



Creating
an inclusive
community
together

Australia's Disability Strategy Survey

Wave 2 Summary report

Introduction

The second wave of the Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) Survey – Share With Us was conducted in 2024 by the Australian National University on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. The purpose of the ADS Survey is to provide information on community attitudes towards people with disability and the experiences of people with disability. The survey was set up to gather information about people with disability, under Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (the Strategy).

The Strategy is the national plan to improve the lives of people with disability. It recognises the importance of community attitudes as one of the major drivers for achieving a more inclusive Australia.

Wave 1 of the ADS Survey was undertaken in 2022 and results can be found in the [Community attitudes towards people with disability](#) report.

There were few changes in attitudes or experiences between Waves 1 and 2 of the ADS Survey. The 2 main differences between Waves 1 and 2 were that:

- a higher proportion of people thought that people with disability were well represented in all aspects of life in 2024, compared with respondents in 2022
- general community attitudes towards people with disability were slightly less positive in 2024 than in 2022. There were fewer strongly positive responses and more “somewhat” positive responses in 2024 than in 2022.

This Summary Report presents key findings from the full ADS Survey Wave 2 Report.

Key findings

Community attitudes and experiences

The ADS Survey Wave 2 explored general attitudes of society towards people with disability, and experiences of people with disability in the community:

- People were more likely to recognise physical conditions (such as severe arthritis) as disability rather than mental health conditions (such as depression) or invisible disabilities (such as extreme fatigue).
- Attitudes towards people with disability were generally positive. Those with mental health conditions and intellectual disability saw the least positive attitudes. In particular, respondents trusted people with these conditions less in professional roles.
- Most people with disability have positive experiences in participating in society.
- About half feel valued, respected and well represented in most areas of life.
- There were few changes in perceptions of disability between Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the survey.

All respondents to the ADS Survey were asked to give their level of agreement with a series of statements about people with disability. The statements were on general attitudes towards people with disability in various aspects of life:

46%

agreed that some people achieve more (are more successful) because of their disability

59%

agreed that having disability can make someone a stronger person

61%

agreed that people with disability are easier to take advantage of (exploit or treat badly) compared with people without disability

50%

thought that people with disability are well represented in the community

20%

thought people with disability are well represented in leadership roles

Work and employment attitudes and experiences

ADS Survey Wave 2 explored attitudes and experiences specific to work and employment of people with disability.

- People with disability are less likely to be in paid work than people without disability (70% compared with 86% for those aged 18–64).
- Many people with disability are involved in volunteer work (30% of those aged 18 and over, the same as for people without disability).
- People with disability still experience negative attitudes which may stop them from finding or keeping a job or applying for a promotion. About 1 in 6 (17%) people with disability said that this happened often or all the time.
- Negative attitudes are experienced more strongly by people with visible disability, those with more severe forms of disability, and those with psychosocial, intellectual, or neurological disability.

General attitudes toward people with disability and work:

1 in 25

people agreed that “people with disability do not want to work, they do not look for a job”

Most people (76%) disagree with this statement

16%

agreed that people with disability work less efficiently than those without disability

86%

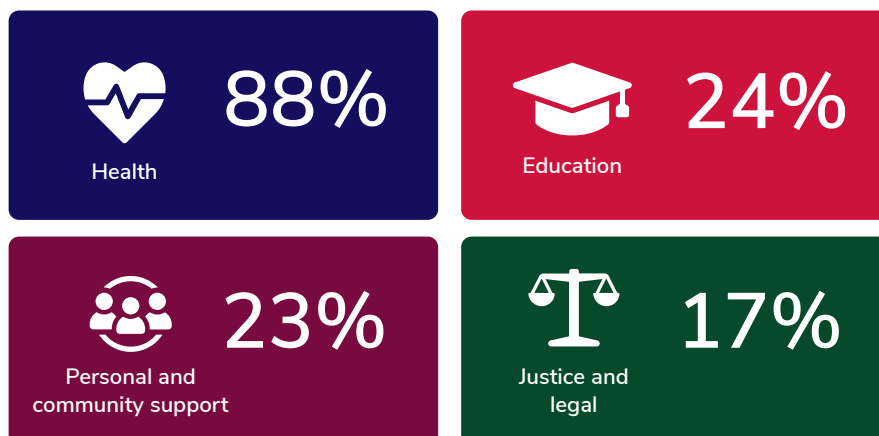
agreed that it is easier for people with disability to do their job if they have the right support and equipment at work

