



Easy Read

# Annual Report 2025 to 2026



A voice of our own



Acknowledgement of Country.

We recognise **First Nations** people as the traditional owners of Australia.

**First Nations** people means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



They were the first people to live on this land.



We respect all First Nations people and **Elders**.

**Elders** are important people in First Nations communities



This is the **annual report** for **People with Disability Australia**.

We say **PWDA** for short.



An **annual report** says what work we did this year.



This annual report is from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.



You can contact PWDA to ask for this report in a different format.



You can call us on 1800 422 015.



You can email us at [pwd@pwd.org.au](mailto:pwd@pwd.org.au)



If you want information in your language contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.



If you are deaf or hard of hearing or have a speech disability you can use the National Relay Service on 1300 555 727.



When you contact us you can tell us what you think about PWDA.



You can also make a **complaint**.

A **complaint** is when you tell us you are not happy about something.



You can tell us your complaint by calling us on 1800 422 015.



Or you can email your complaint to [feedback@pwda.org.au](mailto:feedback@pwda.org.au)

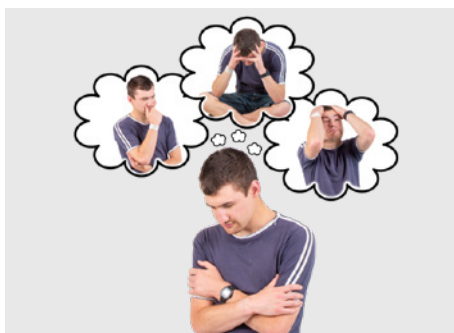
## Message from the board



PWDA has been led by people with disability for more than 45 years.



They have worked hard to improve the rights of people with disability.



This year lots of people with disability were worried about changes to our lives.

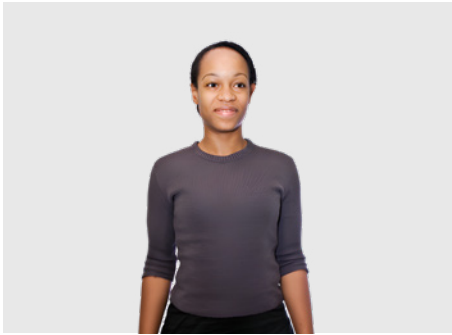


There were big changes to the **NDIS**.

**NDIS** is short for National Disability Insurance Scheme.



People were worried they could lose supports they need.



These supports help people live safely and independently.



We were also worried that governments had not done enough after the **Disability Royal Commission**.



The **Disability Royal Commission** looked at how people with disability are treated in Australia.

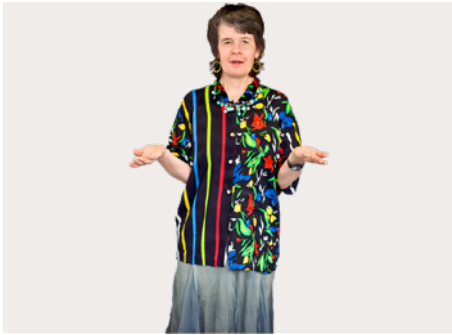
It told governments what needs to change to keep people with disability safe.



PWDA did lots of work to make a difference in the lives of people with disability.



You will learn about our work in this annual report.



Our members told us they wanted to know more about the PWDA board and what **board directors** do.



A **board director** is a person who helps make important decisions about PWDA.

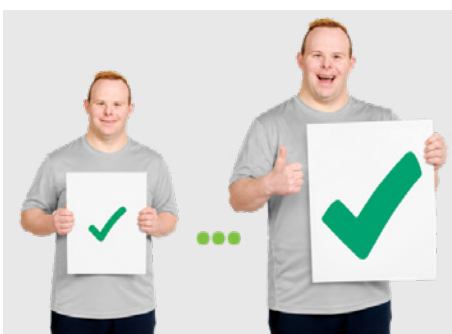
Board directors help make sure PWDA is well run and stays focused on its purpose.



Members also wanted to know how to become a board director.



We made it easy for people to learn and ask questions about being a board director.



We also worked on making the board better.



We met with members at community events and **consultations**.

