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INVOLVED eNews

ACT Office for Disability

Hello!
Welcome to the May INVOLVED eNews.
The items this month include:

ACT information and supports

- ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy
- ACT Government COVID-19 website
- Canberra Strong Together
- ACT Government COVID -19 helpline
- Access to PPE in the ACT
- COVID-19 Stimulus - Rapid Response Grants Program
- Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning Tool for COVID-19
- Canberra Relief Network

- Critical Covid-19 information has been translated into 12 languages
- COVID-19 information for carers
- Visit the Involved website
- Summer Foundation - Housing Preference Tool
- Women with Disabilities ACT - Survey

National information and supports

- COVID-19 National Health Plan for People with Disability
- Share you story with the Disability Royal Commission
- Latest information on the NDIS response to COVID-19
- COVID-19 accessible resources - Department of Social Services
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission COVID-19 Resources
- National Disability Information Helpline
- National Debt Helpline
- Carer Gateway
- Launch of Reimagine Stage 2 - free online resource

Upcoming ACT virtual events and podcasts

- Imagine More virtual peer group sessions and conference
- Podcasts by Advocacy for Inclusion
- Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) webinar plus Q&A

ACT information and supports

ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy

The ACT Government has developed a Strategy to guide its engagement with, and support to, people with disability, their families, carers and the disability sector in their response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) health emergency.

The ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy aims to respond to the needs of all people with disability in the ACT community, across a broader range of issues than merely the health-related aspects of the COVID-19

experience.

The Strategy intends to be flexible and responsive to the ongoing threat and disruption caused by COVID-19 as the health emergency evolves.
It outlines a number of principles, goals and objectives to support people with disability and the disability sector through this crisis, and during the post-emergency transition back to 'business as usual'.

The Minister for Disability, Ms Suzanne Orr, launched the Strategy on Monday 18 May 2020, saying "The introduction of this Strategy will ensure that people with disability and the disability sector are provided with timely, sensitive, informed and appropriate support during this time of uncertainty."

The ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy is available on the Community Services Directorate's website.

ACT Government COVID-19 website

Comprehensive information for all matters related to COVID-19, including the latest news from the ACT Health Directorate, can be found on the dedicated ACT Government COVID-19 website. Some restrictions in the ACT have eased. Find the latest changes to the restrictions on the ACT Government COVID-19 website: Stay safe and up to date at: covid19.act.gov.au

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Canberra Strong Together

Canberrans from all walks of life have shared their experiences of COVID-19 in an ACT Government campaign, Canberra Strong Together

Each person featured in the new video is a proud Canberran, who has invited us into their homes, backyards and makeshift offices, bringing to life their personal experiences amid COVID-19 restrictions.

The best way to help stop the spread of COVID-19 is by staying at home as much as possible and practising

good hygiene. So let's keep up the good work, Canberra. Let's stop the spread of COVID-19.

Share your experiences via #cbrtogether

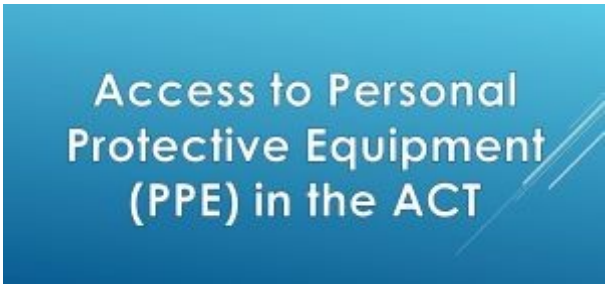
ACT Government COVID-19 helpline

The ACT Government's COVID -19 helpline (02 6207 7244) can provide you and your family with:

- Requests for support for the more vulnerable and isolated people in our community
- Support for those self-isolating or in quarantine
- Health and mental health advice and referrals
- Advice and information about the ACT Government's recent community and business stimulus packages
- Reporting COVID-related scams

If you need support, please call the helpline

COVID-19 in the ACT | covid19.act.gov.au | 02 6207 7244



Access to PPE in the ACT

People with disability, Disability Support providers including NDIS providers and self-managing participants who use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as part of their support arrangements should continue to access PPE through their usual means. Where this is no longer possible, they should first approach the National Medical Stockpile (NMS) by emailing NDISCOVIDPPE@health.gov.au

People with disability who require PPE on a daily basis to ensure that their support needs can be met and disability support providers are unable to access PPE supplies through their usual means, are eligible to apply to access PPE through a supply supported by ACT Government. Requests for PPE can be lodged through the completion of an online request form at the COVID19 website

Due to supply limitations, requests for PPE will be prioritised based on current advice from the Chief Health Officer, ACT Health and the demonstrated need for PPE as outlined through an online request.

