

Psychiatric disability support services

This section presents information on specialist disability support services, provided under the [National Disability Agreement \(NDA\)](#) to service users with [psychiatric disability](#) either as their [primary disability](#) or as an [other significant disability](#). Note that unless explicitly stated, service users with psychiatric disability include all service users with psychiatric disability, regardless of whether it is considered a primary or other significant disability.

Key points

- Almost 88,000 people with a psychiatric disability made use of disability support services in 2011–12.
- Psychiatric disability was the second most frequently reported primary disability among people receiving residential disability support services.
- There has been an average annual increase of 9.2% in the rate of non-residential service users with psychiatric disability, between 2007–08 and 2011–12, while the rate of residential service users has remained relatively stable.
- Employment services were the most frequently provided service group for non-residential service users with psychiatric disability.
- Group homes were the most frequently used service type by people with a psychiatric disability receiving residential services in 2011–12.
- Indigenous Australians with psychiatric disability were about twice as likely to use both residential and non-residential disability support services as non-Indigenous Australians.

The information presented in this section has been extracted from the 2011–12 Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (Disability Services NMDS); comprising national administrative data on disability support services. The [data source](#) section provides further information on data quality, coverage and other aspects of the NDA data collection.

Service users may receive non-residential services, defined using the broad service group categories of accommodation support (excluding large residential facilities/institutions, small residential facilities/institutions, hostels and group homes), community support, community access, respite services, employment services, advocacy, information and alternative forms of communication and other support. Providers of non-residential services are either state or territory administered services or Australian Government funded services.

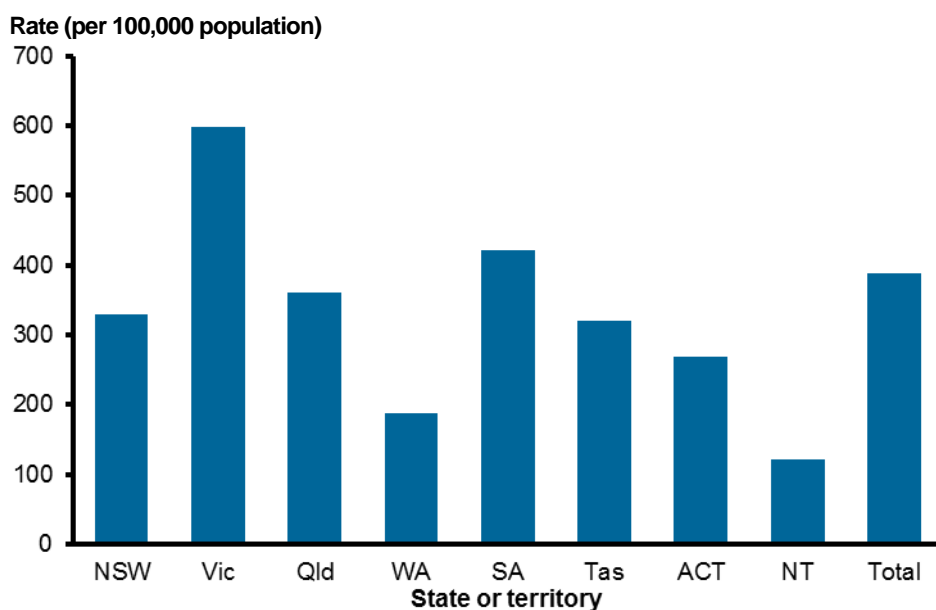
Service users may also receive a range of residential disability support service types, depending on availability and their individual needs, broadly termed large residential facilities/institutions, small residential facilities/institutions, hostels and group homes.

Definitions for psychiatric disability support services can be found on the [key concepts](#) page.

Service users by states and territories

About 317,600 people across Australia made use of specialist disability support services during 2011–12 (AIHW 2013a). More than 87,600 people with psychiatric disability (this refers to all recorded disabilities, not just primary disability) made use of disability support services in 2011–12. The rate of service users was highest in Victoria (597.8 per 100,000 population), and lowest in the Northern Territory (121.6), compared to the national rate of 389.3 (Figure DIS.1).

