

# Benefits of Universal Design in Housing

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# Housing or home?



# Benefits of Universal Design in Housing

Introduction

What is universal design?

UD in homes

Why is UD important

Evidence / Statistics

Conclusion

# What is universal design?

“Universal design provides a blueprint for maximum inclusion of all people”

(Story, Mace and Miller; 1997)

# What is universal design?

Classic definition:

“The design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation and specialized design.”

► Ron Mace

# What is universal design?

- ▶ Universal design is NOT a euphemism for designing for people with disabilities; it is focused on all people.
- ▶ “To the greatest extent possible” means that it is not a utopian ideal, rather a practical, as well as conceptual approach.
- ▶ The focus is on mainstream goods, services and environments; not on adapted or specialised.
- ▶ Design is the emphasis.

# What is universal design?

- ▶ It is a thinking process not a product
- ▶ It's aim is inclusion by design
- ▶ It goes beyond access compliance
- ▶ It's convenient and sustainable over time
- ▶ Suits most people and life situations

# UD in homes

## Level entry into home





# UD in homes

Corridors and hallways minimised to create more space



# UD in homes



# UD in homes



# UD in homes

Future needs can be pre-empted reinforced bathroom walls to take a grab bar





# UD in homes

Basic UD fixtures and fittings include:

- ▶ Lever handles on all doors and tapware
- ▶ D handles on cupboards and drawers



# UD in homes

Basic UD fixtures and fittings include:

- ▶ Power outlets within easy reach
- ▶ Light switches and door handles at elbow height
- ▶ Hand held shower heads and step free showers



# UD in homes



Circulation in front of WC

# UD in homes





# UD in homes

bending

reaching

gripping

moving

sitting

standing

seeing

hearing

Why is universal design  
important?

The background of the slide features abstract geometric shapes in various shades of blue (light blue, medium blue, and dark blue) and white. These shapes are layered and angular, creating a modern, architectural feel. The text is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the slide.

# Why is universal design in housing important?

International and  
domestic  
Government  
commitments

Tax reform

Intergenerational  
report

Productivity  
Commission  
reports

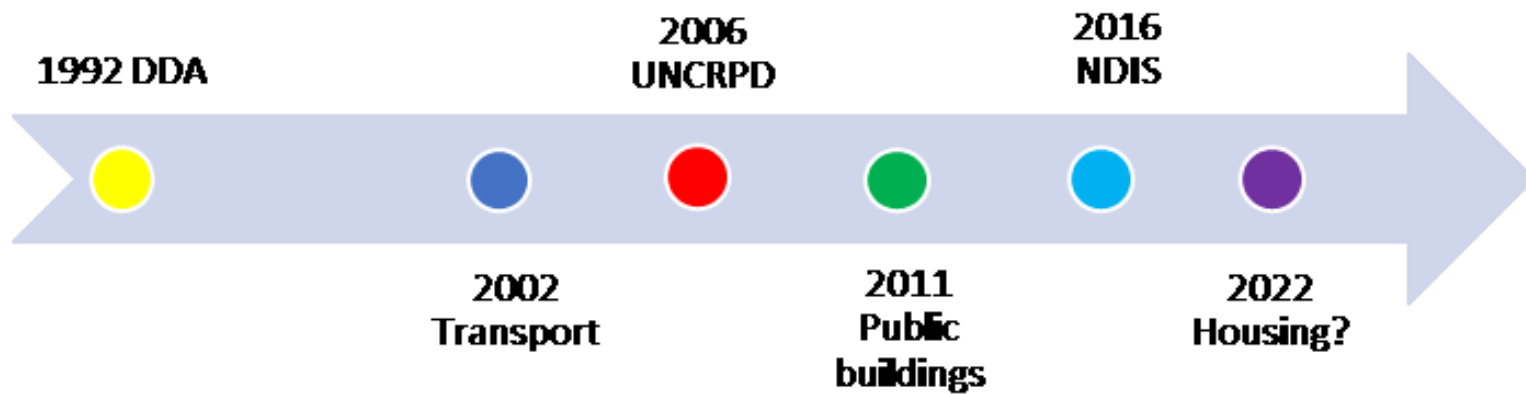
Affordable  
housing

Smart Cities

National Energy  
Productivity

etc

# Policy lag



# Population, Participation, Productivity

2015 - 2054

Population  
increase  
23.9m to  
39.7m

Number  
Australians  
aged >65 will  
more than  
double

Funding Resi  
aged care  
increase  
0.9% GDP to  
1.7% GDP

Source: Intergenerational Report 2015



POPULATION,



PARTICIPATION,



PRODUCTIVITY

The IGR states that:

“ongoing improvements in Australian **living standards** will remain primarily contingent upon **continually improving our productivity** and require us to take every opportunity to **increase participation rates.**”

# Affordable housing

HIA Policy, Housing Affordability states:

*“Every Australian should have access to a home. Access to shelter is a basic human need and is critical to allow all Australians to participate in society to their full economic and social potential.”*

# Affordable housing

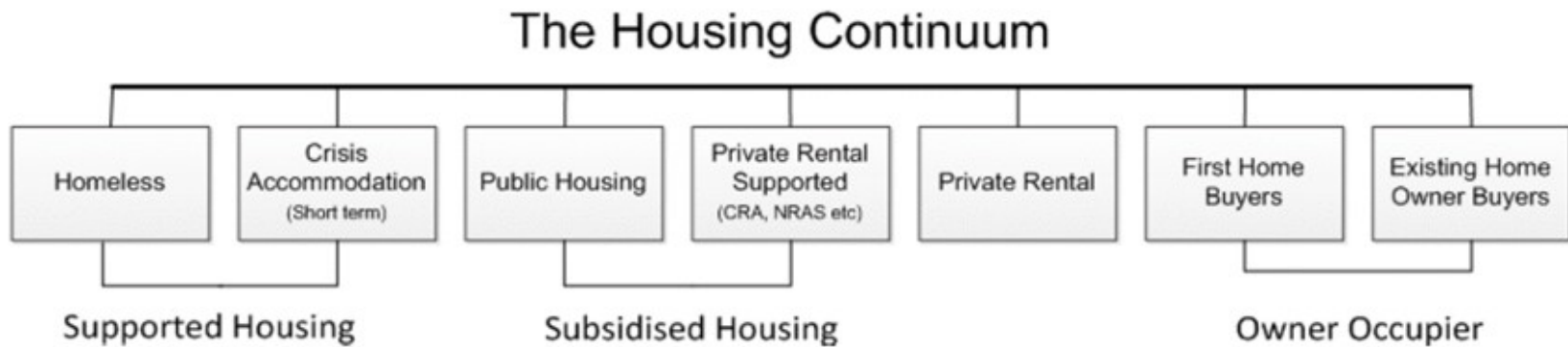
What constitutes 'affordable'?

- ▶ Household's financial situation
- ▶ Housing market
- ▶ Tenure

Households experience affordability differently.