Any questions or enquiries may be sent to the Community Services Directorate at CSDPPE@act.gov.au
For more information see:
NDIS Commission Factsheet COVID-19 Provider Information about PPE
Australian Department of Health COVID-19 information on the use of surgical masks

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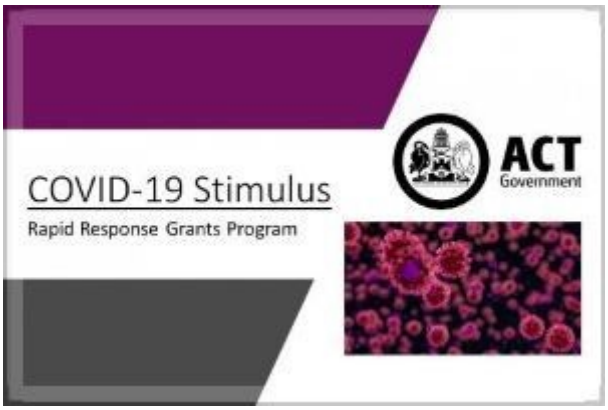

COVID-19 Stimulus - Rapid Response Grants Program

The **COVID-19 Stimulus Rapid Response Grants Program** opened on Monday 11 May 2020 and will close when all the funds have been fully expended (no set date).

The $1 million grant program will provide fast and flexible funding to support eligible organisations to adopt innovative and essential business model changes that adapt their service in response to COVID-19. These changes may relate to operational adjustments required or to address client needs. Projects or programs need to be able to start immediately or in a very short timeframe.

These “Rapid Response” Grants will be streamlined to enable organisations to apply quickly and efficiently for their requirements.
Grant applications will be assessed weekly by the Community Services Directorate.

Funding Priority Areas

Eligible applicants can submit a grant application for a proposal to address one or more of the following priority areas:
- Respond to immediate crisis delivering vital services and support to vulnerable people in the ACT community;

- Support staff working remotely or in different environments;
- Adapt services to meet needs of vulnerable people in the absence of face to face direct service delivery;
- Build infrastructure, organisational or staffing capacity to address current and potential future impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

For further information, please visit the CSD's Grant website or log into CSD's Grant Management Portal
For any enquiries, please contact CSDServiceFundingSupport@act.gov.au

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Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning Tool for COVID-19

