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# Disability support services

## Services provided under the National Disability Agreement

2012–13

### Summary

This bulletin presents data collected in the Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (DS NMDS) on disability support services provided under the National Disability Agreement (NDA) in 2012–13. Information on disability services provided under the NDA continues to be important as the disability policy and service delivery environment evolves with the initial implementation steps of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in 2013–14. During the implementation phase of the NDIS, the DS NMDS remains the main source for reporting on services used by people with disability and is a source of important ‘baseline’ and other data that can be used to inform the implementation of the NDIS.

This bulletin presents information on the estimated 312,539 people with disability who accessed disability support services in 2012–13, including the services they received across five broad service groups—community support (received by 45% of service users), employment (41%), community access (18%), accommodation support (14%) and respite (12%) services.

The number of service users generally increased over the 5 years to 2012–13 (by 12% between 2008–09 and 2012–13), but there was a slight (2%) decrease between 2011–12 and 2012–13. The change in the number of service users was not evenly spread across jurisdictions or service groups and reflected both an actual decrease in service users in some jurisdictions and some changes in the way the data were collected or reported (see Box 1).

### Who uses disability support services?

Users of disability support services are diverse. In 2012–13, 59% were male, 87% were Australian-born, 6% were Indigenous Australians, and 54% lived with their families. The most commonly reported disability groups continued to be intellectual (32%), physical (30%) and psychiatric (27%), though the proportion of service users with an intellectual disability has decreased over the 5 years to 2012–13. On average, service users reported having two disability groups.

## What support needs do service users have?

Most service users required at least some assistance in one or more of three broad life areas—the activities of daily living (55%); the activities of independent living (64%); and the activities of work, education and community living (61%).

On average, service users used 1.3 service groups and 1.4 service types each (see AIHW 2014: Glossary). 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 were service users with less-frequent or no need for assistance in this life area.

## What is the cost of disability support services?

In 2012–13, expenditure on disability support services was \$7.2 billion, of which \$6.7 billion was allocated directly to service delivery. Expenditure on disability support services, adjusted for inflation, has increased in recent years—by 4% between 2011–12 and 2012–13, and by 23% since 2008–09.

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## 1 Introduction

Under the National Disability Agreement (NDA), Australian governments fund a range of disability support services which 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.

Data on these services are collected in the Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (DS NMDS). Further information on the DS NMDS is included in the online appendix accompanying this bulletin (see AIHW 2014). This appendix also contains additional tables (including selected breakdowns of data by state and territory) and technical information (such as a data quality statement and glossary of terms).

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

- ♦ 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
- ♦ community support—services that provide the support needed for a person with disability to live in a non-institutional setting
- ♦ 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
- ♦ 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
- ♦ employment—services that provide employment assistance to people with disability in obtaining and/or retaining paid employment in the open labour market (open employment) or services that provide employment opportunities and assistance to people with disability to work in specialised and supported work environments (supported employment)
- ♦ advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication
- ♦ ‘other support’ services (see also AIHW 2013a, 2014).

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. Service user data are not collected for the service groups of ‘advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication’ and ‘other support’.

Under national health reforms, the NDA was revised in December 2012 to include the funding and regulation by the states and territories of Basic Community Care (BCC) services (formerly the Home and Community Care (HACC) program for those aged under 65 or under 50 for Indigenous Australians).

A summary of key changes in the way DS NMDS data were collected or reported in the 2012–13 collection year are included in Box 1.

**Box 1: Summary of changes in the way DS NMDS data were collected or reported in the 2012–13 collection year**

During the 2012–13 collection year, data included in the DS NMDS differed in some key respects from that in past years. Data refinements are not unexpected in an environment of significant change in the policy and service delivery landscape and largely reflect jurisdictions' continuing efforts and commitment to enhancing data quality. Key differences are as follows:

- changes in the information about service type outlets including a reclassification of service type outlets in Victoria and changes resulting from a major tender for open employment services (detailed in Section 1.1)
- some changes to service user numbers resulting from continuous data-quality initiatives, audits and reviews both in Victoria and South Australia (detailed in Section 2)
- the inclusion in the DS NMDS by the Northern Territory of people using Basic Community Care (BCC) services in line with the health reform-related changes to the NDA. Other jurisdictional data does not include information on this program. Options for reporting on BCC services in subsequent years are currently under consideration
- unlike in previous years, all percentages presented in this bulletin are calculated excluding 'not applicable/stated/collected' responses. This means that percentages presented throughout this bulletin may be different from those presented in previous publications.

## 1.1 Who provides disability support services?

Agencies that deliver disability support services under the NDA collect data against each 'service type outlet' they operate (see AIHW 2014: Glossary).

In 2012–13, there were 2,151 agencies managing 15,659 service type outlets (Table 1.1 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B2 and B7). Of these:

- most agencies were state/territory-funded (70%); the remaining 30% were Australian Government-funded, reflecting the responsibilities outlined in the NDA
- the majority (77%) of service type outlets were in the non-government sector and most of these were income tax exempt charities (69% of service type outlets).

Changes in the number of service type outlets between 2011–12 and 2012–13 primarily related to administrative factors (see Box 1) and included:

- an apparent significant increase in the number of open employment service type outlets being reported in 2012–13. This was largely a by-product of the Disability Employment Services Employment Support Service (DES-ESS) program (open employment services) undergoing an open tender process, resulting in some outlets ceasing operation, some ceasing in their current format only to commence in a new format, along with some completely new outlets commencing. All ceasing and commencing outlets were required to be included in the data collection for that year. Ceasing and commencing outlets were not operational concurrently, meaning that the real increase in the number of service type outlets delivering open employment services was actually quite small
- in Victoria, a shift of service type outlets from community access to community support, resulting from an output structure review (see Table 1.1 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B4 for more information).

The apparent change in the number of service type outlets does not affect the number of service users presented later in this bulletin.

**Table 1.1: Number of disability support service type outlets, by service group and agency sector, 2012–13**

Service group	Government			Non-government			Not stated	Total
	Australian/ state/ territory	Local	Subtotal	Income tax exempt	Non- income tax exempt	Subtotal		
Accommodation support	1,845	33	1,878	4,110	483	4,593	..	6,471
Community support <sup>(a)</sup>	687	25	712	1,025	69	1,094	..	1,806
Community access <sup>(a)</sup>	281	51	332	2,517	137	2,654	..	2,986
Respite <sup>(b)</sup>	311	51	362	1,159	109	1,268	..	1,630
Employment <sup>(c)</sup>	46	2	48	1,035	279	1,314	910 <sup>(d)</sup>	2,272 <sup>(e)</sup>
Advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication	18	1	19	267	49	316	..	335
Other support	44	49	93	53	13	66	..	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,232</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>3,444</b>	<b>10,166</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>11,305</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>15,659</b>

(a) As part of an output structure review in Victoria, an activity previously classified under 'community access' was amalgamated under 'community support' in that jurisdiction from 2012–13 onwards.

