**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

# Disability support services
## Services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2013–14

**bulletin 130**

## Summary

In 2013–14, an estimated 321,531 people used disability support services under the National Disability Agreement (NDA)—a 9% increase since 2009–10, and a 3% increase since 2012–13.

Of those who used NDA services in 2013–14:

+ 44% used community support services, 41% used employment services, 18% used community access services, 14% used accommodation support services, and 12% used respite services

+ around three-quarters (74%) were aged under 50, with an average age of 34

+ most (59%) were male

+ the majority (87%) were Australian-born

+ 6% were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

+ more than half (55%) had an intellectual or learning disability (44% as their primary disability)

+ many needed at least some assistance with activities of daily living (68%), activities of independent living (82%), and activities of work, education and community living (86%)

+ more than half (54%) lived with their families

+ close to one-third (32%) of those aged 15 and over were not in the labour force

+ 70% of those aged 15 and over who were in the labour force were unemployed

+ an estimated 4,200 transitioned to the National Disability Insurance Scheme during the year.

## Contents

## 1   The disability services environment

The disability policy and service delivery environment has undergone significant change in recent years, including the endorsement of a National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 in February 2011, the introduction of a revised National Disability Agreement (NDA) in December 2012, and the introduction and staged implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from 1 July 2013.

The NDIS represents a fundamental shift in the disability policy and service delivery environment and, over time, will largely replace the current provision of services to people with disability under the NDA (NDA services). At present, however, most users of disability services are still receiving support under the NDA, and the associated data remain the main source for reporting. During the transition to the NDIS, NDA services data will continue to form an essential component of the national picture on the use of disability services in Australia. They also provide important contextual information for the implementation and operation of the NDIS.

While the NDIS represents a significant step forward for many people with disability, the National Disability Strategy remains the key to achieving improvements in access to mainstream services and support for all people with disability. The Strategy seeks to drive a more inclusive approach to the design of policies, programs and infrastructure so that people with disability can participate in all areas of Australian life. Improving access to buildings, transport, social events, education, health care services and employment will provide opportunities for people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens. The Strategy is an important mechanism to ensure that the principles underpinning the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UN 2006) are incorporated into policies and programs affecting people with disability, their families and carers.

## 1.1 The National Disability Agreement

The NDA articulates the role of governments in delivering disability support services. Under it, Australian governments fund a range of services that aim to improve the lives of people with disability and of their carers, and to ensure that both have the opportunity to participate as valued members of the community.

Iterations of the NDA have governed the provision of disability support services in Australia since 1991. The latest replaced the previous Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement in January 2009, and was revised in December 2012 as a result of national health reforms.

Eligibility requirements for disability support services under the NDA may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and the actual service a person can receive is subject to the availability of services (for example, based on the number of available places in particular programs).

Information on the use of NDA services is collected in the Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (DS NMDS) (see Box 1.1). In 2013–14, an estimated 321,531 people used disability support services under the NDA (Table 2.2). The number of service users has generally increased over the 5 years to 2013–14—by 9% since 2009–10, and by 3% between 2012–13 and 2013–14 (Table 2.3). If service users who only used open employment services are excluded (see Box 1.2), an estimated 219,564 people used NDA services in 2013–14—an increase of 7% since 2009–10, and of 3% between 2012–13 and 2013–14.

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**Box 1.1: Things to note about Disability Services National Minimum Data Set data**

Further information on the DS NMDS can be found in the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015) as well as on the AIHW website. The appendix to this bulletin contains technical information, such as a data quality statement (including information on scope and interpretability) and a glossary of terms, as well as additional tables (including selected breakdowns of data by state and territory).

Readers should note that percentages presented in the tables, figures and text in this bulletin generally exclude 'not stated/not collected/not applicable' responses, whereas percentages presented in the accompanying appendix tables generally those responses. Footnotes to the table indicate where this is the case.

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In 2013–14, $7.5 billion was spent by Australian governments on disability support services under the NDA (excluding specialist psychiatric disability services) (Table 2.4). Of this, $7.0 billion was allocated directly to service delivery.

### 1.2   The National Disability Insurance Scheme

In response to the Productivity Commission's final report on the *Inquiry into disability care and support* (PC 2011) which was released in 2011, the Australian Government announced the introduction of the NDIS in July 2012. Because of the fundamental change to service provision, the NDIS is being rolled out in stages, starting from July 2013. From 1 July 2013, trial sites began in South Australia (for children from birth to age 14), Tasmania (for young people aged 15–24), the Barwon area of Victoria (for people aged up to 65), and the Hunter area in New South Wales (for people aged up to 65). The 2013–14 trial sites in South Australia and Tasmania can be considered age-specific, while those in the other jurisdictions are largely regionally based.

The NDIS is intended to help people who have a significant and permanent disability and who need assistance with everyday activities. This includes people whose disability is attributed to intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory, or physical impairment, or a psychiatric condition. Unlike the arrangements under the NDA, which largely block-fund providers based on the available places in a set number of programs, the NDIS is intended to provide more choice and control, and deliver a lifelong, individualised-funding approach to support. Each individual seeking access to the NDIS is assessed according to a common set of criteria. Those who are deemed eligible participate in an individualised planning process to identify the reasonable and necessary supports they need to enable them to achieve their goals, and they receive an individualised package of funding to purchase the supports as identified in their plan.

NDIS participants may choose to either keep their current support arrangements once they move across to the NDIS, or change them, provided they are consistent with the legislation that the NDIS operates under.

Data on the NDIS are collected by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), an independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the NDIS, and are published in quarterly reports. At 30 June 2014, 8,585 participants were eligible for the NDIS, 7,316 participants had an approved plan, and it was estimated that $130.9 million in funding would be provided in 2013–14(NDIA 2014).

### 1.3   Transition of NDA service users to the NDIS

With the gradual roll-out of the NDIS across Australia, it is expected that many existing NDA service users will transition to the NDIS and exit from the DS NMDS collection over time. However, not all NDA service users will be eligible for the NDIS, including those aged 65 and over, and, while some specialist disability support programs will be rolled into the NDIS, others will continue once the NDIS is introduced (see Box 1.2). It is intended that people who are clients of specialist disability support programs and not eligible for the NDIS, or who are accessing programs that will not be rolled into the NDIS, will continue to receive support under 'continuity of support' arrangements.

The NDIA will start collecting detailed information about NDA service users once they transition to the NDIS—that is, once the service user has an approved plan, and funding is available through the NDIA. At this point there is no need for jurisdictions to continue reporting these service users in the DS NMDS. This includes service users receiving some component of their services from jurisdictions as 'cash' contributions (that is, full funding responsibility transfers to the NDIA) or 'in-kind' contributions (that is, funding and contract management responsibility remains with jurisdictions in the short to medium term). A person might appear in both collections in the year they transition—in the DS NMDS for part of a year until they transition, and then in the NDIA data for the subsequent part.