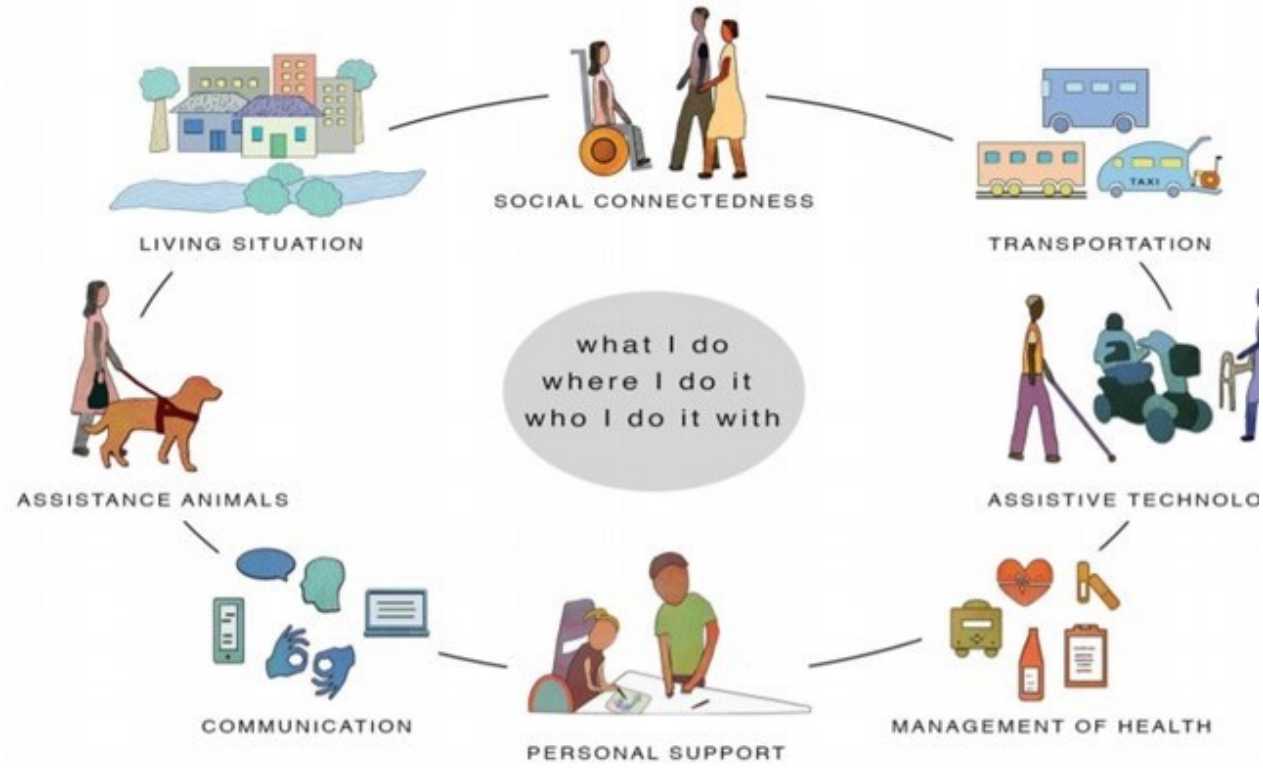
Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning Tool for COVID-19
A practical COVID-19 individual planning tool for people with disability has been developed and adapted for the ACT.

This is a guide to assist people with disability to get the facts about COVID-19 and to plan for how they will manage the impact of this situation.
The individual COVID-19 planning tool will assist you to plan for two situations that you might have to face during this COVID-19 pandemic. They might be:
- staying at home for a long period of time
- getting help if you or someone who supports you gets COVID-19 symptoms

There are more planning tools on the website, including an essential items checklist and a printable visitor door sign for people with a higher vulnerability to the virus. The Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Planning tool for COVID-19 (PCEP) is available on the Community Services Directorate's website

STEP 1. Identify your strengths and support needs

The PCEP helps you break down planning into eight areas:



Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Capability Wheel (Re-printed with permission)

- Think about what you do, where you do it and who you do it with.
- Consider your roles and responsibilities to others (e.g, partner, children, parents) that you support.
- Make a list of the things you need support for in each of the 8 areas.

CANBERRA RELIEF NETWORK

Canberra Relief Network

The Canberra Relief Network (CRN) is the ACT Government's response to the community's overwhelming and increasing demand for food and non-perishable household essential items, during the COVID-19 health emergency.

The CRN is there to support Canberrans who have been impacted by the COVID-19 health emergency,

including casual workers, international students, people isolated due to COVID-19 infection, carers of individuals with COVID-19, people with disability, health and chronic illness.
The CRN can assist with the provision of hygiene supplies to eligible people.

Contact details:
Website: https://canberrarelief.com.au/ **Phone:** 1800 431 133
Or you can fill in the online form to have someone contact you

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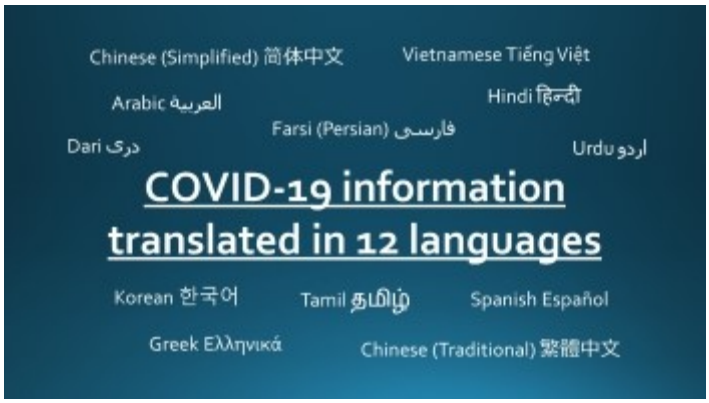

