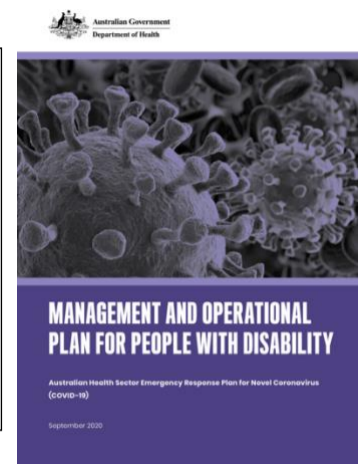


# Advisory Committee for the COVID-19 Response for People with Disability in Australia

MISSING BILLION

<b>Geography and scale:</b>	Australia; national	<b>Involved actors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with disability, family members and carers</li> <li>• Disability organisations</li> <li>• Disability service sector</li> <li>• Research sector</li> <li>• Health care sector (medical practitioners, allied health professionals and nursing)</li> <li>• Australian Government officials</li> <li>• State and territory government officials</li> </ul>
<b>Type of disability:</b>	All types of disability		



## Best practice description

The [Advisory Committee for the COVID-19 Response for People with Disability](#) (Advisory Committee) was established in April 2020 to inform the Australian Government's response to COVID-19 for people with disability. The Advisory Committee includes people with disability, parents and carers, Australian Government officials, state and territory government officials, experts from the health and research sectors, and major disability advocacy groups. Their role is to provide expert advice on the health care needs of people with disability, their families and the disability service sector, including access to COVID-19 screening, prevention and health care.

The Advisory Committee reports to Australia's Chief Medical Officer and regularly informs the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee and Communicable Diseases Network Australia. The Advisory Committee meets regularly (fortnightly in April 2022), and oversees implementation of the Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability under the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Each meeting begins with people with lived experience sharing any relevant updates to the committee for discussion or further action.

## Origin / impetus for best practice

- The Australian Government recognised that many people with disability were at greater risk of contracting SARS-CoV-2 and adverse outcomes of COVID-19.
- The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability called on Australian governments to take all necessary measures to ensure protection and safety of people with disability during the pandemic.
- In line with its commitment to ensure that people with disability have equitable access to health care, the Government took early action between March and April 2020 to develop a targeted COVID-19 response plan for people with disability, including the formation of the Advisory Committee.

## Impact / results of implementing best practice

- Developed one of the world's first dedicated plans focusing on people with disability.
- Prioritising people with disability in residential settings during vaccine roll-out.
- Among National Disability Insurance Scheme beneficiaries, 87.7% of those aged 16 and over are fully vaccinated as at 14 April 2022.
- Recognition of people with disability within [Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan 2022-2032](#) (launched 25 March 2022).

## Critical success factors for best practice

- Powerful disability community advocacy.
- Government officials commitment to considering lived experience of disability in decision-making processes.
- Strong inter-agency collaboration.
- Cooperation across Commonwealth and state and territory governments.

## Impact statement

The Australian Government, government agencies, and state and territory governments are working together to coordinate an evidence-based response to a respiratory illness outbreak caused by a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19).

## Lessons learned

- Importance of disability representatives sharing their lived experience during committee meetings has personalised the challenges and spurred action.
- The need to consider people with disability proactively in health emergency preparedness plans, rather than reactively in response.
- The Advisory Committee has helped enable cross-agency collaboration, which is critical for effective emergency responses.
- Dedicated team needed to do liaison and ensure collaboration within and across governments.
- Publish meeting communiques online to ensure governments are accountable.

<b>Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Advisory Committee for the COVID-19 response for People with Disability</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Advisory Committee meeting communiques</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian COVID-19 vaccination daily rollout update</a></li> </ul>
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<b>Further links &amp; information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The impact of and responses to the Omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic for people with disability</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CDNA national guidelines for the prevention and management of COVID-19 outbreaks in disability residential services - The Disability Supplement</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan 2022-2032</a>.</li> </ul>
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