



Home and Living Consultation

An ordinary life at home

Feedback Submission

September 2021

The Disability Trust would like to acknowledge the contributions of the many people with disability and their carers in responding to this paper.



INTRODUCTION

The Disability Trust is committed to providing highly professional care and support to people with disabilities and their families.

Our staff support people with disabilities to live in a diverse range of home and living arrangements across NSW and the ACT. This diverse range includes drop in support for people living independently and living with friends or family, tailored approaches aligned with the NDIS's framework for Individualised Living Options, as well as 24/7 supports delivered under Supported Independent Living arrangements. Our supported living arrangements offer the people we support quality accessible homes that cater to the individual support needs of people with a range of disabilities.

The Disability Trust is committed to ensuring that the human rights of the people we support are upheld and believes that people with a disability have the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times and to live their lives the way they choose, create their own opportunities and explore their own journey to reach their goals.

For people receiving a service from The Disability Trust, Choice and Control is an intrinsic part of their supports. This is reflected in the Vision, Purpose and Values of The Disability Trust and influences every decision that is made by the organisation and its employees.

The Disability Trust maintains an over-riding commitment to quality care and support tailored to the needs of each individual – positive feedback on our performance in relation to this priority is consistently reflected in results of annual surveys with stakeholders and the testimonials of the people we support and their carers.



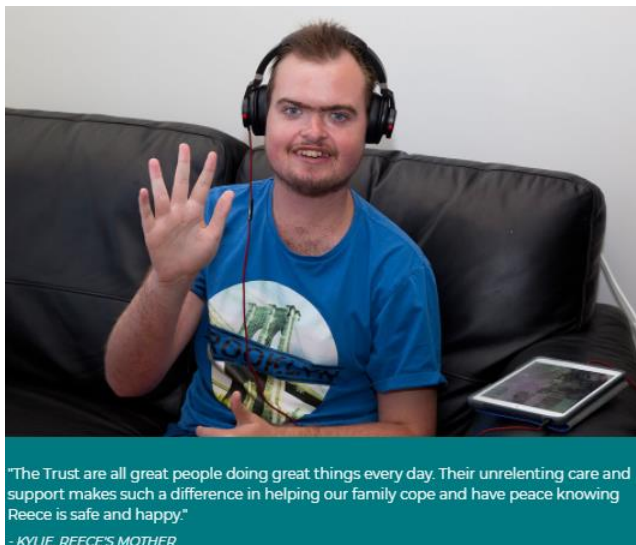
"They genuinely care that my brother has the most optimal quality of life possible."
- TERRI, SISTER OF MARK

As the name implies, trust is central to the work of The Disability Trust.

People with disabilities and their families trust us to give them the highest possible levels of care and support; our staff trust us to provide the training and support they need in their rewarding but often challenging work; and government agencies trust us to deliver best practice standards of client care.

The Disability Trust supports over 4,000 people with disability with a range of supports. A large percentage of these people receive assistance with daily living through in home supports; up to 364 of the people we support are living in shared Supported Independent Living arrangements across 90 households in NSW / ACT.

Tenants in our shared living houses are supported to access the community, to engage in vocational, educational and recreational activities of their choice and to take an active role in the home including participating in meal preparation and choosing social activities with their housemates and friends in the community.



Many of the people we support live with disabilities that impact of cognitive function, such as intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, acquired brain disorders and a range of genetic and neurological conditions.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. **Do you talk to people about how you would like to live?**
 - a. **If not, why not?**
 - b. **What kinds of things do you talk about / would want to talk about?**

The Disability Trust adopts a proactive approach to engaging the people we support in conversations about how they can enjoy 'an ordinary life' and engage in opportunities aligned with the opportunities their age peers experience.

Moving out of home to live more independently of parents and family is a typical experience for most adults in Australia, but access to this opportunity is often complex for the people we support, impacted by affordability, social networks, independent living skills and confidence levels of both the person with a disability and their families.

In supporting people to explore their aspirations and dreams within the cycle of goal setting, preparing for life transitions and discussing NDIS plan reviews, staff at The Disability Trust are often the ones to initiate conversations about planning for the future and thinking about where and how people would like to live.