6 in 10

people (58%) thought that employing people with disability improves a company's image

Attitudes and experiences across key service sectors

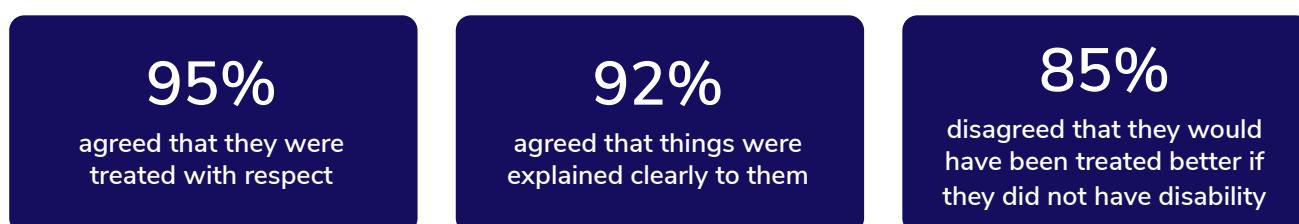
The proportions of people with disability who had contact with the 4 key sectors in the past year were:



Health

- Most health workers were confident in their ability to support patients with disability and were certain their attitudes towards people with disability were positive.
- There were some differences depending on the type of disability of the patient:
 - Health workers felt more confident about helping people with physical disabilities (78%), but less confident when helping people with sensory (62%) or intellectual disabilities (60%). Most health workers (96%) agreed that a patient with physical disability should be able to make their own treatment decisions, compared with 81% agreement for a patient with intellectual disability.
 - Almost all health workers (97%) said that people with sensory disabilities should be able to use the same fertility or family planning services as everyone else. About 3 in 4 (74%) thought that people with intellectual disabilities should be able to use those services.
- Health workers felt more confident and were more supportive when they often worked with people with disabilities, had a disability, or knew someone who did.

Of people with disability who had their most recent service interaction with health services:



People with disability were happy with the care they received from allied health services; most (89%) of those who used allied health services in the past year were satisfied with the quality of care they received.



Education

- Around 1 in 3 (34%) education workers often or very often interact with people with disability in their job.
- The majority of education workers (89%) were quite or very confident that they respond positively towards people with disability, and around half were confident in their ability to support people with disability as part of their role.
- Education workers who had frequent contact with people with disability in their job or had personal disability experience reported higher levels of confidence, and more positive and supportive attitudes.
- The majority of education workers agreed that a teenager with disability should attend sex education classes with their peers and disagreed to exclude a young person with disability from activities such as basketball. The level of agreement was lower when considering a teenager with psychosocial disability attending sex education classes. Education workers were more likely to agree with the exclusion of a young person with sensory disability from activities (such as basketball) compared with other disability types.

Almost 1 in 4 (24%) people with disability have used education services in the last year. Of those who had their most recent interaction with education services:

95%

agreed that they were
treated with respect

87%

agreed that things were
explained clearly

24%

thought they would have
been treated better if they
did not have a disability

Less positive experiences were reported by people with severe or profound disability, or intellectual disability, compared with people with physical disability.



Personal and community support

- Personal and community support workers felt confident in their ability to advise, assist, or treat people with disability. They were most confident in assisting people with physical disability (82%). They were least confident in assisting people with sensory disability (68%).

95% of support workers felt confident that they respond positively to people with disability in general

1 in 10 workers did not feel at all confident in supporting people with disability

- Depending on the type of disability, 59% to 74% of personal and community support workers strongly agreed that people with disability should be able to communicate directly with service providers.
- About 30% of people with disability who had most recently accessed personal and community support thought they would have been treated better if they did not have disability.



Justice and legal

- 90% of justice and legal sector workers were confident that they respond in a positive way to people with disability and around half of justice and legal workers were confident in their ability to advise or assist a person with disability.

24%

reported having had some contact with police in the last 12 months, and 6.7% had contact with judicial officers (judges or magistrates)

3 in 10

people with disability who needed support to communicate with police felt they did not receive it

- About 4 in 10 people with disability who needed support to communicate with judicial officers felt they did not receive support.

Where to find out more and what's next

Detailed information is available in the full ADS Survey Wave 2 Report, and on the [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 Outcomes Framework](#) webpages. The data from the survey will be available for approved users to download via the Australian Data Archive. Subsequent Waves will be conducted over the life of the Strategy, providing further data over time.



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