(b) Information on Australian Government-funded respite services is not included.

(c) Includes only Australian Government-funded employment services.

(d) Service type outlet data items were not available for a large number of open employment outlets which ceased or commenced operation during the reporting period as a result of the Disability Employment Services Employment Support Service (DES-ESS) open tender process (see Note (e)).

(e) The DES-ESS program (open employment services) underwent an open tender process in 2012–13 which resulted in some DES-ESS outlets ceasing operation and new outlets commencing, resulting in a significant apparent increase in the number of open employment service type outlets being reported in 2012–13. Ceasing and commencing outlets were not operational concurrently, meaning that the real increase in the number of service type outlets delivering services was actually quite small.

For further information on agencies and service type outlets, see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B2–B13.

## 1.2 How much was spent on disability support services?

In 2012–13, \$7.2 billion was spent on disability support services under the NDA, of which \$6.7 billion was allocated directly to service delivery (Table 1.2 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B1). Of the total expenditure, 87% was administered by the states and territories and 13% by the Australian Government. For a breakdown of expenditure data by jurisdiction, see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B1.

Overall, expenditure on disability support services in constant dollars (that is, adjusted for inflation or deflation over years) increased by 4% between 2011–12 and 2012–13 and by 23% since 2008–09 (Table 1.2).

Expenditure on employment and community access services decreased between 2011–12 and 2012–13, both by around 10%. The decrease in expenditure for community access services was largely because of a change in service type classification in Victoria as part of an output structure review (see Box 1). In Victoria, an activity previously classified under 'community access' was amalgamated under 'community support' from 2012–13 onwards. The effects of this can be seen in the increase in expenditure on community support services between 2011–12 and 2012–13 (see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B1 and B4 and SCRGSP 2014: tables 14A.4 and 14A.8).

**Table 1.2: Expenditure in constant dollars on disability support services, by service group, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

Service group	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	Percentage change	
						2008–09 to 2012–13	2011–12 to 2012–13
<b>Expenditure (\$ million) (constant prices in 2012–13 dollars)</b>							
Accommodation support	2,628.9	2,759.0	2,887.9	3,153.9	3,342.0	27.1	6.0
Community support	854.1	889.3	1,000.0	1,039.2	1,254.4	46.9	20.7
Community access	660.3	693.2	687.4	728.8	654.5	–0.9	–10.2
Respite	372.1	392.4	386.0	394.3	424.3	14.0	7.6
Employment	599.4	677.2	706.8	758.3	680.3	13.5	–10.3
Advocacy, information, alternative forms of communication	53.7	58.4	60.0	60.5	62.2	15.7	2.7
Other support	191.4	247.1	191.3	242.7	246.6	28.9	1.6
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>5,359.9</i>	<i>5,716.4</i>	<i>5,919.4</i>	<i>6,377.7</i>	<i>6,664.3</i>	<i>24.3</i>	<i>4.5</i>
Administration	433.2	444.3	487.4	512.6	478.7	10.5	–6.6
Capital grants to non-government providers	24.8	46.3	12.4	3.2	7.2	–71.0	128.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,817.9</b>	<b>6,207.0</b>	<b>6,419.3</b>	<b>6,893.5</b>	<b>7,151.8</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Expenditure per service user (constant prices in 2012–13 dollars)</b>							
Accommodation support	83,288	84,545	82,968	90,585	94,073	12.9	3.9
Community support	7,105	6,981	7,160	7,647	9,045	27.3	18.3
Community access	13,588	13,947	13,392	13,116	13,718	1.0	4.6
Respite	11,575	11,703	11,369	11,329	11,911	2.9	5.1
Employment	5,499	5,700	5,508	5,704	5,245	–4.6	–8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,370</b>	<b>19,304</b>	<b>18,963</b>	<b>19,966</b>	<b>21,329</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>6.8</b>

**Notes**

1. Excludes expenditure on, and service users of, specialist psychiatric disability services.
2. 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. Total service users may not be the sum of service groups because individuals may have used more than one service group during the 12-month period.
3. Service user data were not collected for all NDA service types. Refer to the appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
4. Expenditure figures may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: DS NMDS 2012–13; SCRGSP 2014: tables 14A.4 and 14A.8.

The decrease in expenditure on employment services was largely related to a reduction in the number of open employment service users and was not affected by the apparent increase in the number of service type outlets reported (see Table 1.1 and Section 5). The DES-ESS program (open employment services) is a demand-driven program, meaning places are not capped and anyone who meets the eligibility criteria is able to access the program. Expenditure is determined by the number of participants who access the program and the outcomes achieved (Table 1.1, AIHW 2014: Table B5 and AIHW 2013c: Table B7).

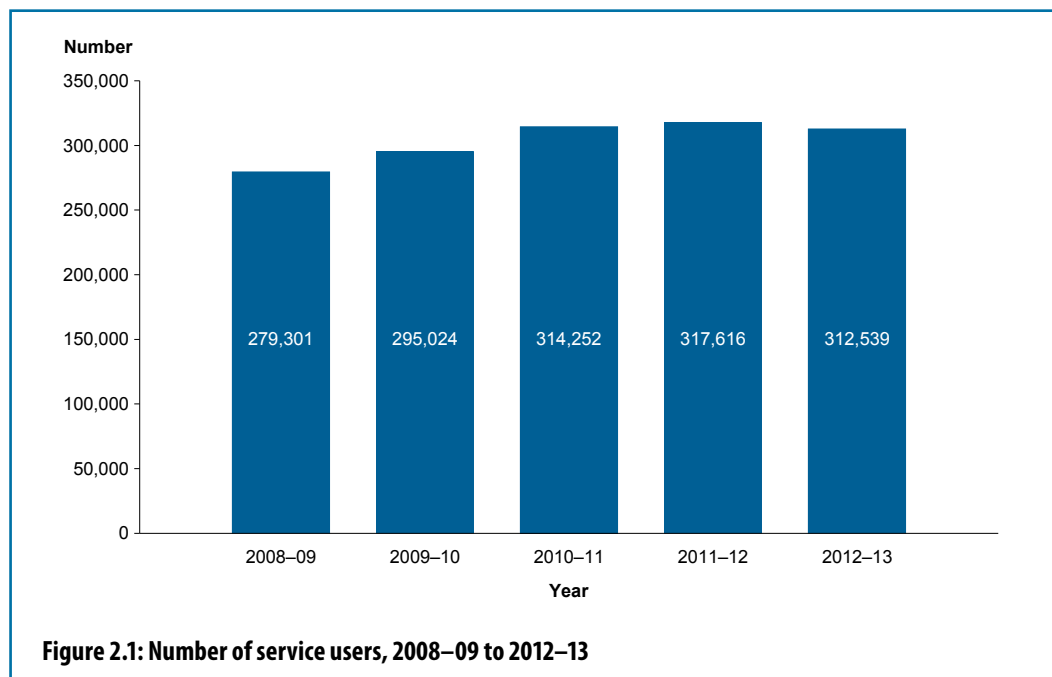
Average expenditure per service user has generally increased, except for employment service users on whom expenditure per service user decreased by 8% between 2011–12 and 2012–13 (Table 1.2).