Our clients provide feedback that outside conversations with their support staff, they might raise the idea of independent living with parents, carers, siblings and peers – but typically find it difficult to know what options are available and how to make things happen, given that for many families the decision to support a person to leave the care of family is a big step – emotionally, financially and logistically. Where families drive the conversations and have a clear vision about the possibilities for independent living, the results can be incredible – but where informal carers / family members are hesitant or fearful about their loved one leaving home, it is typically very difficult for the people we support to get traction with their aspiration for

independent living. It often takes a great deal of time – sometimes several years - of purposeful support to the person with a disability and their carers to help them explore options, develop confidence in the possibility, and trust that the model of support is sustainable and in the best interests of the person with a disability.

Michael is a 63 year old man who was born with Down Syndrome - he lives with his Mum, who is now in her late 80's. Every week, Michael tells his support staff that he wants to move out to live with peers in a familiar share house where staff are available 24/7 - a Supported Independent Living arrangement in his local community. Mum has always been very worried about her son leaving home and it's been somewhat difficult to progress the conversation with her. In recent years, Michael's support staff have purposely worked to create opportunities for Michael to enjoy short stays away from home, and keep the conversation alive about planning for Michael's future to build Mum's confidence that he will be safe and well supported, and reassure her that this is what Michael really wants to do. Mum is now supportive of the idea so Michael's team has started working with the NDIS to ensure provision for SIL funding is built into Michael's next plan.

Fears often expressed by family members focus on issues of:

- safety for the person with a disability that family perceive as vulnerable in the community – particularly at night, or if 'unexpected' events / changes to routines arise;
- continuity – that their family member will have access to the level of support they need in an ongoing way, with many families expressing high anxiety about the risk of funding levels in NDIS plans being eroded over time;
- reliability of informal support networks – concern that informal supports sourced from the community rather than family are at risk of waning over time – particularly without the ongoing involvement of family or someone trusted to facilitate their involvement.

People consulted for this feedback consistently wanted support to have more conversations with their families to explore their options and map out a clear way to make their dreams a reality. They consistently expressed a strong level of trust in the staff they were most familiar with, who already supported them regularly in their daily activities.

We need to recognise that unfortunately not all people have natural networks that can assist with planning for where they want to live. Informal networks outside family need to be cultivated and built in a purposeful way – which takes time and targeted support.

For people with a disability who are NDIS participants, consideration should be given to creating the opportunity to fund these supports from a person's plan rather than rely on LAC's and planners to lead the conversations; access to these people when needed is a major issue of concern. While some participants work have provision for support coordination in their plan, many still reported to feel more connected with the staff who regularly support them – who they felt 'knew them best'. Flexibility with funding in plan budgets to enable people with disability to choose who should support them to explore their home and living options would be beneficial.

2. Where would you like to get information to think about where and how you live?

Based on experience of what works within The Disability Trust, a powerful way for the people we support to get information is through direct exposure to different home and living options –

- seeing first hand a range of home and living arrangements people are experiencing in their local community;
- meeting with people who are also exploring their options (peer networking);
- attending facilitated forums and self advocacy conferences where people share their stories about their home and living arrangements; and
- being supported to access information, videos and easy read workbooks on the topic.



3. What information, learning and resources could we create to help you choose your home and living supports?

Resources that actively support shared conversations are most valuable.

- Video resources - particularly people sharing their stories and experiences of home and living arrangements;
- Pictorial and easy read resources that explain a variety of home and living arrangements;
- Workbooks and 'journey maps' to help people and their informal supports know where to start and steps to take to create a path to more independent living.

4. How helpful is the NDIS website to find information on home and living supports?

Many of the people we support live with a cognitive impairment that can impact on their literacy and capacity to independently search and access information on the internet, including on the NDIS website; the NDIS did not feature strongly as a source of information for either clients or carers during this consultation.

5. Would it be helpful if your informal supports (e.g. friends, family and carers) knew more about how and where you want to live?

a. How can we work better with your informal supports to help them know more?

