - Northern Queensland (primary provider in certain locations)
 - Western Queensland (primary provider – outreach service)
- Service establishment:
 - Care finder staff recruitment and onboarding – Management, Community Connectors, Program Officer and Team Leaders
 - Office procurement and set-up
 - Development of operating service delivery procedures
 - Developing branding, promotional materials and resources
- ADA Link team established with currently 26.8 FTEs and four central offices.
- Launch events for the Darling Downs & West Moreton region held in Ipswich, Toowoomba, Kingaroy and Dalby.
- ADA Link participated in various launch activities across the Brisbane South area.






Key Issues

Community Connectors supported vulnerable seniors across a number of key areas during 2022-23 including:

- Improved understanding of funding and support options available
- Access to services including My Aged Care, NDIS and other government and non-government supports
- Support to connect with services associated with housing and homelessness
- Link to supports associated with financial and legal services
- Support to access local community services, networks and equipment/resources
- Cross-sector navigation between health, mental health, disability and aged care systems.

Key areas impacting vulnerable seniors include:

- Thin markets and shortage of skilled work force particularly in regional, rural and remote areas
- Wait times and funding shortages
- Confusion regarding navigation of government systems
- Fear and reluctance to accept supports
- Lack of accessible information
- Lack of culturally appropriate services and supports.

Aged Care Systems Navigator *		Wide Bay	Brisbane South	Total
	Support hours	25	1,105	1,601
	Cases	212	319	216
	Information sessions	9	0*	9

*Program ceased 31 December 2022







Disability Advocacy

2022-23 Highlights

- The newly established Queensland Disability Advocacy Program (QDAP) which commenced in January 2022 continued to grow during the 2022-23 period.
- The 18-month QDAP contract to deliver services in Redlands, Logan, Beenleigh and Gold Coast was completed in June 2023.
- ADA joined together with the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network and other peak organisations to successfully lobby government to extend funding of state-based disability advocacy services.
- Queensland Government commenced a re-tender process in early 2023 with ADA being successful in retaining its funding across Redlands, Logan, Beenleigh and Gold Coast for the period 2024 to 2027.
- The successful tender also resulted in ongoing funding of the statewide First Nations Disability Advocacy Service until 31 March 2024.
- Delivery of disability advocacy services in the Gold Coast and Central Queensland regions continued under the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) with no availability of additional funding.
- Supported 60 people with disability and their families and carers to share their experiences with the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) in the final six months of the Commission. DRC Final Report released 28 September 2023.

- The change in advocacy case numbers reflects that ADA Australia is no longer providing a state funded statewide Disability Advocacy service, rather focusing only on specific regions within Queensland, that is Central Queensland, Redlands, Logan, Beenleigh and Gold Coast.
- This reduction in geographical reach has significantly impacted on the number of clients able to be assisted (unmet need), with a large volume of requests for support coming from people outside of the ADA funded locations.
- Advocacy case numbers still exceeded KPIs of 520 cases.

Service Delivery

Disability Advocacy		
	2021-22	2022-23
	974	696* Advocacy cases
	406	906 Unmet Demand
Total	1,380	1,602

*Advocacy case number based on new clients entering the service from July 2022 to June 2023.

*Unmet demand consists of out of location or scope requests where a referral or general information is provided.



Key issues

Disability advocates supported people with disability with a number of key issues during 2022-23 including:

- The NDIS continued to be the main area where people needed support, making up 67% of cases in 2022-23. Particularly:
 - NDIS access – carers, families and people with disability find it difficult to navigate the access process in terms of gathering the evidence needed to define what is reasonable and necessary or them
 - NDIS access process is lengthy taking up to 6 attempts which means people are being left for long periods of time with no formal supports. Advocates support clients to source additional supports whilst they wait on NDIS outcomes.
 - There is heavy demand for support across all areas of the NDIS planning, review and service uptake, coordination and complaints processes further impacted on by thin markets, workforce issues and the lack of culturally appropriate supports.
- There are limited options available for people with disability who are not NDIS eligible with long wait

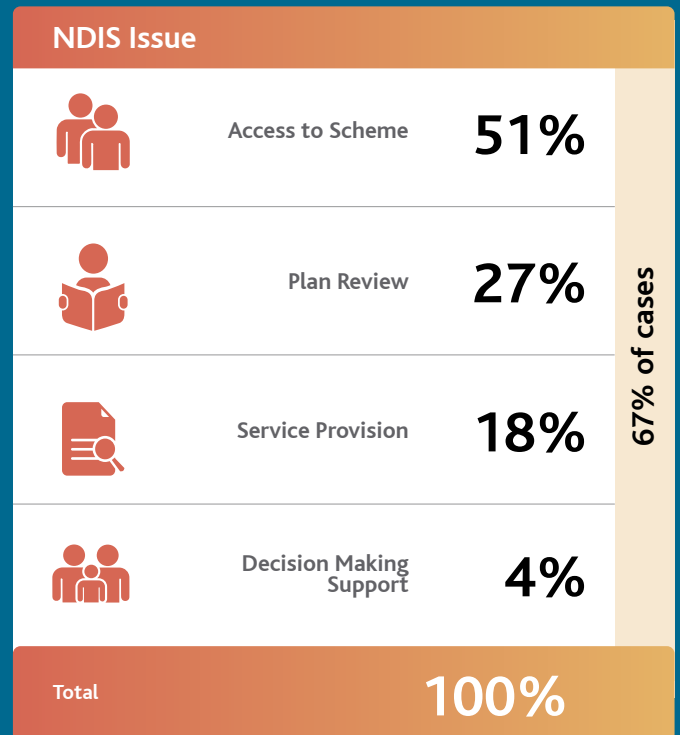
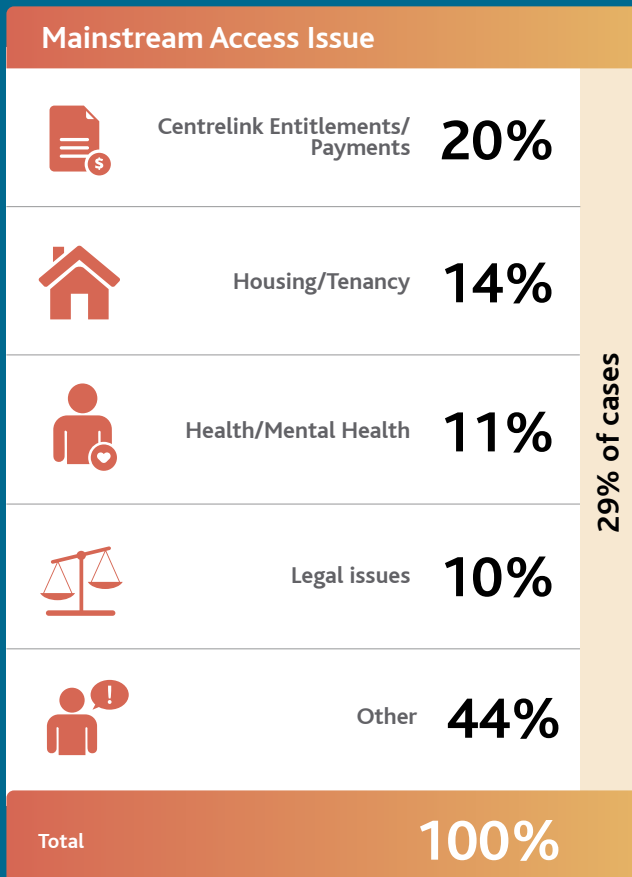
times for Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS) support (12 months) resulting in the need for people to consider early entry into the aged care system.