## 2 How many people used disability support services?

In 2012–13, an estimated 312,539 people used disability support services (Figure 2.1). Of these, 201,675 service users (65%) used state- or territory- delivered services—such as accommodation support, community support, community access and respite services—and 129,698 (41%) used Australian Government-delivered employment services (Table 5.1).

The number of service users generally increased over the 5 years to 2012–13 (an increase of 12% between 2008–09 and 2012–13), but there was a slight decrease of 2% between 2011–12 and 2012–13 (Figure 2.1). The change in the number of service users was not evenly spread across jurisdictions or service groups (see Section 5) and was a result of administrative changes and an actual decrease in service users in some jurisdictions (see Box 1). For example, in 2012–13:

- improved client linkage and continuous data-quality initiatives in Victoria resulted in a decrease in the number of Victorian service users reported. In particular, the improvement in completeness of Victorian statistical linkage keys contributed to a reduction in double counting, and an activity previously classified under ‘community access’ was amalgamated under ‘community support’ in that jurisdiction from 2012–13 onwards
- an audit review in South Australia identified anomalies in reporting by some service providers, which resulted in a number of clients no longer being reported
- the reason for the decrease in the number of open employment service users is not clear but may reflect a slight reduction in demand for this program compared with 2011–12.



For further information on service users, see the following sections and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B14–B73.

### 3 Who used disability support services?

#### 3.1 Age and sex

The average (mean) age of service users overall was 34 (Table 3.1). The median age was similar, at 30 years (AIHW 2013: Appendix B, Table B16).

Most service users (59%) were male (tables 3.1 and 3.2). Males were generally slightly younger with a mean age of 31 in 2012–13 compared with female service users whose mean age was 37. This was influenced by the relatively high number of young male service users with an intellectual or learning disability (see Section 7).

The overall sex and age distribution of service users has remained relatively steady over time (Table 3.1).

For further information on service users by age and sex, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B19, B20, B21, B23, B28, B35–B37, B69, and B62–64.

**Table 3.1: Age and sex of service users, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

Sex	2008–09		2009–10		2010–11		2011–12 <sup>(a)</sup>		2012–13	
	Mean age (years)	%	Mean age (years)	%	Mean age (years)	%	Mean age (years)	%	Mean age (years)	%
Male	32.1	58.9	31.9	59.3	31.9	59.3	31.6	59.1	31.3	59.1
Female	37.8	41.1	37.4	40.7	37.6	40.7	37.2	40.9	37.0	40.9
<b>All service users<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Open employment services data for 2011–12 were resubmitted in 2012–13 and underlying data may vary from that presented in previous publications.

(b) 'All service users' includes service users for whom sex was 'not stated/not collected'.

*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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Percentages are of the 'total' excluding 'not stated/not collected'.

**Table 3.2: Services users, by sex and age group, 2012–13**

Sex	0–49		50–64		65+		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	144,905	62.0	31,894	52.1	7,922	45.6	184,721	59.1
Female	88,890	38.0	29,290	47.9	9,455	54.4	127,635	40.9
Not stated/not collected	149	..	30	..	4	..	183	..
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,944</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>61,214</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,381</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312,539</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Percentages are of the 'total' excluding 'not stated/not collected'.

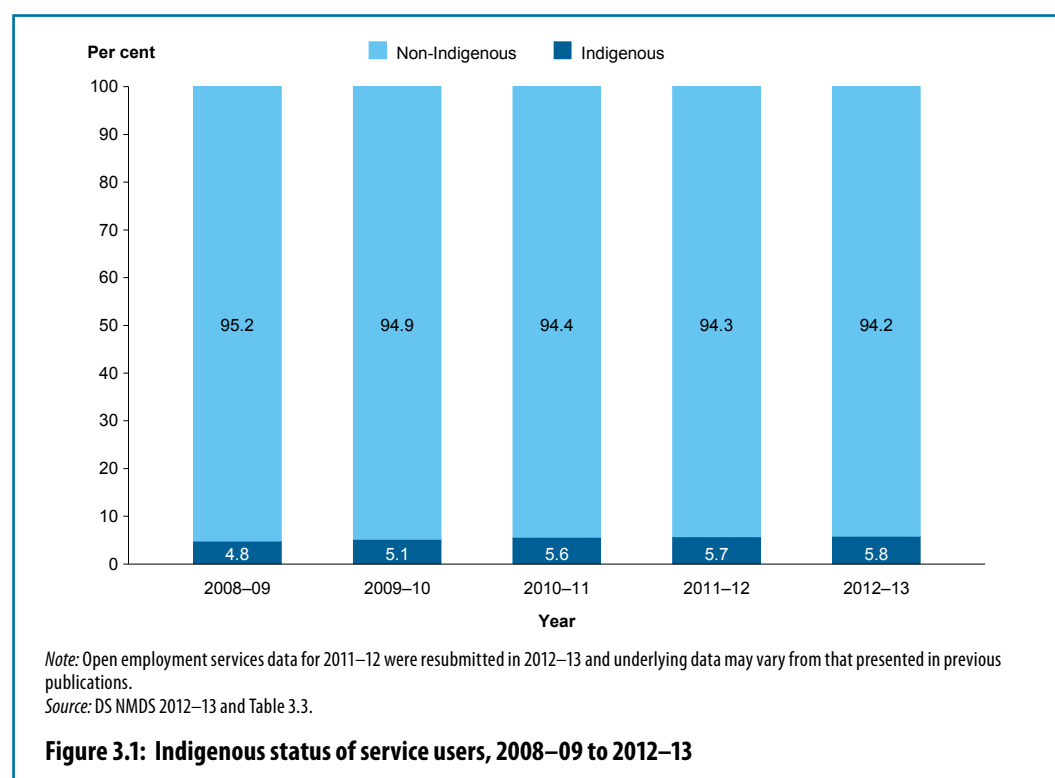


### 3.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

In 2012–13, 5.8% of service users were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, higher than the estimated 3% of Indigenous people in the general Australian population (Figure 3.1; ABS 2013a). The proportion of Indigenous service users has increased from 4.8% in 2008–09.

Most Indigenous service users (84%) were aged under 50 (Table 3.3). This was higher than the proportion of non-Indigenous service users in this age bracket (74%), reflecting the younger age profile of Indigenous Australians relative to the broader Australian population.

For further information on service users by Indigenous status, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B19–21, B43, B48, B60, and B69.



**Table 3.3: Services users, by Indigenous status and age group, 2012–13**

Indigenous status	0–49		50–64		65+		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Indigenous	14,607	6.5	2,136	3.6	663	4.0	17,406	5.8
Non-Indigenous	210,273	93.5	57,283	96.4	15,750	96.0	283,306	94.2
Not stated/not collected <sup>(a)</sup>	9,064	..	1,795	..	968	..	11,827	..
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,944</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>61,214</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,381</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312,539</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Percentages are of the 'total' excluding 'not stated/not collected'.