Data from the 2013–14 DS NMDS show that an estimated 4,200 NDA service users transitioned to the NDIS that year (AIHW 2015: Table D2; see also Section 5).

## 2   What are NDA services?

### 2.1   Who provides services?

Agencies that deliver NDA services collect data against each 'service type outlet' they operate (see AIHW 2015: Glossary). An agency may provide one or more NDA service types and, as such, may collect data for one or more service type outlets.

In 2013–14, the majority (84%) of service type outlets were in the non-government sector, and most of these were income tax exempt (71% of all service type outlets) (Table 2.1).

For further information on agencies and service type outlets, see AIHW 2015: tables B2–B13.

**Table 2.1: Disability support service type outlets by service group and agency sector, 2013–14 (number)**

| Service group | Government | | | Non-government | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Australian/ state/ territory | Local | Subtotal | Income tax exempt | Non- income tax exempt | Subtotal | Total |
| Accommodation support | 1,468 | 39 | 1,507 | 4,511 | 834 | 5,345 | 6,852 |
| Community support | 594 | 26 | 620 | 1,333 | 172 | 1,505 | 2,125 |
| Community access | 63 | 59 | 122 | 2,801 | 268 | 3,069 | 3,191 |
| Respite | 124 | 53 | 177 | 1,359 | 279 | 1,638 | 1,815 |
| Open employment | 101 | — | 101 | 888 | 514 | 1,402 | 1,503 |
| Supported employment | 2 | 3 | 5 | 297 | 1 | 298 | 303 |
| Advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication | 17 | 1 | 18 | 251 | 48 | 299 | 317 |
| Other support | 11 | 54 | 65 | 58 | 44 | 102 | 167 |
| **Total** | **2,380** | **235** | **2,615** | **11,498** | **2,160** | **13,658** | **16,273** |
| *Total (excluding open employment)* | *2,279* | *235* | *2,514* | *10,610* | *1,646* | *12,256* | *14,770* |

## 2.2   What services are provided?

Under the NDA, the Australian Government has responsibility for the provision of employment services for people with disability, and the states and territories have responsibility for the provision of other services. In 2013–14, 65% (207,810) of service users accessed state or territory provided services (Table 2.2).

Services available under the NDA include 34 individual service types which can be grouped into the following seven service groups (Table 2.2):

+ Accommodation support—services that provide accommodation to people with disability, and services that provide support to enable a person with disability to remain in their existing accommodation or to move to more suitable or appropriate accommodation. This comprises: large residential/institution; small residential/ institution; hostels; group homes; attendant care/personal care; in-home accommodation support; alternative family placement; and 'other accommodation support'. This group of services was used by 14% of service users (46,177).

+ Community support—services that provide the support needed for a person with disability to live in a non-institutional setting. This comprises: therapy support; early childhood intervention; behaviour/specialist intervention; counselling; regional resource and support teams; case management, local coordination and development; and 'other community support'. This group of services was used by 44% of service users (142,549).

+ Community access—services designed to provide opportunities for people with disability to gain and use their abilities to enjoy their full potential for social independence. This comprises: learning and life skills development; recreation/holiday programs; and 'other community access'. This group of services was used by 18% of service users (57,493).

- Respite—services that provide a short-term and time-limited break for families and other voluntary care-givers of people with disability to assist in supporting and maintaining the primary care-giving relationship, while providing a positive experience for the person with disability. This comprises: own home respite; centre-based respite/respite homes; host family respite/peer support respite; flexible respite; and 'other respite'. This group of services was used by 12% of service users (39,480).
- Employment services—this group of services was used by 41% of service users (132,169) and consists of two distinct types of services:
  - supported employment—services that provide employment opportunities and assistance to people with disability to work in specialised and supported work environments. These services were used by 7% of service users (21,295)
  - open employment—services that provide employment assistance to people with disability in obtaining and/or retaining paid employment in the open labour market. These services were used by 35% of service users (111,856).
- Advocacy, information, and alternative forms of communication. This comprises: advocacy; information/referral; combined information/advocacy; mutual support/self help groups; and alternative formats of communication. Service user data are not collected for this service type.
- 'Other support' services. This comprises: research and evaluation; training and development; peak bodies; and 'other support services'. Service user data are not collected for this service type.

**Table 2.2: Service users, service group by state and territory, 2013–14 (number)**

| Service group | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accommodation support | 11,071 | 15,725 | 7,204 | 4,095 | 5,702 | 1,338 | 555 | 509 | 46,177 |
| Community support | 35,115 | 45,551 | 20,580 | 15,036 | 14,585 | 4,973 | 5,294 | 1,857 | 142,549 |
| Community access | 16,965 | 17,129 | 9,868 | 4,689 | 6,044 | 1,399 | 960 | 475 | 57,493 |
| Respite | 10,647 | 17,240 | 5,444 | 3,152 | 2,071 | 452 | 354 | 204 | 39,480 |
| *Total state/territory services* | *54,053* | *74,865* | *27,350* | *18,092* | *19,372* | *6,455* | *5,723* | *2,626* | *207,810* |
| Open employment | 36,368 | 27,816 | 26,369 | 7,943 | 10,060 | 2,718 | 1,448 | 339 | 111,856 |
| Supported employment | 8,194 | 4,608 | 2,313 | 2,338 | 2,943 | 505 | 287 | 125 | 21,295 |
| *Total Australian Government services* | *44,217* | *32,165* | *28,566* | *10,173* | *12,912* | *3,208* | *1,731* | *451* | *132,169* |
| **Total** | **93,451** | **102,559** | **52,801** | **25,484** | **30,131** | **9,258** | **7,030** | **2,999** | **321,531** |
| *Total (excluding service users who only used open employment services)* | *59,062* | *77,676* | *28,571* | *18,878* | *20,921* | *6,738* | *5,828* | *2,695* | *219,564* |

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Totals for Australia might not be the sum of service components, because individuals might have used services in more than one state or territory during the 12-month period.
4. Total service users might not be the sum of service group components, because individuals might have used more than one service group over the 12-month period.
5. See AIHW 2015: Table B34 for a breakdown by state and territory of the service types that comprise the service groups.

Proportionally, the use of most service groups has remained relatively stable over the 5 years to 2013–14 (Figure 2.1).



*Source:* Table 2.3.

