



**MY
DISABILITY
MATTERS**

2024 STATE ELECTION PLATFORM

About Queenslanders with Disability Network

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

QDN operates a state-wide network of 2,500+ 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 focuses on a range of key areas identified by Queenslanders with disability including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), improving mainstream services that people with disability rely on every day, including health, housing, employment, education and transport.

QDN also currently hosts 32 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 and 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, extend their social networks, provide peer support and develop leadership skills. Groups usually meet on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and meetings can be face-to-face or virtual.

QDN is the Executive Peak Body for the Queensland Disability Peak Body and Representation Body Program. We support the State Election Platforms of our fellow Peak and Representative bodies, who are valued allies.

Introduction

At this election, disability matters **more than ever**.

There are approximately 4.4 million Australians with disability.¹ In Queensland, 19.1% of the Queensland population, or over 1 in 5 Queenslanders have a disability.²

[Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27](#) sets out the priority areas for disability access and inclusion in Queensland. This plan stems from the overarching framework established in [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#) which reflects the human rights of people with disability, articulated in the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#). Queensland's Disability Plan has associated three-year [Targeted Action Plans](#) that operationalise the core actions of *Australia's Disability Strategy*.

QDN's Queensland State Election Policy Platform has been created in alignment to Queensland's Disability Plan as well as reforms stemming from the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme ([NDIS Review](#)) and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability ([Disability Royal Commission](#)). Specifically, it outlines our priorities for an accessible and inclusive Queensland through the following priority areas:

- a. Employment and financial security including cost of living
- b. Inclusive homes and communities
- c. Safety, rights and justice
- d. Personal and community support
- e. Education and learning
- f. Health and wellbeing
- g. Community attitudes.

QDN's Election Platform also draws on the Queensland Disability Plan, with additional priorities for Governance and Leadership, the NDIS, Digital Inclusion, Transport and the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games. At this election QDN is calling on candidates across all parties standing for the Legislative Assembly for Queensland Parliament, in 93 electorates across Queensland, to commit to supporting the policy priorities outlined in our Election Platform.

Supporting these priorities will demonstrate that candidates are genuinely committed to creating an inclusive and accessible Queensland.

¹ [People with disability in Australia - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](#)

² [Queensland Government - Disability statistics](#)

We call on candidates to commit to:



1. My leadership matters

Queenslanders with disability must have their voices represented.

Currently, responsibility for the ministerial portfolio for Disability Services sits within the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. The department takes advice from relevant stakeholders, and provides funding support, which is distributed to enable independent individual and systemic disability advocacy throughout Queensland.

The organisations that receive funding provide advice and feedback to the Department to drive disability reforms arising from the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review. As well as ensuring funding is sufficient for reform activities, the Department must prioritise co-design of disability reforms, leadership investment and development of Queenslanders with disability to drive reform implementation.

Funding for disability leadership, co-design and advocacy in Queensland

Current funding arrangements for disability advocacy in Queensland are through two programs. The [Queensland Disability Advocacy Program \(QDAP\)](#) provides support for independent individual advocacy and the [Queensland Disability Peak and Representative Bodies Program](#) provides support for information, referrals, and systemic advocacy.

Both individual and systemic advocacy funding streams in Queensland are not enough to meet demand.

Fundamental to achieving full inclusion and improving mainstream services is actively listening to people with disability. Our voice matters. It is essential that the next Queensland Government continues to invest in and engage people with disability to deliver citizen-led policy development.

Engaging with people with disability in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation in all Queensland Government portfolios will deliver inclusive and accessible policy, services and systems that are more efficient and deliver better outcomes for both the government and people with disability. It is also critical that

the Queensland Government continues to invest in the leadership and capacity building of people with disability to be able to engage and advocate in systemic advocacy, reforms and as consumers of mainstream services.

Community attitudes support equality, inclusion and participation in society for people with disability.

Queensland can help shift community attitudes by implementing recommendations made by the Disability Royal Commission relating to rights and attitudes. One element of shifting community attitudes is through public visibility, with disability leadership and representation across all levels of the Queensland Government.