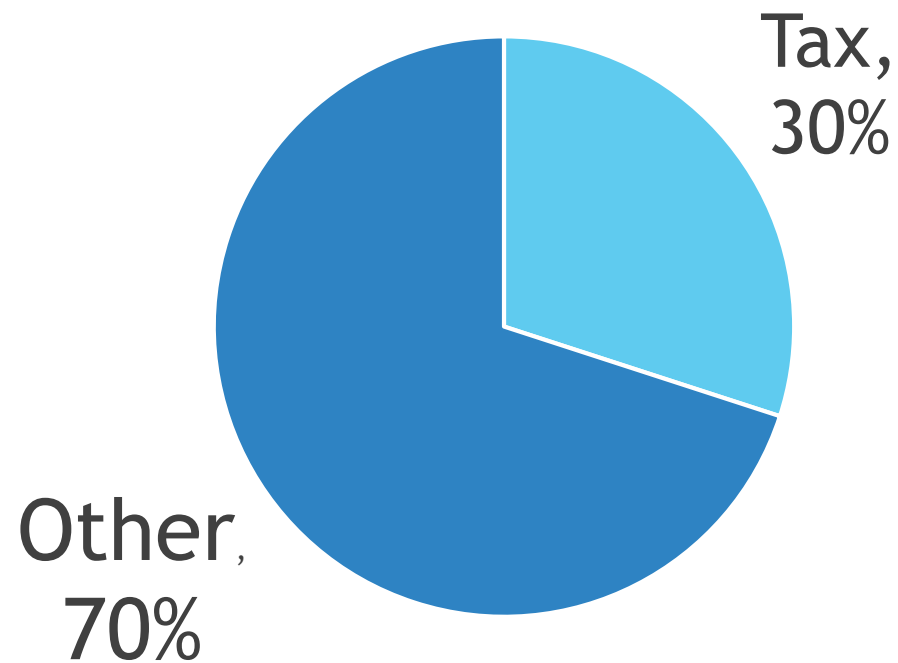


# Affordable housing



# Affordable housing

## Cost of new home



Source: HIA

# Sustainability

*“many of the homes we build today will still be in use in 50 or even 100 years’ time when climate change, population growth and resource depletion will have created a very different environment.*

*Your Home*



# Sustainability

*“... the flexibility or adaptability of a building can be a critical determinant of its ultimate life span.”*

*Government of South Australia*

# Sustainability

A UD home contributes to resilient communities

- ▶ Flexible
- ▶ Adaptable
- ▶ Unlikely to become functionally obsolete

# Design solutions

Design and problem-solving skills can address:

*“crucial issues such as sustainable design, universal access, and user amenity, to deliver housing that is as affordable in its upfront cost as it is for the lifetime of its occupancy.” AIA*

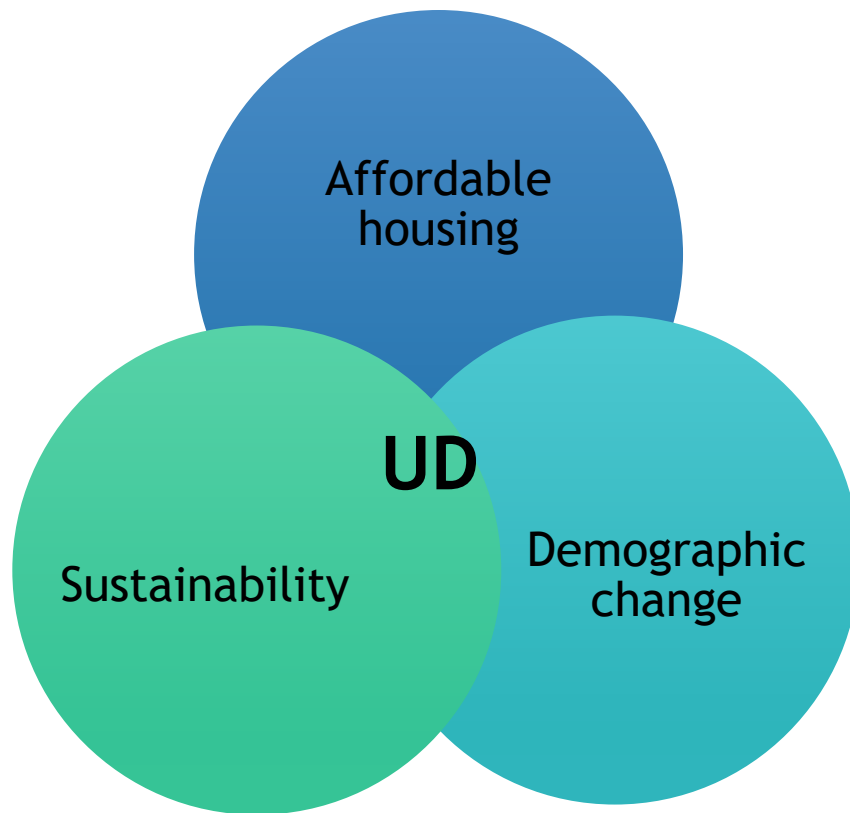


# Design solutions

Universal design =  
thought not cost.