Figure DIS.1: Service users with psychiatric disability, states and territories, 2011–12



Notes:

1. Service users may use both residential and non-residential services and may access services in more than one state or territory.

Source: AIHW analysis of data from the Disability Services NMDS.

Source data for this figure are accessible from Table DIS.1 (260KB XLS) in the Psychiatric disability support services excel table downloads.

Alt text:

Vertical bar chart showing the rate of service users with psychiatric disability for all jurisdictions in 2011–12. Vic had the highest rates of service users with psychiatric disability (597.8 per 100,000 population), followed by SA (422.3), Qld (360.9), NSW (328.8), Tas (321.3), ACT (269.6), WA (188.6) and NT (121.6). Nationally, the rate of service users with psychiatric disability was 389.3. Refer to Table DIS.1.

For residential services, Western Australia had the lowest service user rate (1.3) and Tasmania had the highest (28.7), compared to the national rate of 16.6 per 100,000 population. The Northern Territory had the lowest rate of non-residential service users (118.2), while Victoria had the highest rate (594.3) compared to the national rate of 386.9.

Considering primary disability only, psychiatric disability was the second most frequently reported primary disability (56,733 people or 19.2%) (AIHW 2013a).

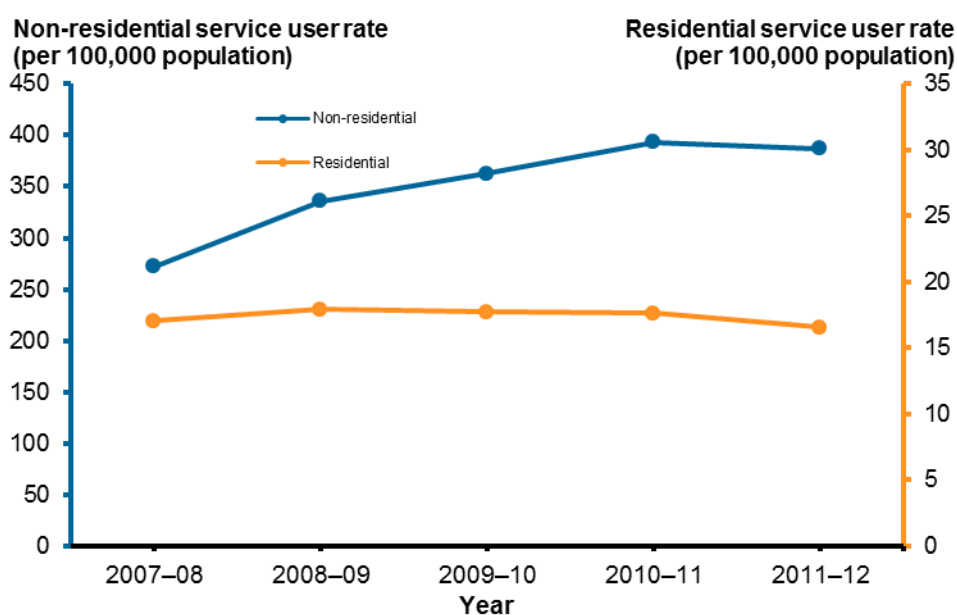
Reference

AIHW 2013a. Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2011–12. AIHW bulletin 118. Cat. no. AUS 173. Canberra: AIHW.

Psychiatric disability support over time

Nationally, the proportion of disability support service users with psychiatric disability (this refers to all recorded disabilities, not just primary disability) has remained relatively stable over the 5 years to 2011–12. Over this time, the rate of non-residential service users has on average increased by 9.2% annually, from 272.5 per 100,000 population in 2007–08 to 386.9 in 2011–12 (Figure DIS.2). This increase has been driven mainly by an increase in the number of users of employment services (AIHW 2013a). Over the same time period, the residential service user rate has remained relatively stable ranging from 17.1 per 100,000 population in 2007–08 to 16.6 in 2011–12.