Disability representation

The Disability Royal Commission explored this area through a [Rights and Attitudes Issues Paper](#) and a dedicated research report, [Changing community attitudes to improve inclusion of people with disability](#). Further, the Disability Royal Commission issued a recommendation 7.18 for increased disability employment across the Australian Public Sector through targets and for new hires in Recommendation 7.19; the Queensland Government accepted both in principle.³

Active presence of Queenslanders with disability employed across the Queensland Government, including in leadership roles, will increase the level of disability awareness and knowledge of inclusive and accessible practices for Queenslanders with disability.

Active representation means that policy development and implementation can be driven by people with disability, for people with disability, ensuring inclusive and accessible practices and actions become a standardised norm in all areas of Queensland society.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 1.1 Implement the disability reforms – specifically the Disability Royal Commission recommendations and NDIS Review through co-design and engagement with people with disability, their families/carers.
- 1.2 Invest in leadership development of Queenslanders with disability and pathways to roles and representation across the public service, business, industry, governance and boards.
- 1.3 Deliver robust, clear mechanisms for reporting on outcomes of disability reforms from the voice and perspective of people with disability.
- 1.4 Provide sufficient funding for individual and systemic advocacy in Queensland to support disability reforms.

³ [Queensland Government Response to Disability Royal Commission](#)

2. My NDIS matters

The NDIS has been transformative for people with disability. Queenslanders with disability have the right to a NDIS that fully and meets their needs.

QDN welcomes the commitment to genuine co-design through the roundtable approach to Queensland disability reforms, including a Foundational Supports Service System.⁴

Queensland has undertaken significant engagement with people with disability, families, carers and service providers in this area of disability reform and it is important that we continue to build upon this work as we move forward.

Foundational Supports are core supports that a person with disability might need. There are two types of Foundational Supports: general – for all people with disability, and targeted – for people who are not eligible for the NDIS.⁵

[NDIS Review Recommendations](#) 1 and 2 support the development of an ecosystem in which Foundational Supports interface with strengthened mainstream services and supports. Queensland has indicated support for ensuring Foundational Support access alongside ‘cohesive response to disability reform.’⁶

Targeted Foundational Supports include home and community supports, personal assistance, early supports for children, and targeted supports for adolescents.

General Foundational Supports include assistance to navigate the support system, information and advice, peer support and advocacy for individuals, families and communities.

Mainstream services include public health, education, employment, housing, transport and justice⁷ and these are covered under later priority areas in this platform.

QDN believes it is critical that the approach to this ecosystem needs to address longstanding service gaps for NDIS services and Foundational Supports in regional, remote and rural areas, including inconsistent service delivery both in terms of quality and availability.⁸ It is important that a consistent, available and responsive service delivery is embedded throughout the state, through investment to enable resourcing in areas that have traditionally had ‘thin markets’.

⁴ Roundtable focuses on disability reform in Queensland [Press release, 6 March 2024]

⁵ [NDIS Review – Fact sheet 2: Foundational supports are for all people with disability](#)

⁶ [Ensuring a fair deal for Queenslanders with disability \[Press release, 9 Feb 2024\]](#)

⁷ [NDIS Review – Fact sheet 1: Connected system of supports for all people with disability](#)

⁸ [QDN Submission \(Feb 2024\) – Inquiry into the NDIS participant experience in regional, rural and remote Australia](#)

Since the introduction of the NDIS, there have been many disability specific organisations providing essential information and peer support at a state and community level who have ceased operating. These organisations provided vital services including information and referral to people with disability as well as families. This is a gap that needs to be addressed and considered in the design of Foundational Supports.

This issue could be compounded if service registration is required as per Recommendation 17 of the NDIS Review, despite the NDIS Provider and Registration Taskforce recommending⁹ that not all providers should be registered.

QDN members based in regional, rural and remote areas have shared that they only have access to unregistered providers and there are fears that registration processes may be costly and cause an administrative burden that means smaller service providers simply exit the market.

Recommendation 17 in the NDIS Review calls for supports for people with psychosocial disability. QDN members have shared that psychosocial supports are currently lacking, and the new ecosystem of supports must include Foundational Supports that accommodate the needs of people with psychosocial disability.