**Figure 2.1: Service users by service group, 2009–10 to 2013–14**
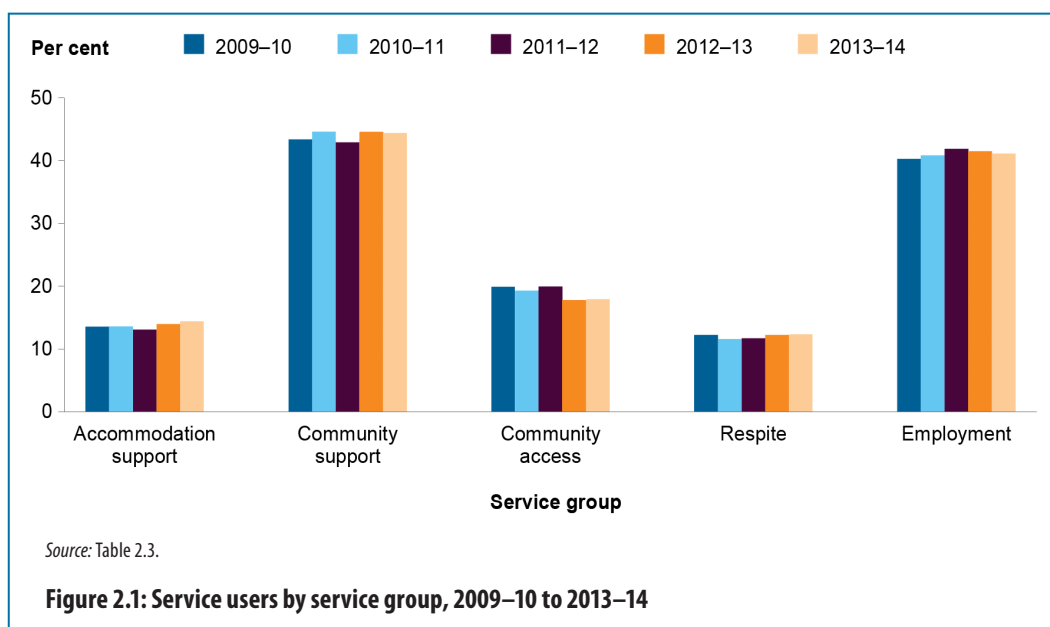
The largest growth over the 5-year period was in the number of accommodation support service users, with an increase of 16% (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3: Service users by service group, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Service group | 2009–10 | 2010–11 | 2011–12 | 2012–13[a][b] | 2013–14[a][b] | Change 2009–10 to 2013–14 (%) | Change 2012–13 to 2013–14 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accommodation support | 39,854 | 42,579 | 41,421 | 43,592 | 46,177 | 15.9 | 5.9 |
| Community support | 127,909 | 140,156 | 136,236 | 139,142 | 142,549 | 11.4 | 2.4 |
| Community access | 58,632 | 60,509 | 63,247 | 55,403 | 57,493 | −1.9 | 3.8 |
| Respite | 35,978 | 36,266 | 37,015 | 38,072 | 39,480 | 9.7 | 3.7 |
| *Total state/territory services* | *193,218* | *204,226* | *203,371* | *201,675* | *207,810* | *7.6* | *3.0* |
| Open employment | 98,257 | 107,942 | 112,742 | 108,989 | 111,856 | 13.8 | 2.6 |
| Supported employment | 21,636 | 21,573 | 21,353 | 21,877 | 21,295 | −1.6 | −2.7 |
| *Total Australian Government services* | *118,801* | *128,321* | *132,949* | *129,698* | *132,169* | *11.3* | *1.9* |
| **Total** | **295,024** | **314,252** | **317,616** | **312,539** | **321,531** | **9.0** | **2.9** |
| *Total (excluding service users who only used open employment services)* | *205,286* | *216,130* | *215,237* | *213,771* | *219,564* | *7.0* | *2.7* |

(a) From 2012–13, the Northern Territory DS NMDS data includes individuals using Basic Community Care (BCC) services (see AIHW 2015).

(b) From 2012–13, in Victoria an activity previously classified under 'community access' was amalgamated under 'community support'. Because of a significant overlap in service users between the two service groups before the shift, the reclassification did not result in an increase in the number of community support service users.

*Notes*

1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.

2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).

3. Total service users might not be the sum of service group components, because individuals might have used more than one service group over the 12-month period.

For further information on the use of services, see AIHW 2015: tables B14, B15, B20, B25, B26, B34–B43, B46, B53, B54, B65–B67, B69, B70, B72, B73, C3, and D3.

*Multiple service use*

On average, service users accessed 1.4 service types and 1.3 service groups each (AIHW 2015: Table B43). Of those using multiple services, 43% used two different service groups, with the most commonly-combined service groups being community support and community access (22,806 service users used this combination of services) (AIHW 2015: tables B40 and B42). Other common combinations were accommodation support with community support (21,170 service users), community support with respite (20,877), and accommodation support with community access (18,022).

As might be expected, service users with the highest level of need for assistance in the activities of daily living were more likely to use multiple service types and to use services across more than one service group than service users with less frequent or no need for assistance in this life area (AIHW 2015: Table B43; see also Section 3.5).

## 2.3  How much was spent?

In 2013–14, Australian governments spent $7.0 billion on delivering services under the NDA (excluding specialist psychiatric disability services), representing an average of $21,586 per service user (Table 2.4; SCRGSP 2015; see also Section 1.2).

Of the expenditure on service delivery, Australian governments spent:

- $3.5 billion on accommodation support, or $95,752 per accommodation support service user
- $1.3 billion on community support, or $8,910 per community support service user
- $0.7 billion on community access, or $14,894 per community access service user
- $0.4 billion on respite, or $11,606 per respite service user
- $0.7 billion on employment, or $5,025 per employment service user.

For further information on expenditure, see AIHW 2015: Table B1.