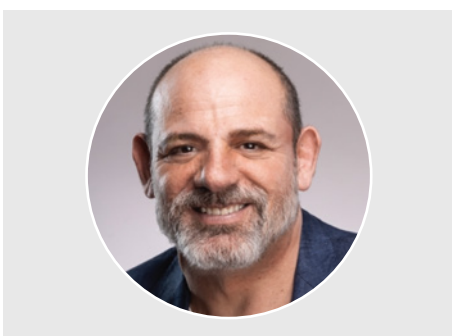
**Consultations** are meetings where we ask members what they think.



Member ideas helped shape our work.



This year there was a change in who led PWDA.



This year **Sebastian Zagarella** left PWDA.

Sebastian was our **Chief Executive Officer**.

We say **CEO** for short.

We thank Sebastian for his work at PWDA.



**Megan Spindler-Smith** became our **Acting CEO**.

An **Acting CEO** is someone who does the CEO job for a short time.

Megan helped lead PWDA during this time of change.

We thank Megan for their leadership.



We thank our members, staff, volunteers, advisory group members, partners and supporters.



Together we will continue working for the rights of people with disability.

# PWDA board directors this year



These are the board directors who helped lead PWDA during the year.



Alexandra Bignell.



Daniel Flynn.



Stephanie Travers.



Tahlia-Rose Vanissum.



Wildaliz De Jesús Arocho.



Jarrod Sandell-Hay.



Jeramy Hope.



Eva Sifis.



Kevyn Morris.



Stuart Mawbey.



Priscilla Brice.



Trinity Ford.



We thank everyone who was a board director this year.



Some board directors are still on the board.



Some board directors left the board during the year.

# Message from the Acting CEO



This year was a busy year for PWDA.



People with disability were worried about lots of changes.



PWDA made sure the voices of people with disability were heard.



We spoke up for disability rights.



We worked to improve human rights.



We helped 50 people with disability go to the **Australian Disability Strategy National Forum**.

The **Australian Disability Strategy National Forum** was a big event for people with disability.



PWDA representatives attended the **19th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** in New York.

We say **COSP19** for short.



PWDA also made our workplace better.



We introduced staff values and created a workplace where people feel supported and included.



I am proud of our staff.



Thank you to everyone who worked with  
PWDA.

# About PWDA



PWDA is a national disability rights organisation.



We are led by people with disability.



This means people with disability help make decisions about our work.



We represent people with all kinds of disability.



We want people with disability to have the same rights as everyone else.



Be included in the community.



Be treated with respect.



Have a say in decisions about their lives.



We help people with disability understand their rights and speak up about what they need.

# Our year in numbers



Hundreds of people with disability became PWDA members.



Over 400000 people clicked on the PWDA website.



2 million people viewed PWDA social media posts.



PWDA wrote 44 reports about disability rights.



Over 1000 people got training from PWDA.



PWDA was in the news over 3000 times this year.

This helped people learn about PWDA and disability rights.



This year PWDA had 62 staff members.



PWDA supported almost 2000 **advocacy clients**.

**Advocacy clients** are people with disability who get help from PWDA.



People got help from our advocacy service more than 35000 times.



We asked advocacy clients about the help they got from PWDA.



We asked people if they were happy with our help.

93% of people said they were.

This means almost everyone said yes.



We asked people if they thought we were listening and understood their issue.

92% of people said they did.

This means almost everyone said yes.



We asked people if our help made it easier to deal with their issue.

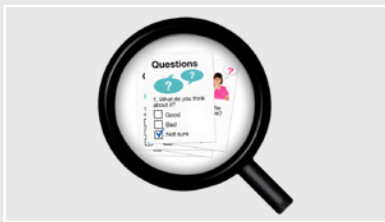
81% of people said they did.

This means almost everyone said yes.

# Our members



We welcomed lots of new members.



We did lots of things with our members like  
Surveys.



Events.



Focus groups.



Storytelling.



**Campaigns.**

A **campaign** is when people work together to change something or raise awareness about an issue.



We had our **Annual General Meeting** with our members on Wednesday 13 November 2025.



The **Annual General Meeting** is a meeting where our members vote on important things.

We say **AGM** for short.