- There continues to be increasing number of requests for assistance with housing given the current housing crisis across Queensland and beyond. This can be challenging from an advocacy perspective as there are limited options to provide support particularly as there continues to be limited housing options available.
- Requests for advocacy support from participants of the Disability Royal Commission has been challenging for the service, with many People with Disability reporting that they have been re-traumatised by the telling their story.



Issue Type

(Queensland Disability Advocacy Program)



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland (ATSIDNQ)

2022-23 Highlights

- The newly established Side by Side First Peoples Advocacy service delivery, which commenced providing statewide support in January 2022, continued to grow during 2022-23 with 63 advocacy cases and support with 74 information and referrals.
- A dedicated ATSIDNQ intake line established to provide a culturally appropriate intake service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- The initial Side By Side funding contract was completed in June 2023, which brought about some structural changes to the team including the end of contract for the Project Officer position.
- ATSIDNQ joined together with the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) and other peak organisations to successfully lobby government to extend funding of state-based disability advocacy services beyond June 2023.
- The Queensland Government commenced a re-tender process in early 2023 with ATSIDNQ being successful in retaining its funding for the Side By Side First Peoples Advocacy Service for the period to 31 March 2024.
- Team resources continued to be stretched with Side by Side advocates providing part-time individual support to statewide disability cases.
- ATSIDNQ Membership numbers were 1,283.
- Focus on reconnecting with the ATSIDNQ membership with Yarn-ups held in Strathpine and Deception Bay in August 2022
- Logan Yarn Up & Kup Murri held in partnership with Gunya Meta in Logan 9 December 2022, as part of NAIDOC celebrations. The event featured interactive activities, a chance to yarn with the NDIS regarding supports and funding, and a Kup Murri lunch.
- The team attended various NAIDOC Week events around the state, including Logan, Cherbourg, Toowoomba and Cairns.
- ATSIDNQ continued to be supported by Network Champions Uncle Willie Prince (Brisbane), Aunty Semah Mokak-Wischki (Brisbane), Aunty Ruth Miller (Cairns), Cody Skinner (Brisbane), MC Chosen Shaun Fabila and Leon Petrou (Brisbane).
- New Champion Recruitment – Uncle Richard McCarthy Toowoomba August 2022.

ATSIDNQ
Gunya Meta



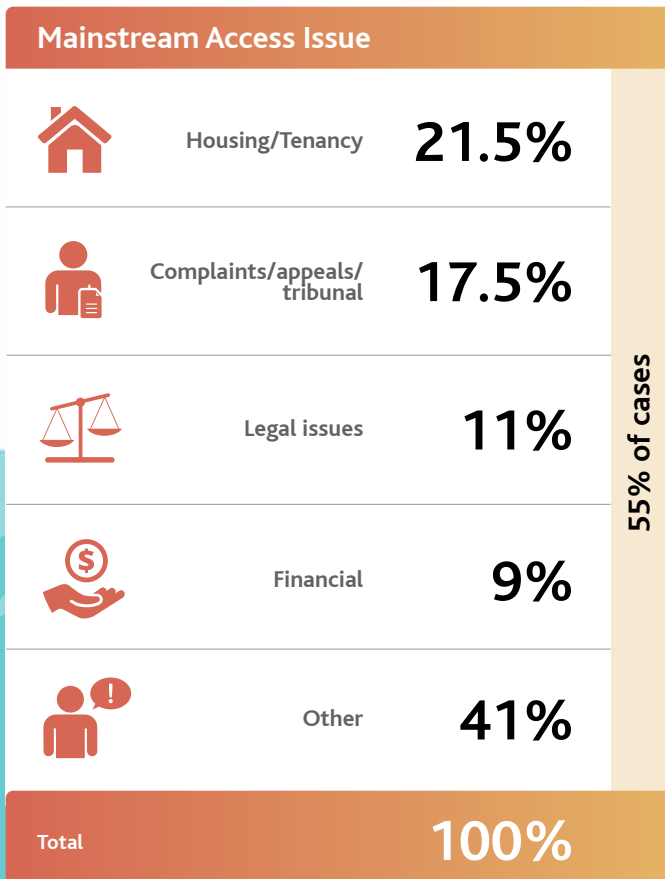
Key issues

Side by Side advocates supported First Nations people with disability with a number of key issues during 2022-23, including:

- Top mainstream issues – Housing/Tenancy, Legal, Financial (Disability Support Pension access support)
- Top NDIS issues – Access to Scheme, Service provision, Plan Reviews.