QDN members are also concerned about inconsistent access to the NDIS for children and young people with Autism, delays in supports and the need for family-centred approaches.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 2.1 Co-design, build and invest in deliver a Queensland Foundational Supports Service System and disability ecosystem for all people with disability across Queensland, including home and community supports, targeted supports for adults with psychosocial disability, early supports for families and children and transition supports for young people.
- 2.2 Co-design, build and invest in a general Foundational Supports Service System including assistance to navigate the support system, information and advice, peer support and advocacy for individuals, families and communities.
- 2.3 Accept and implement NDIS Review recommendations and actions relevant to state government to contribute to a unified system of support and approach to disability rights, discrimination and inclusion legislation.
- 2.4 Ensure Queensland's share of ILC funding meets the needs of this state.

⁹ [Summary of Advice: NDIS Provider and Worker Registration Taskforce](#)



3. My personal and community support matters

Personal and community support includes services and supports that enable people with disability to live independently and access their communities. Queenslanders with disability need to be able to access services in the same way as the rest of the Queensland population.

Community supports and access

Community support includes support services that sit outside the NDIS, including the Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS), and Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS). These systems do not provide adequate support for Queenslanders with disability who are not eligible for the NDIS and or who live with comorbid chronic illness. This is especially critical for people with disability with complex needs who do not receive NDIS supports.

Although a \$10 million temporary uplift¹⁰ was provided recently to the [QCSS](#) and a \$6.5 million commitment¹¹ for [MASS](#), neither scheme has provided sufficient support to people with disability. QDN has heard from members that the provisions through the schemes have not provided enough support to meet their needs.

The Queensland Government must make an additional commitment to establish a new scheme to fill gaps in supports QCSS does not cover and fund MASS to a level that is sufficient to provide the needed support. The Queensland Government must consult with stakeholders accessing the schemes to understand the level of unmet need.

QDN has heard from members and our allies there is critical unmet need for mental health supports and psychosocial supports. These services are a vital part of helping people with their mental health and wellbeing. The community based mental health sector is one of the lowest funded sectors in Australia and recent reports suggest almost 100,000 people are missing out on essential services.

Civic participation in community

Queenslanders with disability have the right, like all Queenslanders, to participate in the voting process at local, state and federal elections.

QDN has heard from members that the process is often inaccessible. Measures such as more wheelchair accessible voting booth options for all elections, and digital access for voting like the iVoting system used in New South Wales for people who are Blind or vision impaired must be implemented in Queensland.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 3.1 Invest in person-centred, timely specialist disability supports for Queenslanders with disability who are not eligible for the NDIS and require supports, equipment or aids.
- 3.2 Provide accessible voting options for Queenslanders with disability by improving voting processes to embed inclusion and enable all people with disability the ability to access independent, secret and verifiable voting.
- 3.3 Fund community mental health services.



4. My employment and financial security matters

Employment provides a means of financial security for all Queenslanders. For Queenslanders with disability, financial security enables access to the housing and rental market, education, social participation in community, and non-NDIS/mainstream services.

Financial pressure is being felt across Australia, and Queensland is no exception. The latest Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) [Living Affordability in Queensland Report](#) reveals financial strain across the board for Queensland households.¹²

Nationally, the latest data indicates that working aged people with disability are less likely to be employed than people without disability (48% comparative to 80%).¹³ This includes Queenslanders with disability.

QDN welcomes the [Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-32](#), which links to Australia's Disability Strategy, including an explicit link to increasing employment of people with disability across the state. Additionally, we welcome the Targeted Action Plan for employment under Queensland's Disability Plan. Finally [Skilling Queenslanders for Work](#) has been a welcome initiative assisting jobseekers, including people with disability, to gain necessary employment skills.

¹² QCOSS Living Affordability in Queensland 2023 Report

¹³ AIHW – People with disability in Australia, employment

QDN recently launched two major reports to influence change in the way Queensland approaches employment and economic security for Queenslanders with disability. The [Game Changers Report](#) developed in partnership with Urbis aims to increase employment opportunities for people with disability in Queensland and develop an inclusive employment legacy from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. [Breaking the Glass Ceiling and Smashing the Legacy of Low Expectations](#) provides recommendations to address systemic issues and create a more equitable environment for women with disability to thrive economically and socially.