### 3.3 Country of birth

The country of birth profile of service users has remained relatively stable over the years (Table 3.4). In 2012–13, the majority of service users (87%) were born in Australia (Table 3.4). Thirteen percent of service users were 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). The proportion of Australian-born service users was higher than the proportion of those who were Australian-born in the overall population (73%) (ABS 2013b).

For further information on service users by country of birth, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B17, B22 and B69.

**Table 3.4: Service users, by country of birth (English Proficiency Group countries), 2008–09 to 2012–13**

Year	Australia <sup>(a)</sup>		Born overseas, EPG 1		Born overseas, EPG 2–4		Not stated/not collected <sup>(b)</sup>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2008–09	228,050	87.3	11,390	4.4	21,767	8.3	18,094	..	279,301	100.0
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 <sup>(c)</sup>	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

(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.

(c) Open employment services data for 2011–12 were resubmitted in 2012–13 and underlying data may vary from that presented in previous publications.

#### 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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Percentages are of the 'total' excluding 'not stated/not collected'.

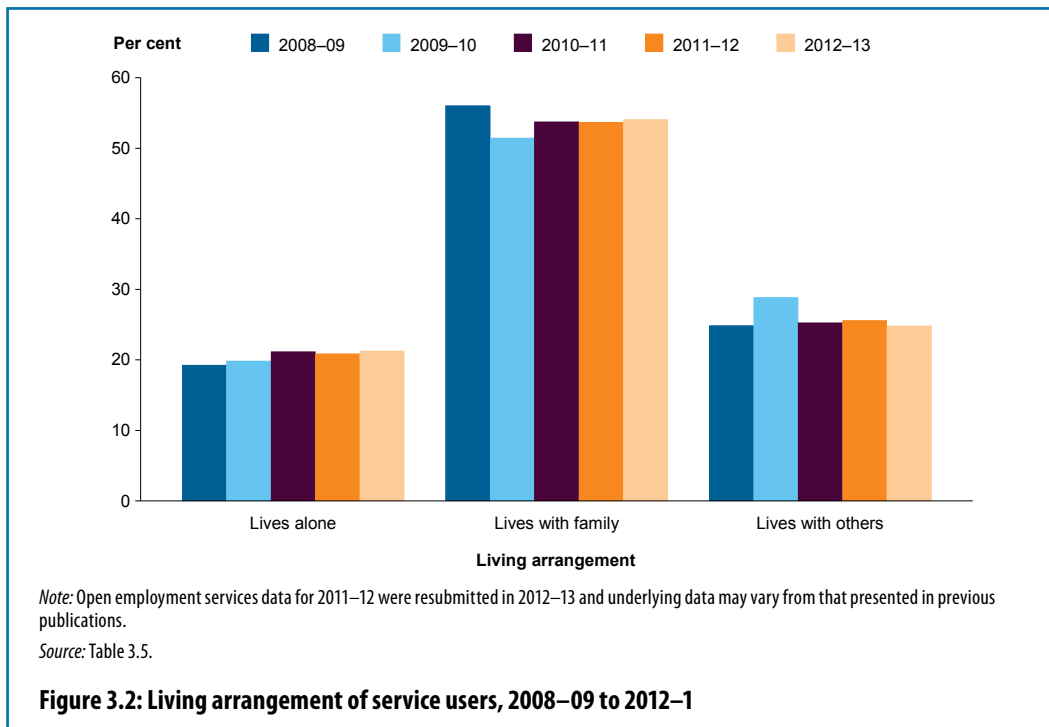
### 3.4 Living arrangement

Around half (54%) of service users lived with family, 25% lived with 'others' (such as sharing with a friend or a non-related carer) and 21% lived alone. The proportion of service users who lived alone increased slightly over the 5 years from 19% in 2008–09 to 21% in 2012–13 (Figure 3.2 and Table 3.5).

The majority (80%) of service users lived in a private residence, 6% lived in a domestic-scale supported living facility (such as a group home), 5% lived in a boarding house or private hotel, and 3% lived in a supported accommodation facility (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B16).

Most of the service users who lived in a domestic-scale supported living facility (77%) or in a supported accommodation facility (64%) had an intellectual disability (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B31).

For further information on service users by living arrangement and/or residential setting, see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B20, B31, B23 and B47.



**Figure 3.2: Living arrangement of service users, 2008-09 to 2012-1**

**Table 3.5: Service users, by living arrangement, 2008-09 to 2012-13**

Year	Lives alone		Lives with family		Lives with others		Not stated/ not collected <sup>(a)</sup>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2008-09	48,998	19.2	142,730	56.0	63,275	24.8	24,298	..	279,301	100.0
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 <sup>(b)</sup>	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

(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.

(b) Open employment services data for 2011-12 were resubmitted in 2012-13 and underlying data may vary from that presented in previous publications.

**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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012-13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Percentages are of the 'total' excluding 'not stated/not collected'.