Key focus for the Side by Side team is to collaborate with other services to provide intensive wrap around support for individuals to be able to access the scheme successfully. The rigorous access process can often create further barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to access NDIS funding.

There is a great need for culturally responsive advocacy services and other identified supports such as Carers QLD First Nations Local Area Coordinator team to continue working together to best support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with disability, their family and communities.



Cultural Capability Building Project

ATSIDNQ was funded by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services to undertake cultural capability building activities with all Queensland Government funded disability advocacy organisations across the state.

ATSIDNQ developed the Talking Disability with our Community Toolkit, which included 7 steps to culturally responsive advocacy, conversation cards for engaging with First Nations people with disability, a cultural strengths assessment tool for organisations and a cultural wellbeing guide.

The launch of the toolkit was supported by an interactive session held in Brisbane where advocates from all disability advocacy providers got to hear directly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders about their lived experience, and their advice on delivering effective advocacy support to First Nations people with disability.

<https://atsidnq.com.au/talking-disability/>

The journey that advocates need to take when delivering services to community have been beautifully illustrated by artist Chern'ee Sutton, a proud Kalkadoon woman and Aboriginal artist from Mount Isa.



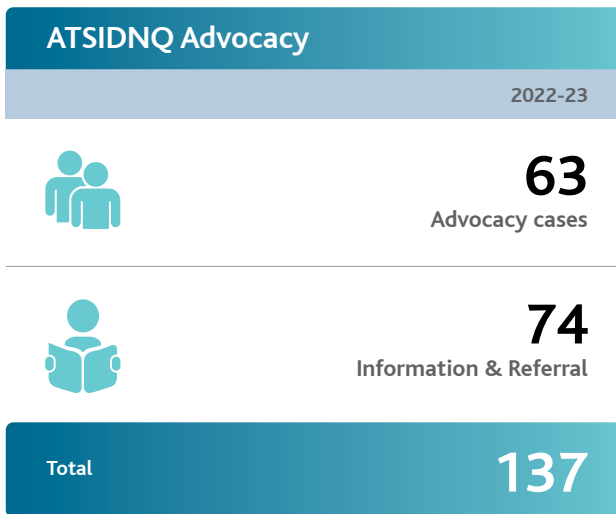
Systemic Advocacy

ATSIDNQ has provided joint feedback and responses into the following:

- Path to Treaty Bill 2023
- NDIS Review QLD Survey DANA
- QLD Health’s Women’s and Girls Strategy
- Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent under the Criminal Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023
- Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service response to Domestic and Family Violence
- National Disability Advocacy Framework 2022 – 2025



Service Delivery



Funding Submissions

With minimal funding from the state, ADA Australia supported ATSIDNQ to apply for several funding opportunities to build capacity, strengthen the Network and support viability moving forward. Funding was sought through federal and state funding and applications were submitted for the following:

- QLD Disability Peak and Representative Bodies – First Nations
- Community Benefit Fund
- Communities Innovative Funds – Social Isolation and Loneliness
- NDIS Commission – Support for NDIS Providers Grant Program. Resources to assist participants to understand their rights, make complains and raise issues with NDIS providers.

Unfortunately, ATSIDNQ was unsuccessful with all the above funding submissions.



Awareness



Recognise



Respectful Relationships



Listening



Lets Yarn



Your Story Matters



The Journey

ADA Law

2022-23 Highlights







- 2023 saw the introduction of two new programs to ADA Law:
 - The Townsville Mental Health Legal Service. Commenced in early 2023, this one-solicitor program has immediately made an impact on the number of mental health consumers receiving in person legal support for their Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) / Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) proceedings in the region. The program is a limited-term funded program from Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG), but we hope to see its positive impact supported by ongoing funding.
 - Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) Outback Outreach Program. Commenced in mid-June, this service provides legal advice and case work services to older Queenslanders living in the most remote parts of outback Queensland, from Birdsville to Mt Isa, to Charleville and Camooweal. A solicitor and social worker were added to the ADA Law team to deliver the service. The program is funded by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services for 18 months, which we hope can be extended.
- Collaboration with Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI) to develop a Supported Decision Making Guide. The Guide is aimed at providing education and tools to assist a person to make their own decisions, and to enhance the support given to them by their support network and professionals, reducing the need for



substitute decision making and curtailed human rights. The Guide was released on June 15, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and is available at www.adalaw.com.au/decision-making.

- Input provided into Federal and State legislative reform, lobbying strongly for improved recognition of our clients' human rights, particularly around independent and supported decision making. Members of the ADA Law team also have leadership roles within national and state law societies, providing further opportunity to influence positive change.
- ADA Law was successful in receiving an Investing in Queensland Women Grant, to extend the #ReadyToListen project to older Queensland women living at home. #ReadyToListen is the campaign that asks us to listen to older people who report sexual assault. The #ReadyToListen Webinar for Home Care Providers was held on Thursday 27 October 2022 for home care workers and aged care professionals working in older peoples' homes in the community.





