



Queensland Independent
Disability Advocacy Network

2024 – 25 Annual Report



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Our Purpose

The purpose of the Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) is to protect and promote independent advocacy and uphold the rights, needs and wellbeing of people with disability, ensuring a socially just, accessible, and inclusive community.

Our Aims

Systems Advocacy: coordinated action to address systemic issues experienced by people with disability.

Member Support: a collaborative space for exchange of information, resources and issues affecting disability advocacy originations.

Sector Advocacy: to promote the significance of independent advocacy at local, state, and national levels.

Our Guiding Principles

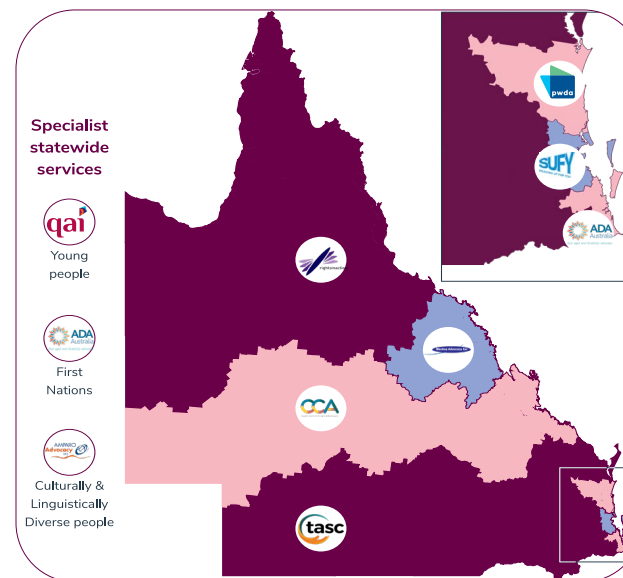
QIDAN's principles are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). QIDAN acknowledges and commits to address

additional barriers experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTQIA+ people with disability, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes ensuring culturally safe and responsive practices.

QIDAN's principles are:

1. To be informed by people with disability and human rights,
2. To be independent,
3. To be respectful of the land we work on and its traditional owners,
4. To empower people with disability,
5. To always act with integrity and accountability,
6. To lead and strengthen through collaboration and collective action and be committed to intersectional responses.

Our Members



- Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI)
- Aged & Disability Advocacy Australia (ADAA)
- Yarn2Action (ADAA)
- Capricorn Citizen Advocacy (CCA)
- Mackay Advocacy Inc. (MAI)
- People With Disability Australia (PWDA)
- Rights In Action (RIA)
- Speaking Up For You (SUFY)
- TASC

The QAI team that supports QIDAN

CEO of Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion

Matilda is the CEO of QAI. As the representative of QIDAN, Matilda sits on the Queensland Disability Advisory Council (QDAC) and the Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee (DRISC).



Chair of the Queensland Disability Advocacy Network

Caitlin is the chair of the network. Her role involves tracking emerging issues, supporting the sector to develop our capacity and collective voice, and to raise awareness and acknowledgement of the network and the importance of advocacy.



Systems Advocacy

Sara and Jesse are systems advocates for QIDAN. As systems advocates, they hear from individual advocates around the state about systemic issues impacting their communities. The role of a systems advocate involves data analysis,



consultation with advocates, responding to systemic issues impacting Queenslanders with disability, responding to government enquiries and disability reform, and representing the views of QIDAN.

Capacity Building

Lenine is the capacity building advocate for QIDAN. Lenine works alongside the team to identify opportunities for skill and organisational development across the network. Lenine facilitates opportunities for the advocates to connect and share, including the Community of Practice (CoP) and Queensland Disability Advocates Conference.

Community Engagement

Emma is the Community Engagement Officer for Pathways. Emma attends community events, provides information sessions about advocacy and meets with community members, organisations and members of parliament to build better relationships and referral pathways for people with disability accessing services.

Pathways Information & Referral Officers

Lisa and Abbey are information and referral officers for Pathways. In this role they respond to enquiries made to the

Pathways service. Pathways is an information and referral hotline to assist Queenslanders with disability, their families and supports to connect with advocacy and other services that suit their needs and location.

LGBTQIASB+ Pilot Project Officers

Mitch and Annabelle, disabilities officers from the [Queensland Council for LGBTI Health](#) (QC) coordinated the activities of the project, including those with the advocacy sector and within the LGBTQIASB+ people with disability community.

A Year of Impact and Progress for QIDAN

The 2024–25 year brought enormous change — from the outcomes of both state and federal elections to major shifts in the NDIS, increasing housing stress across Queensland, climate-related events, and escalating everyday pressures affecting people's lives. Faced with these challenges, QIDAN's network of disability advocacy organisations — including boards, managers and advocates — worked tirelessly across the state to support an incredibly diverse group of Queenslanders with disability.