We talked to and listened to our members about important issues.



We spoke about what our members want to change with

Governments.



Decision-makers.



Community.



## **Media.**

**Media** includes television, radio, newspapers and online news.



During the year lots of media asked PWDA to talk about disability rights.



This year we launched the **PWDA Accessibility Review Network**.



The **PWDA Accessibility Review Network** is a new way people with disability can get paid for sharing what they know.

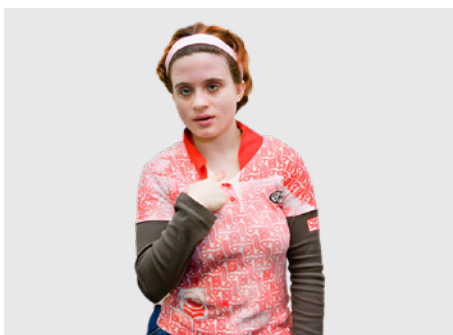
# Making disability rights better



We worked on making disability rights better in Australia.



Other countries.



Our members told us what disability rights issues are important to them.



What they told us helped us decide on what disability right issues to work on.



In Australia we worked on changes to the NDIS.

The government wanted to make big changes to the NDIS.



PWDA was worried these changes could mean people lose important supports.



We worked with people with disability to speak up about the changes.



More than 21000 people signed our **petition**.

A **petition** is a document signed by many people who want to change something.



The government is making new supports called **foundational supports**.

**Foundational supports** are for people with disability outside the NDIS.



PWDA said people must not lose support they need while they wait for foundational supports.

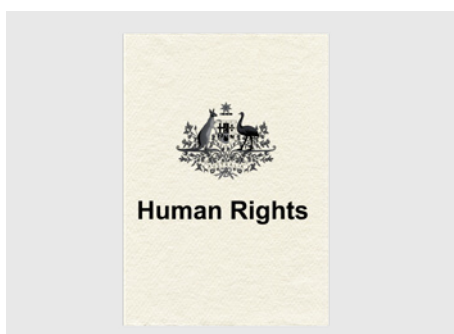


We also worked on the **Federal Budget**.

The **Federal Budget** tells us what the Australian Government is spending money on.



The Disability Royal Commission.



Human rights.



**Disaster and emergencies.**

A **disaster or emergency** is when something very bad happens and people may need help quickly to stay safe.



Making air travel safe.



Health.



Accessible public toilets.



Government computer systems.



Governments are using computer programs to help make decisions about people.



PWDA said people should be able to ask questions about these decisions.



A person should make important decisions,  
not just a computer.



We worked on these things by

Writing reports with our ideas on how to  
change things.



Telling the government what our members told  
us about their lives.



Working with other disability organisations.



Speaking at government **inquiries**.

An **inquiry** is a way governments try to find  
solutions to a problem.



Doing campaigns.



Telling more people about disability rights.



PWDA was part of a group from Australia who went to a big United Nations event in New York.

The event was **COSP19**.



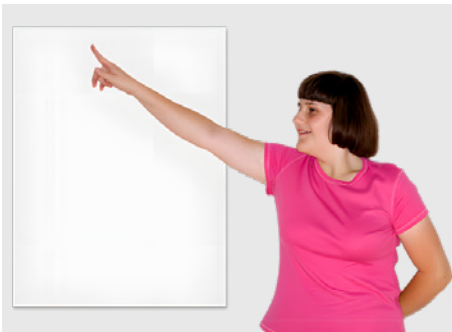
At **COSP19** people from all over the world come together to talk about disability rights.



PWDA representatives at COSP19 were  
Bobbie Trower.



Lee-Anne Pringle.



They spoke about how it is important to  
include people with disability in decisions  
about them.



They hosted an event called Nothing About Us  
Without Us All.



The event was about good **co-design**.

**Co-design** means people with disability share  
their ideas and experiences to make sure  
programs are good for people with disability.



We also told the United Nations about disability rights in Australia.



We told them what needs to be better for people with disability.



PWDA did work on **modern slavery**.

**Modern slavery** is when a person is controlled by another person.

A person in modern slavery might be made to do something by another person.



PWDA wrote reports and talked about modern slavery with lots of different people.