The inclusion of disability in employment frameworks is critical considering the cost of living crisis and the additional costs incurred in daily living for people with disability, including living near public transport, increasing rent prices and housing costs.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 4.1. Establish a dedicated Queensland Disability Innovation Fund (QDIF) to enable:
 - An Incubator and accelerator program targeted to enhance the capability and entrepreneurial, business skills of people with disability.
 - Inclusion Ready program for Queensland business to increase disability inclusion
- 4.2. Develop a strategy for inclusivity in supply chains through co-design, targets, and building business capability through the inclusive employment of people with disability.
- 4.3. Implement the recommendations in [Game Changers: Developing an inclusive employment legacy from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games](#) developed by Urbis and QDN released in May 2024.
- 4.4. Implement the recommendations in [Breaking The Glass Ceiling And Smashing The Legacy Of Low Expectations](#), a QDN position paper on the economic security of women with disability in Queensland.
- 4.5. Deliver targeted financial subsidies to people with disability on income support and low incomes to address additional costs related to disability and cost of living including power, water, transport and other essential services.



5. My education and learning matters

The pathway to employment is generally preceded by education or training. For people with disability, access to education and learning enables greater opportunities for employment and financial security.

The delivery and implementation of inclusive education policies in Queensland needs to incorporate all learning from early childhood through to tertiary and lifelong learning. Whilst *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27* includes education, it does not include a targeted action plan for all stages of learning, nor does the Queensland Department of Education have a publicly available disability action plan.

For transparency and reporting of disability education inclusion progress, especially considering forthcoming reforms from the Disability Royal Commission, these plans are essential. They enable the public to understand how inclusion is being prioritised alongside data reporting against benchmarks to indicate progress of reforms, and across all stages of learning. Inclusive practice needs to be embedded through all stages of education to enable genuinely accessible education and ensure people with disability can transition from education to employment.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 5.1 Implement and report on targeted measures to reduce school suspensions and exclusions for students with disability including investment in multi-tiered systems of support.
- 5.2 Fund innovative transition programs that improve pathways for young people with disability from school to employment or further education.
- 5.3 Re-establish the Ministerial Taskforce on Inclusive Education, which provided recommendations to government in 2004. This re-established Taskforce should focus on reforms from the Disability Royal Commission and broaden the scope to explore achievements and challenges in education across all levels. Taskforce membership should include people with disability, their representative organisations and relevant education stakeholders with



6. My housing matters

Queenslanders need access to inclusive, accessible and safe homes and communities. This is contingent on housing availability, with the additional measure that housing meets accessibility standards.

Accessible housing

There has never been a more pressing time for action on housing for Queenslanders with disability. Housing is covered under the Queensland Disability Plan, [Homes for Queenslanders Plan](#) and [Partnering for inclusive housing with Queenslanders with disability](#).

Data from recent housing reports indicate widespread issues for Queensland households, facing financial and/or rental stress. The housing and cost of living crises are being felt acutely by low-income and Commonwealth payment-assisted households, with cost of housing rising to approximately 40% of expenditure for all households, despite increases in rent assistance payments.¹⁴ In addition, 150,000 households in Queensland have unmet need for affordable housing.¹⁵

There is a need for increased supply of safe, affordable and accessible housing for Queenslanders with disability who are struggling to enter the housing market due to both lack of affordability and accessibility. In terms of accessibility, housing must comply with the National Construction Code, [Livable Housing Design Standard](#), through retrofitting legacy stock, and guaranteeing new build housing meets Silver Liveable Housing Design Standards.

This can enable a pathway for people with disability who are presently, or at risk of homelessness, to safe, accessible, and affordable housing. This action would align with priorities under the [Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-25](#) which includes the priority to ‘promote rights, choice, control, accessibility and inclusion in housing with support for people with disability’ (page18).

Home modifications

Currently, the [Home Assist Secure](#) service enables minor modifications, home repairs or maintenance for people who meet eligibility criteria who are over 60 years old, or people with disability of all ages. One of the criteria is holding a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card, which means that people with disability who do not receive federal payments who are not in the financial position

¹⁴ QCOSS (2023) [Living Affordability in Queensland](#)

¹⁵ Ibid

to fund accessibility modifications, either by self-funding or via other schemes, will fall through the gaps. If they could access the service, they could implement minor modifications to ensure their housing is both safe and accessible.