Home and living outcomes for people with disability are heavily influenced by the presence of an informal supports in their life – whether this presence is enabling or restrictive, the clarity of their vision for future arrangements, the strength of their conviction to make the dream become a reality and the resources they have on hand to make it happen.

The conversations definitely need to start earlier in the lives of the people we support than they do at the moment.

6. If your NDIS funding was more flexible, would you purchase different support/s for your home life that what you have now?

During this consultation people certainly expressed a desire for more flexible funding in their plans and less constraints about spending their budget from different line items and budget categories to a) explore their home and living options, and b) to implement their chosen pathway to a home and living arrangement of their choice – although more importantly, they wanted confidence that the funding in their plan accurately reflected their support needs with surety that funding would continue to be reflective of need year to year and not eroded over time by the vagaries of the planning process or different views and approaches of individual planners.

There was a strong sense that if a home and living arrangement is working well for the person with a disability, funding needed to be assured at a level to enable the arrangement to continue.

“I have lived in my current home & living arrangement for over 5 years - it works really well for me and up until recently I received funding in my plan that was specifically to support this arrangement. Even though I asked for this funding to be maintained, I didn't get enough funding in my last plan so I have had to use my funding from my drop in and community access supports to make sure I can stay living where I live with my on-call supports. That was so stressful.” - Cara

The need for flexibility is highest during the exploration phase. Once a support model is chosen, implemented and confirmed to be working effectively, people with disability and their families were generally in favour of a mechanism in their plan to quarantine their home and living funds, embed it in the plan in a way that was easy to administer / process claims, and ensure continuity from plan to plan.

7. Who helps you to organise your NDIS supports?

a. How helpful is this support?

Participants in this consultation identified that the key people helping to organise their NDIS supports were either family – often Mum – or trusted support staff.

Many people with intellectual disabilities that we spoke to had a poor level of understanding about the detail in their plan budgets.

8. Have you ever used peer support networks or a mentor to find / access NDIS supports?

The Disability Trust has occasionally organised forums for peers, as well as forums for families and informal supports to explore home and living options. The general experience is that many people and their families engage only when accommodation is emerging as a fairly immediate issue in someones life – early conversations and preparatory planning is not necessarily seen as a high priority until circumstances escalate prioritisation of the issue.

9. Who would you be most likely to use to help you implement your plan?

For people who have supportive family or other informal supports already in their life, these were consistently the first port of call when exploring and developing home and living options. Many people also spoke about how much they valued their support staff – a trusted relationship with support staff was a major enabling factor, particularly for people who didn't have access to informal supports.

10. How would you like to encourage providers to offer new and innovative service options?

The biggest issue raised by people with disability and their families was the need to work collaboratively to create innovative solutions. One of the biggest constraints in the home and living arena is access to supports and resources not funded by the NDIS – particularly rental properties and the financial resources to purchase properties to enable people to realise their home and living aspirations.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

A number of people we support have made contributions to the conversation – these are attached in the following pages.


Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to this consultation paper. For further enquiries or clarification please contact Lynne Koerbin, 0409 446 818 or by email on lynne.koerbin@disabilitytrust.org.au

WHO ARE WE

Established in 1974 The Disability Trust has its roots firmly in the community, is based in NSW, Victoria, QLD and the ACT, we ensure that our services are based on the needs of the individuals and families accessing them. Our services include a wide range of residential and centre based supports as well as community access and employment.

Through all services, we focus on skills development and capacity building and assist people to reach their full potential.

We are committed to:



Ensuring that the voices of people we support are heard.

Delivering Exceptional Supports within a framework of Human Rights.

Creating an Inclusive World, where people with disabilities are active members of their community.

As our name implies, trust is central to our operations. People with disabilities and their families trust us to give them the highest possible levels of care and support; our staff trust us to provide the training and support they need in their rewarding but often challenging work. Our funding partners such as the NDIS and other government agencies, trust us to deliver efficient supports that are of the highest quality.

We provide a wide range of supports to adults and children with physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric disabilities, people with acquired brain injury and dual diagnosis.