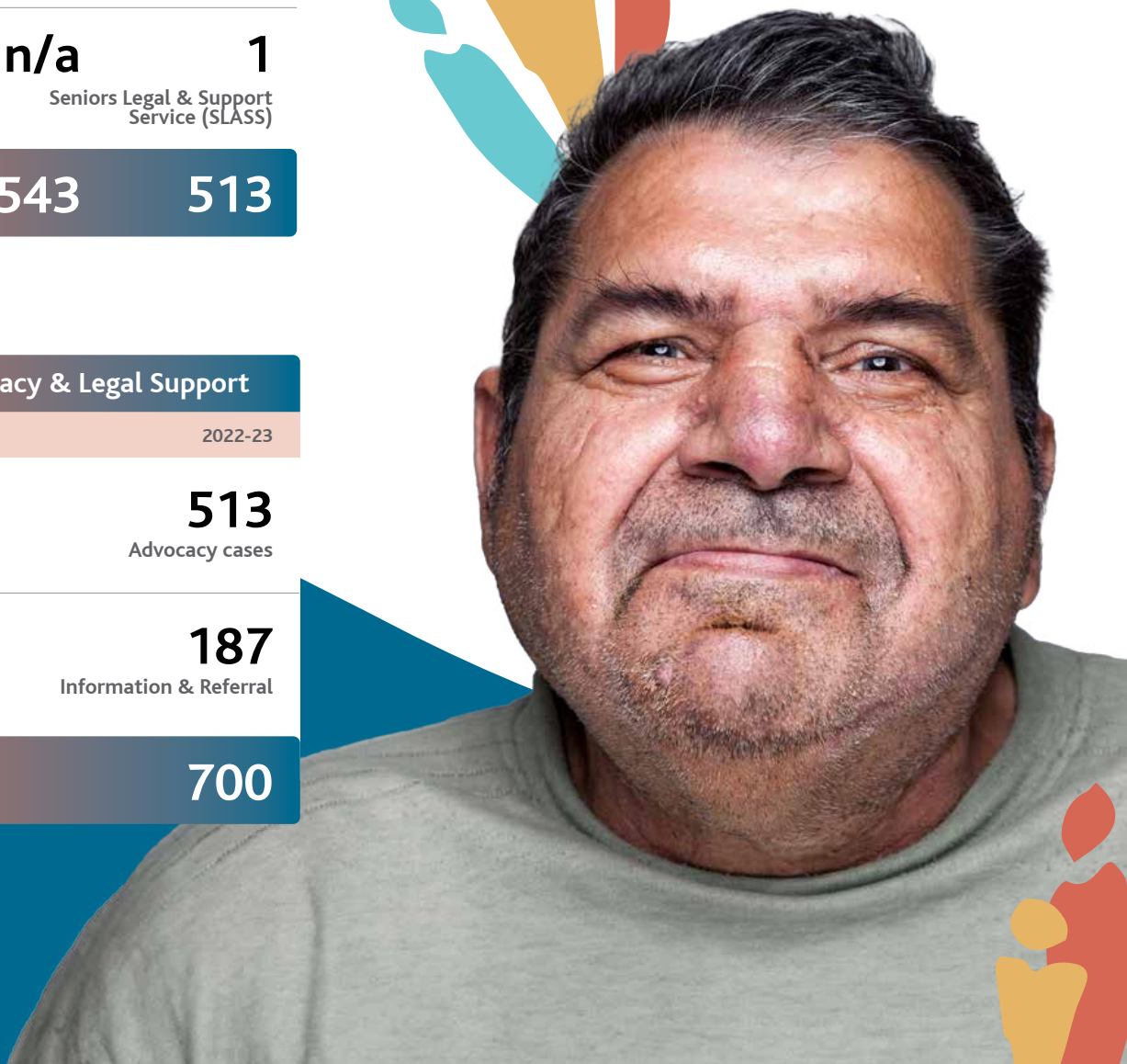
Case by Type Comparison		
	2021-22	2022-23
	215	175 Legal Service
	103	131 Mental Health Review Tribunal
	54	11 People with disability (decision making support)
	171	190 People experiencing elder abuse in residential aged care
	n/a	5 Townsville Mental Health Legal Service
	n/a	1 Seniors Legal & Support Service (SLASS)
Total	543	513

- ADA Law delivered a total of 700 advocacy cases and information referrals in 2022-23.
- Although we see some fluctuation in the types of cases in 2022-23 over the previous year, ADA Law continued to exceed performance targets across the key areas including legal tasks, information and community education.
- Longer time frames for QCAT to hear matters due to their caseload, is impacting on the number of cases.
- ADA Law has seen an increase in the number of appointments made by QCAT to act as Separate Representatives for adults undergoing a QCAT guardianship proceeding, as well as an increase in the number of Legal Aid referrals to act in Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) proceedings.



Service Delivery

ADA Law Advocacy & Legal Support	
	2022-23
	513 Advocacy cases
	187 Information & Referral
Total	700



Case Study 1 (Separate Representative – Restrictive Practices)



ADA Law received a referral from Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) to provide advocacy support to Johan when a Guardianship application for Johan had been lodged by his aged care facility.

Johan was living in aged care, and he was experiencing restrictions to his freedom, such as being detained in a locked area of the facility and

was prevented from coming and going as he chose, and he was receiving medication to manage his behaviour. These are known as Restrictive Practices. Due to his advanced cognitive impairment, he was unable to consent or refuse these restrictions, and did not have a substitute decision maker available to provide consent or refusal on his behalf.

Given he was limited in his ability to engage and provide information and views to the advocate, the Tribunal agreed to appoint ADA Law as his Separate Representative. This meant that not only did we need to advocate for Johan's own wishes and preferences, but also make submissions on what we considered was in his interest.

After first meeting with Johan, and then discussions with the facility manager, we undertook a careful review of the care plan and restrictive practice documentation.

ADA Law was able to submit evidence to the Tribunal about the facility's Guardianship application, including concerns about appropriate assessments, and recommended an exploration of less restrictive management practices. ADA Law provided submissions seeking the least restrictive form of substitute decision making appointment.

Case Study 2 (Mental Health Legal Service Townsville)

ADA Law received a referral to visit a middle-aged person, we will call them Angeline. Angeline lives in Townsville and was admitted to the Mental Health Unit at the Hospital. Angeline had a longstanding diagnosis of Schizophrenia, which had usually been well managed with medication. Angeline had been referred to our Townsville Mental Health Legal Service by the Independent Patients' Rights Advisors, as Angeline had a Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) hearing soon and wanted support and representation at that hearing.