**Table 2.4: Expenditure on disability support services, constant prices by service group, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Service group | 2009–10 | 2010–11 | 2011–12 | 2012–13 | 2013–14[a] | Change 2009–10 to 2013–14 (%) | Change 2012–13 to 2013–14[a] (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Expenditure ($ million) (constant prices in 2013–14 dollars) | | | | |
| Accommodation support | 2,792.1 | 2,902.9 | 3,176.5 | 3,406.1 | 3,549.0 | 27.1 | 4.2 |
| Community support | 900.0 | 1,005.2 | 1,046.7 | 1,205.8 | 1,266.6 | 40.7 | 5.0 |
| Community access | 701.5 | 690.9 | 734.0 | 663.7 | 738.2 | 5.2 | 11.2 |
| Respite | 397.1 | 388.0 | 397.1 | 431.3 | 433.1 | 9.1 | 0.4 |
| Employment | 685.3 | 710.5 | 763.8 | 685.7 | 664.1 | −3.1 | −3.2 |
| Advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication | 59.1 | 60.4 | 61.0 | 64.4 | 66.3 | 12.1 | 2.9 |
| Other support | 250.1 | 192.3 | 244.4 | 252.0 | 276.6 | 10.6 | 9.7 |
| *Subtotal* | *5,785.2* | *5,950.2* | *6,423.4* | *6,709.0* | *6,993.9* | *20.9* | *4.2* |
| Administration | 449.6 | 490.0 | 516.3 | 477.9 | 489.8 | 8.9 | 2.5 |
| Capital grants to non-government providers | 46.9 | 12.5 | 3.2 | 7.3 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| **Total** | **6,281.7** | **6,452.7** | **6,942.9** | **7,195.8** | **7,493.3** | **19.3** | **4.1** |
| | | | Expenditure per service user (2013–14 dollars) | | | | |
| Accommodation support | 85,496 | 83,326 | 91,168 | 95,781 | 95,752 | 12.0 | −0.0 |
| Community support | 7,061 | 7,194 | 7,702 | 8,694 | 8,910 | 26.2 | 2.5 |
| Community access | 14,104 | 13,455 | 13,207 | 13,907 | 14,894 | 5.6 | 7.1 |
| Respite | 11,836 | 11,420 | 11,404 | 12,096 | 11,606 | −1.9 | −4.1 |
| Employment | 5,768 | 5,537 | 5,745 | 5,287 | 5,025 | −12.9 | −5.0 |
| **Total** | **19,398** | **18,928** | **19,993** | **21,312** | **21,586** | **11.3** | **1.3** |

(a) Expenditure data for 2013–14 are affected by the introduction of the NDIS. See SCRGSP 2015 for more information.

*Notes*
1. Table excludes expenditure on, and service users of, specialist psychiatric disability services.
2. Expenditure data is sourced from the *Report on government services 2015* (SCRGSP 2015). In that publication, constant prices are the previous years' expenditure in current year's dollars after basing expenditure on the Australian Bureau of Statistics General government final consumption expenditure chain price deflator.
3. Expenditure figures might not add to total because of rounding.
4. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
5. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).

*Sources:* SCRGSP 2015: tables 14A.6 and 14A.10; DS NMDS 2013–14.

# 3  Who used NDA services?

## 3.1  Age and sex

The average (mean) age of service users overall was 34, with around three-quarters (74%) aged under 50, 21% aged 50–64, and 5% aged 65 and over (tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Most (59%) service users were male, and they were generally younger—with an average age of 31 compared with 37 for females (Table 3.1).

The overall sex and age distribution of service users has remained relatively steady over the 5 years to 2013–14 (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Age and sex of service users, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Sex | 2009–10 | | 2010–11 | | 2011–12 | | 2012–13 | | 2013–14 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean age (years) | % | Mean age (years) | % | Mean age (years) | % | Mean age (years) | % | Mean age (years) | % |
| Male | 31.9 | 59.3 | 31.9 | 59.3 | 31.6 | 59.1 | 31.3 | 59.1 | 31.4 | 59.2 |
| Female | 37.4 | 40.7 | 37.6 | 40.7 | 37.2 | 40.9 | 37.0 | 40.9 | 37.2 | 40.8 |
| **All service users**[a] | **34.1** | **100.0** | **34.2** | **100.0** | **33.9** | **100.0** | **33.6** | **100.0** | **33.7** | **100.0** |

(a)  'All service users' includes service users for whom sex was 'not stated'.

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom sex was not stated.

**Table 3.2: Service users, by sex and age group, 2013–14**

| Sex | 0–49 | | 50–64 | | 65+ | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Male | 148,121 | 62.2 | 34,219 | 51.9 | 8,041 | 46.7 | 190,381 | 59.2 |
| Female | 90,110 | 37.8 | 31,690 | 48.1 | 9,172 | 53.3 | 130,972 | 40.8 |
| Not stated | 142 | .. | 31 | .. | 5 | .. | 178 | .. |
| **Total** | **238,373** | **100.0** | **65,940** | **100.0** | **17,218** | **100.0** | **321,531** | **100.0** |

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom sex was 'not stated'.

For further information on service users by age and sex, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B19, B20, B21, B23, B28, B35–B37, B62–64, B69, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 3.2  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

In 2013–14, 6% of service users were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with most of those aged under 50 (84% of Indigenous service users) (tables 3.3 and 3.4).

**Table 3.3: Service users by Indigenous status, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Year | Indigenous | | Non-Indigenous | | Not stated/ not collected[a] | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| 2009–10 | 14,251 | 5.1 | 264,331 | 94.9 | 16,442 | .. | 295,024 | 100.0 |
| 2010–11 | 16,577 | 5.6 | 280,434 | 94.4 | 17,241 | .. | 314,252 | 100.0 |
| 2011–12 | 16,937 | 5.7 | 282,128 | 94.3 | 18,551 | .. | 317,616 | 100.0 |
| 2012–13 | 17,406 | 5.8 | 283,306 | 94.2 | 11,827 | .. | 312,539 | 100.0 |
| 2013–14 | 18,021 | 5.8 | 291,631 | 94.2 | 11,879 | .. | 321,531 | 100.0 |

(a)  Includes service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02), and who did not provide a response. This service type was not required to complete this data item.

*Notes*
1.  Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2.  Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3.  Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom Indigenous status was 'not stated/not collected'.

Forty per cent of Indigenous service users lived in *Major cities*, lower than the 68% of non-Indigenous service users (AIHW 2015: Table B20). A further 27% lived in an *Inner regional* area, 20% lived in an *Outer regional* area, and 13% lived in a *Remote* or *Very remote* area, and did so in higher proportions than non-Indigenous service users (23%, 9%, and 1% respectively).

**Table 3.4: Services users, by Indigenous status and age group, 2013–14**

| Indigenous status | 0–49 | | 50–64 | | 65+ | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Indigenous | 15,092 | 6.6 | 2,257 | 3.5 | 672 | 4.1 | 18,021 | 5.8 |
| Non-Indigenous | 214,149 | 93.4 | 61,781 | 96.5 | 15,701 | 95.9 | 291,631 | 94.2 |
| Not stated/not collected[a] | 9,132 | .. | 1,902 | .. | 845 | .. | 11,879 | .. |
| **Total** | **238,373** | **100.0** | **65,940** | **100.0** | **17,218** | **100.0** | **321,531** | **100.0** |

(a)  Includes service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02) and who did not provide a response. This service type was not required to complete this data item.

*Notes*
1.  Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2.  Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3.  Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom Indigenous status was 'not stated/not collected'.

For further information on service users by Indigenous status, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B19–21, B43, B48, B60, B69, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 3.3 Country of birth

In 2013–14, the majority (87%) of service users were born in Australia, with 13% born overseas—9% in a predominantly non-English-speaking country (countries in English Proficiency Groups (EPG) 2–4), and 4% in a predominantly English-speaking country (EPG 1 countries) (see AIHW 2015: Glossary) (Table 3.5). This has remained relatively steady over the 5 years to 2013–14.

