

MY DISABILITY MATTERS

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK
2020 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION POLICY PLATFORM

QDN
QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK
NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

ABOUT

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK (QDN)

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is an organisation of, for, and with people with disability.

QDN operates a state-wide network of 2,000+ members and supporters who provide information, feedback and views based on their lived experience, which inform the organisation's systemic advocacy activities. We believe people with disability should always be at the table when decisions are made that directly impact their lives.

QDN's systemic advocacy work encompasses a range of responses – from community campaigns, formal submissions, evidence to commissions and inquiries and membership of roundtables and working groups around national, state, and local government legislative and policy initiatives. QDN's work is focused on the rights and full social and economic inclusion of people with disability within their communities. QDN's systemic advocacy work has focused on a range of key areas identified by Queenslanders with disability that has included the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), improving mainstream services that people with disability rely on every day, including health, housing, employment and transport and most recently the impact of COVID-19.

QDN also currently hosts 21 peer support groups across Queensland, made up of people with a diverse range of disability types, and convened by people with disability. The groups meet to socialise, share information, life experiences and solutions to create more inclusive lives and communities. Local groups are a space for people with disability to share information on topics that are of interest to them, to extend their social networks, provide peer support and to build capacity leadership skills. Groups usually meet on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and meetings can be face-to-face or virtually.

INTRODUCTION

At this election, disability matters.

There are 900,000 Queenslanders living with disability. Alongside our network of supporters, from family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, support workers or the staff at the local footy club, we have connections in every corner of our communities. We believe that Queenslanders with disability need to be empowered active and valued citizens, fully included in the economic, social, civic, and cultural life of Queensland.

Queenslanders with Disability Networks' (QDN) 2020 Queensland State Election Policy Platform '*Disability Matters*' is about an inclusive Queensland. It focuses on mainstream services Queenslanders, including those with disability, use every day, including health, housing, transport, education, and employment. QDN calls on the next Queensland Government to deliver and fund accessible, affordable and quality mainstream services for people with disability. Only then can we create communities where Queenslanders with disability are included and celebrated for their contributions to the economic, social, civic and cultural life of our wonderful state.

Fundamental to achieving full inclusion and improving mainstream services is actively listening directly to people with disability. Our voice matters. It is essential that the next Queensland Government continues to engage people with disability to deliver citizen-led policy development. Engaging with people with disability in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation in all state government portfolios will deliver inclusive and accessible policy, services and systems that are more efficient and deliver better outcomes for both government and people with disability. It is also critical that government continue to invest in the leadership and capacity of people with disability to be able to engage and advocate as consumers of mainstream services.

QDN members are calling on candidates across Queensland – from all political parties and from all corners of the state – to commit to the policy positions outlined in this platform. In doing so, you will be showing the 900,000 Queenslanders with disability and their families your commitment and that disability does matter at this election.

QDN is a member of the Queensland Community Service Peaks and is committed to working with fellow peaks and all stakeholders to implement successful reform in four critical areas – the NDIS, Family Matters campaign, Queensland Human Rights Act 2019, and accessible and affordable housing. QDN supports the election platforms of its allies and fellow peaks.

SUMMARY

OF DISABILITY MATTERS POLICY COMMITMENTS



My voice matters

1. A dedicated Minister for Disability Services and Inclusion
2. Invest in independent individual and systemic advocacy for people with disability
3. Establish clear mechanisms for reporting to the Minister for Disability Services and Inclusion



My safety and wellbeing matters

1. Invest in initiatives for people with disability to better prepare for emergency events
2. Invest in initiatives targeted to local emergency management for people with disability
3. Establish an Expert Panel to investigate deaths of people with disability in care
4. Work with the National Cabinet to build better safeguards to protect people with disability



My housing matters

1. Invest in the establishment of a community based online Housing Hub
2. Improve home ownership rates for people with disability through innovative financing options and improved shared equity approaches
3. Adopt the *Making Renting Fair Alliance Queensland* campaign reforms
4. Invest in training initiatives for Supported Accommodation residents
5. Fund and build more accessible, affordable social housing
6. Reform planning legislation and regulations to mandate inclusionary zoning so there are minimum quotas of accessible, affordable dwellings within areas of new supply



My digital connection matters

1. Fund programs that deliver devices, data and build the digital skills of people with disability
2. Ensure that government, business and service providers adhere to best practice digital access, user friendly platforms and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines



My health matters

1. Ensure a range of tele-health services
2. Develop and implement an overarching statewide Disability Health Plan to improve the healthcare of people with disability
3. Invest in professional training for health professionals
4. Improve governance, reporting, communication, and integrated care across acute and primary care
5. Queensland Government to commit to annual funding of the Comprehensive Health Assessment Program (CHAP)



My education and employment matters

1. Delivery and implementation of inclusive education policies in Queensland schools
2. Improved pathways to TAFE for people with disability
3. Funding programs aimed at increasing learning opportunities for people with disability
4. Developing a dedicated Queensland Disability Employment Strategy
5. Increase employment of people with disability in the public service



My justice matters

1. Develop a statewide plan to respond to the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission
2. Develop and implement a data reporting system that identifies people with disability who are interacting with the criminal justice system
3. Invest in training and development to embed disability awareness and inclusion in the practices of first responders to victims of violence
4. Develop and implement a reporting framework on service use and service outcomes for women and children with disability who experience domestic and family violence
5. Embed the *Queensland Human Rights Act 2019*
6. Fund prevention and rehabilitation programs to prevent the incarceration of people with disability
7. Amend Section 216 of the Criminal Code
8. Raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14



My transport matters

1. Fund the Taxi Subsidy Scheme beyond 2021
2. Invest in accessibility upgrades to existing transport infrastructure
3. Develop a regional and rural accessible transport strategy
4. Engage with people with disability on major infrastructure projects
5. Implement the next phase of disability parking reforms



My NDIS matters

1. Ensure Queensland's investment in the NDIS is delivering outcomes for Queenslanders with disability, including people who experience marginalisation.
2. Lobby for Queensland's share of the ILC funding that is targeted to meet needs of this state.



My cost of living matters

1. Invest in a targeted strategy to deliver accessible and user-friendly financial counselling for people with disability
2. Lobby the Federal Government to expand the No Interest Loans program and ensure the rate for the JobSeeker payment remains above the poverty line
3. Maintain existing energy concessions for people with disability



MY VOICE MATTERS

People with disability should always be at the table where decisions are made about their lives. People with disability must also be consulted in the development, design and implementation of policies, legislation and projects that impact their lives.

Advocacy plays a key role in ensuring the voices of people with disability are heard. Investing in independent and systemic advocacy leads to improved educational and employment outcomes, more responsive health, and housing services, and provides opportunities for greater social inclusion.

Advocacy also assists governments improve their services and understand their obligations to uphold the rights of people with disability. By improving the efficiency and effectiveness of mainstream services, independent disability advocacy has a significant cost benefit to governments measured at \$3.5 return for each \$1 of funding.¹ Increasing funding certainty for disability advocacy is vital to building the long-term capacity of organisations and people with disability to self-advocate or access independent advocacy services.

¹ Disability Advocacy Network Australia, *Independent Cost Benefit Analysis of Australia's Independent Disability Advocacy Agencies*, [Canberra: 2017], p. 1.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:

1. A dedicated Minister for Disability Services and Inclusion.

Queenslanders with disability want to continue to have a Minister that represents the needs and voice of people within the Queensland parliament. Despite the introduction of the NDIS, the Queensland Government continues to have obligations and responsibilities to invest in services and implement policies that deliver positive outcomes for people with disability.

2. Investing in independent individual and systemic advocacy for people with disability.

People with disability living in Queensland need a guarantee that government will fund independent individual and systemic disability advocacy for another five years. Individual advocacy ensures Queenslanders with disability can access the support they need to resolve issues of access to mainstream services and systems. While systemic advocacy will assist people with disability and government by:

- a. linking government with the lived experiences of Queenslanders with disability
- b. safeguarding Queensland's investment in the NDIS
- c. improving the quality and accessibility of mainstream public services
- d. providing strategic advice on issues and recommendations raised by Disability Royal Commission

3. Establishing clear mechanisms for reporting to the Minister for Disability Services and Inclusion.

People with disability need to see greater accountability, governance and reporting arrangements implemented, to measure, review and monitor the outcomes of inclusion delivered across Government.

The Queensland Government have responsibility for the implementation of a range of policies, state disability plan and Disability Service Plans across Government that aim to deliver improved outcomes for Queenslanders with disability, and in line with the National Disability Strategy. It is important that measurement and monitoring of this progress is provided in a transparent and accessible way to the community.