COVID-19 Information translated into 12 Languages

Critical COVID-19 information has been translated into 12 commonly spoken languages in the ACT. These include:

- Arabic العربية
- Chinese (Simplified) 简体中文
- Chinese (Traditional) 繁體中文
- Dari دری
- Farsi (Persian) فارسی
- Greek Ελληνικά
- Hindi हिन्दी
- Korean 한국어
- Spanish Español
- Tamil தமிழ்
- Urdu اردو
- Vietnamese Tiếng Việt

The translated material, which is updated regularly, is available via the ACT Government's COVID-19 website

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COVID-19 information for carers

The Carers ACT website includes information and support for carers during the COVID-19 emergency. It includes a dedicated Coronavirus COVID-19 information for carers webpage.

Carers ACT contact details:

Website: https://www.carersact.org.au/

Email: carers@carersact.org.au Phone: 02 6296 9900

Visit the Involved website

The Involved website provides Canberrans with information and resources on how inclusion of people with disability is happening right across the ACT. It is your one stop shop to see what government and community are doing to support and engage with people with disability.

Read the latest news and events and get involved by uploading your upcoming virtual events and activities to the "what's on" section. Please share the site with colleagues, friends and family.

Submit your upcoming event to the Involved website

SUMMER FOUNDATION

Summer Foundation - Housing Preference Tool

The Summer Foundation, through the Housing Hub, are working with La Trobe University to better understand the housing and support preferences and needs of people with disability.

The Summer Foundation invites people with disability to complete the Housing Preference Tool online survey. It takes around 10-15 minutes to complete and all information will remain confidential.

This tool helps you think about where you want to live, who you would like to live with and the type of housing that you would like to live in. You can use this tool to tell your housing story and identify your housing goals.

If you would have any questions, or would like support to fill in the form, please contact Jennifer Merriman, Housing Project Coordinator, on:

- Phone: 0456 110 160
- Email: jennifer.merriman@summerfoundation.org.au

Women with Disabilities ACT - Survey

Women with Disabilities ACT (WWDACT) want to know how COVID-19 has affected you and is conducting a survey.

This is an opportunity to have your say about the impact of COVID-19 on your life, as well as provide feedback on what you need and what has been most helpful during this time.

Your responses are incredibly valuable. The responses gathered from this survey will help inform our work, government and service responses for women with disability in the ACT and region.

This project was funded by a grant from the Disability Advocacy Network Australia.

You can complete the survey on Survey Monkey.

National information and supports

COVID-19 National Health Plan for People with Disability

COVID-19 presents a significant and unprecedented challenge for many people with disability, including children and young people, the people who support them, and the disability sector as a whole. Some people with disability are more likely to be vulnerable to the effects associated with COVID-19 including impacts which continue following the pandemic period.

The Management and Operational Plan for COVID-19 for People with Disability (the Plan) has been

developed to provide a targeted response for people with disability, their families, carers and support workers. The Plan is available in PDF, Word, and Easy Read. The Plan is available on the Australian Department of Health webpage

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Share you story with the Disability Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has suspended public hearings, however you can still share your story with the Disability Royal Commission during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sharing your story helps the Disability Royal Commission understand the impacts of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation on people with disability. It will also help the Royal Commission make recommendations to stop it from happening again.

You can share your experience by making a submission any way you feel comfortable – in writing, over the phone, in a video or audio recording or in a private session with a Commissioner You can do this through the Disability Royal Commission's website

You can also have your say on the Issues Papers that the Royal Commission is publishing on different topics that may be important to you. All of the Issues Papers ask people to respond by a deadline, so your response can be included in initial analysis and help inform any related public hearings. You can provide a response after the deadline and your input will contribute to the ongoing work of the Royal Commission. Below is a list of Issues Papers that you can provide your feedback on, all of which are available on the Royal Commission website:

- Employment
- Rights and Attitudes
- Emergency Planning and Response
- Criminal Justice System
- Health Care for People with Cognitive Disability
- Group Homes

- Education and Learning

Latest information on the NDIS response to COVID-19

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) provides the latest information on the response to COVID-19 including number of changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to assist participants and providers during the COVID-19 health emergency.