**Table 3.5: Service users by country of birth (English Proficiency Group countries), 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Year | Australia[a] | | Born overseas, EPG 1 | | Born overseas, EPG 2–4 | | Not stated/ not collected[b] | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| 2009–10 | 242,724 | 87.0 | 11,940 | 4.3 | 24,225 | 8.7 | 16,135 | .. | 295,024 | 100.0 |
| 2010–11 | 257,769 | 86.8 | 12,539 | 4.2 | 26,827 | 9.0 | 17,117 | .. | 314,252 | 100.0 |
| 2011–12 | 258,527 | 86.5 | 12,810 | 4.3 | 27,493 | 9.2 | 18,786 | .. | 317,616 | 100.0 |
| 2012–13 | 260,863 | 87.0 | 12,109 | 4.0 | 26,882 | 9.0 | 12,685 | .. | 312,539 | 100.0 |
| 2013–14 | 267,189 | 86.7 | 12,575 | 4.1 | 28,471 | 9.2 | 13,296 | .. | 321,531 | 100.0 |

(a) Includes external territories, excludes Norfolk Island.
(b) Includes service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02) and who did not provide a response. This service type was not required to complete this data item.
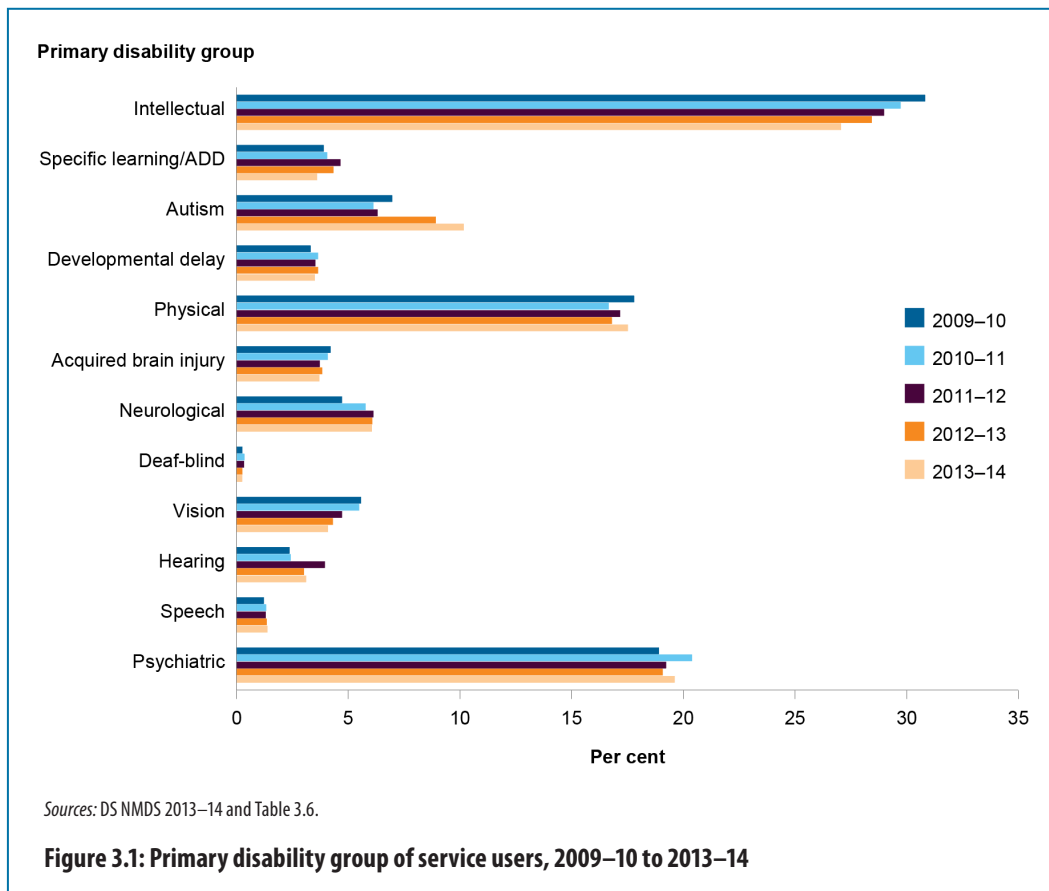
*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom country of birth was not 'stated/not collected'.

For further information on service users by country of birth, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B22, B69, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 3.4 Disability group

The term 'disability group' refers to a broad categorisation of disabilities in terms of underlying health condition, impairment, activity limitations, participation restrictions and environmental factors. 'Disability group' is not a diagnostic grouping, and there is not a one to-one correspondence between a health condition and a disability group.

In the DS NMDS, service users are asked to record their primary disability—that is, the disability that most clearly reflects their experience of disability and which can be considered the one that causes the person the most difficulty in everyday life. They are also asked about any other types of disability that cause them difficulty, referred to as 'other significant disability group'. On average, around two disability groups per service user were reported (AIHW 2015: Table B33).

**Table 3.6: Service users by primary or other significant disability group, 2013–14**

| Disability group | Primary disability group | | Other disability group | | Total disability group | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| **Intellectual/learning** | **134,533** | **44.3** | **40,838** | **12.7** | **175,371** | **54.5** |
| Intellectual | 82,125 | 27.1 | 17,647 | 5.5 | 99,772 | 31.0 |
| Specific learning/ attention deficit disorder | 10,919 | 3.6 | 11,382 | 3.5 | 22,301 | 6.9 |
| Autism | 30,853 | 10.2 | 9,951 | 3.1 | 40,804 | 12.7 |
| Developmental delay | 10,636 | 3.5 | 1,858 | 0.6 | 12,494 | 3.9 |
| **Physical/diverse** | **82,758** | **27.3** | **70,288** | **21.9** | **153,046** | **47.6** |
| Physical | 53,165 | 17.5 | 44,262 | 13.8 | 97,427 | 30.3 |
| Acquired brain injury | 11,228 | 3.7 | 4,436 | 1.4 | 15,664 | 4.9 |
| Neurological | 18,365 | 6.0 | 21,590 | 6.7 | 39,955 | 12.4 |
| **Sensory/speech** | **26,762** | **8.8** | **40,161** | **12.5** | **66,923** | **20.8** |
| Deaf-blind | 730 | 0.2 | 1,253 | 0.4 | 1,983 | 0.6 |
| Vision | 12,428 | 4.1 | 11,512 | 3.6 | 23,940 | 7.4 |
| Hearing | 9,405 | 3.1 | 8,080 | 2.5 | 17,485 | 5.4 |
| Speech | 4,199 | 1.4 | 19,316 | 6.0 | 23,515 | 7.3 |
| **Psychiatric** | **59,529** | **19.6** | **29,536** | **9.2** | **89,065** | **27.7** |
| **Total**[a] | **303,582** | **100.0** | **321,531** | **100.0** | **321,531** | **100.0** |

(a) Primary disability group was 'not stated/not collected' for 17,949 service users (which includes service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02) and who did not provide a response). The total for 'primary disability group' excludes these records, while the total for 'total disability group' includes these records.