KATELYNS FEEDBACK

Katelyn Blacker

Where do you live Katelyn?

22 Howard Ave Bega



Do you like living in this house?

I Like it I can walk to
work and Friends



Who do you live with?

Gravin and Beth

Who helped you move into this house?

Workability and Family



Are you happy with the people that support you?

yes make me feel safe
and comfortable

What is your favourite thing about living at Howard Ave?

COOKING karaoke Living
independently movies



WAYNES FEEDBACK

Wayne Ramus

What do you like about living at Golf Circuit?

I like that I can go for a walk to the golf club and I can go to the shopping centre. Everything is close by and in walking distance.

I like that I can hear the ocean because the beach is so close.

I like the backyard here at Golf Circuit, I can grow vegetables in the veggie garden, and there are lots of birds around that I feed regularly.

I have a big bathroom and lots of space to move, which I need.

Are you happy with the support provided to you? Why?

Yes! I am happy with all of my support people, all of the staff that support me I'm very happy with.

I am happy because my mum is very happy with where I live and that everything is going well for me.

All of the people listen to me and they talk to me all of the time. All of the support workers are very friendly with me. "I think its just great around here".

Is there anything that you would change about your current living arrangement?

No, I like everything just how it is. I get to go out with staff from The Disability Trust and also my other support worker Jed.



DANE & JUNEES FEEDBACK

What do you like about living at Quondola?

Dane – My choice does matter. I have lived in a SIL house and it did not work for me. I live at Quondola now and my own space. I can make all my own choices.

It has happy neighbours. My apartment is lovely inside. I call it my happy apartment. It is quiet.



What did you like about the Friendly Neighbour?

Dane - I felt very happy because the friendly neighbour was living there and I felt very comfortable because he was there. He always gave me a big wave when I came home.

I felt very secure when I had a friendly neighbour. The friendly neighbour helped me explain to my neighbours my needs and my ways because I find this difficult. My neighbours got to know me and understood me.

The friendly neighbour helps me to understand my neighbours and respect their needs.

June – Friendly neighbour was an advocate for all the residents. Especially at the resident's meetings. By having a friendly neighbour, they can assist the resident's to promptly problem solve between each other.

Dane had 3 different plans in the first roll out of the NDIS. To eliminate the risk of that ever happening again we have requested the same planner each review. Given Dane's complex needs, I have been assured by the NDIS that they have noted he has no extended family other than myself. He cannot manage without the overnight monitoring funding. I have to have faith they will respect, honour and fund that component. If I was not here to advocate for my son I am worried that his accommodation funding would be cut/reduced.

Why did you choose Quondola at an accommodation options for Dane?



Dane's psychologist contacted me and said there are too many variables a SIL home and his anxiety level was increasing. The Psychologist said he needs to be in his own secure space with support nearby. Dane then came home to live until The Disability Trust informed us of Quondola as an independent living option for Dane.

Dane liked the layout, the space of the apartment- the simplicity of the apartment, the cleanliness, the bright colours, friendly neighbour component and the sense of community.

The friendly neighbour is what attracted me. My son could sleep though an alarm and a fire. I knew the friendly neighbour would be able to assist Dane in an emergency.

This reduced my concerns of Dane living independently. The friendly neighbour is a bit of a "gate keeper" to keep an eye on who is coming into the unit complex.

MATT'S FEEDBACK

What do you like about living at Quondola?

When we had a friendly neighbour, I liked that if there was a problem I could let the friendly neighbour know about it and he could help me fix it. It is good living close to shops because I don't drive a car. It is very handy to have TDT to organise people to fix any maintenance issues and that the gardeners come and look after my lawn and garden.

My anxiety is less knowing who my neighbours are and having a safe place to live. Quondola is a community and I like knowing who lives around me.

It helps with my mum's stress knowing I live at Quondola and I am supported.

It's very handy to have an on-call number I can call if I need help. I know the people on call and feel confident I could call if I needed help.

I think the NDIS need more places like Quondola to live. I have friends that want to live here and they can't because there are no free units.