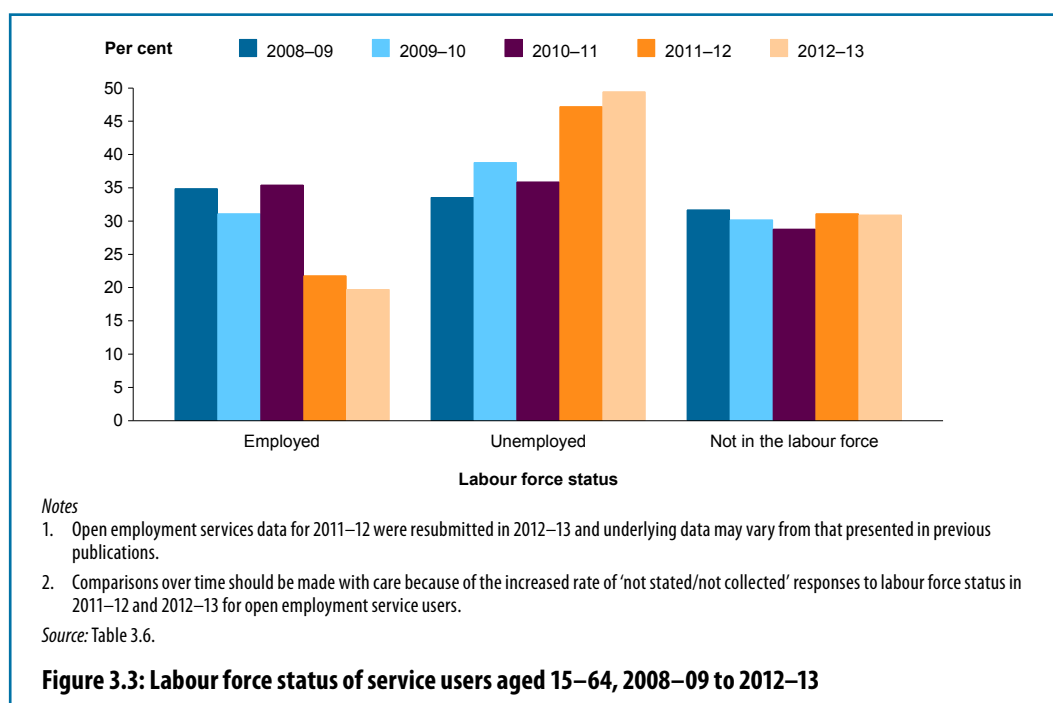
### 3.5 Employment and income

Most service users aged 15-64 were either in the labour force but unemployed (49%) or not in the labour force at all (31%) (Figure 3.3, Table 3.6 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B27; see also AIHW 2014: Glossary). Data on labour force status should be interpreted with caution because of the increase in the rate of 'not stated/not collected' responses for labour force status in 2011-12 and 2012-13 for open employment service users (see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B27). Comparisons over time should be made with care.

The most common source of income of service users aged 16–64, regardless of their labour force status, was the Disability Support Pension (67%), followed by ‘other pension or benefit’ (25%) (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B29).

Of the service users aged 16–64 who received the Disability Support Pension, 22% were employed, 40% were unemployed and 38% were not in the labour force (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B29). Three-quarters (75%) of employed service users aged 16–64 were also receiving the Disability Support Pension.

For further information on service users by main source of income and labour force status, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B20, B27, B29, B30, B68, B72 and B73.



**Table 3.6: Service users aged 15–64, by labour force status<sup>(a)</sup>, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

Year	Employed		Unemployed		Not in the labour force		Not stated/ not collected <sup>(b)</sup>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2008–09	64,708	34.8	62,297	33.5	58,763	31.6	20,628	..	206,396	100.0
2009–10	62,002	31.1	77,351	38.8	60,183	30.2	19,806	..	219,342	100.0
2010–11 <sup>(c)</sup>	74,111	35.4	75,027	35.8	60,211	28.8	23,632	..	232,981	100.0
2011–12	41,039	21.8	88,960	47.2	58,601	31.1	49,154	..	237,754	100.0
2012–13	37,053	19.7	92,917	49.4	58,041	30.9	43,950	..	231,961	100.0

(a) Only service users aged 15 and over were asked about their labour force status.

(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.

(c) Open employment services data for 2011–12 were resubmitted in 2012–13 and underlying data may vary from that presented in previous publications.

**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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).

3. Percentages are of the ‘total’ excluding ‘not stated/not collected’.

### 3.6 Disability group

The term 'disability groups' refers to a broad categorisation of disabilities in terms of underlying health condition, impairment, activity limitations, participation restrictions and environmental factors (AIHW 2013a). '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 (see also AIHW 2014: Glossary). They are also asked about any other types of disability that caused them difficulty (referred to as 'other significant disability group'). On average, around two disability groups per service user were reported (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B33).

Around a third of service users had an intellectual disability in 2012–13 (28% as a primary disability or 32% when 'other significant disability' is included) (Table 3.7). Other common types of disability of service users were physical disability and psychiatric disability.

Service users with an intellectual disability were the largest group across years, though the proportion has decreased over the 5 years to 2012–13 (Figure 3.4).

For further information on service users by disability group, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B20, B28–B33, B37, B43, B49, B70, and B73.

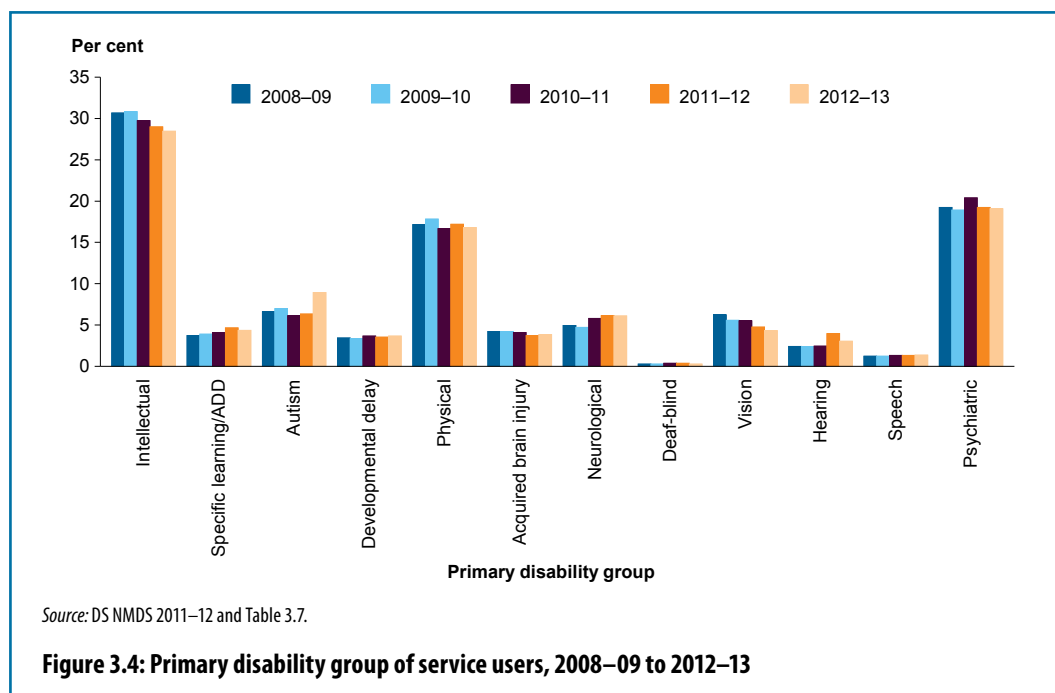
**Table 3.7: Services users, by primary or other significant disability group, 2012–13**

Disability group	Primary disability group		Other disability group		Total disability group	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Intellectual/learning</b>	<b>134,005</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>40,687</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>174,692</b>	<b>55.9</b>
Intellectual	84,082	28.4	16,980	5.4	101,062	32.3
Specific learning/ADD	12,808	4.3	11,463	3.7	24,271	7.8
Autism	26,347	8.9	10,288	3.3	36,635	11.7
Developmental delay	10,768	3.6	1,956	0.6	12,724	4.1
<b>Physical/diverse</b>	<b>78,935</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>70,044</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>148,979</b>	<b>47.7</b>
Physical	49,655	16.8	44,236	14.2	93,891	30.0
Acquired brain injury	11,340	3.8	4,608	1.5	15,948	5.1
Neurological	17,940	6.1	21,200	6.8	39,140	12.5
<b>Sensory/speech</b>	<b>26,341</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>39,630</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>65,971</b>	<b>21.1</b>
Deaf-blind	748	0.3	1,281	0.4	2,029	0.6
Vision	12,721	4.3	11,385	3.6	24,106	7.7
Hearing	8,900	3.0	7,897	2.5	16,797	5.4
Speech	3,972	1.3	19,067	6.1	23,039	7.4
<b>Psychiatric</b>	<b>56,391</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>27,994</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>84,385</b>	<b>27.0</b>
Psychiatric	56,391	19.1	27,994	9.0	84,385	27.0
<b>Total<sup>(a)</sup></b>	<b>295,672</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312,539</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312,539</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Primary disability group was 'not stated/not collected' for 16,867 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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Totals for 'other significant disability' and 'total disability' are not the sum of components because individuals may report multiple types of disability.



