



**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY
AUSTRALIA**

Report about the pandemic project



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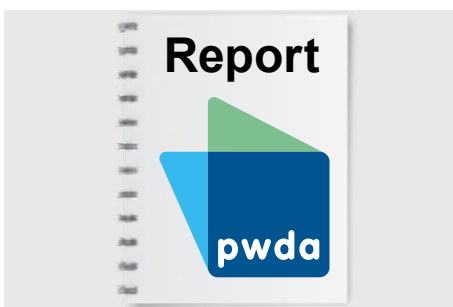
About this report



This is our report about the pandemic project.



The **pandemic project** is about what COVID-19 meant for different communities.



People with Disability Australia wrote this report.

We are called **PWDA** for short.



We looked into what COVID-19 and the lockdowns meant for women with disability.



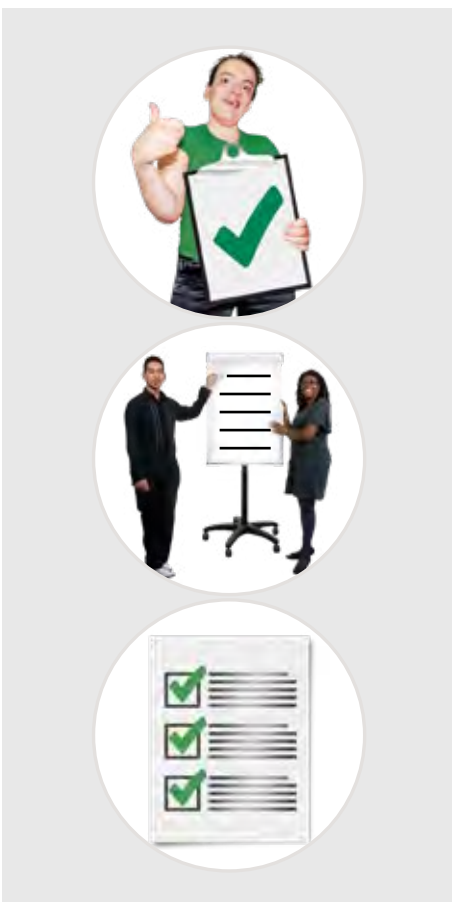
Lockdowns are when people cannot leave their home or area because of COVID-19.



We also looked into what COVID-19 meant for the mental health of women with disability.



Mental health is about how you think and feel.



This report will talk about

- What we did
- What we found out
- What we think should happen with what we found out.

Why the project is important



Women with disability already had many mental health issues before COVID-19.



They also often had domestic violence happen to them.



Domestic violence means that someone in your home

- Hurts you
- Says or does bad things to you
- Says they will hurt you.



We wanted to find out if COVID-19 made things worse for women with disability.



We wanted to hear from women with disability about their issues.



We found out that there were good and bad things that came from COVID-19.



We want the Government to keep doing the good things and change the bad things.



We want the Government to support women with disability to feel safe.

What we did



There are 3 things we did for this project.

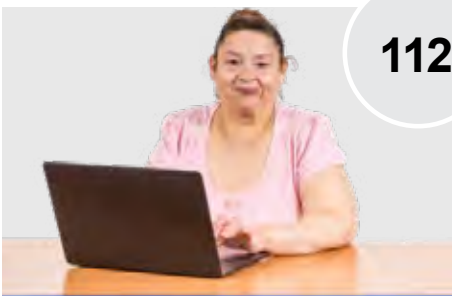


We first looked at many things written about women with disability and COVID-19.



We then did an online survey.

A **survey** means questions we want people to answer.



112

112 people did the survey.



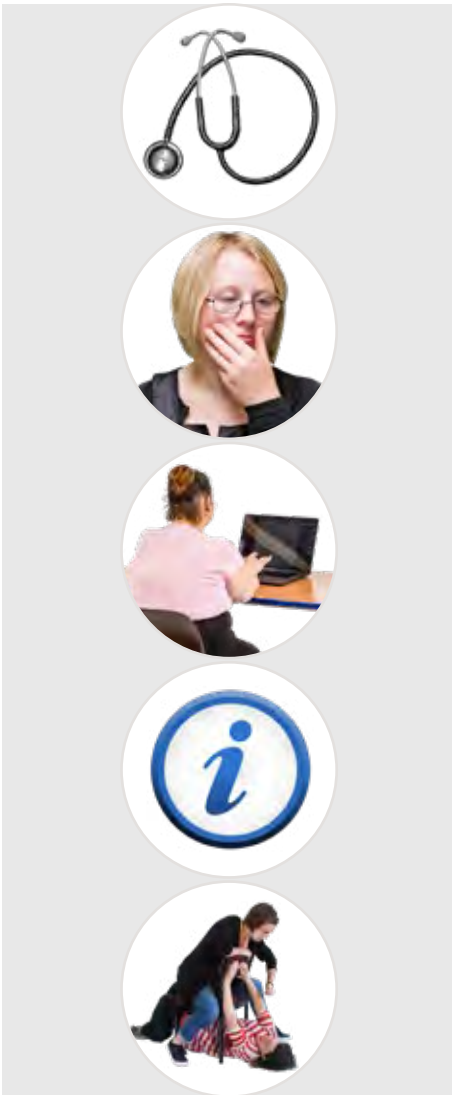
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We also talked to 13 women with disability in person.