MY SAFETY AND WELLBEING MATTERS

The safety and wellbeing of people with disability should be central to all government plans and services, whether it's services that are accessed in their day to day lives or in times of emergency.

The State Government has a critical role to play protecting Queenslanders with disability and working with other State and Commonwealth agencies to deliver quality and safe services and supports.

As seen by recent high-profile deaths of people with disability and testimony to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission), ensuring effective oversight can be a matter of life and death. This oversight responsibility is complex and cannot be achieved by one level of government alone. Protecting people with disability from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation requires a whole of community response with the NDIS Commission, the NDIS, people with disability, service providers, disability advocacy organisations and all levels of government working collaboratively.

Internationally, it has been acknowledged that people with disability have been left behind in disaster preparedness and consequently experience greater disadvantage and challenges. People with disability are disproportionately affected before, during, and after a natural disaster.²

² [1] Stough, L., & Kelman, I. (2017). People with disabilities and disasters. In H. Rodriguez, J. Trainor, & W. Donner (Eds.), *Handbook of Disaster Research* 2nd ed., pp. 225-242. Cham, Switzerland: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63254-4_12

People with disability need to be included, and have a right to access information, support and planning tools and resources so they can be part of broader community emergency planning and responses. People with disability rely on different levels and types of function-based support every day and this must be taken into consideration in emergency planning and responses. People's disability support needs can be compromised during an emergency, so it is critical that people with disability are empowered so they can be prepared and know what to do, before, during and after an emergency. It is also important that people with disability can access the additional support, resources, and advocacy they need during an emergency.

As we've seen with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, people with disability's safety and wellbeing is at greater risk during times of emergency. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on a broad range of service and system gaps that have existed for people with disability over many decades. COVID-19 has also driven a rapid and collaborative policy response to put in place a number of key strategies and initiatives to ensure people with disability could continue to access essential day to day disability supports, food and nutrition, housing, health care and other essential services.

COVID-19 has also seen a number of people with disability who were already in closed and isolated environments become further isolated because of government health directives and measures that have been put in place to slow the spread of the virus. Specific and detailed scenario outbreak planning is needed to better inform how public health directives should be implemented in congregate housing settings and what services are considered 'essential'.

The next Queensland government must continue to improve emergency planning and responses by, with and for people with disability. People with disability need to be included from the beginning in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of emergency planning and response.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:

- 1. Invest in initiatives for people with disability** to engage in COVID-19 and natural disaster preparedness and emergency planning to ensure they are prepared and have a plan in place to keep themselves safe.
- 2. Invest in training and capacity building initiatives targeted to local emergency management**, including local councils, emergency and community services so they can more effectively engage with people with disability in the planning, design, delivery and implementation of local, regional and emergency planning.
- 3. Establish an Expert Panel to assist the State Coroner to undertake regular systemic reviews of deaths of people with disability in care**, that includes a biennial report to the Queensland Parliament.
- 4. Work through the National Cabinet to establish a range of auditing, monitoring and safeguarding functions** to include:
 - a. For NDIS participants to have identify potential people who may fall through the gaps and assess potential risk through a flagging system to notify NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission if NDIS participant has had no Medicare claim for medical appointment in a 12 month period
 - b. Development of a National Safeguarding Framework as part of the National Disability Strategy 2020-2030



MY HOUSING MATTERS

There is nothing more fundamental than having somewhere affordable, accessible, secure, and safe to live.

Not having somewhere to live or living in inadequate housing has a flow on effect to all parts of a person with disability's life, impacting their physical and mental health, ability to find and keep a job, and build a social network in their local community.

The ability to choose where and with whom one lives with is a basic human right, but one too many people with disability are still not able to exercise.

QDN acknowledges the strategic direction and achievements to date of the *Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan*, a 10-year framework that aims to provide all Queenslanders with a better pathway to safe, secure, person-centred, and affordable housing. To continue delivering on the next phrase of the strategy vision, a clear commitment, plan, and funding is needed.

The housing commitments outlined below are founded on the four key principles outlined in QDN's 2017 report [*Going for Gold: Accessible, Affordable Housing Now*](#): rights, inclusion, choice and control. These principles have subsequently been adopted by the Department of Housing and Public Works to guide future housing supports to people with disability. These principles must continue to guide all policies, procedures and program investments delivered by the next Queensland Government to improve housing outcomes for people with disability.

