



Australian Government

**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

**Australia's
Disability
Strategy**
2021-2031

Creating
an inclusive
community
together

Australia's Disability Strategy

2021-2031

Outcomes Framework

4th annual report summary

The AIHW is a corporate Commonwealth entity producing authoritative and accessible information and statistics to inform and support better policy and service delivery decisions, leading to better health and wellbeing.

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ISBN 978-1-923553-07-1 (Online)

ISBN 978-1-923553-08-8 (Print)

Suggested citation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2025) *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 Outcomes Framework: 4th annual report summary*, catalogue number ADS 8, AIHW, Australian Government.

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Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report.
Please check the online version at www.aihw.gov.au for any amendments.

Summary

The Outcomes Framework is a key part of Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (the Strategy) designed to measure, track, and report on the progress for people with disability. The annual reports on the Outcomes Framework will highlight the advancements made each year.

This summary is for the 4th annual report on the Strategy's Outcomes Framework, showcasing the key changes in 2025. For a detailed overview of the updates in 2025, please refer to the full 4th annual report and the [Australia's Disability Strategy Outcomes Framework dashboard](#).



Highlights from 2025

The Strategy tracks information on issues important to people with disability. These measures include information about employment, financial security, homes and community, safety and justice, support services, education and learning, health and wellbeing, and community attitudes. Data are used to monitor these areas to see if the Strategy is making a difference. New data are added to measures over time. The progress status of a measure is decided by comparing the original data collected under the Strategy to the most recent data available for the measure. The status shows if the measure has changed over time, and the direction of the change.

In 2025, 32 measures were updated:

- 12 showed improvement,
- 10 showed no change, and
- 10 showed regress.

Ten of these measures received a status update for the first time. There were also 12 measures that were listed on the Outcomes Framework dashboard for the first time, establishing a baseline to track future progress.

Key findings for measures that were updated in 2025

Improvements were reported for 12 measures updated in 2025, including:



Community attitudes

The proportion of people with disability who feel represented in leadership roles has increased from 19% in 2022 to 23% in 2024.



Health and wellbeing

The number of involuntary hospital admissions per 100,000 people with disability decreased from 2,013 hospital admissions in 2020–21 to 1,841 in 2021–22.



Education and learning

The proportion of undergraduate higher education students with disability increased from 10% in 2021 to 13% in 2023.



Employment and financial security

The proportion of NDIS participants aged 15–64 in the labour force who are in open employment at full award wage increased from 20% in 2021–22 Q2 to 24% in 2024–25 Q3.

There were 10 measures updated in 2025 which showed **no change**, including:



Education and learning

The proportion of students with disability who complete a higher education qualification has changed little. For cohort 2018–2023, 55% of students with disability completed a higher education qualification, compared with 59% for cohort 2005–2010.



Community attitudes

5 of the 7 Community Attitude measures showed little or no change. Shifting community attitudes is a long-term process and it's likely that any substantive change may take several years to show results.



Health and wellbeing

The number of potentially avoidable deaths in hospital for people with disability, compared with people without disability per 100,000 people changed little. In 2021–22, there were 238 potentially avoidable deaths per 100,000 people with disability during hospital admission or emergency department presentation, compared with 33 deaths per 100,000 people without disability.

There were 10 measures updated in 2025 which had **regressed** since baseline. Among these were:



Inclusive homes and communities

The average waiting time for social housing has increased since baseline. In 2023–24, households with people with disability were waiting an average of 547–811 days for newly allocated social housing through available government housing schemes.



Safety, rights and justice

The proportion of complaints related to disability discrimination lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission that were successfully resolved by conciliation decreased from 72% in 2020–21 to 61% in 2023–24.



Employment and financial security

In 2024–25 Q3, 63% of NDIS participants reported they get the support they need to do their job, compared with 66% in 2021–22 Q2.

Further details on these measures and other measures which were updated in 2025 can be found on the [Outcomes Framework dashboard | all measures](#).

Insights from measures that were introduced in 2025

In 2025, several new measures were reported for the first time on the Strategy's Outcomes Framework. These measures covered various outcome areas, including health and wellbeing, safety, rights and justice, and personal and community support. These measures indicated that:

- accessing preventive and early intervention health care services in the last 12 months was easier for people without disability (82%) than for people with disability (66%)
- 68% of people with disability were supported when dealing with police and/or judicial officers
- 80% of people with disability could access mainstream support services when needed compared with 89% of people without disability.

Spotlight: Living in remote areas

As part of the commitment to provide better information for people with disability, measures are reported by different priority groups where data allow. This annual report highlights similarities and differences based on remoteness.

Location can impact access to supports and services and community inclusion. Distance can multiply the difficulties for people with disability, creating barriers to effective participation and inclusion. Key findings from Outcomes Framework 2025 data included:

- NDIS participants in remote areas are less likely to get the support they need to do their job (58%, compared with 63% of participants in major cities), be in open employment at full award wage (21% vs 25%), receive assistive technology supports (28% vs 37%), or feel that the NDIS had helped them have more choice and control over their life (74% vs 80%).
- Students with disability in remote areas are less likely to complete their higher education qualification than those in major cities: the completion rates were 34% (remote) and 43% (major cities) for VET students and 50% (remote) and 57% (major cities) for higher education students with disability.
- However, VET graduates with disability in remote areas are more likely to be employed on completion of training (68%, compared with 57% in major cities).

Further details about people with disability living in remote areas compared to major cities are provided in the full report.

Activities supporting the Outcomes Framework

Development of disability flags within the National Disability Data Asset (NDDA)

Disability flags are types of information about disability. For example, how many people have disability and what disability they have. These flags provide consistent data to research and develop insights that can benefit the disability community, though they do not capture all people with disability in Australia.

The first set of flags focus on individuals who receive or are eligible for disability-related government payments and services, such as **NDIS participants** or recipients of the **Disability Support Pension**. Developed through the **NDDA**, these flags were used to examine 3 measures through data extracted from the **National Health Data Hub (NHDH)**.

Use of linked data

In 2025, 3 measures using linked data (**potentially avoidable deaths**, **GP-type emergency presentations** and **involuntary hospital admissions**) were reported on the Outcomes Framework dashboard for the first time. The data were extracted from the **NHDH** using the disability flags developed through the **NDDA**. These measures can be explored in more detail under the **Health and wellbeing** outcome area on the dashboard.

Future plans

Data updates will continue to be released quarterly on the **Australia's Disability Strategy Outcomes Framework** webpages, with the next release scheduled for April 2026.

Developing **future measures** for the ADS Outcome Framework continues. For further details on which measures are under development, see the Strategy's **Data Improvement Plan**.

Work continues with the disability community, their representatives and experts in disability data to develop more **disability flags** in national and state data collections. This will improve the availability of data for people with disability, providing greater insights into the issues that impact them.

The next annual report will be released in early 2027.