Rental assistance

According to QCOSS, the median rental price for all Queensland areas is \$510, with a sharp increase recorded in many regional and rural areas. While legislation to limit rental increases for all current and new tenancies to once in every 12 months has capped increases, it has provided little relief to many Queenslanders with disability struggling to make ends meet and pay rent. For many, it has displaced them from their current homes due to rent becoming unaffordable.

Reforms must be adopted, including limiting annual rent increases, ending no-cause evictions and energy efficiency minimum standards.

It is critical that the Queensland Government introduces measures to assist people with disability who are feeling the financial constraints created by rent increases coupled with the cost of living crisis.

Home ownership support

To support home ownership among Queenslanders with disability, the Queensland Government's Pathways shared equity loan program must be extended to include people with a disability, and the sale-to-tenant housing program and models for incentivising the involvement of the private sector in shared equity schemes must also be extended.

Supported accommodation

The Queensland Government conducted [the Inquiry into the Provision and Regulation of Supported Accommodation](#). QDN and Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI) both extensively engaged and provided detailed feedback and advice to the inquiry.

In this election, QDN is supporting the implementation of all recommendations made in the inquiry report, with a view of leading co-design work in implementation of the recommendations throughout Queensland.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 6.1 Fund and build more safe, affordable and accessible social, community and private housing in line with the National Construction Code standards.
- 6.2 Deliver innovative housing models for people with disability including supportive housing.

- 6.3 Increase rental assistance and investment in rental support activities.
- 6.4 Deliver on initiatives in [*Partnering for inclusive housing with Queenslanders with disability 2024-2027 \(Partnering for inclusive housing\)*](#).
- 6.5 Adopt and action recommendations in the Community Support and Services Committee [*report on the Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation*](#)
- 6.6 Improve enforcement of tenancy rights, including providing support for people with disability to lodge complaints.
- 6.7 Adopt the [*Make Renting Fair in Queensland*](#) campaign reforms on rent increases, ending tenancies and energy efficiency minimum standards.
- 6.8 Improve home ownership rates for people with disability through innovative financing options and improved shared equity approaches.



7. My safety, rights and justice matters

Queenslanders with disability have rights to access justice, feel safe in their communities, and can enjoy equality before the law. Rights to safety and justice are included as a priority in *Queensland's Disability Strategy*.

Equality before the law is recognised as a human right in the CRPD, [*Article 12 Equal recognition before the law*](#). This is further reflected in the [*DJAG 2022-25 Disability Service Plan 2022-25*](#).

The national data regarding justice interactions by people with disability reported by the Disability Royal Commission indicate that people with disability and First Nations peoples are overrepresented at all stages in the justice system.¹⁶ In their submissions to the Inquiry into ongoing reforms to the youth justice system, QAI indicated that officially reported data shows overrepresentation of children with disability in Queensland, believing it extends beyond what has been reported at 47%.¹⁷

¹⁶ [People with disability overrepresented at all stages of the criminal justice system](#) [Press release, 23 December 2020]

¹⁷ [QAI \(2024\) Youth Justice Reform – Phase One Submission](#)

Justice reform recommendations including restrictive practices

Queensland's Disability Reform Framework includes justice, relating to reform recommendations put forth in the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review.¹⁸ This is welcomed. It is critical that justice reforms are supported to reduce overrepresentation of people with disability in the justice system, and to provide support and pathways for people with disability impacted.

This includes reforms relating to the use of restrictive practices. The Disability Royal Commission examined restrictive practices at length through an issue paper and research reports, providing a solid evidence base for the traumatic and long-lasting impact that their use can have on people with disability.

Queensland must ensure it follows forthcoming reforms and advice that has been provided through the Disability Royal Commission in relation to restrictive practice use.

Section 216 of the Criminal Code

Amend 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 criminalised.

Age of Criminal Responsibility

Many children aged 10 to 13 years old 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. These children should be supported to access specialist health, including mental health, and disability supports.

Queensland has indicated it will not support Recommendation 8.22 Age of Criminal Responsibility set out in the Disability Royal Commission Final Report.¹⁹ Recommendation 8.22 proposed lifting the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years of age.