QDN also supports the overall election platforms of our housing allies Tenants Queensland, QShelter and QCROSS around the key actions to improve housing in Queensland.

SPECIFICALLY, QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:

- 1. Investing in the establishment of a community based online Housing Hub** that promotes available options of accessible housing and connects people with disability with others looking to share housing. The initiative, in partnership with people with disability, peak bodies and the private sector should include an Accessibility Disclosure Scheme to deliver property listings that align with accessible housing design requirements and enable people with disability to find properties that meet their disability needs.
- 2. Improving home ownership rates for people with disability through innovative financing options and improved shared equity approaches.** This must include expanding the Queensland Government's Pathways shared equity loan program to people with a disability, the sale-to-tenant housing program, and models for incentivising the involvement of the private sector in shared equity schemes.
- 3. Adopting the [*Making Renting Fair Alliance Queensland*](#) campaign reforms,** including changes to allow for tenants to make minor modifications more easily, which are essential for keeping people with disability safe in their homes.
- 4. Investing in training initiatives for Supported Accommodation residents** to build their capacity to exercise their tenancy rights and obligations and explore a range of options around resident's housing, health, and well-being to maximise choice and control.
- 5. Funding and building more accessible, affordable social housing.** Due to the high cost of housing, many people with disability need access to a range of public and community social housing arrangements, with 51% of public housing households having at least one tenant with disability. Despite recent investments by the State Government, present stock of accessible social housing remains inadequate. To effectively transition people with disability out of inappropriate housing including residential aged care facilities, and reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness, greater funding of an accessible range of social housing is desperately required.
- 6. Reform of planning legislation and regulations to mandate inclusionary zoning so there are minimum quotas of accessible, affordable dwellings within areas of new supply.**



MY DIGITAL CONNECTION MATTERS

As mainstream services and everyday supports move online, it is more important than ever that people with disability have the devices, data, and skills they need to connect to their community and essential services online.

As a result of the growing digital divide, many people with disability experience exclusion from essential supports, services, and experiences; from accessing government portals through to making doctors' appointments or connecting with friends and family on social media. Affordability and accessibility are major barriers for people with disability in their access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICT). Lack of access to ICT education and training, lack of digital literacy, incompatible devices and technologies, and poorly designed websites are some of the issues exacerbating these barriers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the digital divide that exists for many people with disability. Many people with disability do not own a computer, cannot afford data, and have difficulty maintaining digital skills. During the peak of the pandemic in Queensland, many struggled to get their basic daily needs met and have any connection to the world beyond their homes.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO:

- 1. Funding programs that deliver devices, data and build the digital skills of people with disability,** particularly the 90% of Queenslanders with disability who are ineligible for the NDIS. These programs should be designed and delivered in consultation with people with disability, using peer support as a key mode of delivery.
- 2. Ensuring that government, business and service providers adhere to best practice digital access, user friendly platforms and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines,** so that barriers to information and communication are systemically removed for all people with disability, particularly those who use assistive and adaptive technology to access online information.



MY HEALTH MATTERS

People with disabilities have the right to access the same quality of health care as all other Queenslanders. Yet statistics show, people with disability have poorer health outcomes than the rest of the community because of barriers to accessing appropriate health services.

People with intellectual disability are twice as likely to suffer a potentially avoidable death compared to the general population. People with intellectual disability experience a large range of potential risk factors for early death, including heart problems, high blood pressure and obesity, and experience challenges accessing health care, in part due to communication issues and active discrimination. People with mental health and psychosocial disability also experience poorer health outcomes and additional challenges with accessing the right care due to negative attitudes and a lack of awareness around their health rights.

Despite progress in recent years, many people working in the health sector still do not have access to adequate training regarding disability, which creates significant gaps in knowledge and leads to greater misunderstandings about the health needs of people with disabilities. More disturbingly, many QDN members still report that outdated attitudes and misconceptions about disability are affecting clinical decisions and compromising their quality of care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a broad range of service and system gaps that have existed for people with disability over many decades, particularly in health. COVID-19 has also driven a rapid and collaborative policy and system response to put in place a number of key policy, strategies and initiatives to ensure people with disability could continue to access essential day to day disability supports, food and nutrition, housing, health care and other essential services.