This year, QIDAN organisations supported 1746 people with disability through individual advocacy.

This year's collective achievements reflect our shared commitment to protecting and advancing the rights of people with disability.

1. Sustained Funding Success for Advocacy

For the second consecutive year, QIDAN secured \$12 million in state government funding for all nine disability advocacy organisations. This success was made possible by the systems advocacy team's strong analysis of annual data and a compelling budget submission. The uplift was confirmed in the 2024–25 financial year, and a further commitment has been made for 2025–26. This was the first significant uplift in funding since the start of the program in 2022.

This investment ensures we can continue supporting Queenslanders with disability who we are currently funded to advocate for — while we work toward securing funding to expand our capacity to reach more people. We will continue working with government and across our network to highlight the value of advocacy and increase investment in this essential work.

2. Strengthened QIDAN Backbone Team

Two key new roles were established to support growth:

- Emma Moore, Community Engagement Officer
- Lenine Bourke, Capacity Building Advocate

These roles help amplify our presence, support member organisations, and strengthen cross-sector relationships.

3. New Advocacy Roles Within Member Organisations

Through uplift funding, new roles were created within QIDAN member organisations, increasing capacity to deliver vital individual and systemic advocacy.

4. Two State-wide Pilot Projects

As part of the uplift funding, two innovative pilot projects were launched:

- Regional and Remote Pilot — \$100,000 each was allocated to Rights in Action (RIA), TASC, and Capricorn

Citizen Advocacy (CCA) to explore advocacy delivery models outside metropolitan centres.

- LGBTQIASB+ Pilot — Coordinated by Queensland Council for LGBT Health, Annabelle Oxley and Mitch Medcalf led targeted advocacy development with \$100,000 in project funding.

Detailed project reports are available on the QAI website:

<https://qai.org.au/research-reports/>



5. 2025 Queensland Disability Advocacy Conference

QIDAN proudly hosted the Queensland Disability Advocacy Conference in May 2025 — a three-day event featuring keynote speakers, panel discussions, workshops, and sector networking. More than 120 participants attended from across the state. Read the detailed conference report later in this document.

6. State-wide Advocacy Data Alignment

Significant work was undertaken to improve consistency and accuracy across advocacy reporting. QIDAN developed a more robust and relevant data template to better reflect the people supported and the advocacy outcomes achieved. The QIDAN team continue to provide data-related education and guidance and to work alongside each advocacy organisation to build capacity on data collection and value.

7. Extended Support During Cyclone Alfred

QIDAN organisations played a key role in ensuring continuity of support and advocacy during Cyclone Alfred, especially in regions facing service disruption.

8. Contribution to QDAC and DRISC

QIDAN actively contributed to Queensland Disability Advisory Council (QDAC) and Disability Reform Implementation Steering Committee (DRISC) initiatives, ensuring that lived experience and advocacy voices were present in systems change processes.

9. Membership Update

QIDAN's membership has evolved over the past year. We acknowledge the contributions of ATSIDNQ, which is no longer part of the network. We also welcome ADA's Yarn2Action, a new First Nations disability advocacy program committed to culturally strong and community-led work.

Systems Advocacy

Our QIDAN systems team based at QAI, in collaboration with our members, continued to advocate for inclusive services, systems, legislation and policies that create lasting change and support for people with disability. Through our systems



advocacy, we continued to build strong relationships with

government, key sector allies, and advocacy networks to elevate shared concerns and influence reforms.

Our systems advocacy involves:

- ✓ Engaging with advocates across the network
- ✓ Analysing data
- ✓ Writing submissions and reports
- ✓ Meeting with key stakeholders and decision makers
- ✓ Working on campaigns

In the 2024–25 financial year, QIDAN played a central role in shaping reforms and policy through written submission and advisory input across multiple areas. Importantly, in July 2024, ten months after the publication of the Disability Royal Commission's final report, the Federal and State Governments issued their response to the Disability Royal Commission's 222 recommendations. We were pleased to see many of the recommendations being accepted or accepted in principle. However, the government responses lacked practical actions and next steps, which we continued

to advocate for. QIDAN remains committed to ensuring that the work is done and the Disability Royal Commission's recommendations are implemented.

On a separate note, we were disappointed that a response to the NDIS Independent Review has not been officially made by the Queensland or the Federal Government. QIDAN has engaged in disability reforms opportunities which include the progress of some of the NDIS Independent Review recommendations, despite no official response being given to the disability community. We continue to watch this space closely and to advocate for the rights of people with disability who are affected and impacted by the implementation of the NDIS Independent Review's recommendations.

In addition to these two big reforms, in the 2024-25 financial year we also witnessed state and federal elections, resulting in changes of priorities and direction. The challenges we faced include the government's response to not implement any of the recommendations made in the Human Rights Act

Independent Review Report. We also had to respond quickly when the Queensland Government announced a pause on reforms to modernise Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act, which were due to commence on 1 July 2025. In collaboration with allies and key stakeholders, QIDAN members have called on the Queensland Government to proceed with the implementation of reforms and review recommendations. We continue to monitor and advocate for the advancement of equal protection for all Queenslanders.