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Totals for 'other significant disability' and 'total disability' are not the sum of components, because individuals may report multiple types of disability.

The individual disability groups can be further categorised into four broader disability groups—intellectual or learning, physical or diverse, sensory or speech, and psychiatric (see Table 3.6 for the composition of these broad groups). Many service users fall into the broad disability group of intellectual or learning—with 44% having an intellectual or learning disability as their primary disability, or 55% when 'other significant disability' is included (Table 3.6). Of these, most had an intellectual disability—27% of service users as a primary disability, or 31% when 'other significant disability' is included.

Service users with an intellectual disability were the largest group across the 5 years, though this group has decreased over time—for example, service users with an intellectual primary disability have decreased proportionally by 4 percentage points (from 31% in 2009–10 to 27% in 2013–14), or by 2% in terms of the number of service users (Figure 3.1). Over the same period, service users with autism have increased substantially—for example, service users with a primary disability of autism have increased proportionally by 3 percentage points (from 7% in 2009–10 to 10% in 2013–14), or by 62% in terms of the number of service users.

Primary disability group

Sources: DS NMDS 2013–14 and Table 3.6.

**Figure 3.1: Primary disability group of service users, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

For further information on service users by disability group, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B20, B28–B33, B37, B43, B49, B70, B73, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 3.5 Functional need

People with disability might require assistance to perform activities in different areas of their lives ('life area' activities). The DS NMDS includes nine data items to indicate at least some of the functional needs of service users across these life areas, and these can be grouped into the categories of 'activities of daily living' (ADL), 'activities of independent living' (AIL), and 'activities of work, education and community living' (AWEC). The level of assistance required can vary, from not needing assistance at all to always needing assistance.

The majority of service users needed at least some assistance in one or more of the three broad life areas—68% always or sometimes needed assistance with activities of daily living, 82% always or sometimes needed assistance with activities of independent living, and 86% always or sometimes needed assistance with activities of work, education and community living (Figure 3.2; see AIHW 2015: tables B44 and B45 for a breakdown of the life area groups).

Employment service users were the least likely to need assistance in the broad life areas (Figure 3.2). This is affected by the inclusion in this group of open employment service users (see Section 2.2), who generally have a lower requirement for assistance across the broad life areas (AIHW 2015: Table C5).

Source: AIHW 2015: Table B46.

**Figure 3.2: Service users who always or sometimes need assistance, broad life area by service group, 2013–14**
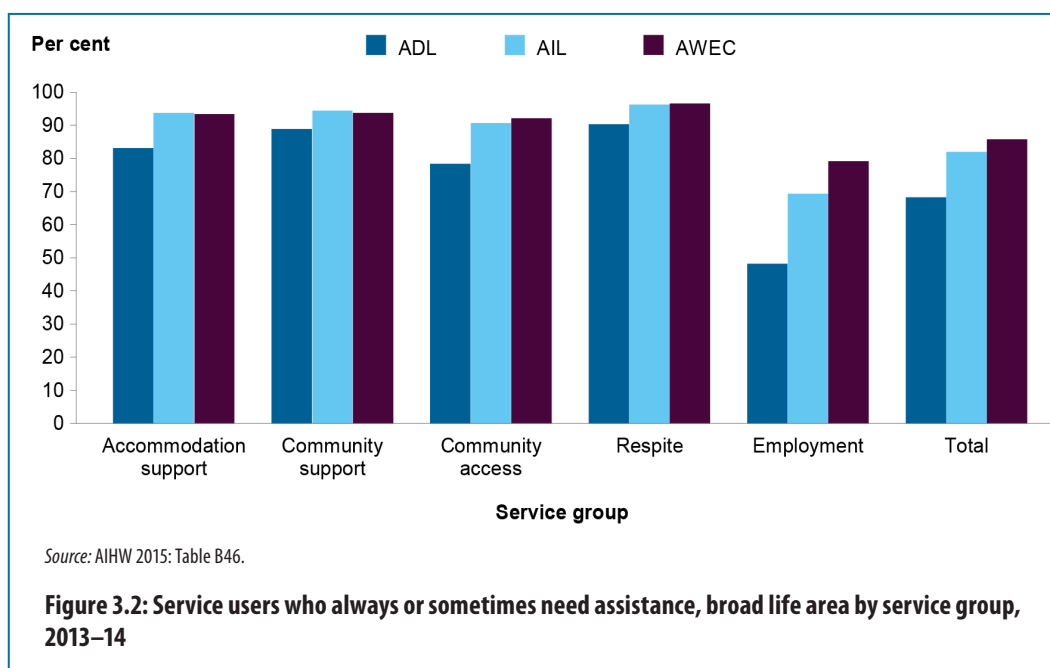
For further information on service users and their need for assistance in a life area, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B44–B49, B61, C1, C2, C5, D1, D2, and D5.

## 3.6 Living arrangement

More than half (54%) of service users lived with family, 24% lived with others (such as sharing with a friend or a non-related carer), and 22% lived alone (Table 3.7).

**Table 3.7: Service users by living arrangement, 2009–10 to 2013–14**

| Year | Lives alone | | Lives with family | | Lives with others | | Not stated/ not collected[a] | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| 2009–10 | 54,697 | 19.8 | 142,011 | 51.4 | 79,487 | 28.8 | 18,829 | .. | 295,024 | 100.0 |
| 2010–11 | 59,223 | 21.1 | 150,754 | 53.7 | 70,777 | 25.2 | 33,498 | .. | 314,252 | 100.0 |
| 2011–12 | 58,324 | 20.8 | 150,325 | 53.6 | 71,550 | 25.5 | 37,417 | .. | 317,616 | 100.0 |
| 2012–13 | 59,355 | 21.2 | 151,128 | 54.0 | 69,332 | 24.8 | 32,724 | .. | 312,539 | 100.0 |
| 2013–14 | 63,566 | 21.9 | 156,537 | 54.0 | 69,601 | 24.0 | 31,827 | .. | 321,531 | 100.0 |

(a) Includes service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02) and who did not provide a response. This service type was not required to complete this data item.

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. Percentages are of the total excluding service users for whom living arrangement was not 'stated/not collected'.

The majority (81%) of service users lived in a private residence. Other types of residential settings included domestic-scale supported living facilities (such as a group home) (5%), boarding houses or private hotels (5%), and supported accommodation facilities (3%) (AIHW 2015: Table B16).