People with disability face a range of unique challenges in emergency situations, many of these highlighted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Not only are many people with disability at higher risk from COVID-19, but the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and barriers for people with disability within the health system.

It is important that reforms that have been achieved during the COVID-19 can continue, and the lessons learnt can be implemented to deliver improved health services and outcomes for Queenslanders with disability.

A health system that delivers integrated care across hospital settings, primary and allied health care and is more connected with disability services is essential to deliver the quality health care people with disability deserve. People with disability need to be included in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all health services to ensure they are efficient, effective, and meet their needs.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **As part of health system reforms post COVID-19, ensure a range of tele-health services** services in general practice, allied health and statewide specialist services including virtual clinics continue to be available and affordable for people with disability. This will include the State Government working through Council of Australian Government/ National Cabinet to progress Commonwealth responsibilities.
2. **Develop and implement an overarching Statewide Disability Health Plan to improve the healthcare of people with disability**, that includes a focus on people with intellectual disability. The Statewide Plan should build on the success of the collaborative approaches adopted during the COVID-19 event, including engagement with people with disability to plan, design, implement and review. It should include:
 - a. **Establishing a Queensland Statewide Clinical Network for Disability.** Statewide Clinical Networks are groups, that include doctors, clinicians and health consumers who focus on improving the quality and efficiency of health care. Queensland needs a specific Statewide Clinical Network for Disability to guide and lead the delivery of health care for people with disability in this state.
 - b. **Strategies to deliver health promotion and health literacy across the Hospital and Health services** for people with disability to improve health outcomes.
 - c. **Developing and implementing a statewide strategy for the delivery of high value care for people with disability** as a specific target group to ensure access for people experiencing significant disadvantage in line with key risk factors and vulnerabilities across respiratory disease, epilepsy, circulatory system diseases, and mental illness.
 - d. A review of the results of the trial of patient directed/controlled health passport including Julian's Key, ASK diary and patient communication companions to implement and roll out a statewide strategy across Hospital and Health Services.
 - e. A statewide strategy to incorporate a patient disability identifier across health data systems to be able to report and measure on patient outcomes and safety for people with disability.

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- 3. Invest in professional training for health professionals** within the Hospital and Health Services on best practices in communicating with and responding to the health needs of people with disability.
 - 4. Improving governance, reporting, communication, and integrated care across acute and primary care to enhance care** for people with disability and ensure regular annual health reviews are incorporated in people's care, including licensing for Comprehensive Health Assessment Program (CHAP).
 - 5. Queensland Government to commit to annual funding of the Comprehensive Health Assessment Program (CHAP)** to ensure it continues to remain available for all Queenslanders with disability (approximately \$30,000 annually).



MY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

Having access to a quality education and a secure job is not only essential to a person's economic security, but gives people a sense of purpose and achievement, which is central to fostering good mental health and creating an enriched life free from poverty.

Overwhelmingly, QDN members indicate that they want to engage in some form of work. The barrier to secure work is not their abilities, but a lack of opportunities.

QDN continues to support the work of the Queensland Collective for Inclusive Education and it's 2020 State Election campaign #InclusionQLD2020.

Education should not stop when school finishes. Many people with disabilities are looking for more opportunities to increase their skills. Whether it's through engaging in formal education settings, like TAFE, or increasing their life skills, like financial literacy or gaining experience through volunteering, learning should continue at all stages of life.

With Australia in a recession and more Queenslanders than ever looking for work because of the COVID-19 pandemic, people with disability are at risk of being locked out of the jobs market. Working-age people with disability (10%) are twice as likely as those without disability (5%) to be unemployed.³ Worryingly, there has been no progress in closing this gap in employment for almost a decade.⁴ A targeted strategy is needed to ensure Queenslanders with disability are not left behind and can contribute to Queensland's economic recovery.

³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2019). People with disability in Australia. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia>.

⁴ ABS, *Disability, Ageing and Carers in Australia*, 2012 and 2018.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Delivering and implementing inclusive education policies in Queensland schools** so that all students with disability are welcomed in their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate regular classes, and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of school life.
- 2. Improved pathways to TAFE for people with disability** to upskill and gain additional qualifications.
- 3. Funding programs aimed at increasing learning opportunities for people with disability** at every stage of life. These programs should include literacy, numeracy, and financial life skills.
- 4. Developing a dedicated Queensland Disability Employment Strategy** to support people with disability to find a job or volunteer opportunities that build skills during the COVID-19 recovery phase. The strategy must include a performance framework with measures that deliver real-life outcomes for people with disability. The strategy should be developed in consultation with people with disability and include requirements for public reporting.
- 5. Increasing employment of people with disability in the public service,** including through the roll-out of innovative training and internship programs and procurement practices that preference suppliers who meet targets for diversity in the workplace and who demonstrate best practice in the employment of people with disability.