Angeline had other health conditions which had required treatment, and so her anti-psychotic medications had been reduced to allow treatment to occur. Unfortunately, this had resulted in a significant decline in Angeline's mental health, which required admission to hospital. Due to the deterioration in their mental health however, Angeline was deemed unable to provide consent or refusal for mental health treatment and was detained under an involuntary treatment admission, called a Treatment Authority. Under the Mental Health Act this requires a review of Angeline's detention be conducted by the MHRT and Angeline is entitled to legal representation.

Our lawyer visited Angeline and was able to assist them to request a second opinion of their situation.

Angeline wanted to return to their usual medication and go home, but the treating team had commenced a new medication as the old medication was no longer best practice. ADA Law assisted Angeline at the MHRT hearing where their concerns were discussed, and the treating psychiatrist explained the treating team's plans for Angeline's discharge after stabilization. Angeline was relieved to be given support at the hearing, and reported that they felt heard.

Advocating for Diverse Needs

Everyone has the right to be supported. ADA Australia embraces inclusivity and welcomes and encourages clients from diverse age groups, genders and abilities, cultural backgrounds, sexualities and religious or spiritual beliefs.








We also know that people from diverse backgrounds can experience additional barriers to accessing support or speaking up for their rights and needs. As an organisation we continued our focus on inclusive practice and addressing these imbalances and are continuing to include more diversity in the team at ADA Australia

2022-23 Highlights

- In 2022-23, Lead Practitioners were appointed to provide guidance and practice for providing appropriate and safe advocacy services across LGBTIQ, First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, along with areas of complex needs such as those living with dementia.
- Staff training in How to Use Interpreters and Cultural Capability training to support advocates to better work with people from CALD backgrounds.
- ADA Australia developed its first Dementia-Friendly Action plan and began the process towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Organisation.
- Staff training in LGBTI awareness and Silver Rainbow sessions to deepen understanding of the older LGBTI community.
- ADA Australia became a proud member of Pride in Health and Wellbeing and attended Pride events in Brisbane and the Gold Coast.
- Advocacy support for First Nations people has increase by 20%, as expected with the first full operational year of Side by Side First Peoples advocacy service.
- Advocacy support for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds has increased by 15%, which may point to increased awareness of advocacy services through promotion via multicultural networks and with CALD communities and groups.
- A large 300% increase in cases for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, reflects the current housing crisis and impacts on vulnerable people in the community.

Diversity Project

- The diversity education training program for aged care providers across Queensland was implemented in 2022-23.
- Block 1 of the Planning for Diversity workshop series received a total of 253 registrations and delivered 15 workshop series (3 workshops in each series, totalling 45 workshops).
- Overall, 97% of attendees reported positive outcomes in terms of awareness and competency in identifying barriers and implementing inclusive practices for their organisation.

Cases Snapshot		2021-22	2022-23
	195	243	people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
	823	527	people who live rurally or remotely
	375	443	CALD backgrounds
	4	2	parent separated from their children by forced adoption or removal
	38	56	Veterans
	25	105	people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
	n/a	16	LGBTI



Systemic Advocacy

ADA Australia continued to take a key role in fostering and protecting the rights and wellbeing of older people and people with disability across the systems that support them. ADA Australia made submissions, appeared before Parliamentary Committees, participated in consultations and spoke to the media across a range of matters impacting our clients, representing the consumer voice.

Key Issues

- People with disability over 65 who are ineligible for the NDIS. The current aged care system is not fit for purpose for older people living with high levels of disability and this needs to be addressed.
- Concerns about the cost of the NDIS. The NDIS provides people with disability the support they need to live life, and we need to consider the savings the NDIS provide. When support is not there, they are more likely to end up being inappropriately supported in other more costly

systems such as health, child protection or the criminal justice system.

- Concerns around Schedule 9 dealing with restrictive practices in the Aged Care and Other Legislation Amendment (Royal Commission Response) Bill 2022. Schedule 9 offers aged care providers immunity against criminal charges and civil claims, in certain circumstances, involving substitute decision makers. Removing these basic legal rights from people in aged care, under any circumstances, will have serious consequences.
- Calls for Queensland legislation, Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022, which would facilitate compliance with OPCAT, to include all places of detention including disability group homes, aged care facilities and mental health wards.

 18
Submissions

 1
Public Hearings

Our Submissions

- Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework – Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights
- Banking closures in regional Australia – Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
- Path to Treaty Bill 2023 – Community Support and Services Committee
- Submission on Inspector-General of Aged Care Bill 2023 – Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
- Consultation Draft of Inspector-General of Aged Care Bill 2023 – Inspector-General of Aged Care Taskforce
- Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 – Economic and Governance Committee
- Public Consultation on a New Act to Replace the Disability Services Act 1986 – Department of Social Services
- Disability Services and Inclusion Bil 2023 – Department of Social Services
- Participation in the Civil Society Panel and recommendations for an effective implementation of OPCAT to the Queensland Attorney-General
- Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022 – Legal Affairs and Safety Committee
- Supported Decision Making – Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- Advocacy and access to justice for persons with disability - Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- Quality of Care Principles – (Restricted Practices) Principles 2022 Consultation – Department of Health and Aged Care
- A new model for regulating Aged Care | Consultation Paper 1 – Department of Health and Aged Care
- Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022 - Health and Environment Committee
- Aged Care Amendment (Implementing Care Reform) Bill 2022 – Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
- Review of the Guardianship and Administration Regulation 2012 – Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Review of the National Disability Advocacy Framework 2022-2025 – Department of Social Services