Figure DIS.2: Service users with psychiatric disability, 2007–08 to 2011–12



Note:

The methodology to obtain service user counts has varied over time, so comparisons between reporting years should be approached with caution. See data source section for more information.

Source: AIHW analysis of data from the Disability Services NMDS.

Source data for this figure are accessible from Table DIS.3 (260KB XLS) in the Psychiatric disability support services excel table downloads.

Alt text:

Line chart with two lines showing the rate of residential and non-residential service users with psychiatric disability between 2007–08 and 2011–12. 2007–08: residential service users 17.1 per 100,000 population and non-residential service users 272.5; 2008–09: residential 17.9 and non-residential 336.2; 2009–10: residential 17.7 and non-residential 362.9; 2010–11; residential 17.7 and non-residential 393.3; and 2011–12: residential 16.6 and non-residential 386.9. Refer to Table DIS.3.

Reference

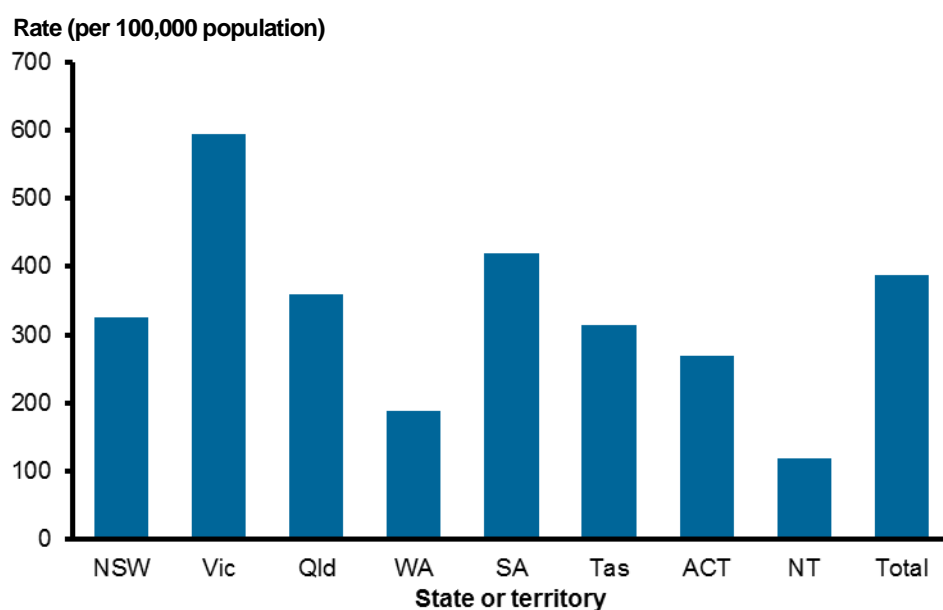
AIHW 2013a. Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2011-12. AIHW bulletin 118. Cat. no. AUS 173. Canberra: AIHW.

Non-residential services

Profile of service usage

Non-residential disability support services were most frequently used by people with psychiatric disability in Victoria, with 594.3 users per 100,000 population. The Northern Territory had the lowest usage rate of 118.2, compared to the national rate of 386.9 (Figure DIS.3). Employment services had the highest rate of service users per 100,000 population for all jurisdictions in 2011–12, while respite services had the lowest service user rate. Victoria had the highest rate of service users for accommodation support, community access and respite services. South Australia had the highest service user rate for community support and employment services.

Figure DIS.3: Non-residential service users with psychiatric disability, states and territories, 2011–12



Source: AIHW analysis of data from the Disability Services NMDS.

Source data for this figure are accessible from Table DIS.4 (260KB XLS) in the Psychiatric disability support services excel table downloads.