MY JUSTICE MATTERS

Queenslanders with disability have the right to live free from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. People with disability also deserve and have a right to equal access to justice. However, people with disability, particularly those with intellectual disabilities, are over-represented in prison and often experience barriers to their rights through the courts.

The State Government has a significant role to play to ensure people with disability are safe – from ensuring the Community Visitor Program is strengthened and meets demand to improving police training in how to respond to reports from people with disability.

Like other women, women with disabilities are most likely to experience violence at the hands of someone they know, such as a partner or family member who may also be their carer. Additionally, women with disabilities face the risk of abuse in their homes by support workers who are supposed to be there to assist them. Domestic and family violence can often present differently for people with disability. Caregivers can withhold medicine and assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or braces. They can also refuse to help with daily needs like bathing, dressing, or eating.

Making our justice system accessible, including giving people with disability the knowledge and support to exercise their rights is fundamental to reducing the instances of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Developing a statewide plan to respond to the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission** that includes engagement with people with disability. The plan will focus on the Queensland Government response to the issues raised and implement systemic improvements to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Queenslanders with disability, and access to mainstream services and supports.
- 2. Developing and implementing a data reporting system that identifies people with disability who are interacting with the criminal justice system** including police and courts.
- 3. Investing in training and development to embed disability awareness and inclusion in the practices of first responders to victims of violence**, including police, courts, and staff within the criminal justice system.
- 4. Developing and implementing a reporting framework on service use and service outcomes** for women and children with disability who experience domestic and family violence to demonstrate progress of the work of **Recommendation 10 of the Not Now, Not Ever Report**.
- 5. Embedding the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019.** As well as enshrining human rights in law, the *Queensland Human Rights Act 2019* also provides important social, economic, and cultural benefits, including improving government policy and delivery of services.
- 6. Funding prevention and rehabilitation programs to prevent the incarceration of people with disability.** People with disability, particularly people with cognitive and/or dual disabilities are vastly overrepresented in our criminal justice system. Programs which address issues such as lack of early intervention and specialist disability support must be developed and implemented in coordination with the NDIS. There must also be additional funding for diversionary and rehabilitation programs targeted at people with disability.
- 7. Amending Section 216 of the Criminal Code** to ensure that people with intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, or neurological impairments who have the capacity for this matter to decide to engage in a consensual sexual relationship are not criminalized under the law.

8. Raising the age of criminal responsibility to 14. We know that many of the children aged 10 to 13 years old, currently in juvenile detention, have intellectual or dual disabilities. Early contact with the criminal justice system can lead to irreparable harm and increase the rate of reoffending. Instead, these children should be supported to access specialist health, including mental health, and disability supports.



MY TRANSPORT MATTERS

Accessible, affordable, and reliable transport is essential to ensuring Queenslanders with disability can access their communities, whether it's going to the doctors, visiting friends or being able to get to work.

Although progress has been made with policy, legislation and changes to transport, most modes are not fully accessible to all people with disability. Ageing buses and trains still include steps, train stations do not always have lifts, and mobility parking spaces remain limited. The number of accessible loading zones and taxi ranks are inadequate, with many not having kerb ramps for wheelchair-accessible taxi users.

Queenslanders with disability living in remote, rural, and regional parts of our state often remain isolated and cannot access essential services due to the lack of accessible transport that is regular and reliable.