# Why is universal design important?





# Evidence / statistics

The background of the slide features a series of overlapping triangles in various shades of blue, ranging from a light sky blue to a deep navy blue. These triangles are positioned primarily on the right side and bottom of the frame, creating a dynamic, modern geometric pattern. The left side of the slide is a solid, very light blue, providing a clean backdrop for the title text.

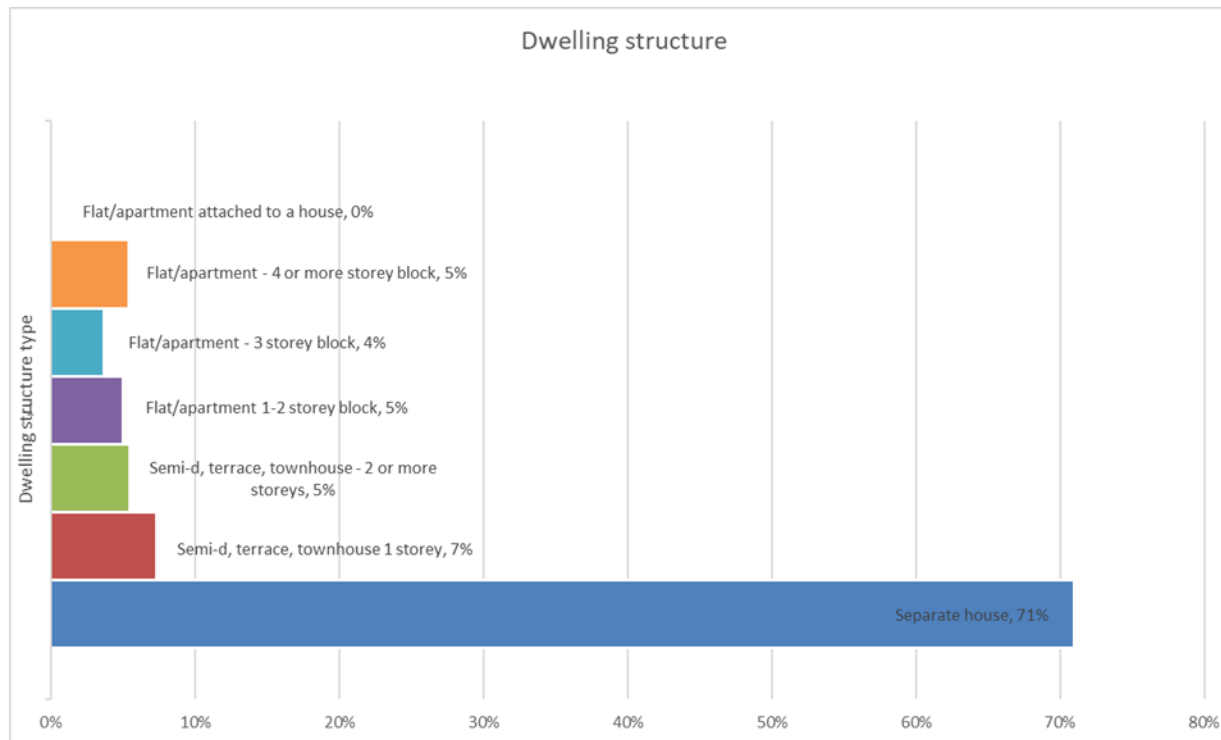


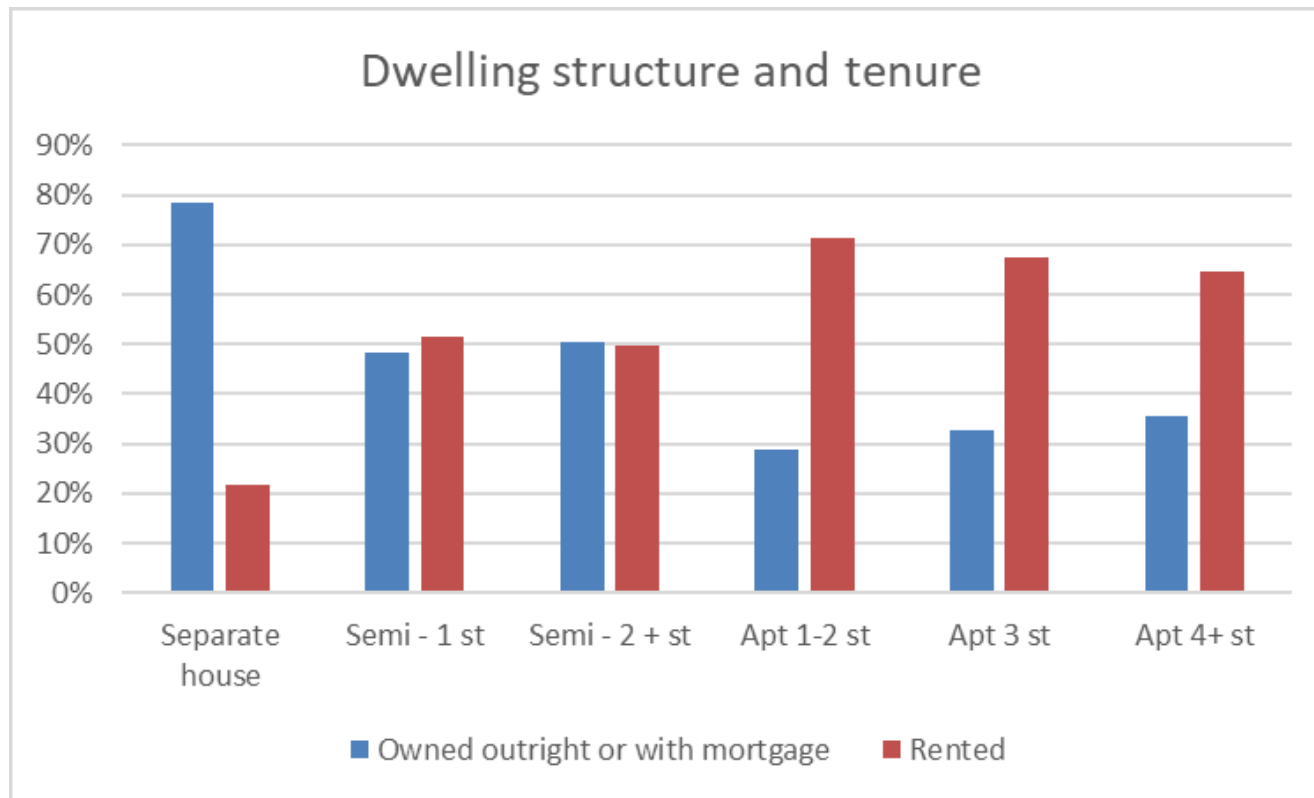
- ▶ Households
- ▶ Dwelling types
- ▶ Tenure
- ▶ Demographics
- ▶ Occupancy
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Carers

# Household composition

- ▶ The average household size is 2.6 people.
- ▶ The average home has 3.1 bedrooms