QIDAN representatives engaged in strategic meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) across the political spectrum, including Ministers and Shadow Ministers, to raise urgent issues around housing, foundational supports, the NDIS review, and the implementation of the Disability Royal Commission recommendations. Letters and briefings were prepared for Minister Camm and other newly appointed Ministers to advocate for sustained investment in disability advocacy and highlight sector priorities.

This year, QIDAN retained its role on the Queensland Disability Advisory Council (QDAC) and was appointed to the Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee (DRISC), enhancing our voice in government-led reform processes.

QIDAN have been keeping up with this changing environment, which brings more opportunities to promote the rights of people with disability.

All our work can be viewed on our website:

<https://qidan.org.au/systems-advocacy/>.



Member Support

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoPs) remain a vital component of QIDAN. A community of practice is a group of people who share a common interest or profession and come together regularly to share knowledge, experiences, and strategies. Through collaboration and peer learning, members strengthen their skills, build networks, and develop solutions to common challenges in their field or area of practice. Professionally they act as a site of development for emerging, mid-career or senior disability advocates across Queensland. These forums bring together disability advocates for online discussions with other advocates and key sector partners. Each CoP is co-developed by QIDAN members in collaboration with the QIDAN team based at QAI and includes the entire array of staff from intake and admin staff to advocates, managers and even some Board members.

Over the past 12 months, we've seen a significant increase in engagement across all CoPs, including participation from advocates who had never previously joined a session.

Key CoP sessions held this year included:

- Co-design approaches for engaging with hard-to-reach communities/people.
- Exploring the NDIS Navigator model and its implications for advocacy.
- Consultation with QIDAN members to shape 2025 capacity-building priorities.
- Expert sessions led by QAI's human rights legal advocates, including updates on mental health orders; we also used a case study from one of the advocacy organisations.
- The development of a First Nations Disability Advocates CoP which held two online meetings and had a strong

presence at this year's QLD Disability Advocacy Conference.

- Sector consultations on NDIS regulatory reform and regular updates.
- The LGBTIQ+ Brotherboy and Sistergirl consultation, informing our pilot project and online training delivered by QC.
- CoPs held with the NDIA, the Office of the Public Guardian, and other key stakeholders.
- Regular forums for QIDAN member managers to connect, collaborate, and share strategies.

We also launched the Lead Advocates Project, which supported disability advocates with specialist knowledge in areas such as domestic and family violence, LGBTIQSB+ communities, and First Nations issues to lead conversations, share insights, and contribute to systems advocacy efforts.

These spaces continue to be essential in strengthening practice, building shared knowledge, and deepening collaboration across Queensland's disability advocacy landscape.



QLD Disability Advocates Conference 2025

The second Queensland Disability Advocacy Conference was held in May 2025, bringing together over 120 participants from across Queensland for three days of learning, collaboration, and connection. Hosted at the Victoria Park Conference Centre's Garden Marquee, the event was made possible through uplift funding from the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and a grant from the Community Gambling Benefit Fund.

“Great event with inspiring, informative speakers.”

Organised by the QIDAN team at QAI and co-developed with QIDAN member organisations, the conference was shaped by extensive consultation. This included a sector-wide survey in late 2024, feedback gathered through QIDAN's communities of practice, and direct engagement via emails and discussions

with member advocates. Through our ongoing systems advocacy and regional face-to-face engagement, we ensured the program responded to the most pressing issues facing disability advocates today. As one participant reflected:

“These conferences are going from strength to strength — a very professional event, very well thought through.”



Key moments included:

- The conference opened with a Welcome to Country by Elder Auntie Catherine Fisher, followed by an insightful panel of First Nations disability advocates from around Queensland.
- Collaborative arts workshop run by artist Duane Doyle.
- Keynote sessions from Khadija Gbla, Akii Ngo and Nas Campanella on human rights and intersectionality.
- Panel discussions centering on children and young people, domestic and family violence, housing and community supports.
- Lunchtime guests from a range of government and non-government organisations.
- Networking opportunities with advocates from around the state.
- A collaborative workshop with Elly Desmarchelier and the Hon Leeanne Enoch, Shadow Minister for Seniors and Disability Services about the ways disability advocates across Queensland can collaborate for impact, explore actions that transform the systems and ensure human rights for all.
- The launch of sector resources including a wellbeing diary developed by Rights in Action, Guidelines for Advocates Supporting LGBTQIASB+ and People with Disabilities developed by QAI and QC, and a Guide to Child Safety for Advocates.

“I thought there was a lot of knowledge being shared from all the speakers which I will embrace in my advocacy practice.”