This helped more people understand that people with disability are at a bigger risk of modern slavery.



The United Nations visited Australia and wrote a report about modern slavery in the country.

The report included work done by PWDA.



We did lots of work with **LGBTQIA+** people with disability.



**LGBTQIA+** means the different ways people can love and feel about who they are.



We joined events like

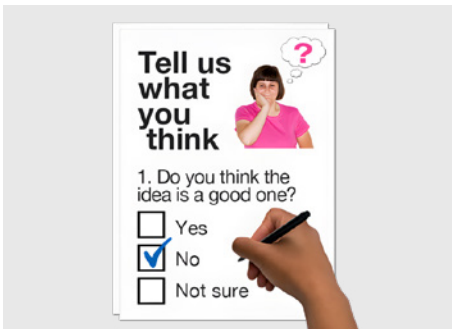
The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade.



Fair Day.



Melbourne Midsumma March.



We told people about the work we did on a big survey with LGBTQIA+ people with disability.



Almost 1000 LGBTQIA+ people with disability did our survey.

They told us what is important to them.



We are using what they told us to help make healthcare better.

# Individual advocacy



This year our **advocates** helped lots of people with disability in NSW and QLD.

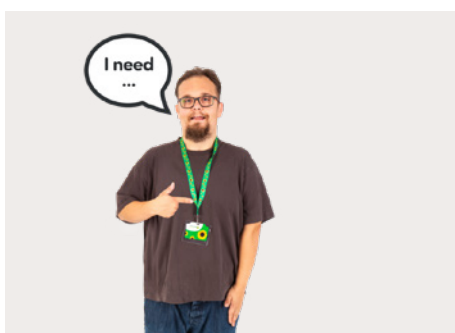
An **advocate** helps people with disability understand their rights and speak up about what they need.



Our advocates helped make sure people with disability are in control of decisions about them.



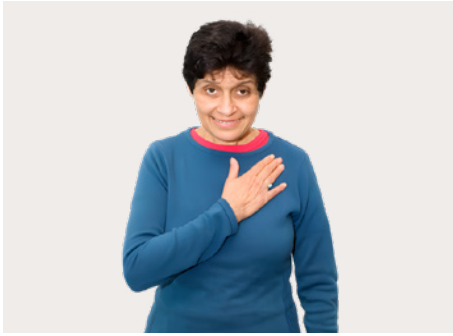
They helped people with disability understand what matters to them.



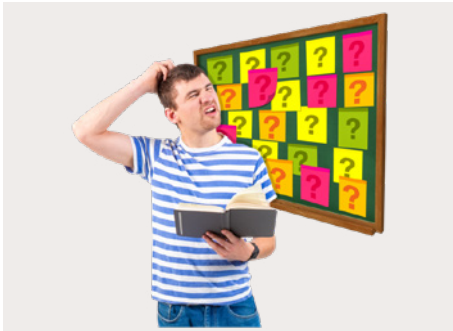
Remove barriers to doing things.



Get information to make decisions.



Understand their rights.



Solve problems.



Speak up.



Get support.



PWDA helped people with issues like the NDIS.



Housing and home and living.



Education.



**Guardianship.**

**Guardianship** is when someone is chosen to make decisions about your life when you cannot make decisions on your own.



**Supported decision making.**

**Supported decision making** is when someone helps you get information you need to make your own decision.

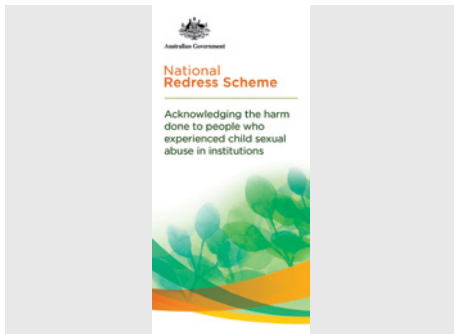


Employment.



## **Discrimination.**

**Discrimination** is when someone is treated badly because of something they cannot change about them.



## **The National Redress Scheme.**

The **National Redress Scheme** is for adults who were **sexually abused** as a child.