Alt text:

Vertical bar chart showing the rate of non-residential service users with psychiatric disability for all jurisdictions in 2011–12. Vic had the highest rates of non-residential service users with psychiatric disability (594.3 per 100,000 population), followed by SA (420.3), Qld (359.4), NSW (325.7), Tas (314.6), ACT (268.5), WA (188.5) and NT (118.2). Nationally, the rate of service users with psychiatric disability was 386.9. Refer to Table DIS.4.

Profile of service users

Of the non-residential service users who identified as having psychiatric disability, almost two-thirds (64.9%) reported this as their primary disability.

There were more male users (55.1%) of non-residential disability support services than females (44.9%) and more than two-thirds of non-residential users were aged 25–54 (67.3%). Just over 4 in 5 (80.9%) non-residential service users were born in Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accounted for 4.8% of non-residential service users with psychiatric disability, and were more than twice as likely to use non-residential disability support services as non-Indigenous Australians (800.8 and 368.5 per 100,000 population respectively).

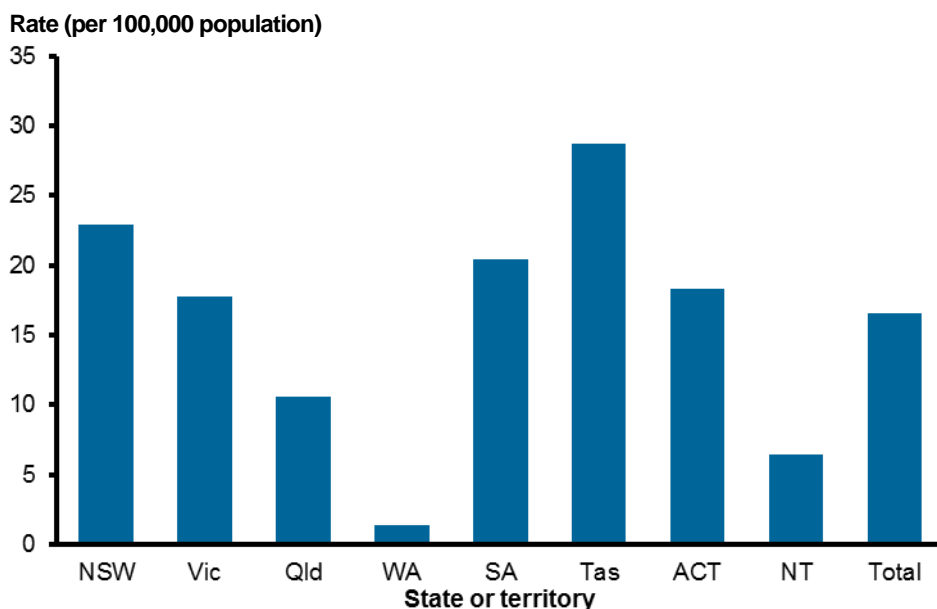
Most (89.7%) non-residential disability support service users lived in a *Major city or Inner regional area* and more than three-quarters in private residences (78.2%). While the highest proportion of service users lived alone (37.1%), a similar proportion lived with others (36.1%) and around a quarter lived with family (26.9%). The main source of income for users of non-residential services was a disability support pension (59.1%) with only 5.0% of users reporting paid employment as their main income source.

Residential services

Profile of service usage

The highest usage of residential disability support services by people with psychiatric disability was in Tasmania, with 28.7 users per 100,000 population. The lowest rate was in Western Australia (1.3) and the national average was 16.6 (Figure DIS.4). Group homes were the most widely reported residential service type nationally, with 12.8 service users per 100,000 population. Group homes were the only residential service type reported by people with a psychiatric disability in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Figure DIS.4: Residential service users with psychiatric disability, states and territories, 2011–12



Source: AIHW analysis of data from the Disability Services NMDS.

Source data for this figure are accessible from Table DIS.8 (260KB XLS) in the Psychiatric disability support services excel table downloads.