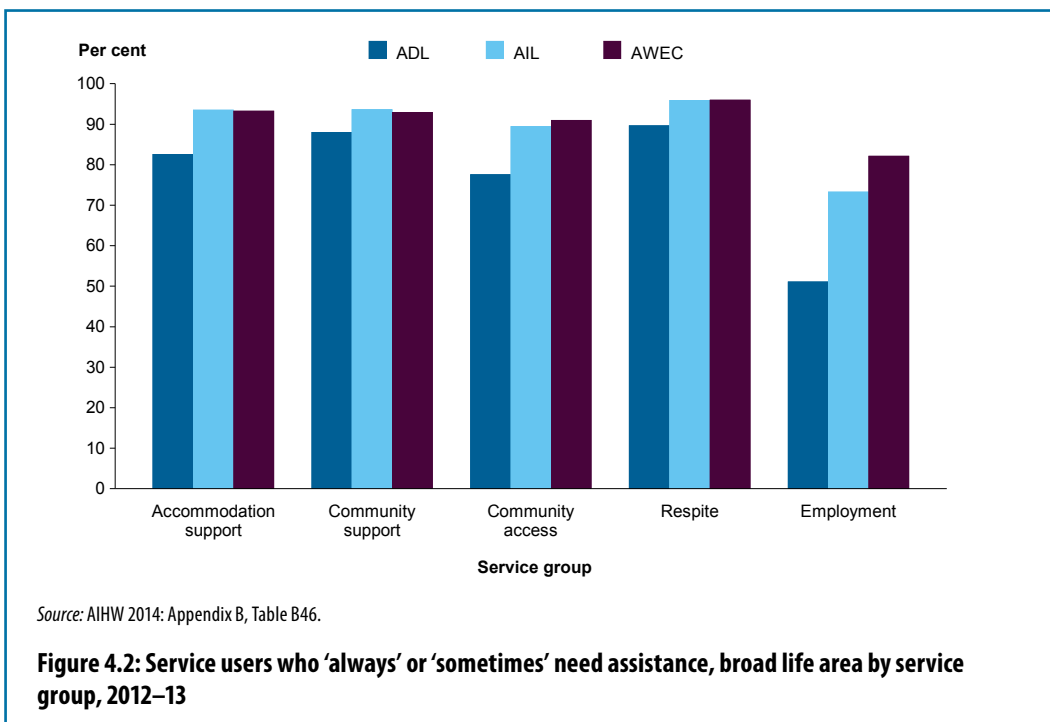
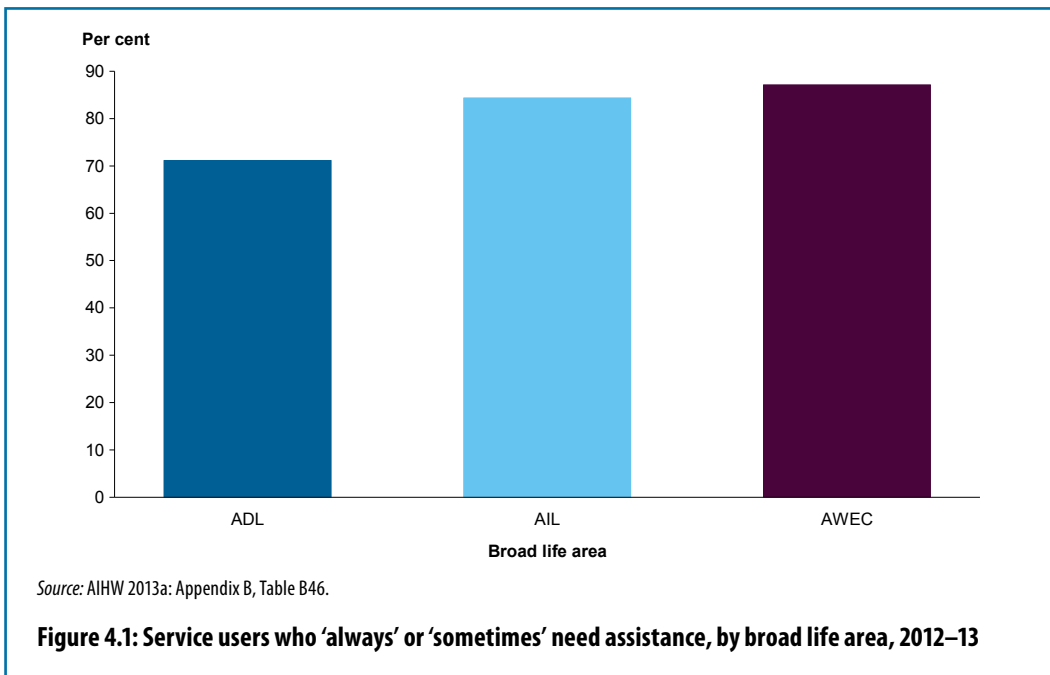
#### 4 In what life areas was assistance needed?

People with disability may require support 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). (For more information see the glossary in *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014)). The level of that support can vary, from not needing assistance to always needing assistance.

Data about support needs should be interpreted with caution because there were relatively high rates of 'not applicable/stated/collected' responses, particularly in 2011–12 and 2012–13 for open employment service users. Comparisons over time should be made with care.

The majority of service users needed some assistance in one or more of the three broad life areas—ADL (71%), AIL (84%), and AWEC (87%) (Figure 4.1). (See AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B44 and B45 for a breakdown of the life area groups).

Users of respite services were the most likely to 'always' or 'sometimes' need assistance to perform activities in all three broad life areas (Figure 4.2). Users of employment services were the least likely to 'always' or 'sometimes' need assistance across the three areas. This overall finding is consistent with that from previous years.



For further information on service users and their need for assistance in a life area, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B16, B44–B49 and B61.

## 5 What were the most common services used?

In 2012–13, community support (45%) and employment services (41%) were the most common service groups used (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1).

Proportionally, the use of most service groups has remained relatively stable over the 5 years to 2012–13 (Table 5.2 and Figure 5.1).