**Sexual abuse** is when someone makes you do sexual things you do not want.



We went to events and communities to tell people how PWDA can help.



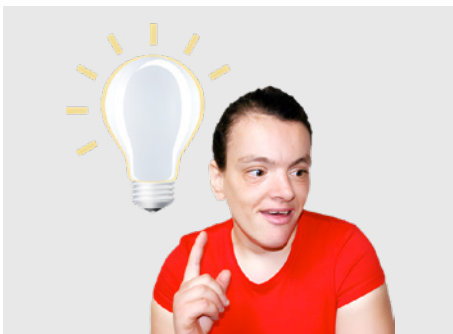
We talked to more than 2000 people at these events.



The people we help tell us about problems they have.



Sometimes lots of people have the same problem.



This helps us know what needs to change.

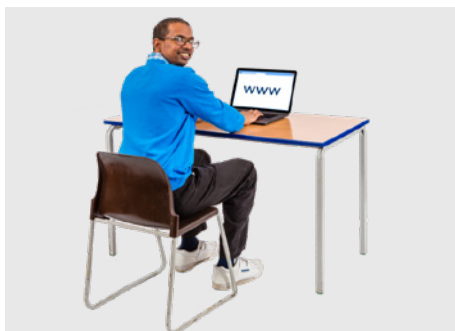


We tell governments about these problems.

# Projects and training



This year PWDA did lots of work with groups and organisations.



We did a lot of work on our online learning.



Our online learning will help more people access important training.



This year we worked on some big projects about things like helping women with disability in work and business



Making it easier for women and children with disability to use services.



What healthy and safe relationships are.



People with disability understanding online health information better.



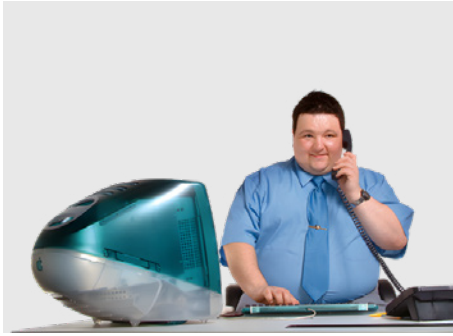
Helping people to respect LGBTQIA+ people with disability.



This year PWDA held lots of training sessions.



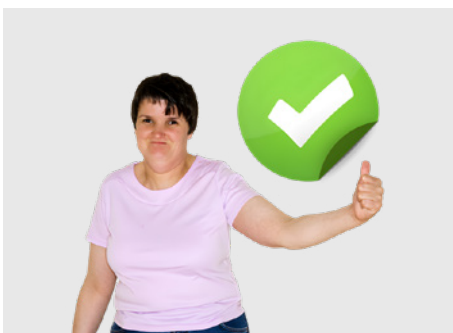
Our training is led by people with disability.



The training was about things like how to make workplaces better for people with disability.



How to talk about people with disability.



How to make their work better for people with disability.



We helped organisations to remove barriers.



We helped people with disability get a **Qantas Carer Concession Card**.



This **Qantas Carer Concession Card** is for people with disability who need a carer to travel with them on a plane.

# Making PWDA better



44% of PWDA staff are people with disability or live with other health conditions.

This means almost half of our staff are people with disability.



Our staff have many different backgrounds and life experiences.



We want PWDA to be a safe and inclusive workplace.



We worked hard to make PWDA a better place for staff to work.

We won an award for this work.



This year our staff created our first **employee values**.

**Employee values** show how we want to work together.



Our values are  
Community focused.



Work as a team.



Act with **integrity**.

**Integrity** is being honest and doing what is right and fair.



Champion inclusion.



We helped our leaders build new skills.

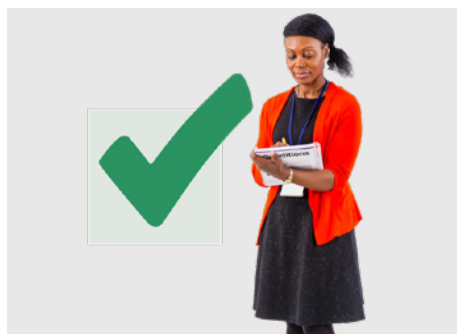


PWDA staff came together for a staff conference.