Alt text:

Vertical bar chart showing the rate of residential service users with psychiatric disability for all jurisdictions in 2011–12. Tas had the highest rates of residential service users with psychiatric disability (28.7 per 100,000 population), followed

by NSW (22.9), SA (20.5), ACT (18.3), Vic (17.8), Qld (10.6), NT (6.4) and WA (1.3). Nationally, the rate of residential service users with psychiatric disability was 16.6. Refer to Table DIS.8.

Profile of service users

Of all residential service users with psychiatric disability, the most frequently reported primary disability was intellectual disability (70.4%). Only a relatively small proportion of residential service users had a primary psychiatric disability (14.8%) in comparison to users of non-residential services (64.9%).

There were more male (57.3%) residential service users, than female (42.7%), with the majority aged 35–64 (72.7%).

Indigenous Australians made up a small proportion of residential service users (3.8%) but were almost twice as likely to access residential services as non-Indigenous Australians (31.6 and 15.9 per 100,000 population respectively).

Residential service users were most likely to be living with others (94.3%), in a domestic-scale supported living facility (55.2%) and receiving a disability support pension (97.4%) as their main source of income.

Data source

Disability Services National Minimum Data Set collection

Data pertaining to the National Disability Agreement (NDA) are collected through the Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (Disability Services NMDS). This NMDS, managed by the AIHW, facilitates the annual collation of nationally comparable data about disability services. Services within the scope of the collection are those for which funding has been provided during the specified period by a government organisation operating under the NDA. An agency may receive funding from multiple sources. Where an agency is unable to differentiate service users according to funding source they are asked to provide details of all service users for each service type.

With the exceptions noted below, agencies are asked to provide information about:

- each of the service types they provide (that is, service type outlets they operate)
- all service users who received support over a specified reporting period
- the Disability Services NMDS service type(s) the service users received.

However, certain service type outlets—such as those providing advocacy or information and referral services—are not requested to provide any service user details, and other service type outlets (such as recreation and holiday programs) are only asked to provide minimal service user details.

The collection includes those disability support service providers that provide services under the NDA, including some psychiatric-specific disability service providers, as well as other disability service providers that may be accessed by people with psychiatric disability. It should be noted that the NDA does not apply to the provision of services with a specialist clinical focus.

Data for the 2011–12 collection period were released in *Disability support services 2011–12* (AIHW 2013a). The scope of services varied in terms of programs provided across jurisdictions. For example, in Victoria and Queensland, specialist psychiatric disability services were provided under the NDA. However, in all other jurisdictions specific mental health services were funded and provided under health, rather than disability, portfolios. In addition, Victoria has changed the way service users with a psychiatric disability were reported between *Mental health services in Australia* publications. Therefore, comparisons between publications should be approached with caution.

Response rates

For the 2011–12 collection, there was an overall response rate of 96.9% for service outlets, although rates were variable across jurisdictions (see table below). The response rates estimate the number of service outlets providing client data. Information on which service type outlets provided information for each collection period is not available as part of the Disability Services NMDS. Therefore, there is the possibility that, between collection periods, different outlets, with different proportions of psychiatric disability users, are providing service user information to the Disability Services NMDS. In addition, the number of non-responses for the item 'Primary disability group' also varies considerably between jurisdictions. The service outlet response rates and the non-response rates for states and territories for 2005–06 to 2011–12 are shown in the table below. The user response rate within these outlets cannot be estimated.