Matt didn't have an understanding of funding and his NDIS plan.

CARA AND ADAM'S FEEDBACK

Do you have any concerns/anxiety around receiving the correct funding in your NDIS plan to ensure you can sustain your accommodation?

I cross my fingers and hope that I have a planner that understands what I need in my plan so I can keep living where I am. I worry my funding will be taken away from me. A planner said to me at one of my plan reviews the way you've phrased why you need funding your claim will be rejected. I feel anxious when I am waiting for my new plan to come back. They never get it right.



I have to repeat why I need certain funding in my plan over and over to different people in the NDIS. They question everything. It would be good if I could have the same planner every time.

Even though I have asked for funding for my accommodation and drop in supports I didn't get enough funding for my accommodation so I have had to use my funding from my drop in supports to make sure I can stay living at Quondola. That was so stressful.

NDIS reviews should be at least on zoom so the planner can see me and I can see them. I do not like my review being over the phone.

Planners need to understand the different styles of accommodation and every model looks different. It's not just black and white - there are lots of different living situations. A more flexible approach would help me.

The friendly neighbour was good because he would check in if I was unwell and he would help. I could count on him and felt safe and supported. I could message him and ask for help. He regularly organised social events to do together. He was always there and always said hello and checked in.

What do you like about living at Quondola?

I love living here and I want to continue living here. Its closed in (gated community). I like how we are close to shops. I like the communal area and the community feel.

It's a good thing having someone organise tradespeople to fix things.

One of the main things my mum wanted was me to live somewhere I am safe and supported so they can take a step back.

FEEDBACK FROM RICHARD, TIM & DALE

Home & Living Support

Stories for 'An Ordinary Life at Home'



The Disability Trust Participants:

Richard Rose

Timothy David

Dale Burnett

NDIS Goal: Be more independently settled and have a partner.



Richard Rose
45 Years old
Tathra, NSW

Do you talk to people about how you would like to live?

Yes, I have been discussing with my sister about where I want to stay

and want to do. I have also been talking to you and Tim from the Disability Trust.

Where would you like to get information to think about/would want to talk about?

I have been searching online for rental properties in Merimbula and Tathra areas.

What information, learning and resources could we create to help you choose your home and living supports?

Maybe give me easy to follow direction with a page with simple explanation about supports available for accommodation. I struggle with decision-making and problem solving. I would prefer having simple diagrams to show me what steps I need to take for different living arrangements that there are.

How helpful is the NDIS website to find information on home and living supports?

I found that there were no supports in the area that I live and that I would have to move away, which I think is not okay for me. I couldn't find much information on the NDIS website.

Would it be helpful if your informal supports knew more about how and where you want to live?

Yes, because I struggle with making the right choice on this matter and I always ask my sister for advice, and she helps me with any life matters.

I think including my sister in all discussion around accommodation would be very helpful, just like today's interview.

If your NDIS funding was more flexible, would you purchase different support/s for your home life than what you have now?

Most of the times I don't understand how my NDIS funds are used and who uses it. The NDIA never discusses this with me, and I always ask Dichen from the Disability Trust or Megan from Flourish. If I knew more about my NDIS plan I would definitely use from support around getting a place.

Who helps you too organise your NDIS supports?

My sister helps the most and then it would be disability trust and Flourish.

I find conversations about accommodation with Dichen very helpful because it gives me hope and a way forward. I am currently talking to Dichen about getting a job once I move out of my parents' home so that way, I can pay rent.

Have you ever used peer support networks or a mentor to find/access NDIS supports?

No, I have not. But I do talk to my support workers a lot about life and such.

Who would you be most likely to use to help you implement your plan?

The disability trust, Flourish.

How would you like to encourage providers to offer new and innovative service options?

I think if you had a diagram showing steps to follow for what accommodation supports are out there, would be very helpful for me. For example, something like infographics would also be very easy to follow. Right now, I don't really know who to go to for information with the NDIS.

Do you identify as: I am Australian

Is there something you would like to see in a home and living policy specific to your response in Q 12?