Most of the service users who lived in a domestic-scale supported living facility or in a supported accommodation facility had an intellectual primary disability (79% and 63%, respectively) (AIHW 2015: Table B31).

For further information on service users by living arrangement and/or residential setting, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B20, B23, B31, B47, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 3.7 Employment and income

Around one-third (32%) of service users aged 15 and over were not in the labour force (AIHW 2015: Table B16). Just over one-fifth (21%) were employed, and close to half (48%) were in the labour force but unemployed. This was influenced by the large number of open employment service users in the data (see Section 2.2), who, by definition, are likely to be in the labour force (see, for example, AIHW 2015: Table C1 for data on labour force status excluding service users who only used open employment services).

When considered in terms of those in the labour force, that is, who are either employed or looking for employment, 70% of service users aged 15 and over were unemployed and 30% were employed (AIHW 2015: Table B16).

The most common source of income of service users aged 16–64, regardless of their labour force status, was the Disability Support Pension (65%), followed by 'other pension or benefit' (26%) (AIHW 2015: Table B29). Of employed service users aged 16–64, 66% were also receiving the Disability Support Pension. Of service users aged 16–64 who received the Disability Support Pension, 22% were employed, 41% were in the labour force but unemployed, and 37% were not in the labour force (AIHW 2015: Table B29).

For further information on service users by labour force status and main source of income, see AIHW 2015: tables B16, B17, B20, B27, B29, B30, B68, B72, B73, C1, C2, D1, and D2.

## 4 Informal care

An informal carer is a person, such as a family member, friend or neighbour, who provides regular and sustained care and assistance to the person requiring support. This includes people who might receive a pension or benefit associated with their caring role, but does not include people, either paid or voluntary, whose services are arranged by a formal service organisation.

Informal carers play an important role in the lives of many people with disability. They provide essential support either in place of, or in addition to, NDA services. They might also be the recipient of services under the NDA, such as respite services.

In the DS NMDS, information is collected on whether the service user has an informal carer as well as some characteristics of that carer—for example, whether the carer was a primary carer, whether the carer lived with the service user, the relationship of the carer to the service user (from which the carer's sex can be derived), and the age group of the carer.

In 2013–14, 140,525 (68%) service users had an informal carer (Figure 4.1 and AIHW 2015: Table B51). This was an increase of 19% from the estimated 117,754 service users with an informal carer in 2009–10, and an increase of 3% from the 136,325 service users with an informal carer in 2012–13.



*Source:* AIHW 2015: Table B53.

**Figure 4.1: Existence of an informal carer by service group, 2013–14**
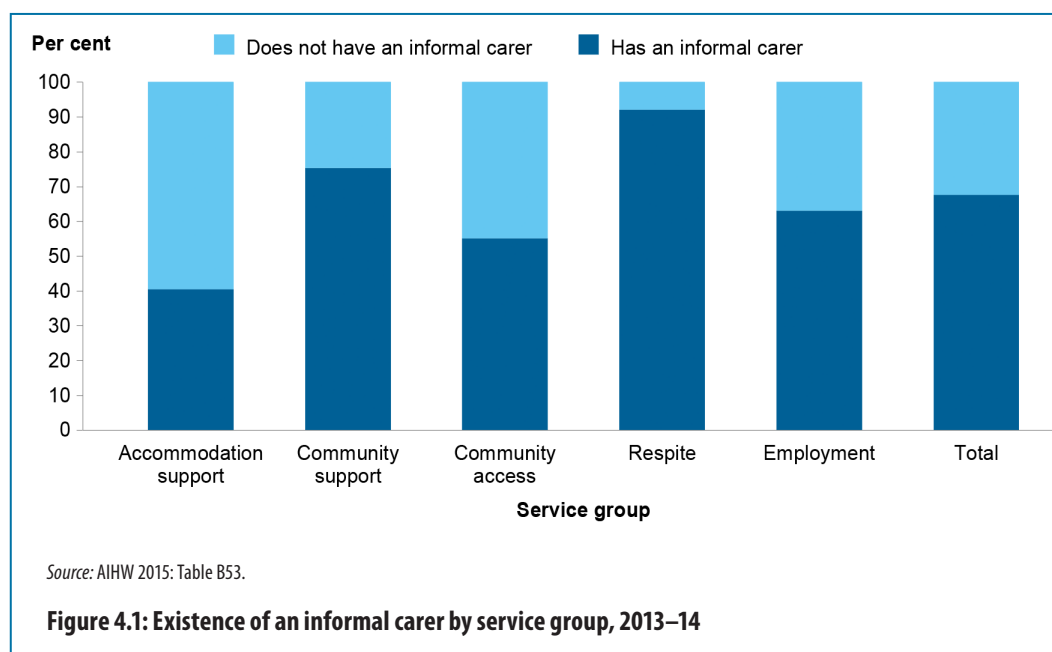
Not surprisingly, the service users most likely to report having an informal carer were those who used respite services (92%) (Figure 4.1). Accommodation support service users were the least likely to have an informal carer (40%), particularly those living in institutional accommodation (18%).

Of the service users who had an informal carer:

- most (84%) reported that their informal carer was also their primary carer—that is, an informal carer who helps with one or more of the activities of daily living: self-care, mobility or communication (AIHW 2015: Table B50)

- the majority (86%) had a female carer, most often their mother (72%) (AIHW 2015: tables B54 and B50)

- 9% were cared for by their spouse or partner—as service user age increased, the likelihood of a spouse or partner being identified as a carer also increased, with being cared for by a spouse or partner the most common informal care arrangement for service users aged 65 and over (54%) (AIHW 2015: Table B56)

- 13% reported having a carer aged 65 and over (AIHW 2015: Table B50)—many (68%) of these were the parent of the service user, most often their mother (56%) (AIHW 2015: Table B57).

For further information on service users with an informal carer, see AIHW 2015: tables B50–B62, C4, and D4.

# 5  Service users who transitioned to the NDIS

In 2013–14, an estimated 4,200 NDA service users transitioned to the NDIS (see Section 1.3). This equates to 1.3% of all service users or 1.9% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services. Open employment services will not be rolled into the NDIS (Box 1.2). As such, comparisons in this section are made with both the overall service user population and with service users excluding those who only used open employment services.

In comparison with these groups, service users who transitioned to the NDIS were generally younger, were more likely to be Australia-born and non-Indigenous, and had a higher need for assistance to perform activities in different areas of their lives (Table 5.1; see also sections 2, 3 and 4).

