

# Useful services for people with disabilities 2015

## National Disability Insurance Scheme

[www.ndis.gov.au/](http://www.ndis.gov.au/)

- The NDIS is designed to support people with a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.
- There are currently 8 pilot sites across Australia, including the Barwon region in Victoria. From July 2016 to 2019 the NDIS will be rolled out across the whole of Australia.

## Advocacy and information

- **Association for Children with a Disability.** Offers a range of information and advocacy services, presentations and publications for parents and siblings of children and young people with disabilities including an extensive list of useful links [www.acd.org.au](http://www.acd.org.au). Through The Maze: A Guide to Services and Benefits for Families of Children with a Disability direct link see [www.acd.org.au/through-the-maze](http://www.acd.org.au/through-the-maze)
- **Carers Victoria.** Carers Victoria is a state-wide organisation in Victoria offering direct services to support carers, and Education and Training and advocacy programs to increase awareness of carers and carer's issues. [www.carersvictoria.org.au/](http://www.carersvictoria.org.au/)
- **Department of Human Services** the Victorian government website for people with disabilities and their families containing information about policy and services. [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability/start-here/access-to-disability-supports](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability/start-here/access-to-disability-supports)
- **VALID (Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability).** VALID is funded by the Victorian State Government to provide peak representation of adults with intellectual disability and to operate an advocacy support service for adults with intellectual disability, their families/carers and advocates. [www.valid.org.au/](http://www.valid.org.au/)

## Aids and Equipment

- **State-wide Equipment Program.** State Government program which aims to assist children and adults to access subsidised aids, equipment and home modifications to enhance their safety and independence, support their family and carers and prevent premature admission to institutional care or high cost services. [swep.bhs.org.au/](http://swep.bhs.org.au/)
- **Independent Living Centre (ILC).** Provides impartial information and professional assessment and advice on equipment to enhance the independence of people

with both developmental and acquired disabilities in the activities of daily living.

<http://ilcaustralia.org.au/>

- **Solve Disability Solutions** (previously **Tadvic**) is an organisation whose volunteer members design, construct or modify equipment for people with disabilities. This service is provided where no commercially available solution will meet their needs. [www.solve.org.au/](http://www.solve.org.au/)

## Carers and families

- **Commonwealth Carelink Centres** are a single access point for up-to-date contact, availability and eligibility information on community aged care, disability and support services in each area. Phone 1800 052 222 or [www.commcarelink.health.gov.au](http://www.commcarelink.health.gov.au)

## Case Management

- **'Flexible Support Packages'** is a general term used to describe a range of programs including Early Choices, Making a Difference, Family Choice and Linkages. These programs include Case Management and some brokerage funding.
- **Disability Client Services (DCS)** of the Department of Human Services (DHS) provides Case Management and other support to people with Intellectual Disability as well as assisting with service coordination and planning for people with any other types of disability.
- **Non-government Case Management.** In addition to options listed above, various non-government organisations provide case management services for people with physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological disabilities and/or acquired brain injury.

## Communication

- **Communication Resource Centre.** A Victorian statewide service, working for people with complex communication needs to create inclusive environments. [www.scopevic.org.au/service/communication-access/](http://www.scopevic.org.au/service/communication-access/)  
Phone (03) 9843 2000 or (for rural callers) 1800 888 824

## Continence

- **National Continence Helpline** 1800 330 066
- **Continence Foundation of Australia (CFA)**  
There are CFA resource centres funded through State Government programs. They are staffed by qualified continence health professionals who offer information, advice and referral to clinical continence services. They are a resource both to the public and to health professionals on a range of incontinence issues. [www.continence.org.au/](http://www.continence.org.au/)

- **Victorian Continence Resource Centre** can provide details of the nearest Disability Continence Program. The Disability Continence Program undertakes assessments and interventions to assist children with disabilities aged 5 – 15 years, including access to an annual subsidy to assist with the cost of continence products. Phone (03) 9816 8266.