- The launch of the ‘Listen to Us’ postcard campaign featuring the powerful artwork of artists Ruby Herrenberg, Jazper Sediati and Duane Doyle. Over 130 postcards were written to State and Federal Members and Ministers to highlight the issues experienced by people with disability and their solutions.
- A moving performance from The Brotherhood of the Wordless, a collective of writers who use facilitated communication to share poetry, stories, and plays.

The 2025 Queensland Disability Advocacy Conference was a landmark event — amplifying diverse voices, strengthening statewide networks, and sharing critical knowledge to empower Queensland’s disability advocacy workforce.



“There is so much to learn and do and I am very keen to continue having these conversations and working with you all.”

Sector Advocacy

The sector was allocated a temporary uplift funding of \$5 million in addition to our baseline funding in 2024-25 Queensland Budget. This uplift funding was a huge achievement for QIDAN and has facilitated the hire of new advocacy staff, expansion of operations, and a greater level of outreach and community engagement. The additional funding is a result of QIDAN's annual Budget Submission to Treasury and is a direct response to the Disability Royal Commission's recommendations for better investment in independent advocacy. The sector received a similar uplift funding of \$5 million for 2025-26, and QIDAN will continue to push for additional funding in our next Budget Submission to Treasury.

During the year, the QIDAN team has been busy meeting MPs around Australia. We discussed issues impacting locals with disability, thereby garnering support for the sector in the

process. The QIDAN team look forward to raising more awareness on the advocacy sector in the new financial year.



Community Engagement



With uplift funding from the Department, we welcomed Emma Moore, our Community Engagement Advocate, leading efforts to build stronger connections between disability advocacy and community services across Queensland.

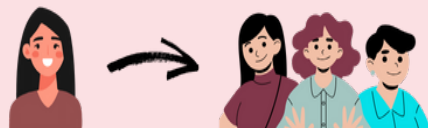
Over the year, Emma engaged with over 65 community organisations — including domestic and family violence, legal, youth, and neighbourhood services — raising awareness of disability advocacy and strengthening referral pathways. This work had a measurable impact, with over 9% of new enquiries to Pathways directly linked to community engagement activities.

Reaching regional and underrepresented communities

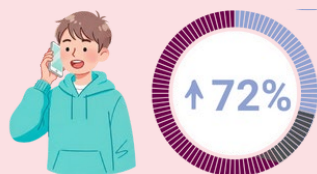
A key focus was connecting with people less likely to access advocacy — particularly those in regional, rural and remote (RRR) areas and young people with disability. Visits to Longreach, Bundaberg, South Burnett, and Townsville helped increase awareness and strengthen collaboration with local councils, MPs, and frontline services.

The Results:

Referrals from the South
Burnett Region more than
tripled,



and referrals from the
Bundaberg Region shot
up by 72%.



Building partnerships across sectors

We partnered with organisations across Queensland to make advocacy more visible where people already seek support — from DFSV services and carer networks to LGBTIQSB+ health, education, and neighbourhood centres. Emma delivered five presentations to more than 160 people, building understanding of independent disability advocacy and how to connect people to Pathways.

Listening to community voices

Through engagement across RRR Queensland, we consistently heard about:

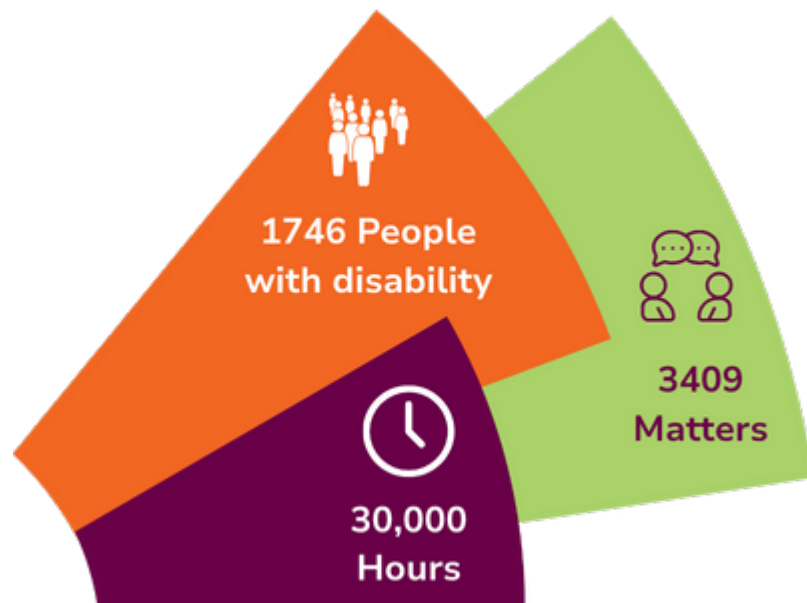
- Service shortages that make applying for the NDIS feel pointless for some people
- Transport barriers that limit access and participation.