DIS.1 Disability Services NMDS response rates, by states and territories, 2005–06 to 2011–12 (per cent)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust Gov	Total
Service outlet response rates										
2005–06	89.0	90.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	94.0
2006–07	89.0	90.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	94.0
2007–08	90.0	93.0	100.0	99.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	99.0	100.0	95.0
2008–09	92.0	93.0	99.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.0
2009–10	93.0	96.0	99.0	100.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	96.0	100.0	97.0
2010–11*	94.0	95.0	100.0	98.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.0	100.0	97.0
2011–12	95.7	95.0	99.9	99.2	99.9	100.0	100.0	96.0	100.0	96.9
'Not stated' and 'not known' response rates for Primary disability group^(a)										
2005–06	11.1	41.8	0.8	3.5	1.8	0.6	21.0	27.6	13.9	19.7
2006–07	9.1	23.8	0.9	1.0	1.4	4.5	9.5	26.6	0.7	9.2
2007–08	8.0	23.5	1.4	1.6	3.6	0.3	3.3	16.2	0.0	8.5
2008–09	10.6	16.2	2.6	1.0	0.7	0.0	4.2	11.9	0.1	6.6
2009–10	13.4	16.7	1.8	1.9	0.7	—	3.6	10.8	—	6.8
2010–11	9.1	15.6	1.7	1.6	0.4	—	2.5	44.1	1.6	6.6
2011–12	6.5	13.8	1.7	3.1	0.7	0.1	2.1	35.5	3.5	6.5

* Indicates where previously published data has been revised.

(a) Figures are the percentage of total responses for primary disability group.

Notes

1. Response rates are based on figures provided by jurisdictions.
2. The total response rate is based on the number of outlets in the data set divided by the number of total outlets that would have been in the data set if all jurisdictions had a 100% response rate.
3. The methodology to obtain service user counts has varied over time, so comparisons between reporting years should be approached with caution.

Sources: Disability support services (AIHW 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013b).

The statistical linkage key

Individuals may receive disability support services from more than one service type or service group, or from multiple jurisdictions. A statistical linkage key enables unique service user counts to be estimated from the data collected by service type outlets and agencies. To link records within the Disability Services NMDS, the statistical linkage key components of each record for a service received are compared electronically with the statistical linkage key components of all other records. Records that have matching statistical linkage keys are assumed to belong to the same individual service user and are linked. There is a small probability that some of the linked records do not actually belong to the same individual, and, conversely, that some records that did not link do belong to the same individual. More technical information on the use, calculation and validity of the statistical linkage key can be found in the publication, *Disability Support Services: Appendix 2011–12* (2013b).

Indigenous status

For 2011–12, the proportion of service users identifying as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was higher than the proportion in the general population (5.7% versus 2.8%). See *Disability Support Services: report on services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2011–12* (2013b) for further information.

References

- AIHW 2007. Disability support services 2005–06: national data on services provided under the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 51. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2008. Disability support services 2006–07: national data on services provided under the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 52. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2009. Disability support services 2007–08: national data on services provided under the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 56. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011a. Disability support services 2009–10: report on services provided under the National Disability Agreement. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 59. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011b. Disability support services 2008–09: national data on services provided under the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 58. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2012. Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2010–11. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 60. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013a. Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2011–12. AIHW bulletin 118. Cat. no. AUS 173. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013b. Disability support services: appendix 2011–12. Disability series. Cat. no. AUS 173. Canberra: AIHW.

Key concepts

Support services for people with psychiatric disability

Key Concept	Description
Accommodation support	Accommodation support services provide the support needed to enable a person with a disability to remain in their existing accommodation or to move to more suitable or appropriate accommodation. It includes personal care by an attendant, in-home accommodation support, alternative placement (such as shared-care arrangements and host family placements) and other short-term one-off support such as crisis accommodation.
Advocacy, information and alternative forms of communication and other support	Advocacy, information and alternative forms of communication and other support services include advocacy, information, referral, mutual support, self-help groups and alternative formats of communication. (Note that no service user counts are collected for these services and are therefore not presented in the text, or associated data, for this section.)
Australian Government-funded services	Australian Government-funded services include the National Disability Agreement (NDA) funded Employment services funded directly from the Australian Government.
Community access	Community access services are designed to provide opportunities for people with a disability to gain and use their abilities to enjoy their full potential for social independence. They include learning and life skills development, and recreation and holiday programs.
Community support	Community support services provide assistance with non-institutionalised living arrangements, such as specialised therapeutic care services, early childhood intervention, behaviour and/or specialist intervention, regional resource and support teams, counselling and case management.
Employment services	Employment services include open employment services that provide assistance in obtaining and/or retaining paid employment in the open labour market and supported employment services that provide employment opportunities and assistance to work in specialised and supported environments.
Group homes	Group homes provide combined accommodation and community-based residential support to people in a residential setting and are generally staffed 24 hours a day. Usually, no more than 6 service users are located in any one home.
Hostels	Hostels provide residential support in a setting of usually less than 20 beds and may or may not provide 24-hour residential support. Unlike residential facilities/institutions, hostels do not provide segregated specialist services.
Large residential facilities/ institutions	Large residential facilities/institutions provide 24-hour residential support in a setting of more than 20 beds. In some cases a range of residential and vocational/day services, and/or respite services are provided on the one site.
National Disability Agreement (NDA)	Originally signed by Australian Government and state and territory governments in January 2009 and replacing the previous Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement, the National Disability Agreement articulates the roles of the