The NDIA website also includes a wide range of information packs in key topics and for different situations to support NDIS participants and their families.

COVID-19 accessible resources - Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services has released a range of resources including in Easy Read and Auslan about COVID-19

You can access these resources on the Disability and Carers webpage

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COVID-19 advice for people with disability - Department of Health

The Australian Government Department of Health has created a webpage containing COVID-19 advice for people with disability

The webpage provides information on how people with disability can protect themselves from COVID-19, manage their mental health, and access important services like telehealth and prescription medications.

The advice includes how you can protect yourself through good hygiene, physical distancing, avoiding public gatherings, isolating if sick, and finding safe and alternative ways to get the services you need.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission COVID-19 Resources

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission has a COVID-19 webpage containing information for people with disability with two fact sheets for NDIS participants about COVID-19

The first COVID-19 NDIS participant information fact sheet explains:
- What to expect from their NDIS providers
- Their rights and how to make a complaint about a provider
- What resources are available from the NDIA
- Where to find more information and resources about COVID-19

The second NDIS participant fact sheet explains what to expect from providers and workers during COVID-19, including some possible changes to the way supports and services are delivered during this time.

National Disability Information Helpline

The Australian Government's Disability Information Helpline provides information and referrals for people with disability, who need assistance because of COVID-19. The Helpline assists people with disability, as well as their families, carers, and support workers.

The Disability Information Helpline is free, private and fact-checked

You can contact the Helpline in the following ways:

- Phone (free call): 1800 643 787
- If you are deaf, or have hearing loss or a speech impairment, you can call the National Relay Service on 133 677
- Via a Livechat link on the website

The Helpline is available Monday to Friday, from 8am to 8pm (AEST) and Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 7pm (AEST). It is not available on national public holidays.

National Debt Helpline

If you are in financial difficulty, free support is available at the National Debt Helpline where you can speak to a financial counsellor to receive advice: 1800 007 007

The National Debt Helpline also provides a free COVID-19 Financial Survival Guide, with information on how you can look after yourself and your family financially during the COVID-19 health emergency. The Guide contains information about:

- Emergency financial support
- Government assistance
- Maintaining payments on your rent or mortgage
- Utilities and Rates
- Payment priorities
- Making repayment arrangements
- Bankruptcy changes
- Accessing superannuation early

Carer Gateway

The Carer Gateway has a dedicated Coronavirus (COVID-19) information webpage for carers.
The Carer Gateway phone line is available Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm on: 1800 422 737
For emergency respite, call your local Carer Gateway Service Provider 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 422 737

Survey for Disability Support Workers

The safety, health and well-being of disability support workers is critical to ensure that people with disability receive timely, adequate and necessary support.

As part of their research, the Centre for Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH) want to understand the impact of the COVID-19 health emergency on people who work as disability support workers, specifically how COVID-10 impacts the working conditions, health and well-being of disability support workers over time.

CRE-DH invite people who are over 18 years of age and currently work as a disability support worker to participate in their survey.

The study involves completing 3 surveys in total. The first survey is a 10-15 minute online survey which you will complete now, and then again in 3 and 9 months' time.

The survey is anonymous and only the research team has access to the results.

Those who participate will be entered into a prize-draw to win a $50 Visa debit card as a thank you for participating in this research project.

Findings from this study will provide information that can inform how best to respond to COVID-19 and other future crises to minimise the impact on disability support workers and people with disability.

Click here to participate in the survey

Launch of Reimagine Stage 2 - free online resource

Reimagine Stage 2 is a peer-led project which centres around a free online resource to support people living with mental health conditions to access the NDIS: www.reimagine.today

Originally launched in 2017, reimagine was developed by Mental Health Community Coalition in partnership with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and co-designed with people with lived experience of mental health conditions:

- A new look website, updated in line with community needs
- NEW resources co-designed with people from diverse communities
- A reimagine.today App – a spot for people to store information about themselves and keep track of their NDIS access journey, and appointments, etc
- Skill building resources for people living with mental health conditions
- A Self-care Hub
- And more….