These insights are now informing our systemic advocacy and collaboration with government and sector partners.

Creating lasting connections

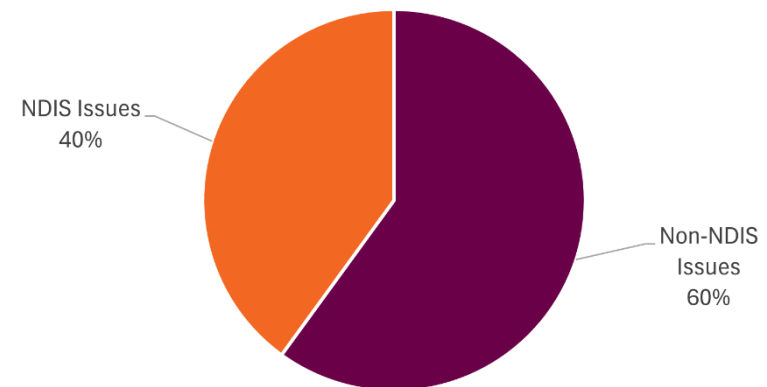
One standout example was our connection with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission's Indigenous & Remote Operations team. After meeting at Cherbourg, they were invited to present at QIDAN's quarterly forum and connected with advocates in the Northern Territory — creating lasting national collaboration from one local conversation.

Individual Advocacy



Over the financial year, advocates across the state collectively spent almost **30,000 hours** advocating for **1746** Queenslanders with disability. Our incredible network helped them to have their voices heard and to make their own decisions, as well as assist people to navigate systems and address barriers.

60% of the advocacy delivered in the year addressed non-NDIS issues, including housing and tenancy issues, support navigating commonwealth entitlements and other financial issues, and assistance with community access and participation. The other 40% of advocacy matters were NDIS-related.



Advocates have observed how growing social issues, like the housing and cost-of-living crises, have impacted Queenslanders with disability. Often, these social issues are just one part of a person's story, and things like housing instability, domestic and family violence, and financial strain can make other problems a lot harder to navigate.

Case Study: Support for a young person

*George is a 7-year-old child from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background, diagnosed with ASD Level 3, ADHD, and significant speech difficulties. His mother, *Susan, contacted QAI after George left school through an open gate and was later found by police at a neighbour's home. The school had not implemented an Individual Behaviour Support Plan (IBSP) or other reasonable adjustments. Susan felt the school had failed to ensure George's safety and was considering lodging a formal complaint.



Advocacy

The Young People's Advocate helped her understand the formal complaint process, George's right to reasonable adjustments, and supports available through the Department. Instead of immediately escalating the issue, they proposed a collaborative approach: to engage the school's guidance officer, Principal Advisors, and the Autism Hub to put supports in place. Susan agreed.

The advocate helped the family request an IBSP and necessary adjustments. As a result, the school:

- Installed new locks to secure exits
- Engaged an Advisory Visiting Teacher
- Agreed to provide 15 hours per week of 1:1 teacher aide support
- Developed a time-limited part-time education plan to support George's safe reintegration to school.

When Susan later expressed frustration that George missed a school event due to short notice, the advocate facilitated improved communication protocols. The advocate also coached Susan in developing “talking points” for future discussions with the school.

Finally, when Susan raised concerns that George's frequent movement breaks were disrupting his learning, the advocate helped her understand the role of these breaks in reducing absconding and supporting regulation. Together, they

explored ways to balance George's emotional needs and academic progress.

Outcome

With sustained advocacy support, Susan successfully lodged her concerns with the school without having to file a complaint. George received appropriate safety and support measures, and Susan felt empowered to continue advocating effectively.

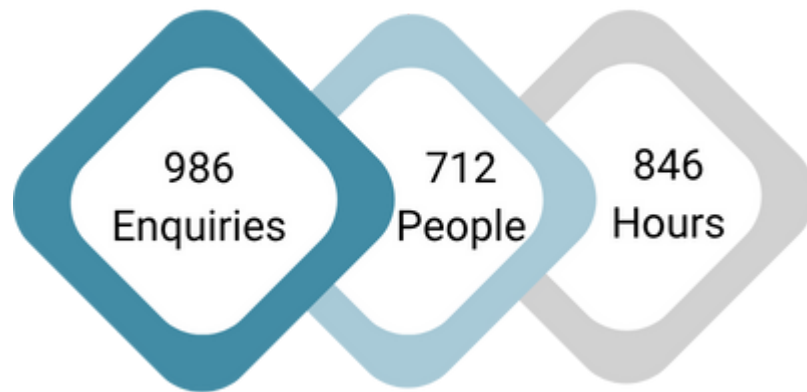
Impact

This case demonstrates how independent, collaborative advocacy can de-escalate conflict, secure urgent reasonable adjustments, and build the capacity of families to self-advocate — reducing strain on schools and promoting student safety and inclusion.