Not sure but I would like to see more consultation around availability of supports with people with disability and its less confusing.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I am currently visiting my sister to seek advise on accommodation stuff and I would really like to find something in Merimbula and Tathra area so that I don't have to move away somewhere far. I would like to continue to receive supports as it is but not in my parents' home.

NDIS Goal: Save money, learn independent living skills, and buy a place of my own



Timothy David
31 Years old
Millangandi, NSW

Do you talk to people about how you would like to live?

No, I haven't really talked about this besides Dichen and Glenn Bonser from the Disability trust.

Where would you like to get information to think about/would want to talk about?

I have been looking at rental properties in Merimbula and Pambula area for a long time now.

What information, learning and resources could we create to help you choose your home and living supports?

I wish that there was more information on rentals or shared accommodation. I would really like to move out of the house.

How helpful was the NDIS website to find information on home and living supports?

I haven't really used the NDIS website I am not so good technology wise. I always ask you and Glenn.

Would it be helpful if your informal supports knew more about how and where you want to live?

I don't think so because I don't have that kind of relationship with my family, and I am not sure if they would understand.

If your NDIS funding was more flexible, would you purchase different support/s for your home life than what you have now?

I understand that I don't have many funds to use many supports, so if I have more funds I could use it to help me find a house or a flat.

Who helps you too organise your NDIS supports?

My mother does sometimes but mostly you guys.

Have you ever used peer support networks or a mentor to find/access NDIS supports?

No, I haven't but I talk to Glenn Bonser about life and work. I also talk to Dichen about looking for a roommate and moving out of home.

Who would you be most likely to use to help you implement your plan?

The Disability Trust.

How would you like to encourage providers to offer new and innovative service options?

Help me find the right information about shared accommodation.

Do you identify as: **Yes, my father is aboriginal?**

Is there something you would like to see in a home and living policy specific to your response in Q 12?

I am not sure.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I am working hard (5 days a week) to save up to move out of here, but I am finding it hard to get information on any rental properties or how I can rent them. I need lots of support around paperwork. I am not sure I can do this by myself and so I would appreciate any support in getting a place to live.

NDIS GOAL: Get a job and have a house to live in 5 years from now



Dale Burnett
22 Years old
Wyndham, NSW

Do you talk to people about how you would like to live?

No not really. Only to you (Disability Trust) and mum.

Where would you like to get information to think about/would want to talk about?

I don't know where to start.

What information, learning and resources could we create to help you choose your home and living supports?

Maybe few years from now I will be able to decide what information I need.

How helpful was the NDIS website to find information on home and living supports?

I have not seen the website.

Would it be helpful if your informal supports knew more about how and where you want to live?

My mum always wants to know what my plans are, but I am not sure myself.

If your NDIS funding was more flexible, would you purchase different support/s for your home life than what you have now?

I would like to have more supports other than just the groups and then hopefully I can learn more about living independently.

Who helps you too organise your NDIS supports?

My mum and Dichen.

Have you ever used peer support networks or a mentor to find/access NDIS supports?

No, I have never used any mentor support. I just talk to you on-on-one when I have things to discuss.

Who would you be most likely to use to help you implement your plan?

I ask my mother and if she is unsure, I ask you.

How would you like to encourage providers to offer new and innovative service options?

Maybe have gaming groups and computer lesson supports so that I can look for NDIS information because I don't know anything right now.

Do you identify as: Australian

Is there something you would like to see in a home and living policy specific to your response in Q 12?

Just that my mum would really like me to move you and live by myself and I would like to make that happen, but I would need a job first and then find a place.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

My mum does everything for me and I am hoping one day I can get more support and information so that mum does not have to do much.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

Journey to Inclusion



Congratulations to our Hunter and Supported Independent Living services who have helped move 76 participants into 17 new homes.

Over the last 12 months The Disability Trust has been supporting people from Stockton, Kanangra and Tomaree to move to their new home in the community. It is great to see how many communities have welcomed people to their new neighbourhood. The Disability Trust is committed to an Australia in which people with a disability can exercise their rights and choices.