Upcoming ACT virtual events and podcasts

Imagine More virtual peer group sessions and conference

Imagine More virtual peer group sessions are moving to fortnightly gatherings until July 2020:

Peer support for Inclusive Education

Inclusive education can sometimes be an isolating journey when families are advocating for physical, social and academic inclusion in schools. Join our fortnightly virtual sessions over lunch to hear from guest speakers, peers and feel supported

From 12:00 -1:00pm: Tuesday 2 June | Tuesday 16 June | Tuesday 30 June 2020

Register here for the Inclusive Education Peer Group

Virtual Happy Hour for employment – customised employment and microenterprise focused

Employment for people with disability can sometimes be difficult to find. We have many stories and strategies to share that will help you find meaningful work for your family member with disability
From 5:00 – 6:00pm: Wednesday 3 June and Wednesday 17 June 2020 via Zoom
Register here for the Virtual Happy Hour for employment

Virtual Lunch for people self-managing NDIS
Self-managing NDIS funding has many aspects to consider. This peer group will help you understand how to set meaningful goals and objectives; how to find the right supports; how to budget; how to use paid supports to increase the freely given supports in a person life. This peer group will host guest speakers as well as hold a wealth of information from the peers that come along.
From 12 – 1pm: Friday 29 May | 12 June | 26 June
Register here for the Self-managing NDIS peer group

Save the Dates!
Imagine More virtual Let's Get to Work employment conference
This is a conference focusing on employment for people with disability. It will explore finding and keeping a job through customised employment and microenterprise.
Attendees will see many examples of young people with disability in work and will learn how they got there. Our presenters will not just share stories of example and inspiration: they will also provide practical tips, helpful resources and will point you in the right direction for more assistance.
The conference will run over 6 weeks with one presentation each week:
11 June: Jan Kruger, Gus Riechelt and Cameron Zellner – Launching 3 short films of young men in meaningful work
18 June: Ann Greer – Why work is important and tips to find work through your connections, community and networks.
25 June: Jeannie Hodges – How you can used supported employment funding to support people in real work and understanding SLES
2 July: June Alexander – Customised Employment; Discovery and Job Search Planning
9 July: June Alexander – Customised Employment (Continued); Job Development and Negotiation and Post-Employment Supports
16 July: Microenterprise stories
Registration will open soon. To find out more subscribe to Imagine More event updates at
https://imaginemore.org.au/subscribe-mailing-list/

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Podcasts by Advocacy for Inclusion

Advocacy for Inclusion provides independent individual, self and systemic advocacy for people with disability

Supported Decision Making Podcast

In this series we will build our skills in supporting others in their decision-making. This kind of support is particularly important for people in our community whose decision-making has been ignored or undermined. In this Supported Decision Making podcast we aim to assist people to reclaim their decision-making power.

The Disability Royal Commission in the time of COVID-19: An interview with Kate Eastman SC

In this podcast Advocacy for Inclusion (AFI) speaks with Kate Eastman, Senior Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission. Kate is a barrister with a significant background as an advocate for human rights and won the 2019 Human Rights Law Award. In this podcast we discuss the Royal Commission and how it is continuing during COVID-19.

You can also email AFI at podcast@advocacyforinclusion.org

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) webinar plus Q&A

Summer Foundation and Summer Housing present an SDA webinar plus Q&A.

This free online event will bring you all the information you need to know about accessing SDA housing and SDA Funding.

You will learn about Housing Options under the NDIS, what SDA is and who is eligible, how to get SDA in your NDIS plan and the current trends we are seeing in the SDA market.

You will also get detailed information about Summer Housing's stunning new properties in Canberra.

This free webinar and Q&A will be delivered online. Registration is essential.

For more information about this webinar plus Q&A, visit Eventbrite

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Disclaimer:

The information contained in this newsletter is provided in good faith and was up to date as at 22 May 2020.

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You received Involved as you have previously advised you wish to receive information about disability

matters in the ACT.

Our mailing address is: ACT Office for Disability, GPO Box 158, Canberra City, ACT 2601

Add us to your address book

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