## Counselling Support

- **National Carers Counselling Program.** Provides access to 6-12 funded visits to registered psychologists in the local area. Coordinated by Carers Victoria. Freecall on 1800 242 636 or [www.carersaustralia.com.au/how-we-work/national-programs/national-carer-counselling-program/](http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/how-we-work/national-programs/national-carer-counselling-program/)
- **Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through Medicare**  
Generic service providing eligible patients with access to allied health referrals (usually psychology) of up to 10 individual and/or 10 group allied mental health services per calendar year.

## Disability Services exist in each State.

- **In Victoria** these provide a range of services for people with disabilities and their families including
  - Case Management.
  - Respite, recreation, in home support and accommodation services.
  - Futures for Young Adults program for school leavers.
  - Aids and equipment programs.
  - Specialist Services including Behaviour Intervention. Support Teams and Family Intervention Support Services.

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability)

## Education Departments in each State

- In Victoria the Department of Education and Training (DET) provides
  - Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx)
  - Preschool Field Officer Program  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/needs/Pages/kinderinclusionsupport.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/needs/Pages/kinderinclusionsupport.aspx)
  - Early Childhood Intervention Service for preschool children  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/needs/Pages/ecis.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/needs/Pages/ecis.aspx)

- Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) provides additional support for eligible students with disabilities in regular and specialist schools.  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/disabilityprogram.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/disabilityprogram.aspx)

## Financial

- **Centrelink: Financial Assistance.** The Centrelink payment system for people with disabilities and their carers is complex. Every Centrelink office has a Disability Officer who is available to explain the system and ensure that people receive the benefits they are entitled to.  
[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink)
- **Individualised Planning & Support Packages (IP&S).** In recent years there has been a move towards developing ISPs for people with disabilities, aiming to be more flexible and client-orientated in their approach. Support and Choice is one such program, funded through the DHS.

## Healthcare issues – information

- **Text:** Lennox N & Diggins J. Management Guidelines: People with Developmental & Intellectual Disabilities. Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd. Melbourne 2012. 3rd edition out recently. [www.tg.com.au](http://www.tg.com.au)
- **Journal** Developmental Disability. Australian Family Physician (Journal of Royal Australian College of General Practitioners). April 2011 Vol 40 (4) 177-256  
[www.racgp.org.au/afp/2011/april/](http://www.racgp.org.au/afp/2011/april/)  
and August, 2004, [www.racgp.org.au/afp/backissues/2004/](http://www.racgp.org.au/afp/backissues/2004/)
- **Health and Disability: Partnerships in Action** is a new teaching and learning package, produced through an interprofessional collaboration between dentists, dieticians, medical practitioners, nurses, occupational therapists, paramedics, physiotherapists, social workers, speech pathologists and students. *Through 'meeting' people with disabilities students gain a personal context for their learning.* <http://www.cddh.monash.org/health-and-disability.html>
- **Healthcare Scenarios in Developmental Disability Medicine CD ROM.** Interactive multimedia resource, providing information in Developmental Disability Medicine. Cost: \$40 (\$20 students).  
[www.cddh.monash.org/products-resources.html#health](http://www.cddh.monash.org/products-resources.html#health)

## Healthcare – specialist academic centres

- **Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria.**  
This academic Centre aims to improve health outcomes for adults with disabilities through a range of educational, research and clinical activities that enhance the

generic service system's capacity to provide for the needs of people with disabilities. It is situated within Monash Health Community and affiliated with the School of Primary Health, Monash University and the Department of General Practice at the University Melbourne. Funding for the Centre is through the Victorian State Government Department of Human Services Disability Services.

[www.cddh.monash.org](http://www.cddh.monash.org).