This has been a huge change for people with a disability, families and supporters but there has been some great outcomes for people as they settle into life in their new home and the local community. Being included in community is really important for all of us.

One of our local cafes have even built an accessible path so people can enjoy their coffee and cake. Whilst COVID 19 has impacted on people exploring their communities, it hasn't stopped all activities, particularly people enjoying their daily chores that we all do at home.



Reconnecting FAMILIES FROM SUNSHINE LODGE

When the old Sunshine Lodge boarding house in Mittagong closed down after many years, some long-term residents had lost touch with their families. As they transferred into their wonderful new Disability Trust group homes in the region our Disability Support Worker, Michelle Coates, started the process of helping them to put their affairs in order.

"The job I was given was to find out if any clients had wills or superannuation, to empower them to decide what their wishes are and to organise a plan for them. The question, 'Who's your next of kin?' has brought up all of this information. It's opened up some lovely channels of conversation".

This provided a great opportunity to help people like William to reconnect with their families, as Michelle explains. "William, who has an intellectual disability, was one of 17 children who were all put in care after his mother died when he was seven. He is well known around the Mittagong area as a local character, as he's always covered in badges and wears two or three hats. William is in his eighties now, and I've managed to find his sister who is eighty. She was so pleased when I got in touch as she thought William had died. Now they talk on the phone once a week, and she sends him little gifts all the time".

Another client called Rosemary wanted to locate her cousins, so Michelle put information out on lots of Facebook pages covering the areas they lived in, and discovered that Rosemary has a huge family tree.

"They hold family reunions a couple of times a year, so once COVID-19's over with, we're hoping to get her to a family reunion. We're also trying to confirm that she is of aboriginal descent.

"In some cases, we're only finding out now more about their families and their past, and it's nice to be able to reconnect people down the track.

"It shows that we care and are prepared to do extra follow up.

"It's good to be able to sit down with the residents and talk to them to find out if there's anything they would like help with.

"Yesterday I had eight residents make a will. I'm so proud of them."

Michelle put information out on lots of Facebook pages covering the areas they lived in, and discovered that Rosemary has a huge family tree.

ROLE OF SUPPORT COORDINATION

HOUSING *Solutions*

At Trusted Support Coordination one of the most complex but rewarding things we do is assist in finding suitable housing for our participants.

Finding a place to call home can be a struggle, especially if your home needs to form part of your support network. Housing options include Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), Supported Independent Living (SIL), Medium and Short Term Accommodation (MTA and STA). Within our team of more than 60 support coordinators, we have successfully applied for over 40 SDA placements.

While most of the participants we support move into SIL accommodation, it's important to understand that not everyone who needs SIL also needs Specialist Disability Accommodation. It's all about the physical housing requirements a person needs to make their home work. There are different levels of SDA, depending on an individual's own support needs.

This ranges from the 'basic' category where the housing needs no specialist design feature but may be in a location that assists with the delivery of supports, right up to the 'High Physical Support' category that has a high level of physical access provision, and includes things such as structural provision for ceiling hoists, fully accessible bathrooms and minimum door widths of 950mm.

Jeanie is one of our support coordinators who has recently assisted Carmen to move from an aged care facility into her own SDA unit. Carmen is only 48, but had been living in an aged care facility for 10 years when Jeanie started helping her to find more appropriate housing. Carmen didn't want to live in a standard group home environment; she is a

young woman who previously lived independently and wanted to make a space her own and to have her kids around.

Jeanie assisted Carmen in securing her accommodation first, ensuring her home would support her needs and enable her to reach her goals. Jeanie connected Carmen with property development group Charvin and Slaven, who work with participants to create a home specifically designed to meet their needs. Engaging with an experienced SDA developer enabled Carmen to have input into the design of her home, and ensured it helped her to live as independently as possible.

With her home sorted, Carmen went about interviewing SIL providers to choose who would be the best fit for her. In securing accommodation first, Carmen was able to have choice and control over her house, her supports and her life.

Trusted Support Coordination prides itself on tailoring housing solutions to ensure everyone has a home where they can grow, learn and receive the support they need to work towards their goals.

For more information contact 1300 016 346.

