

Portfolio summary: Disability support for older Victorians

What is the issue?

Disability is significantly more common among older people, particularly as Australia's population ages and more people live longer with lifelong disability, chronic illness, dementia, or age-related impairment.

Despite this, many older Victorians with disability face major gaps in support. While the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has improved outcomes for many Australians, people who become ineligible due to age often cannot access equivalent levels of support through other systems.

As a result, many older people rely on aged care, health and informal support systems that may not adequately meet disability-related needs. This can reduce independence and quality of life, increase pressure on carers, and contribute to avoidable hospitalisation or premature entry into residential aged care.

Older people with disability also face heightened risks of exclusion, discrimination and abuse due to the combined impacts of ageism and ableism.

Older Victorians with disability should have equitable access to support, participation and inclusion regardless of age or service system boundaries.

Key facts

- Over half of Victorians aged 65 and over, around 528,000 people, live with disability. They are 2.5 times more likely than the general population to experience a profound or severe disability.ⁱ
- Older Victorians account for nearly 40% of all disability support needs in the state. Almost half of those with a disability who are ineligible for the NDIS are aged 65+.
- One in three older Victorians with a disability report that their support needs at home are unmet or only partially met.ⁱⁱ
- An estimated 339,000 Victorians aged 65+ with a disability need assistance to live at home. Around 229,000 receive help from a government-funded service provider.
- Two in five informal carers provide care to a family member or friend over 65 - 72% for disability needs – and nearly half these carers are themselves over 60.ⁱⁱⁱ

Our advocacy agenda

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria advocates for disability support systems that are equitable, accessible and responsive to the needs of older Victorians.

We advocate for:

- more integrated pathways between disability, aged care and health systems;
- equitable access to disability supports regardless of age;
- improved access to assistive technology, allied health and home-based supports;
- stronger recognition of older people with disability within disability inclusion and reform agendas;
- increased advocacy, navigation and support services for older people with disability and their carers; and
- reforms that reduce the gaps between aged care and disability support systems.

Our advocacy aligns with broader reforms across aged care, disability and health systems, including work on foundational supports, assistive technology and community-based care.

Recent COTA Victoria documents

Recent examples of COTA Victoria's work on disability support and inclusion include:

- [Briefing: Findings of survey of older people with disabilities](#)
- [Disability support and inclusion for older Victorians: Towards an Agenda for Action](#)
- [Submission to Department of Social Services consultation on General Foundational Supports](#)
- [Submission to the review of the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

COTA Victoria has widely disseminated its key publication *Disability support and inclusion for older Victorians: Towards an Agenda for Action* to generate momentum for change.

In addition to the formal submissions listed above, we have made verbal representation to the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, via the Office for Disability and the Disability Reform and Complex Needs Branch.

Disability advocacy continues to be an influential component of our annual state budget advocacy, and our 2026 state election campaign advocacy.

Feedback on any issue raised in this briefing can be provided through our policy advocacy survey tool accessible at: [COTA Victoria Policy Advocacy - Feedback on Publications – Fill out form](#)

Last updated: June 2026

ⁱ Council on the Ageing Victoria. (2025). Agenda for action: Disability supports for older Victorians. <https://cotavic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Agenda-for-action-Disability-supports-for-older-Victorians.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings. ABS. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>.

ⁱⁱⁱ www.carersvictoria.org.au/media/5866/3600-national-carer-survey-2022-results-facts-flyer.pdf