See also direct link to Fact Sheets on specific disabilities at

[www.cddh.monash.org/products-resources.html#factsheets](http://www.cddh.monash.org/products-resources.html#factsheets)

- **Centres in other states focusing on the health of people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities include:**
  - **QCIDD: Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability** [www.qcidd.com.au](http://www.qcidd.com.au)
  - **CDH: Centre for Disability Health, South Australia** [https://www.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/13048/centre-for-disability-health.pdf](https://www.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/13048/centre-for-disability-health.pdf)
  - **Centre for Disability Studies, NSW.** [www.cds.med.usyd.edu.au/](http://www.cds.med.usyd.edu.au/) and [www.cds.med.usyd.edu.au/clinical-services](http://www.cds.med.usyd.edu.au/clinical-services)
  - **Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry, NSW.** <https://3dn.unsw.edu.au/the-guide>

## Legal Issues

For more information about the rights of people with disabilities and the legal responsibilities inherent in their care:

- **Australian Guardianship and Administration Council** [www.agac.org.au/](http://www.agac.org.au/) Provides a forum for all state and territory agencies associated with the protective jurisdiction of guardianship and administration.

### Guardianship and Administration

- **Victoria. Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT):** This is a legal body set up to resolve civil disputes in an accessible, efficient and cost effective manner. The **Guardianship List** lies within the Human Rights Division of VCAT and works to protect persons aged 18 years or over who, as result of a disability, are unable to make reasonable decisions about their person or circumstances or their financial and legal affairs. [www.vcat.vic.gov.au](http://www.vcat.vic.gov.au)
- **Office of the Public Advocate (Victoria)** [www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/)
- **Villamanta Legal Service.** A community legal centre specialising in disability related legal issues. [www.villamanta.org.au/](http://www.villamanta.org.au/)

## Recreation

- **Local Government** provides a range of services including home help, respite, and recreational services. For information about local government services in your area contact Health and Aged services at your local council.
- **Access for All Abilities** provides Australia's only first-point-of call service connecting people with a disability to sports and recreational opportunities in

Melbourne.  
[www.aaavic.org.au](http://www.aaavic.org.au)

## Respite

- **Carer Respite Centres** Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres coordinate access to respite services in all local areas.  
Toll free number: 1800 059 059 or <http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/>
- **Local Government** provides a range of services including home help, respite, and recreational services. For more information contact Aged and Disability services at your local council.

## Support groups

- **Diagnosis Specific Support Groups.** The Royal Children's Hospital (Melbourne) keeps an up to date list of disability specific support groups at their Kids Health and Safety Resources [www.rch.org.au/chas/](http://www.rch.org.au/chas/)
- Other **Diagnosis Specific Support Groups** include:
  - Autism:** Autism Victoria (now trading as Amaze) - consumer web site for people with autism and their families. [www.amaze.org.au/](http://www.amaze.org.au/)  
Another consumer web site demonstrates well the common features of autism. Autism Help - [www.autismhelp.info](http://www.autismhelp.info)
  - Down syndrome:** Down Syndrome Victoria – consumer organisation for people with Down syndrome and their families. Website contains links to personal stories and photos. [www.downsyndromevictoria.org.au](http://www.downsyndromevictoria.org.au)  
Another consumer website (American) Riverbend Down Syndrome Association has very good information regarding medical implications at [www.riverbendds.org/index.htm](http://www.riverbendds.org/index.htm)
  - Fragile X Syndrome :** Fragile X Association of Australia – consumer website for people with Fragile X and their families. [www.fragilex.org.au/](http://www.fragilex.org.au/)
- **Genetic Support Network Victoria** This organisation aims to maintain a thriving network committed to promoting the interests and well-being of people affected by genetic conditions. It also has an extensive list of useful links. [www.gsnv.org.au/](http://www.gsnv.org.au/)
- **Siblings Australia.** This organisation's primary aim is to develop and co-ordinate services for families, and in particular, brothers and sisters of children with special needs (disability or chronic illness). [www.siblingsaustralia.org.au/](http://www.siblingsaustralia.org.au/)