Our Media Coverage



21
Radio Interview



9
TV Appearances



20
Print & Online



6
Published Articles



1
Podcasts



6
Editions of
The Advocate (e-news)

Communications & Resources

2022-23 Highlights

- COVID-19 vaccines, aged care staff shortages, staying safe during winter and removal of visitor restrictions in aged care were key topics for media discussion early 2022-23.
- A wide range of issues covered during remainder of the year including: a lack of disability services available in rural and remote areas, lack of support for older Australians with disabilities, costs of the NDIS, aged care reforms, and elder abuse.
- In April, we raised the need for the deinstitutionalisation of residential aged care nationally, calling on the government to commit 10% of the aged care reform budget to innovation and alternatives. This was published in The Australian and garnered interviews with radio 2GB Sydney and 4BC Brisbane and Channel 10 News.
- Work was undertaken to define the new care finder service's identity including name, branding, key messaging and a suite of resources.
- In June 2023, ADA Link was launched as the new care finder service in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region, with launch events in Ipswich and Toowoomba, and gaining media coverage across TV, radio and print publications.
- Promotional campaign undertaken in Cairns region to increase awareness of advocacy and case numbers during April and May 2023, including advertising across radio, social media and across the Health TV Network. Cases and requests for information increased by around 60% compared to the same period in the previous year.

ADA Australia
Link Launch Ipswich



In Print

- The Australian
- Deinstitutionalisation of aged care
- The Last Post Magazine
- The latest on aged care reforms and financial advocacy
- Your Life, Your Rights. Decision making and having a say in the things that affect your life.
- Deinstitutionalisation of aged care
- Your Time Magazine
- Shame and Blame – the insidious surge in elder abuse
- OPAN news release and socials

We also continued to develop a range of resources during 2022-23 to address information gaps in the community and to inform our clients about the ways in which ADA Australia can support them. This included 40,000 copies of the Queensland Seniors Calendar 2023 edition, an additional 10,000 copies more than the previous year.

You don't need an accountant to understand aged care costs – feature on financial advocacy with ADA Australia financial advocate.

Resources



Financial advocacy service



How ADA Australia and ADA Law can support older people in hospital with advocacy and decision making.



ADA Australia's Queensland Seniors Calendar, a reference guide to supports and services for older Queenslanders, 40,000 copies distributed.

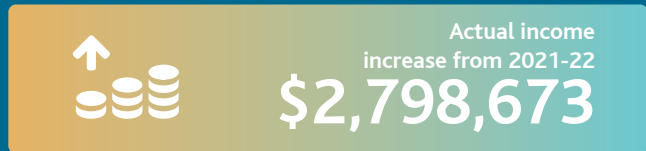


ADA Link branding and resources



2022-23 Financial Snapshot

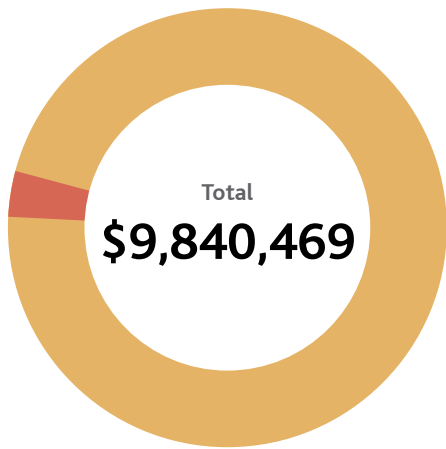
Financially 2022-23 was a very successful year for ADA Australia. Overall, actual income for the year was \$9,840,469, up by \$2,798,673 from the previous year.



- Through funding from the Australian Government and the existing partnership with the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), ADA Australia was granted a further increase on funding to expand its reach and delivery of advocacy services to clients of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP). This increase, in addition to the previous year's growth funding allowed ADA Australia to increase its reach across the state, taking the organisation's total aged care advocacy workforce to 42.4 FTE.
- In recognition of ADA Australia's success in the aged care advocacy sector, the organisation has been provided funding from multiple Primary Health Networks to establish Care Finder services in the Darling Downs & West Moreton, North Queensland, Western Queensland, and Brisbane South regions.
- ADA Australia was granted an extension of funding through to 2027 from the Department of Child Safety, Seniors & Disability Services to continue to provide individual advocacy to people with disability across all cohorts and disability types within the Logan, Redlands and Gold Coast regions.
- The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Disability Network (ATSIDNQ) was also provided an extension of funding from the Department Child Safety, Seniors & Disability Services through to March 2024 to continue to provide a statewide individual advocacy service that supports First Nations people with disability. In recognition of the success of the Network, the Department has also provided funding to facilitate the Network's transition to a community-controlled legal entity.
- ADA Australia was successful in receiving further funding from the Department of Child Safety, Seniors & Disability Services to deliver Seniors Legal & Social Support (SLASS) services to older people in outback Queensland.
- In recognition of the successful advocacy outcomes achieved for improving the lives of people with a disability in the Rockhampton and Gold Coast regions, ADA Australia was granted continued funding from the Department of Social Services through the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) for these regions through to 2025.
- Through funding from the Department of Justice & Attorney-General, ADA Australia's Specialist Community Legal Service, ADA Law, has continued to support adults with impaired decision-making capacity to resolve guardianship and administration issues.
- In recognition of the achievements of ADA Australia's Community Legal Service, ADA Law has been successful in receiving further funding from the Department of Justice & Attorney-General to support people with Mental Health conditions in the Townsville region access the Justice system.
- Total expenditure for the year was \$9,842,033, an increase of \$3,259,534 from the previous year. This escalation in expenditure is a direct result of the expansion of ADA Australia's advocacy services across the state.
- ADA Australia's cash position increased with a closing cash balance of \$4,314,929 at the end of the financial year, up by \$2,227,700 from the previous year.