The change in the number of service users overall (see Section 2) was not evenly distributed across service groups. For example, between 2011–12 and 2012–13:

- ♦ the number of community access service users decreased by around 12% (or by 7,844 service users). The decrease in the number of community access service users was largely a result of a change in service type classification in Victoria as part of an output structure review. In Victoria, an activity previously classified under ‘community access’ was amalgamated under ‘community support’ from 2012–13 onwards. Because of a significant overlap in service users between the two service groups prior to the shift, the reclassification did not result in an increase in the number of community support service users
- ♦ the number of employment service users decreased by 2% (3,251 service users). This was largely related to a decrease in the number of open employment service users. While the reasons for this decrease are not clear, it is likely to be independent of the increase in the number of employment service type outlets reported in 2012–13 (that is, it is likely not because of the administrative changes discussed in sections 1 and 2).

**Table 5.1: Services users, service group by state and territory, 2012–13 (number)**

Service group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT <sup>(a)</sup>	Total
Accommodation support	10,153	14,821	6,761	4,252	5,267	1,326	475	553	43,592
Community support	37,307	44,629	19,014	14,165	13,593	4,929	4,092	1,862	139,142
Community access	15,703	16,773	9,380	4,752	6,042	1,567	700	521	55,403
Respite	10,580	16,042	5,041	3,549	1,876	471	327	250	38,072
<i>Total state/territory services</i>	<i>53,128</i>	<i>72,170</i>	<i>27,583</i>	<i>17,187</i>	<i>18,386</i>	<i>6,547</i>	<i>4,673</i>	<i>2,757</i>	<i>201,675</i>
Employment	43,777	31,486	26,667	10,536	12,846	3,061	1,801	579	129,698
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,802</b>	<b>98,948</b>	<b>51,289</b>	<b>24,857</b>	<b>29,055</b>	<b>9,166</b>	<b>6,187</b>	<b>3,244</b>	<b>312,539</b>

(a) From 2012–13, the Northern Territory DS NMDS data includes individuals using BCC services.

*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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Totals for Australia may not be the sum of service components because individuals may have used services in more than one state or territory during the 12-month period.
4. Total service users may not be the sum of service group components because individuals may have used more than one service group over the 12-month period.
5. See AIHW 2014: Table B34 for a breakdown by state and territory of the service types that comprise the service groups.



**Table 5.2: Services users, by service group, 2008–09 to 2012–13**

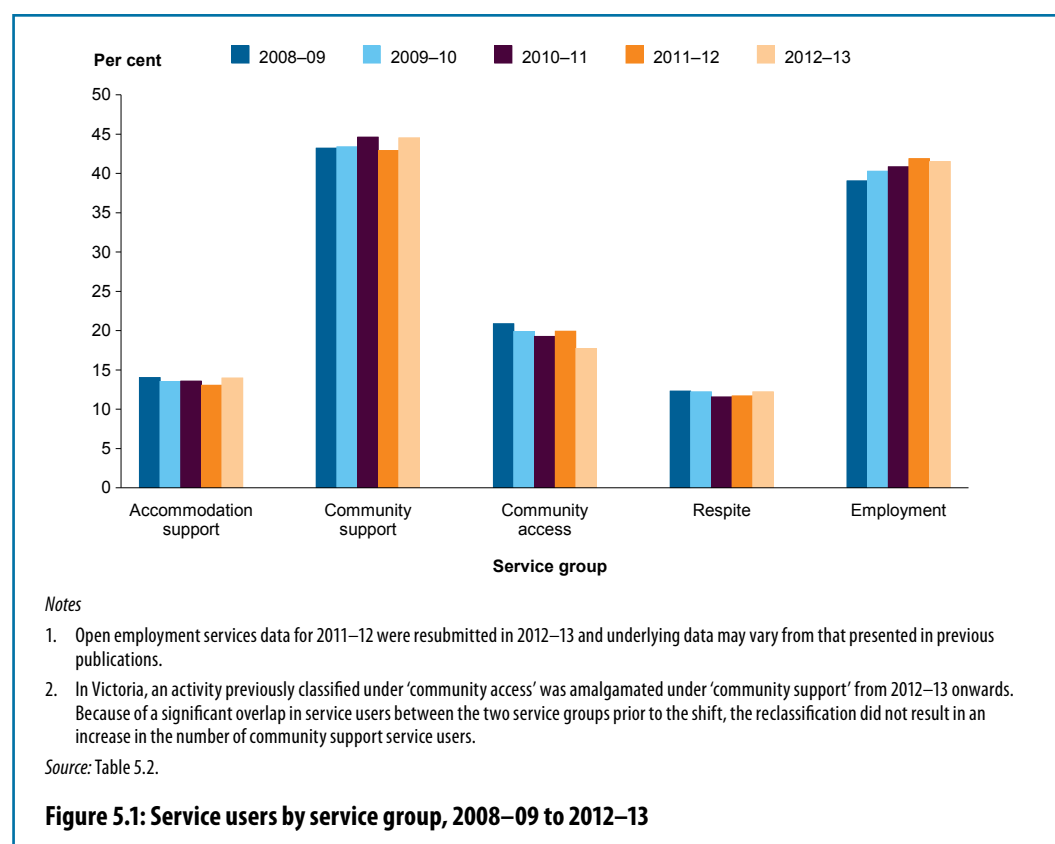
Service group	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12 <sup>(a)</sup>	2012–13	Percentage change	
						2008–09 to 2012–13	2011–12 to 2012–13
Accommodation support	39,169	39,854	42,579	41,421	43,592	11.3	5.2
Community support	120,629	127,909	140,156	136,236	139,142	15.3	2.1
Community access	58,274	58,632	60,509	63,247	55,403	-4.9 <sup>(b)</sup>	-12.4 <sup>(b)</sup>
Respite	34,331	35,978	36,266	37,015	38,072	10.9	2.9
<i>Total state/territory services</i>	<i>186,961</i>	<i>193,218</i>	<i>204,226</i>	<i>203,371</i>	<i>201,675</i>	<i>7.9</i>	<i>-0.8</i>
Employment	109,003	118,801	128,321	132,949	129,698	19.0	-2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>279,301</b>	<b>295,024</b>	<b>314,252</b>	<b>317,616</b>	<b>312,539</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>-1.6</b>

(a) Open employment services data for 2011–12 were resubmitted in 2012–13 and underlying data may vary from that presented in previous publications.

(b) In Victoria, an activity previously classified under 'community access' was amalgamated under 'community support' from 2012–13 onwards. Because of a significant overlap in service users between the two service groups prior to 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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. Total service users may not be the sum of service group components because individuals may have used more than one service group over the 12-month period.



For further information on the use of services, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B20, B26, B14, B15, B25, B34–B43, B46, B53, B54, B65–B67, B69, B70, B72, and B73.

## 5.1 Users of multiple services

On average, service users used 1.4 service types and 1.3 service groups each (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B40 and B43). In terms of individual service types, this includes using the same service type from different service type outlets (14% of service users) or using multiple service types from different outlets (27%). In terms of service groups, this includes using services within the same service group from different outlets (for example, within community access) (19% of service users) or using service types across service groups (for example, in both accommodation support and community access) (22%) (see Section 1). Most of those using multiple service groups used two or three different service groups.