# Dwelling structure type as a percentage of all dwellings

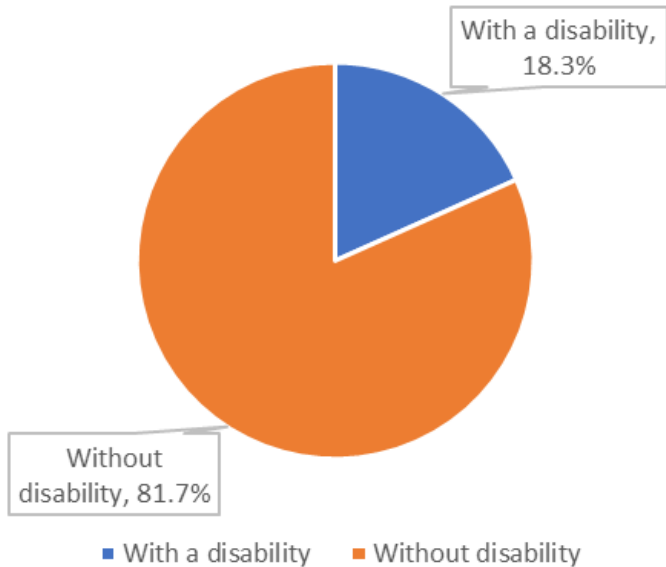




## Dwelling structure type and tenure

# Individuals

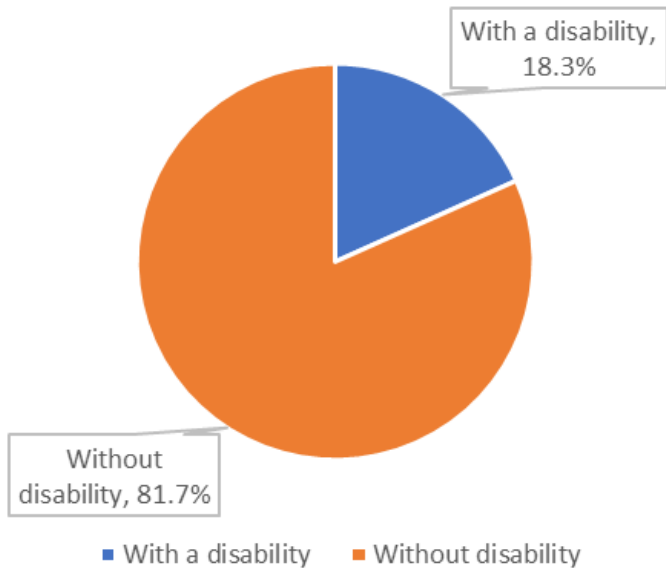
Individuals with and without disability



18.3%

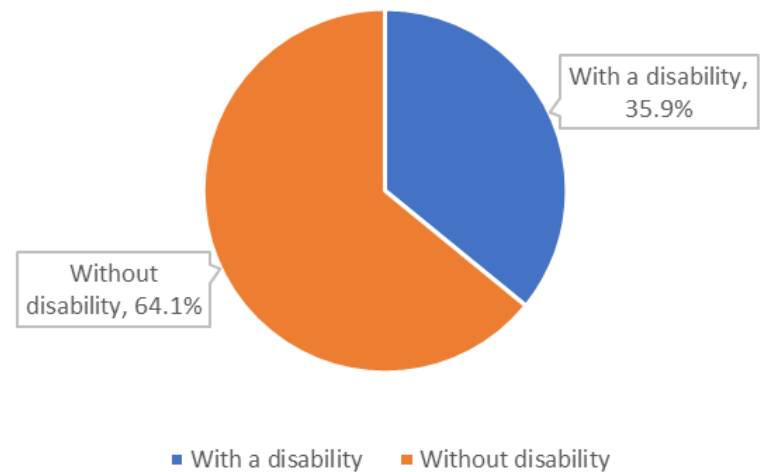
# Individuals vs Households

Individuals with and without disability



18.3%

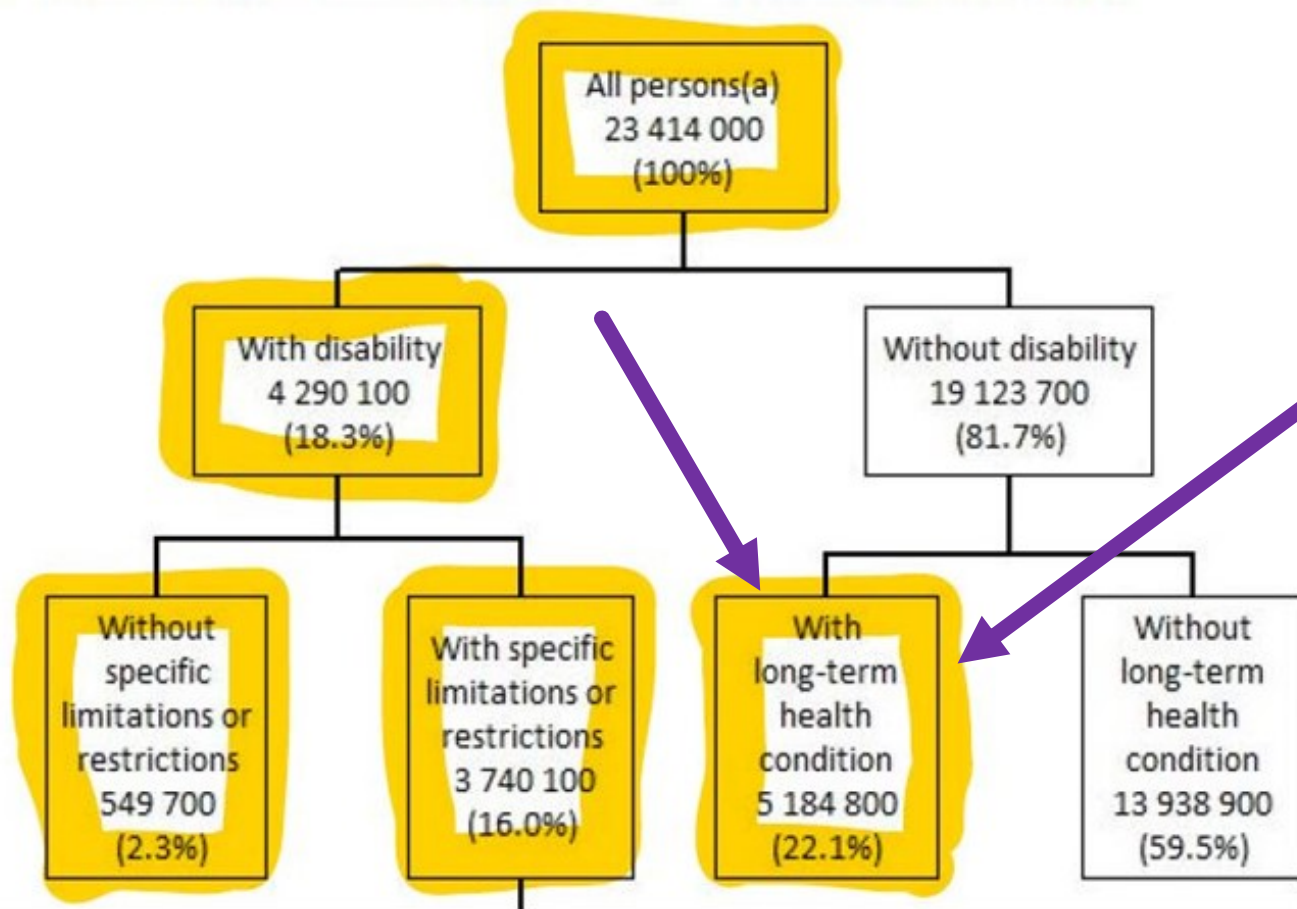
Households with and without disability



35.9%

# Long term health condition

Conceptual Framework: All persons, by disability status, 2015





# How Many?

	Individuals	
People with Disability	18.3%	
Long Term Health Condition	22.1%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	

4 in 10

# How Many?

	Individuals	Households
People with Disability	18.3%	35.9%
Long Term Health Condition	22.1%	43.4% Estimated
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>79.25% Estimated</b>

8 in 10

# Why is universal design important?

- ▶ Homes have lifespans too
  - ▶ Home built today has
    - 60% chance of having an occupant with a disability
    - 91% chance of a visitor with disability
- (Smith, Rayer, Smith, 2008, 2011)
- ▶ Everyone needs the safety and convenience





# Benefits of providing UD homes

Economic

Social

Human rights

Better infrastructure

Sustainable

Resilient communities

# Conclusion

- ▶ UD suits most people and life situations
- ▶ UD requires thought NOT cost
- ▶ Need to think of households NOT individuals
- ▶ Much evidence to support the need for UD in housing
- ▶ Benefits of UD in housing are far-reaching
- ▶ UD is about the people we love

Thank you



# Housing or home?





# Housing Design Policy update

- ▶ Australia has a commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- ▶ The National Disability Strategy is Australia's policy approach to meet the goals of the UNCRPD
- ▶ There is a 2020 goal for accessible housing
- ▶ COAG has asked ABCB for a Regulatory Impact Assessment looking at LHDG Silver and Gold
- ▶ NCC in 2022 could see changes to meet this goal