Other differences included:

+ 70% used community support services—higher than the 44% of the overall service user population and of the 65% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 22% used respite services—higher than the 12% of the overall service user population and of the 18% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 70% had an intellectual or learning primary disability—higher than the 44% of the overall service user population and of the 56% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 71% lived with their families—higher than the 54% of the overall service user population and of the 69% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 75% lived in a private residence—lower than the 81% of the overall service user population and of the 78% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 8% lived in a supported accommodation facility—higher than the 3% of the overall service user population and of the 5% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 59% of those aged 15 and over were not in the labour force—higher than the 32% of the overall service user population in this age range and of the 55% of service users in this age range excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 66% of those aged 15 and over who were in the labour force were employed—higher than the 30% of the overall service user population in this age range and of the 58% of service users in this age range excluding those who only used open employment services

+ 76% had an informal carer—higher than the 68% of the overall service user population and of the 66% of service users excluding those who only used open employment services.

**Table 5.1: Service users who transitioned to the NDIS, selected characteristics and comparisons, 2013–14**

| Selected characteristics | Service users who transitioned to the NDIS | Service users excluding those who only used open employment | All service users |
|---|---|---|---|
| Service group—accommodation support (%) | 18.4 | 21.0 | 14.4 |
| Service group—community support (%) | 69.9 | 64.9 | 44.3 |
| Service group—community access (%) | 22.2 | 26.2 | 17.9 |
| Service group—respite (%) | 22.5 | 18.0 | 12.3 |
| Service group—supported employment (%) | 13.4 | 9.7 | 6.6 |
| Age—mean age (years) | 26.1 | 31.1 | 33.7 |
| Sex—male (%) | 59.3 | 59.6 | 59.2 |
| Country of birth—Australian-born (%) | 96.8 | 90.8 | 86.7 |
| Indigenous status—Indigenous (%) | 3.2 | 6.4 | 5.8 |
| Primary disability group—intellectual/learning disability (%) | 69.5 | 56.2 | 44.3 |
| Other significant disability group—intellectual/learning disability (%) | 19.7 | 14.8 | 12.7 |
| Always or sometimes need assistance with activities of daily living (%) | 88.7 | 83.6 | 68.3 |
| Always or sometimes need assistance with activities of independent living (%) | 95.7 | 92.9 | 81.9 |
| Always or sometimes need assistance with activities of work, education and community living (%) | 96.5 | 92.8 | 85.7 |
| Living arrangement—lives with family (%) | 70.6 | 68.6 | 54.0 |
| Living arrangement—lives alone (%) | 8.9 | 11.4 | 21.9 |
| Residential setting—private residence (%) | 74.7 | 77.5 | 80.5 |
| Residential setting—domestic-scale supported living facility (%) | 8.0 | 7.9 | 5.3 |
| Residential setting—supported accommodation facility (%) | 7.5 | 4.7 | 3.2 |
| Residential setting—boarding house/private hotel (%) | 0.9 | 0.9 | 5.0 |
| Not in the labour force (aged 15 and over) (%) | 59.3 | 54.8 | 31.9 |
| In the labour force (aged 15 and over)—employed (%) | 65.8 | 57.7 | 30.2 |
| In the labour force (aged 15 and over)—unemployed (%) | 34.2 | 42.3 | 69.8 |
| Has an informal carer (%) | 76.1 | 66.0 | 67.7 |

*Notes*
1. Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the 12-month period.
2. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the separately-published appendix to this bulletin (AIHW 2015).
3. See AIHW 2015: tables B16, B35, B45, B50, C1–C5, D1–D5 for more information and associated numbers.

Readers should that many of the differences observed between service users who transitioned to the NDIS and the other groups are the result of the age-specific focus on children and young people in some NDIS launch sites. For example, the relatively younger age profile of transitioned service users was affected by the age-specific launch sites in Tasmania (with an average age of 21) and South Australia (with an average age of 4) and the fact that people who are aged over 65 are not eligible to enter the NDIS (AIHW 2015: Table D1).

Readers should also note there are several reasons why NDIA published data on people with an approved NDIS plan might not match the DS NMDS data on NDA service users who transitioned to the NDIS (see, for example, NDIA 2014). In particular, the NDIA data include people who have not been reported as part of the DS NMDS—for example, because they were referred directly to the NDIS. This is especially the case for very young children. It is also possible for a NDA service user to have exited NDA services before their NDIS plan approval date. In such cases, they would not show in the DS NMDS data as transitioned to the NDIS.

For more information on service users who transitioned to the NDIS, see AIHW 2015: tables D1–D5. For further information on service users excluding those who only used open employment services, see tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and AIHW 2015: tables C1–C5.

## Acknowledgments

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ADL | activities of daily living |
| AIHW | Australian Institute of Health and Welfare |
| AIL | activities of independent living |
| AWEC | activities of work, education and community living |
| DS NMDS | Disability Services National Minimum Data Set |
| EPG | English Proficiency Group |
| NDA | National Disability Agreement |
| NDIA | National Disability Insurance Agency |
| NDIS | National Disability Insurance Scheme |
| SCRGSP | Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision |

## Symbols

| | |
|---|---|
| — | nil or rounded to zero |
| . . | not applicable |
| n.a. | not available |

## References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2015. Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2013–14—appendix. Cat. no. AUS 192. Canberra: AIHW.

NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency) 2014. Quarter 4: Report on the sustainability of the NDIS for Q4 of Y1. Canberra: NDIA. Viewed 25 February 2015, <www.ndis.gov.au/document/754>.

PC (Productivity Commission) 2011. Inquiry into disability care and support. Viewed 1 June 2015, <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/disability-support/report>.

SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015. Report on government services 2015. Canberra: Productivity Commission.

UN (United Nations) 2006. Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Viewed 1 June 2015, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>.

## Related publications

This bulletin is part of an annual series of reports. The earlier editions and any published subsequently can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website <www.aihw.gov.au/disability-publications>. The website also includes information on ordering printed copies.

Additional tables and technical information relating to this bulletin are published separately online as *Disability support services: services provided under the National Disability Agreement 2013–14—appendix* (AIHW 2015). DS NMDS data cubes are also available on the AIHW website <www.aihw.gov.au/disability-data-cubes>.

The following AIHW publications relating to disability might also be of interest:

- AIHW 2015. Access to health services by Australians with disability 2012. Bulletin no. 129. Cat. no. AUS 191. Canberra: AIHW.

- AIHW 2014. Healthy life expectancy in Australia: patterns and trends 1998 to 2012. AIHW bulletin no. 126. Cat. no. AUS 187. Canberra: AIHW.

- AIHW 2014. Mental health services—in brief 2014. Cat. no. HSE 154. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 13 February 2015 <www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129549463>.

- AIHW 2014. People using both Disability Services and Home and Community Care in 2010–11. Disability series. Cat. no. DIS 64. Canberra: AIHW.

- AIHW 2013. Diabetes and disability: impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions and comorbidities. Diabetes series 20. Cat. no. CVD 63. Canberra: AIHW.

- AIHW 2013. Incontinence in Australia. Cat. no. DIS 61. Canberra: AIHW.

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