The conference gave staff the chance to learn new skills and connect with each other.

# PWDA services were good



PWDA passed the **audit** for the **National Standards for Disability Services**.



An **audit** is a check to make sure we are following the rules and doing things the right way.



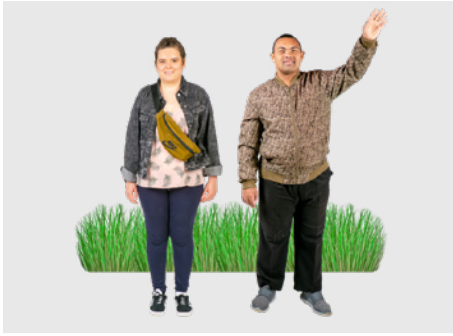
**National Standards for Disability Services** say how to do things to keep people safe.



We reviewed our policies and procedures and made them better.



This year we continued work on our **Reconciliation Action Plan**.



Our **Reconciliation Action Plan** helps us work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



PWDA changed how we work to make it better for the environment.



This helped make work costs lower.

# Directors report



Board directors can do different roles on the board.



This year different people did these roles at different time these include

## **President**

The **president** helps make decisions about how PWDA runs.



## **Vice president**

**Vice president** means they help make decisions about PWDA runs if the president can not do their job.



## **Secretary**

The **secretary** writes down what happens at board meetings and helps sort things out.



## **Treasurer.**

The **treasurer** helps to look after PWDA money.



In this section we tell you when people joined the PWDA board and when they left.

We also tell you what role they did.



Alexandra Bignell.

Board director.

Joined 14 November 2024.



Daniel Flynn.

Co-vice president and **interim president**

**Interim president** means they did the president role for a short time.

Joined 5 August 2024.



Stephanie Travers.

Secretary.

Joined 14 November 2024.



Tahlia-Rose Vanissum.

Secretary.

Joined 13 November 2025.



Wildaliz De Jesús Arocho.

Board director.

Joined 13 November 2025.



Jarrod Sandell-Hay.

Vice president.

Joined 13 November 2025.



Jeramy Hope.

President.

Left Thursday 1 June 2026.



Eva Sifis.

Co-vice president.

Left 13 November 2025.



Kevyn Morris.

Co-vice president.

Left 13 November 2025.



Stuart Mawbey.

Treasurer.

Left 13 November 2025.



Priscilla Brice.

Board director.

Left 24 January 2026.

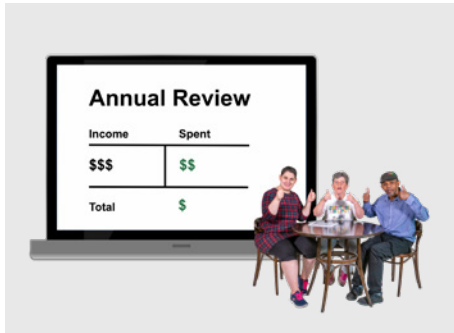


Trinity Ford.

President.

Left 12 November 2025.

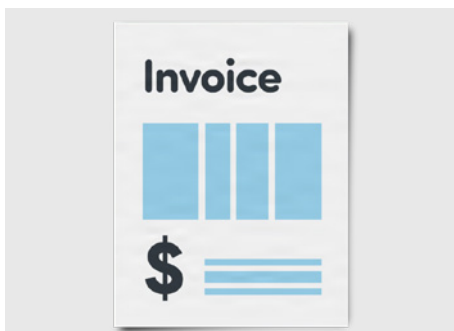
# Money



At the end of the year PWDA had more money than it spent.



This year PWDA income was \$11,090,597.



This year PWDA spent \$10,772,357.



PWDA gets money from Governments.

This includes **grants**.

A **grant** is money from the government to pay for important work that can help others.



Organisations.



People who support our work.



We use this money to do our work and pay our staff.

# Contact us



If you want support from PWDA  
you can contact us.



Call us on 1800 422 015.



Email us at [pwd@pwd.org.au](mailto:pwd@pwd.org.au)





[pwd.org.au](http://pwd.org.au)



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1800 422 015



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**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY  
AUSTRALIA**