*Names have been changed for the purpose of de-identification.

Pathways

Pathways provide information and referral support to people with disability, their families and supporters.

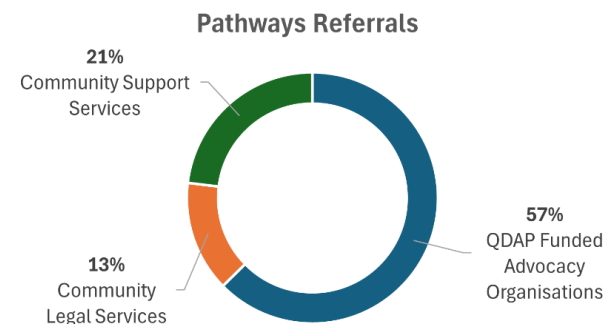
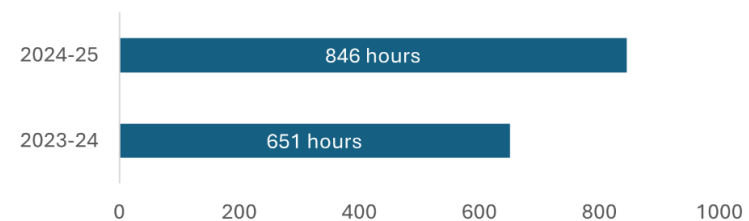


During the financial year, 846 hours were recorded on Pathways' enquiries. This is significantly higher than the previous year, which recorded a total of 651 hours.

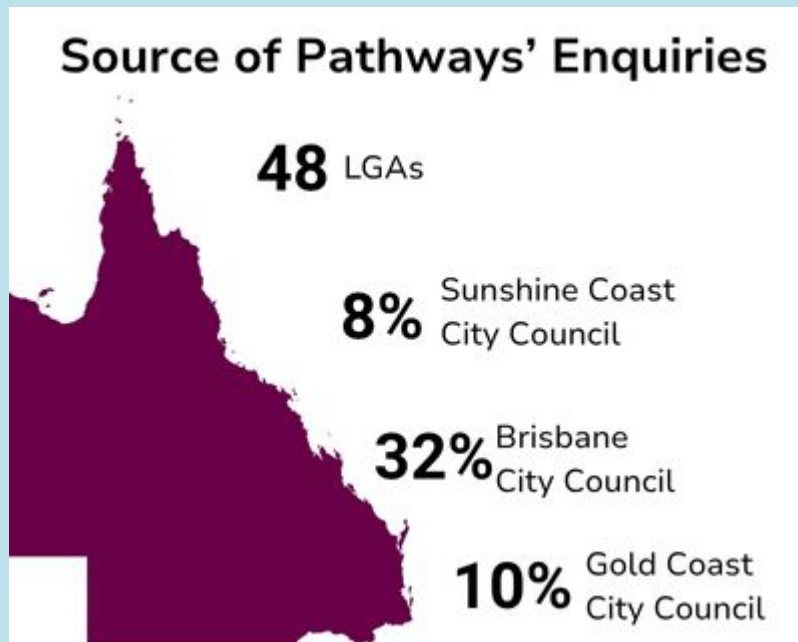
However, the number of advocacy services delivered remained similar, indicating that enquiries in 2024-25 were more complex and took longer to resolve.

Pathways operate from a supported decision-making framework and make referrals based on the caller, their circumstances, preferences and expressed consent. Pathways made referrals to a range of organisations and programs, often making multiple referrals for individuals.