¹⁸ [Roundtable focuses on disability reform in Queensland \[Press release, 6 March 2024\]](#)

¹⁹ [Queensland Government Response to Disability Royal Commission](#)

Youth detention

There is a significant number of children in Queensland being held in police watch houses, which are not appropriate places for children. Watch houses do not have the capacity or facilities to care for young offenders, who often have mental health problems.^{20,21} 35% of children and young people in youth justice custody in 2022 had a mental health and/or behavioural disorder.²² The detention of children in adult watch houses must be stopped, except for emergencies. If detention is required, it must be in a fit-for-purpose youth detention centre, designed to meet the needs of children and young people with disability.

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Response

Violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation disproportionately impact people with disability, especially women.²³ This is explicitly acknowledged in [Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence \(DFV\) Strategy](#):

'People with disabilities can also experience 'disability-related' abuse such as withholding of care, denial of access to disability aids and threats of institutionalisation. They can face additional barriers to seeking help for domestic and family violence such as dependence on the perpetrator for basic needs such as access to food and medication, lack of ability to earn income, and inability to communicate with support services' (page 6)

The Queensland Government has acknowledged this with the welcome provision of information on DFV and support for women with disability, this needs to be extended to the provision of safe and accessible services and temporary housing supports. This should be delivered through a specific targeted action plan for people with disability that sits under *Queensland's DFV Strategy*. The targeted action plan must include provisions for increase of availability of accessible and inclusive DFV services for women with disability with targets for increasing quotas and co-design processes for design and implementation of services across the state.

¹⁸ [Roundtable focuses on disability reform in Queensland \[Press release, 6 March 2024\]](#)

¹⁹ [Queensland Government Response to Disability Royal Commission](#)

²⁰ [Youth Advocacy Centre Inc, Use of Police Watch Houses in Queensland](#)

²¹ [Queensland Family & Child Commission – Young people in Queensland watch houses](#)

²² [Queensland Government, Youth justice data](#)

Child safety system

An improved child safety system in Queensland is critical for delivering better outcomes, quality services, pathways and integrated responses resulting in the best outcome for the child and their family. QDN members who have been children with disability in the child protection system or parents, including parents with intellectual disability, with children in the system speak to the profound long-lasting impacts on them and their families.

Investment in tailored support services, advocacy and supported decision making particularly for women with disability involved in the child safety system is needed. This includes services and supports that ensure parents and children's rights are upheld, their needs are met, and families stay together.

Emergency response and planning

Invest in initiatives for people with disability to engage in natural disaster preparedness and emergency planning to ensure they are prepared and have a plan in place to keep themselves safe.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 7.1 Design and implement a dedicated Domestic and Family Violence Targeted Action Plan for disability under [*Queensland's Domestic and family violence prevention strategy 2016-2026*](#).
- 7.2 Provide tailored support and targeted programs to parents with disability who have children in the child safety system.
- 7.3 Invest in initiatives for people with disability to be prepared for emergency and disaster events before, during and after.
- 7.4 Amend Section 216 of the Criminal Code to ensure the rights of people with intellectual disability to have sexual relationships.
- 7.5 Raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14 and stop detaining young people in watchhouses.



8. My health and wellbeing matters

Access to healthcare is a human right. Queenslanders with disability deserve access to responsive and accessible health systems to support their health and wellbeing.

[Article 25 Health](#) in the CRPD stipulates that people with disability have the right to attain the highest standard of health without discrimination. This is reflected in the *Queensland Disability Plan*, which states a priority for people with disability to attain the highest possible health and wellbeing within their lives. The priority is supported by the Department of Health Disability Service Plan 2022-24 that sets out priorities for improved health service delivery and access for Queenslanders with disability.

The focus on healthcare for people with disability is welcomed, however, the health system could be more responsive in numerous ways for Queenslanders with disability. This includes increased access to healthcare that is inclusive and accessible to people intersectional needs of people with disability who may identify as women with disability, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and/or First Nations.

Accessible and inclusive healthcare and mental health care

Queenslanders with disability require access to healthcare and mental healthcare that meet their needs. Healthcare needs to be trauma-informed, culturally and psychologically safe, responsive to intersectional needs and disadvantage. For example, women's healthcare for women with disability might include access to reproductive technology with accessible information provided plus any other accommodations that the woman might need, or for access to the [Comprehensive Health Assessment Program \(CHAP\)](#) for Queenslanders with intellectual disability.

