



2025 Progress Report

Implementation of the Recommendations of the
Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

Supporting people with disability

Since the Royal Commission, there has been positive reform to ensure that younger people with disability are not living in residential aged care, except in very limited circumstances.

However, gaps in disability support remain...

For older people with disability, entering aged care can come at a particularly high cost. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides wide-ranging, specialised disability support and assistance to people who apply before they turn 65. Much of this specialised disability support, and some supports for disabilities unrelated to ageing, is not offered in aged care.

Transitioning into aged care from the NDIS, or the preceding Disability Support for Older Australians program (DSOA), can leave people financially worse-off and without access to the specialised, critical disability support they previously had.

The loss of specialised disability support when transitioning into aged care has serious consequences for older people with disability, and runs contrary to the intention of a rights-based, person-centred aged care system.

What are the problems?

Accessing aged care services (permanent home or residential care) can result in the loss of NDIS supports. Many people are not aware this will occur.

Currently, the supports available under the aged care system do not provide the same coverage as the NDIS or DSOA, particularly for people with disabilities that are not related to ageing.

For a full pensioner with disability on the NDIS, entering aged care could mean losing access to critical care for which they were previously entitled full funding support.

This creates a serious gap in support.

Despite positive reform action to ensure younger people are not living in residential care, a substantial group of older people with disability are likely unable to afford, and will therefore go without the critical disability support on which they have relied. Sufficient age-appropriate alternatives need to be made available.

How are the care systems different?

The supports available in the aged care system are not designed to meet the needs of people with disability whose support needs are not related to ageing. This creates a gap in the supports people need and what aged care can provide.

By comparison, the disability sector has made greater progress in reducing the use of restrictive practices, supporting people with disability to set and achieve their own goals and empowering supported decision-making.

There is an opportunity for aged care to learn from these approaches and better meet the needs of older people with disability.

What needs to happen?

- The Inspector-General is deeply concerned that older people lose vital support when they move from the NDIS into aged care. The government must urgently address this gap.
- The Inspector-General calls for equitable care for older people with disability, regardless of whether they are receiving aged care.
- Aged care policy makers are encouraged to look more closely at the disability sector for ideas and options, especially around the reduction and elimination of restrictive practices.
- Federal government and state and territory governments need to develop, fund and implement accommodation and care options for younger people ineligible for the NDIS and in or at risk of entering aged care to fully meet the goals of the Royal Commissions.