Consulting people with disability in all stages of transport planning is a non-negotiable. Citizen-led policy development and co-design is vital to improving the real-life experiences of people with disability who rely on public transport and saving the taxpayers from having to pay for expensive retrofitting resulting from poor planning.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Continued funding of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme beyond 2021.** The Taxi Subsidy Scheme subsidizes the cost of using private taxis where public transport is not accessible and protects the State Government from issues of access and anti-discrimination. The scheme must be kept separate to the NDIS, as it is not a reasonable and necessary support, but rather an essential service.
- 2. Greater investment in accessibility upgrades to existing transport infrastructure,** including train station upgrades to retrofit lifts, wider entry points and ramps.
- 3. Developing a regional and rural accessible transport strategy** that looks at integrating public transport options with existing community infrastructure, such as buses operated by local community groups and clubs. The strategy must be developed in consultation with people with disability living in remote, rural, and regional communities.
- 4. Meaningful engagement with people with disability on major infrastructure projects to ensure accessibility and user-friendly design.** For engagement to truly be meaningful, it must start when projects are still in their formative stages, well before budgets are developed and procurement processes are advertised.
- 5. Implementing the next phase of disability parking reforms.** The Queensland Government to work with people with disability and local governments to develop and implement legislative and policy changes that enable Local Councils greater regulatory powers to enforce disability parking in private parking areas.



MY NDIS MATTERS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) offers an incredible opportunity to change the lives of people with disability and their families, giving them greater choice and control over how, when and where they receive supports.

However, despite significant progress in recent years, many Queenslanders with disability and their families are experiencing a range of challenges around accessing the NDIS, the NDIS planning process and their subsequent plan activation, plan utilisation and reviews.

The Queensland Government has an important responsibility to ensure the NDIS is delivering for people with disability. The State Government has committed to investing up to \$2 billion a year into the NDIS. This is a substantial financial commitment, particularly during difficult economic times. Queenslanders expect that their money is being used to help Queenslanders with disability. The next Queensland Government has an important role to play, ensuring Queensland gets its fair share of NDIS funding and the Federal Government is delivering a scheme that offers value for money and greater choice and control for people with disability.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Ensuring Queensland's investment in the NDIS is delivering outcomes for Queenslanders with disability, including people who experience marginalization.** The Queensland Government, as a key partner and investor in the NDIS has an important role to play in market governance, oversight, and stewardship. Development of an independent and evidence-based approach to measuring outcomes for people with disability and their families, as well as the broader outcomes and impacts on Queensland's mainstream services is key to monitoring Queensland's investment. This includes ensuring that investment and delivery of targeted strategies for marginalized and vulnerable Queenslanders continues, including Targeted Outreach.
- 2. Lobbying for Queensland's share of the ILC funding that is targeted to meet needs of this state.** The Queensland Government is a key investor in the ILC, and it is important that Queensland organisations and Queenslanders with disability benefit from the investment and outcomes of this investment strategy.



MY COST OF LIVING MATTERS

Like most Queenslanders living in the COVID-19 economy, people with disability are struggling with the cost of living. This is particularly difficult because many people with disability were already struggling to make ends meet before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. 38% of Australians living in poverty have a disability.

Many people with disability have additional costs because of their disability needs, from higher medical expenses to paying for assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or hearing aids. Queenslanders with disability may need to spend more on transportation or modified housing or be restricted in what neighborhoods they can live to be closer to work or accessible services.

The next Queensland Government must do more to ensure people with disability are not left behind in the economic recovery and are able to cover the basic cost of living.

QDN MEMBERS CALL ON ALL CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Investing in a targeted strategy to deliver accessible and user-friendly financial counselling for people with disability.** The economic impacts of COVID-19 are significant for people with disability and it is critical that they can access services and supports that meet the different accessibility and learning needs of Queenslanders with disability.
- 2. Lobbying the Federal Government to expand the No Interest Loans program and ensure the rate for the JobSeeker payment remains above the poverty line.** The No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) offers people, including people with disability, on low incomes access to an affordable and safe credit option to pay for important expenses. People with intellectual, psychosocial, or dual disabilities are especially vulnerable to high-cost credit providers who exploit people by charging exorbitant fees and using predatory practices that target people at their most vulnerable. Queensland community organisations should be funded to deliver on-the-ground service and outreach to provide Queenslanders with better access to NILS. It is estimated that 25-30% of people who receive JobSeeker (formerly called Newstart) are people with disability and/or chronic illness. Before the COVID-19 crisis, the rate of Newstart had not been increased in real terms for 25 years, while the cost of living, especially housing, has increased exponentially. The next Queensland Government must publicly support the campaign to raise the rate of JobSeeker to above the poverty line (\$500 a week).
- 3. Maintaining existing energy concessions for people with disability** and investing in specific strategies to engage energy consumers with disability to increase their knowledge and understanding of energy tariffs, getting the best deal for their consumption needs and understanding available concessions.



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