Investment in community-based mental health supports provided by the non-government organisations in Queensland is low compared to other states and territories. These services provide practical supports for people to manage the impacts of illness and provide opportunities to re-establish skills lost such as employment, education, social relationships and connections to communities.

Dedicated healthcare support for people with intellectual disability

There is a drastic need for dedicated health support for Queenslanders with intellectual and psychosocial disability. At present, many Queenslanders with intellectual and/or psychosocial disability are not able to access the support they need, nor the wrap around supports needed through care or post-care. Specifically, there is a gap between specialist support and General Practitioners (GPs), where support is most needed for people with intellectual and/or psychosocial disability and their families or support people.

Integrated Response Pathway for supported accommodation referral agencies

Investment is needed to ensure a smooth transition for residents entering supported accommodation including ongoing case management to access a range of health, community and disability supports and services.

Residential aged care to housing transition for young people with disability

Living in residential aged care can be detrimental for a young person with disability. It can reduce their independence, limit their ability to reach their full potential and be socially isolating. There continues to be high numbers of young people with disability living in residential aged care facilities, compounded by the issue of lack of affordable, accessible and safe housing. Funding and transition support for young people with disability into accommodation that prioritises their choice and control of living arrangements and services is required.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 8.1 Review and audit current patient data systems to establish recording mechanisms for key disability identifier information. This is to ensure all health workers and health professionals can deliver inclusive, timely, quality healthcare that meets patient's needs. This includes data that identifies intersectional needs and disadvantage including First Nations peoples, the LGBTIQ+ community, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, and women with disability.

- 8.2 Increase availability of accessible and inclusive healthcare and mental healthcare that meets the needs of all people with disability who may identify as women with disability, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and/or First Nations. This includes expanding telehealth access.
- 8.3 Increase targeted health care for people with intellectual disability through expanding remit and investment in the Queensland Centre for Excellence in Intellectual and Developmental Disability Mental Health to focus on physical health and wellbeing.
- 8.4 Establish an Integrated Response Pathway across government and community services, to improve access by supported accommodation residents to a range of integrated and coordinated allied, mental health and health supports; including case management.
- 8.5 Invest in workforce development for health professionals to increase this groups' skills and knowledge to work more confidentially and effectively with patients with diverse disabilities.



9. My community attitudes matter

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 9.1 Increase disability representation, especially in leadership roles, to increase the public awareness of Queenslanders with disability who make diverse contributions to Queensland communities.



10. My digital inclusion matters

Under Personal and Community Support, *Queensland's Disability Plan* includes that people with disability are supported to access assistive technology.

Digital inclusion

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. The Australian Digital Inclusion Index uses survey data to measure digital inclusion and identify critical barriers to accessing networks, the costs of devices or data, skills and digital literacy. The Index reveals that despite improved digital literacy scores in Australia, digital inclusion remains low for people with disability²⁵.

Accessible and inclusive technology procurement, design and access

The procurement and implementation of technology across public facing technology systems must ensure that accessibility is a consideration to enable access to all forms of digital communication. In addition, Queenslanders with disability must be able to access training for digital literacy, especially for disaster preparedness to access critical information and emergency alerts during natural and other disasters. This supports the existing work by QDN, the University of Sydney and other stakeholders on [Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness \(P-CEP\)](#).²⁶

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 10.1 Fund programs that deliver devices, data and build the digital skills of people with disability.
- 10.2 Ensure that government, business and service providers adhere to best practice digital access, user friendly platforms and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- 10.3 Prioritise co-design and user testing by people with disability for any public-facing artificial intelligence systems used by the Queensland Government and public services.

²⁶ [Home - Australian Digital Inclusion Index](#)



11. My transport matters

Transport is included under Inclusive Homes and Communities in Queensland's Disability Plan, with an aim to ensure transport systems are accessible to the whole community.

For Queenslanders with disability, this extends beyond public transport – trains, buses and ferries – to taxis and rideshare. Pedestrian access is a major point of consideration with increased traffic in pedestrian areas due to e-scooters and e-bikes.