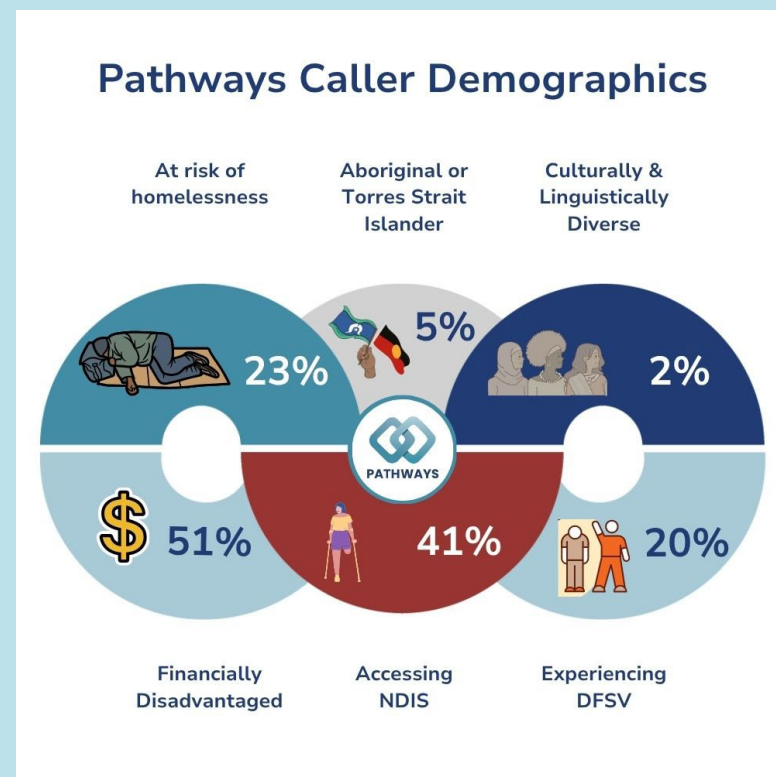
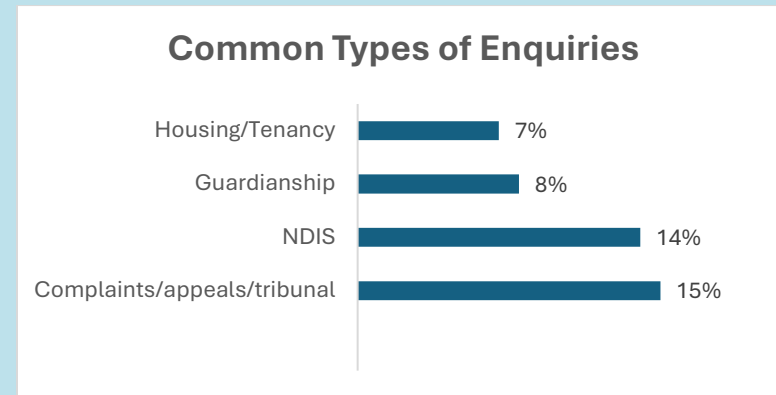
Number of hours to resolve enquiries



Pathways received enquiries from all over Queensland along with a few interstate enquiries. The largest number of enquiries came from the Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast.



Pathways' callers often experience several intersecting issues, and this year, 23.5% were NDIS related issues along with other non-NDIS matters like housing, guardianship and complaints.



The Public Advocate's recent report on Supporting Parents with Cognitive Disability in Queensland highlights the need for advocacy for these people. This year, Pathways received 19 enquiries about child safety matters. Among the adults supported, a quarter had experienced Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV), and only 25% were connected to the NDIS, highlighting potential gaps in support. These complex matters often required more time and care, with double the average time spent with each one.

Compared to the previous financial year, Pathways observed a rise in the number of people who disclosed experiencing financial disadvantage and risk of homelessness, likely due to the cost-of-living crisis. Additionally, we have seen a surge in the number of enquiries by First Nations people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities as a result of our targeted community engagement.

“One in 5 were at risk of DFSV”

During the 2024-25 financial year, Pathways continued to see high volumes (20.7%) of people with disability experiencing or at risk of DFSV. Some people cited poor experiences with DFSV supports due to their inaccessibility and lack of disability awareness. For example, several people who contact DFSV support organisations were hung up on due to their rapid and disconnected speech on account of their disability. Feedback indicates that Pathways service users appreciated the time taken by Information and Referral Officers to listen to them when everyone else had dismissed them.

In the same period, NDIS related problem types were highest with many having issues accessing the Scheme or getting appropriate supports funded in their NDIS plan. Pathways saw an alarming trend in the south-east corner of poor interaction with Local Area Coordinators (LACs) (as demonstrated in Colin's case study below). As a result, many people with disability increasingly relied on disability

advocacy to provide the services that LACs are funded to provide. This placed pressure on local disability advocacy organisations who provide wider scope of advocacy to differing issues such as housing, DFSV, and much more.

Case Study: Colin's challenges navigating the NDIS

*Colin is a 64-year-old man living with acquired brain injury and physical disability in Brisbane. Colin lives alone and only receives 5 hours of QCSS support work a week. Pathways received a referral by a QCSS support coordinator after Colin was found lying helpless on the floor, unable to get up after numerous hours. His support coordinator mentioned that QCSS support was no longer adequate for Colin's disability, and that he was going to try to get him onto NDIS. Colin's QCSS support coordinator referred him to Pathways as there were concerns that his local area coordinator wasn't polite, was providing 'decision making advice', and provided

incorrect information. Since this is beyond the scope of QCSS, he sought advocacy advice moving forward.

When Pathways connected with Colin, he seemed very annoyed at his LAC. He said the person never showed up to arranged appointments, was impatient and hung up on him on a couple of occasions.



“I wouldn’t have received NDIS without the efforts of Pathways and the in-person support by SUFY over the months”

There was much confusion from the information provided by the LAC, about wait times and what the NDIS does.