What we found out



There are some areas that changed the most for women with disability during COVID-19.



These areas are

- Health care
- Mental health
- Working from home
- Information from the Government
- Domestic violence.



We will talk about each of these areas next.

Health care



Telehealth was used a lot more during COVID-19 than before.



Telehealth is when you talk to your doctor

- Over the phone
- Online in a video call.



Telehealth made it much easier for many women with disability to get health care.



It took away the stress of travelling to a doctor.



Many women felt safer because they could use Telehealth from their home.



Some doctors only did Telehealth over the phone.



This was hard for some women who find video calls easier to use.



Many women were scared to go to the hospital or doctor in person because of COVID-19.



That means they might have missed important health checks.

Mental health



Mental health issues got worse during COVID-19.



Many people felt lonely when they could not leave their home or area during lockdowns.



They could also not get the support they need.



Some people lost their jobs and worried about money.



Many mothers with disability had a hard time with home schooling their kids.



A lot of the school work and information from the school was not easy to understand.



They felt they could not support their children well with their school work.



This made their mental health worse.

Work



Working from home was a good thing for many women with disability.



Many women with disability could

- Start a job
- Work more hours.



This helped many women with disability feel good about themselves.



It also meant they could make more money.



Many women feel stressed about workplaces asking them to come back into the office.

Information from the Government



Many women with disability felt left alone by the Government during COVID-19.



They felt the Government did not think about them when they put together information.



A lot of the information from the Government was hard to understand.



Information also changed all the time.



All of this made people with disability feel more stressed and worried.

Domestic violence



Domestic violence got worse during COVID-19 and the lockdowns.



Many women with disability were not able to get away from the person who hurt them.



They could also not get support from domestic violence services.



Some women told their disability services about the domestic violence.



Many disability services did not know how to help.

What should happen with what we found out



We will now talk about what we think should happen with what we found out.



There were some things that were good during COVID-19 and the lockdowns.



We will talk about the good things we should keep.

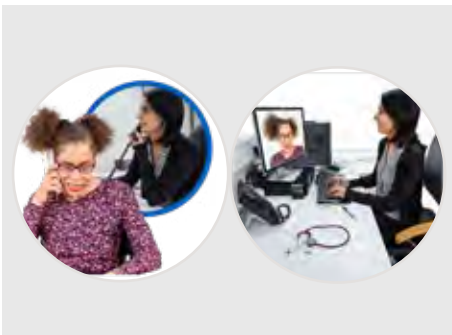


We will also talk about what changes should be made.

Keep Telehealth



People should be able to keep using Telehealth with their doctors.



Doctors need to make sure they have Telehealth over the phone **and** as video calls.



You should not have to see your doctor once a year in person.



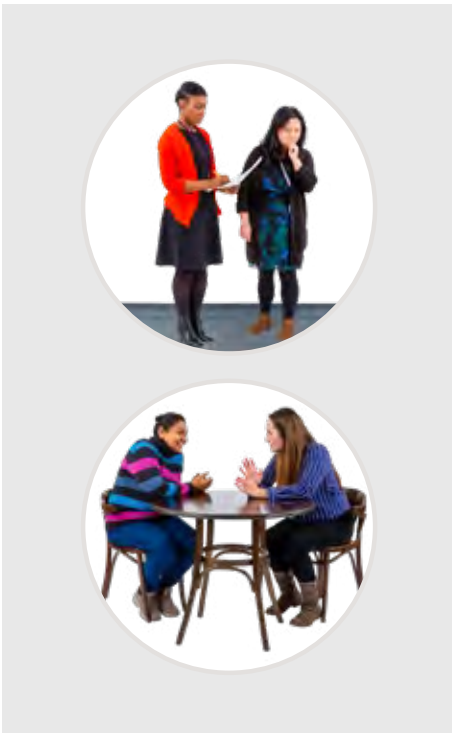
Telehealth should still be bulk billed.

Bulk billed means that Medicare pays for it and not you.

More studies and decisions with women with disability



There should be more studies about women with disability and their issues.



This will help the Government and other services

- Understand what women with disability need
- Support them better.



Women with disability should also have a say in important Government decisions.

Easier information



During COVID-19 a lot of the Government information was

- Hard to understand
- Changed all the time.



The Government needs to think more about people with disability when they give information.



Information needs to be in a way everyone can understand.



This is also true for information about domestic violence and mental health.

Keep working from home



Working from home has been good for many women with disability.



Many could now work part time or full time.



Government workplaces should let people keep working from home if they want to.



Government should ask businesses and organisations to let their staff work from home.

More support for mental health and domestic violence



We need more support for mental health and domestic violence.



These supports need to know how to help women with disability.



They should get training to learn how to support women with disability.



There should also be checks to see if support services do a good job.

More information



You can contact us if you want to know more about this project.



You can send an email to Sally from PWDA at
sallyh@pwd.org.au

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You need to ask CID if you want to use any pictures in this document.
You can contact CID at **business@cid.org.au**.