Accessible public transport

Queenslanders with disability require access to transport including transport boarding and drop-off points that are designed and implemented with disability accessibility in mind. In recent years, national consultation has occurred to update the [Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport \(DSAPT\) 2002](#).

Ongoing funding for the Queensland Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS)

The Queensland [Taxi Subsidy Scheme \(TSS\)](#) currently subsidises travel for people with severe disability, up to a maximum of \$30 per trip. In the current cost of living crisis including rising petrol costs, this requires re-examination; people with disability rely on taxis for many situations in which travel is essential, to medical appointments, hospital, health or disability services, and other parts of community.

Further, there are many Queenslanders with disability who do not have NDIS access and for those who do, many do not have transport funding. There is often no alternative for the support gained through TSS, which means in the current economic climate, it is a transport lifeline for many people.

Safe and accessible pedestrian access

Pedestrian areas have increased traffic, between foot traffic, e-scooters and e-bikes. For people with disability, the speed of e-scooters, e-bikes and mobility devices and the use of devices in built-up pedestrian areas places them at risk of injury, or even death.²⁷

The Queensland Government must commit to regulating the speed of e-scooters, e-bikes and mobility devices through legislative requirements for speed limits, plus

²⁷ [Blind Citizens Australia \(2020\) Position Statement on e-scooters and e-bikes](#)

geo-locking which will restrict the use of devices to certain less built-up pedestrian areas.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 11.1 Update the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (2002) including user testing by people with disability to provide feedback on implementation of measures.
- 11.2 Commit ongoing funding for the Queensland Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) beyond 2025.
- 11.3 Introduce mandatory public reporting for taxi companies, to report on average wait times, available wheelchair accessible taxis, and number of complaints.
- 11.4 Develop a regional and rural accessible transport strategy.
- 11.5 Legislate protections to make pedestrians safe through the regulation of speed and geo-locking for e-scooters, e-bikes and other mobility devices.



12. Inclusive and accessible 2032 Olympics and Paralympics matters

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games has positioned Queensland with an ambitious aim to be the most inclusive and accessible event in Olympic and Paralympic history.²⁸

There is an opportunity beyond this to embed accessibility and inclusion throughout all aspects of life in Queensland, with the 2032 Games providing the scaffolding.

2032 Games legacy accessibility and inclusion measures

In June 2022 QDN held a forum to explore how an enduring legacy of inclusion in Queensland could be established using a foundation of the measures being introduced to make the 2032 Games to be inclusive and accessible for all.

[The Brisbane 2032 Games Summary Report](#) outlines legacy areas for focus for accessibility and inclusion:

- a. More accessible, affordable housing
- b. Improved accessible, affordable and integrated transport
- c. Infrastructure and built environment that enables people to move around well in their communities

²⁸ [Brisbane 2032 – Accessibility and inclusion](#)

- d. Inclusive and accessible tourism that encourages and enables people with disability to participate as athletes in the games, but also delivers ongoing legacy for all visitors to Queensland and positions our state as the most accessible and inclusive destination of choice for tourism into the future
- e. Growing the next generation of athletes to compete in the games
- f. Health and wellbeing outcomes to improve quality of life
- g. Employment opportunities, especially those identified in [Game Changers](#), leveraging the 2032 Games to increase disability employment across the state
- h. Volunteering opportunities
- i. Sustainability
- j. Inclusive practices around procurement of services, products, infrastructure that starts with accessibility and inclusion principles
- k. Disability inclusive arts and culture.

Queensland has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to capitalise on the international exposure from the 2032 Games and cement our reputation as a global frontrunner in providing an inclusive society for all people with disability.

QDN members call on all candidates and political parties to:

- 12.1 Commit to engagement and co-design with people with disability in the planning and delivery phases to deliver a world-leading accessible and inclusive 2032 Games.
- 12.2 Commit to legacy accessibility and inclusion measures beyond the 2032 Games that include uplift for housing, employment, health and wellbeing, transport, public infrastructure, tourism and sport.

Find out how you can be involved in the 2024 Queensland Election by reading QDN's State Government Election Advocacy Kit available here: [2024 State Government Election Platform - Queenslanders With Disability Network \(qdn.org.au\)](#)