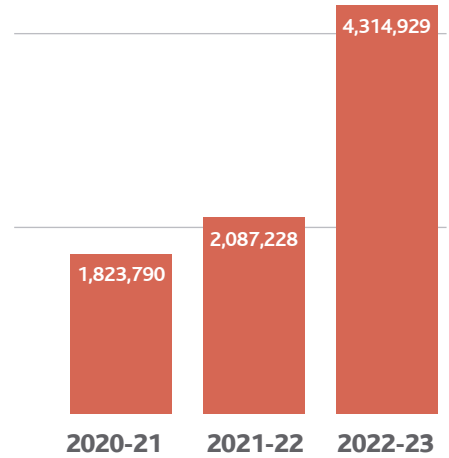
The closing cash balance has been impacted due to grants and funding received prior to year-end being reflected in the financial report as unexpended funds carried forward.

Where the money came from - 2022-23



- **\$9,753,814**
Government (99.12%)
- **\$86,655**
Self Generated (0.88%)

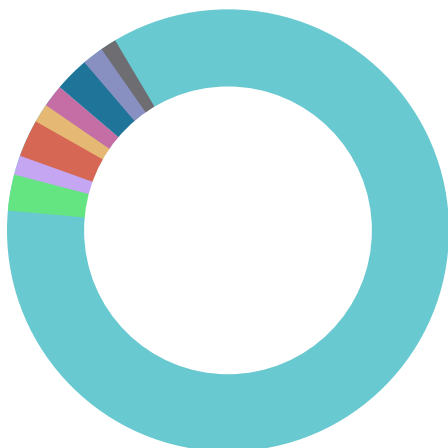
Cash at end of year (\$)



Sources of Income

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Government	\$4,956,405	\$6,733,773	\$9,753,814
Self Generated	\$240,100	\$308,023	\$86,655
Total	\$5,196,505	\$7,041,796	\$9,840,469

How money was spent - 2022-23



- **81.54%**
Staffing
- **1.34%**
Premises/Accommodation
- **1.83%**
Promotion
- **3.02%**
Information Technology
- **1.23%**
Other
- **3.53%**
Travel
- **3.60%**
Equipment/Furniture
- **1.92%**
Communication
- **1.98%**
Contracted Services

Board Members



Liz Kearins

Chair – ADA Australia elected
November 2019

**(Board Director, ADA Australia,
February 2016)**

(Board Director, QADA December 2012)

Liz Kearins is an experienced senior executive, board director and consultant, with expertise in strategy, culture change, engagement, and communication. Her diverse background spans the management consultancy, utilities, healthcare, local government, environment, tourism, and media sectors.

Liz is the Chief Operating Officer at performance culture consultancy Actrua, where she leads project strategy, design and delivery to help organisations and leaders engage, inspire and empower people to be their best.

She also serves on the Board of Australia's Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) and chairs OPAN's Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

Liz is a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders, a certified Change Management Practitioner, and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Australian Human Resources Institute, the Public Relations Institute of Australia and the Institute of Executive Coaching and Leadership.



Paul Johnson

Deputy Chair – Elected to Board
2014 Retired from Board July 2023

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

Paul brings professional and personal carer insights to his role on the ADA Australia Board. On a personal level, Paul navigates the health and aged care sectors as an enacted EPOA for a close family member. Professionally Paul brings a wealth of experience from a career in the ageing industry spanning two states, over two decades and across the spectra of service provider, industry adviser and government official. With qualifications in human services, training and management,

Paul is passionate about ensuring the voices and lived experiences of older Australians are respected and celebrated. Paul is currently the Chief Opportunity Officer at BallyCara where he has executive leadership for People & Culture, Service Excellence, Compliance, Communications & Engagement and Business Development. 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 Aged & Community Care Providers Association. Paul has chaired ADA Australia's Quality & Compliance sub-committee during 2021-22.



Ian Edwards

Board Member – Elected to Board
2015 Retired from Board

November 2022

MHA BBUS (HRM), Assoc Dip Bus (Mgt)

Ian has over 30 years of experience in the health and education sectors, including 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 retired in late 2020 and has been discovering a variety of new interests to continue his active lifestyle

ADA Australia has since welcomed two new members to the Board in October 2023. Preya Pillay, Chief Financial Officer & Company Secretary, at yourtown, and Steve Cunningham, Managing Director Centrado.



Jennifer Pouwer

Director – Elected to Board 2017

Retired from Board September 2023

Bachelor of Occupational Therapy and Graduate and member of AICD

Jennifer has extensive senior executive experience in the government (Commonwealth and State) and diverse non-government health and social services sectors. Since 2002 this experience has been supplemented by Corporate governance qualifications and through service to diverse not for profit Boards, supporting their governance, strategy and policy.

Presently Jennifer is also Deputy Chair, Checkup, a not for profit, non-government organisation assisting communities to address health inequities and contributes into consulting assignments.



Natalie Siegel-Brown

Director – Elected to Board 2021

LLB, BA, Executive Certificate Harvard University, GradCert Corporate Management, Masters Public Politics and Public Administration

Natalie has unique experience leading organisations in all three sectors: government, NGO and private and she has been a senior executive in the Australian, Queensland and NSW Governments. Her diverse background has been singularly driven by a passion to make the world a better place. Natalie's work in Indigenous Affairs and legal service policy has been published internationally and in 2002, she was awarded the inaugural Gowling Lafleur Henderson Award (University of Toronto).

Natalie is passionate about advocating for the human rights of people experiencing vulnerability. Most recently, Natalie was the Queensland Public Guardian. She was the only Public Guardian in Australia to perform the role of child guardian and adult guardian simultaneously. Natalie is currently Commissioner (Australian Social Policy), at the Australian Productivity Commission.



John Devereux

Director – Elected to Board 2021

BA/LLB, Doctorate of Philosophy of Law

John Devereux is Professor of Law at the University of Queensland. He is a Barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia. A Rhodes Scholar, John has degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Queensland, and a Doctorate of Philosophy of Law from Magdalen College, Oxford.