	<p>governments in delivering specialist disability services. The agreement's overarching objective is to provide more opportunities for people with disability and their carers to participate in economic and social life (COAG 2012).</p> <p>A revised NDA was endorsed by COAG members in 2012. In addition to changes that reflect the new policy directions for community care in the National Health Reform Agreement, the revised NDA includes five new reform priorities. The priority areas for reform are aimed at building the evidence base for disability policies and strategies; enhancing family and carer capacity; strategies for increasing choice, control and self-directed decision-making; building innovative and flexible support models for people with high and complex needs; and developing employment opportunities for people with disability (COAG 2012; FaHCSIA 2012).</p>
Non-residential services	Non-residential services are services that support people with a disability to live in a non-institutional setting through the provision of community support, community access, accommodation support in the community (including personal care by an attendant, in-home accommodation support, alternative family placement and other accommodation support), respite and/or employment services.
Other significant disability	Other significant disability refers to disability group(s) other than that indicated as being 'primary' that also clearly expresses the experience of disability by a person and/or causes difficulty for the person. A number of other significant disabilities may be identified for each service user.
Primary disability	Primary disability is the disability group that most clearly expresses the experience of disability by a person, and causes the most difficulty for the person in their daily life.
Psychiatric disability	Psychiatric disability within the Disability Services NMDS collection includes clinically recognisable symptoms and behaviour patterns frequently associated with distress that may impair functioning in normal social activity. Psychiatric disability may be associated with schizophrenias, affective disorders, anxiety disorders, addictive behaviours, personality disorders, stress, psychosis, depression and adjustment disorders but dementias, specific learning disorders (such as attention deficit disorder) and autism are excluded.
Residential services	Residential services are services that provide accommodation for people with a disability. They include accommodation in large (>20 places) and small (7–20 places) residential facilities/institutions; hostels; and group homes (<7 places).
Respite services	Respite services provide a short-term and time-limited break for families and other voluntary caregivers of people with disability and include services such as those provided in the individual's home, in centres, in respite homes and with host families. Although respite is provided to both the person with disability and their caregiver, in this report the person with disability is regarded as the client, and numbers presented in the tables/figures reflect this definition.
Service type and service group	Service type and service group refer to the classification of services according to the support activity which the service provider is providing under the NDA. Service types are rolled into service groups for data relating to non-residential services.

Small residential facilities/ institutions	Small residential facilities/institutions provide 24-hour residential support in a setting of 7 to 20 beds. In some cases a range of residential and vocational/day services, and/or respite services are provided on the one site.
State or territory administered services	State or territory administered services include those services providing any residential service and those providing the non-residential service groups of accommodation support, community support, community access and respite. Joint funding of these agencies may occur between the state/territory and the Australian Government as specified by the NDA.

References

COAG 2012. National Disability Agreement. Canberra: COAG. Viewed 9 October 2012, <<http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/disability/national-agreement.pdf> >.

FaHCSIA 2012. FaHCSIA (Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) National Disability Agreement. Revised National Disability Agreement. Viewed February 2013, <<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/program-services/government-international/national-disability-agreement>>