Pathways’ initial engagement with Colin focused on providing the right information in line with the NDIS website and communicating it to him in an accessible way. Pathways also made a warm referral back to the local area coordinator partner to flag concerns on the behaviour of the LAC assisting him. Despite repeated follow ups, Pathways received no response. Pathways then attempted a referral to Speaking Up for You (SUFY). As he was at the access stage, SUFY initially did not accept the referral. However, Pathways continued to follow up with SUFY as Colin’s situation only escalated with his limited mobility, and the LAC were no

longer answering his calls. In an attempt to resolve the situation, Colin even made several complaints to Bill Shorten’s office. Two months later Colin finally gained NDIS access, and SUFY took him on to assist in the plan drafting stage. The last time Pathways heard from Colin, he seemed excited to be receiving more company around the house with a planned increase in support worker hours. He felt very thankful to Pathways for their work on assisting him to understand the NDIS system, and how to advocate for himself.

* Name has been changed for the purpose of de-identification.

Case Study: Charlie’s debt relief

*Charlie is a single parent with acquired brain injury and contacted Pathways for help with a debt. They had tried everything to fix their issue but felt stuck. Charlie was worried they might lose their licence and would not be able

to bring value to their community. Pathways talked about the differences between disability advocacy and legal services and referred Charlie to Caxton Legal Centre.

When Pathways followed up a few weeks later, Charlie said Caxton provided great advice and helped them get on a payment plan. This gave Charlie a sense of direction while



reducing stress. Charlie said Pathways' service was "quick and clear". They felt good knowing they can contact Pathways again, if needed.

* Name has been changed for the purpose of de-identification.

Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred

In times of natural disaster, Pathways has the capacity to activate extended hours and expand its scope to meet increased demand with greater flexibility. With the anticipation of Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, the Department requested Pathways to increase operating hours from Wednesday 5 March to Friday 14 March. During this 10-day period, the Pathways service operated from 9:00am to 9:00pm, seven days a week.

We helped Queenslanders with disability to plan, communicate, find and contact supports they needed to stay safe. People contacting Pathways experienced a range of

issues relating to the impacts of Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred including:

- Continuity of care during power outages
- In-home support disruptions
- Complex support systems
- Domestic and family violence
- Lack of disability-specific information
- NDIS barriers
- Lack of coordinated practical support
- Increased stress and anxiety
- Insufficient emergency preparedness.

During this time Pathways received a lot of complex enquiries, with at least 1 in 3 people experiencing financial hardship and risk of homelessness. Enquiries were longer, averaging 1.2 hours, with the longest single enquiry lasting 7 hours. Most people were referred to government agencies for further assistance due to the kind of escalation required and a

lack of non-government services that were known, appropriate and available.

Pathways observed that natural disasters pose significant and disproportionate risks to people with disability. We prepared a report outlining reflections and recommendations for governments at local, state and federal levels to improve disaster planning for Queenslanders with disability. We urged governments to implement coordinated preparedness and responsive systems that will help ensure people with disability have access to inclusive supports before, during and after disaster events.

Pathways' recommendations highlight the need for:

- Proactive communication
- Access to backup power solutions
- Improved flood prevention assistance
- Safe and accessible evacuation options.

Pathways continue to build on this work and recently presented at the National Preparedness for Higher Risk Weather Season Summit held in September 2025.

Case Study: Emergency Support Access Barriers

During cyclone preparations, Pathways received a call from an individual in Brisbane who was unable to leave their home due to their disability. The caller was distressed, as they were unable to access essential items such as sandbags or food and their regular support provider was unavailable due to the extreme weather. The situation was further complicated by the caller's experience of domestic violence. The perpetrator, who resided in the same area and knew the caller's address, was also expected to evacuate to the same local evacuation centre — posing a significant safety risk.

Due to safety concerns, evacuation was not an option. In response, Pathways contacted the local Member of

Parliament to advocate for urgent support. Staff from the MP's office were able to deliver sandbags, assist with setting up a flood barrier, and provide a small supply of food, allowing the caller to shelter in place more safely.



“Thank you so much for all the info and work you have done for me. And spent the time to talk to me on the phone this afternoon. I can't thank you enough and will source each of the links and see where they take me. I really appreciate your help. Thank you.”

“Extremely helpful - would recommend this to everyone - fantastic service - very helpful - couldn't be more helpful - it was excellent.”

“Excellent communication. Patient and understanding”.

“Pathways made me feel like I still had dignity. They took what I said seriously, as someone who is autistic, a DV survivor, and is often not taken seriously by the health industry.

Having someone listen to me and believe in me meant so much. As someone that used to advocate for others, having Pathways treat me like a human gave me hope.

I wish there was Pathways on the end of every phone line I call.”

“Pathways were lovely and went above and beyond! She's one of the most amazing people I've worked with. She called back to follow up after speaking with her colleague - most of the time you don't hear from agencies again”.

**Feedback
Satisfaction**





Queensland Independent
Disability Advocacy Network

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