John has spent the last 30 years working in different areas of law, with a special focus on health law. As a Law Reform Commissioner for Queensland, a member of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal and the Assistant Commissioner (Legal) of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission. He currently serves on the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. John has taught medical law at Universities in Australia and abroad. His book Australian Medical Law is in its third edition. He recently co-authored a book for Cambridge University Press, Health Law: Frameworks and Context.



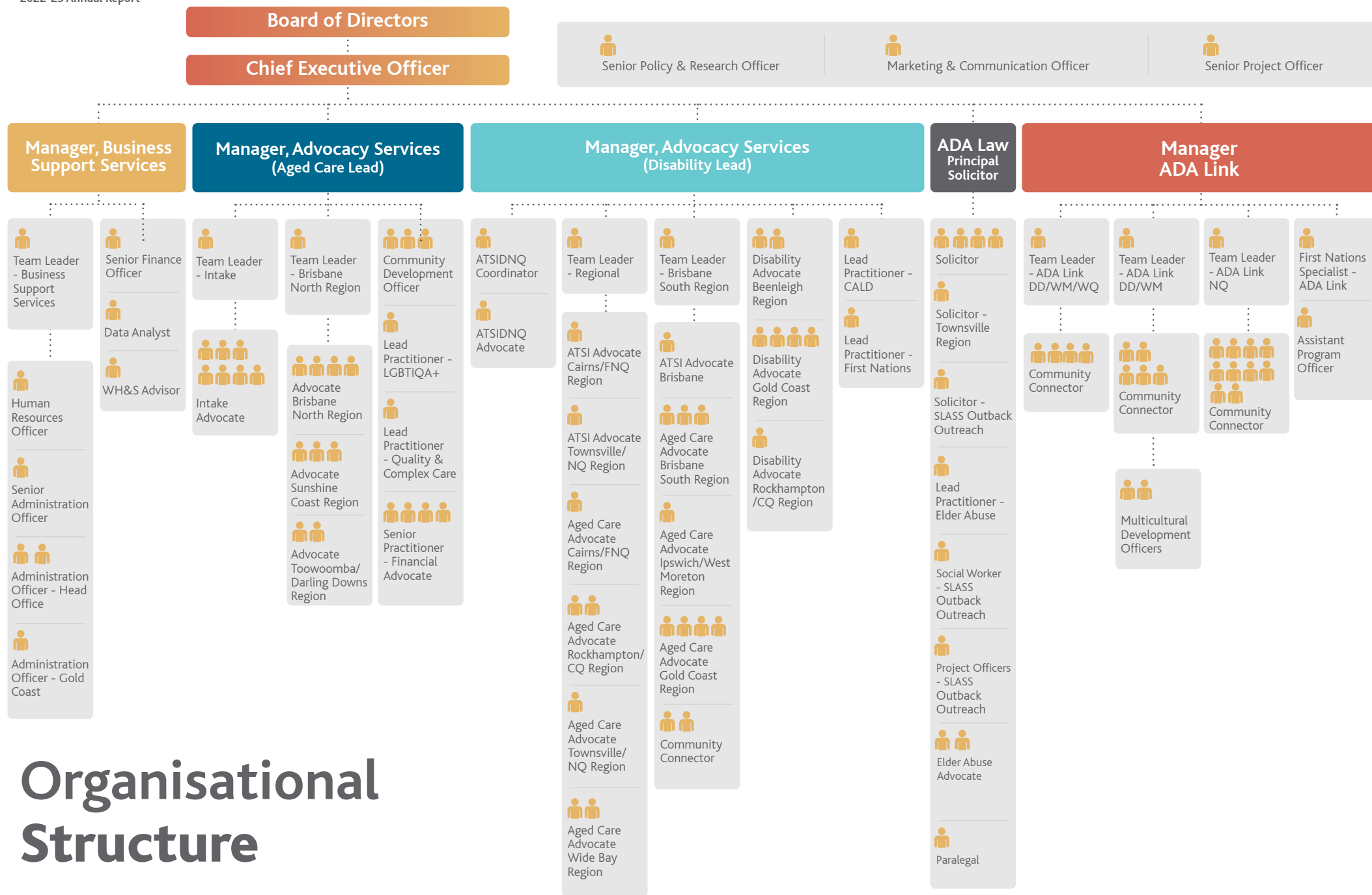
Lucille Chalmers

Director – Elected to Board 2021

BAppSc, MPH, GradCertBus, Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

Lucille is a senior health and human services executive with a proven track record in change management, service re-design and increasing revenue to achieve strategic vision in the delivery of high quality and sustainable health services. She has held senior roles with large not for profit and government agencies and has significant experience in leading major change initiatives and designing new service delivery and capability building programs. Lucille has a particular passion for community driven co-design to address health inequities and improve health outcomes.

Her current role is the Chief Executive Officer, Darling Downs & West Moreton Primary Health Network.



Organisational Structure



Glossary of Terms

ACAT

Aged Care Assessment Team

ACSN

Aged Care System Navigator

ADA Australia

Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia

Aged Care Royal Commission

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety

ATSIDNQ

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland

CALD

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CDC

Consumer Directed Care

CHSP

Commonwealth Home Support Program

DRC

Disability Royal Commission

Disability Royal Commission

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

EPOA

Enduring Power of Attorney

HCP

Home Care Packages

ISO

International Organisation for Standardisation

LAC

Local Area Coordinator

LGBTIQ+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning

MAC

My Aged Care

MHRT

Mental Health Review Tribunal

NACAP

National Aged Care Advocacy Program

NAIDOC

National Aboriginal & Islander Day Observance Committee

NDAP

National Disability Advocacy Program

NDIA

National Disability Insurance Agency

NDIS

National Disability Insurance Scheme

OPAN

Older Persons Advocacy Network

PHN

Primary Health Network

QCAT

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

QDAP

Queensland Disability Advocacy Program

RACF

Residential Aged Care Facility

RAP

Reconciliation Action Plan

RAS

Regional Assessment Service



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Australia

*Your aged and
disability advocates*

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