The most commonly combined service groups were community support and community access, with 21,954 service users using this combination of services (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B42). This combination was used by 16% of community support users, and by 40% of community access users. Other common combinations were community support with respite (20,421 service users), accommodation support with community support (20,232 service users), and accommodation support with community access (16,924 service users).

The use of multiple service types and service groups was least common among those who used employment services and most common among those who used accommodation, respite or community access service groups (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B41).

As might be expected, 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 were service users with less-frequent or no need for assistance in this life area (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B43).

## 6 Informal care

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-provided services.

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 may 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 (see AIHW 2013c for a more detailed definition of informal care and the ways in which definitions are used in various data collections).

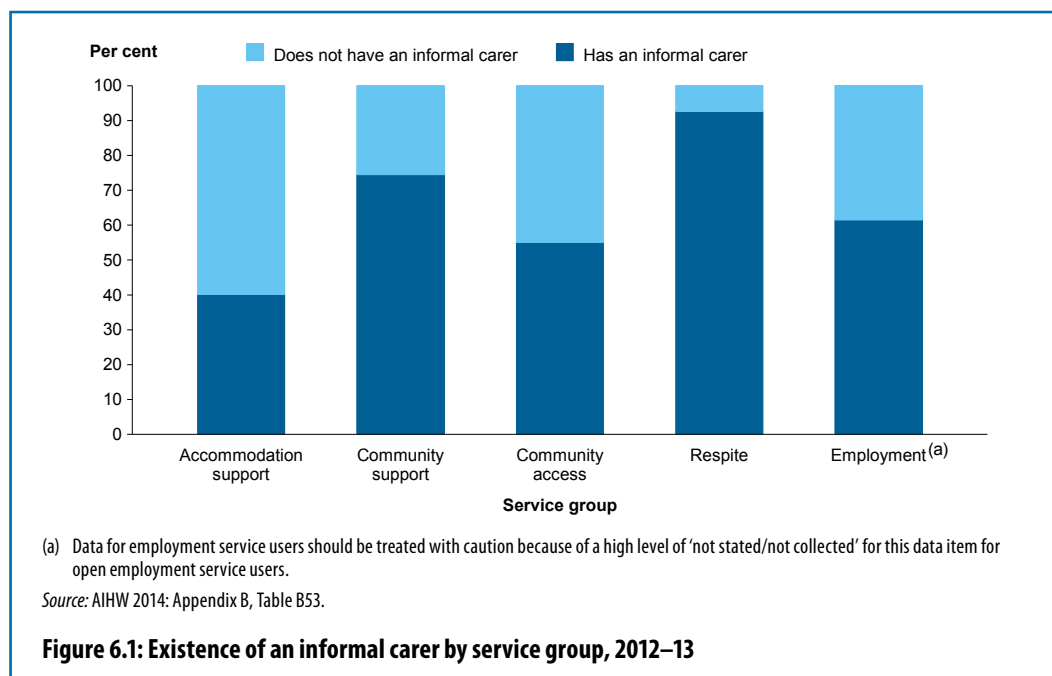
Data about the existence of an informal carer should be interpreted with caution because there were relatively high rates of 'not stated/not collected' for this data item in 2011–12 and 2012–13 (see AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B51). Much of the increase in the 'not stated/not collected' rates in these years was because of the high rate of 'not stated/not collected' submitted in the open employment services data. Employment services are required to collect data on whether the service user had an informal carer but are not required to collect other carer characteristics such as the primary status, residency status, and age group of the carer.

For further information on service users with an informal carer, see Section 7 and AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B50–B62.

## 6.1 How many service users had an informal carer?

In 2012–13, 136,325 (67%) service users had an informal carer (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B51). This was an increase of 24% from the estimated 110,082 service users with an informal carer in 2008–09, and a slight decrease from the 136,794 service users with an informal carer in 2011–12.

Not surprisingly, the service users most likely to report having an informal carer were those who used respite services (93%) (Figure 6.1). Accommodation support service users were the least likely to have an informal carer (40%), particularly those living in institutional accommodation (16%).



## 6.2 Who provided informal care?

In 2012–13, most service users with an informal carer (86%) 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 2014: Appendix B, Table B59).

The majority of service users with an informal carer (86%) reported having a female carer, most often their mother (72%) (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, tables B54 and B56).

In most cases (82% of service users with an informal carer), the informal carer was co-resident with the service user (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B54). As expected, there is a relationship between living arrangement and service group use. Users of service groups such as respite services (85%) and community support (84%) were more likely to have a co-resident carer than were users of other service groups.

About 9% of service users with an informal carer reported that their carer was their spouse; however, as service user age increased, the likelihood of a spouse being identified as a carer also

increased (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B56). Being cared for by a spouse was the most common informal care arrangement for service users aged 45–64 (35%) and 65-and-over (53%).

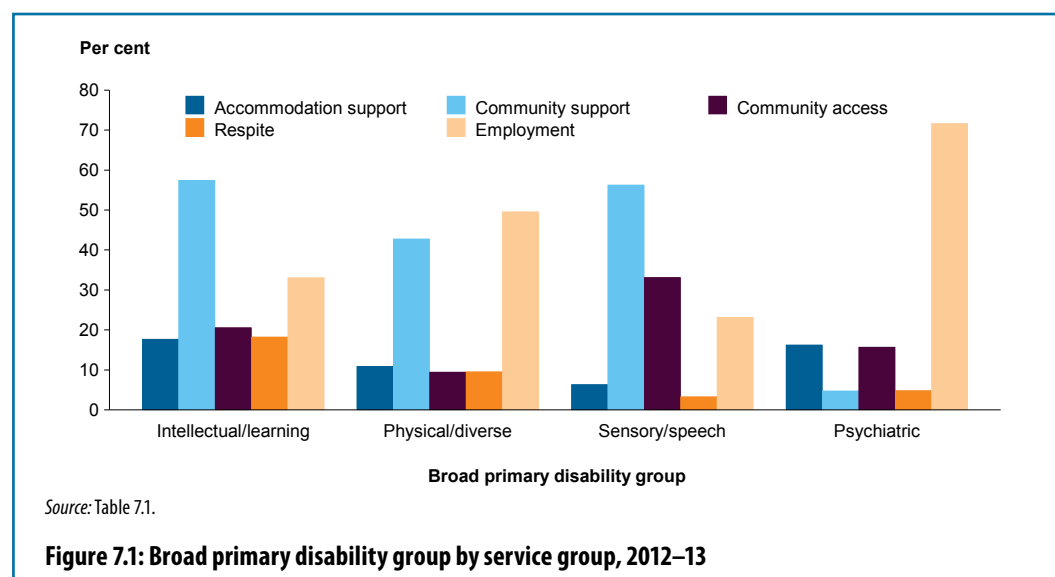
Most service users with an informal carer had a carer who was aged under 65 (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B55). Around 14% of services users with an informal carer reported having a carer aged 65-and-over. Many of these (71%) were the parent of the service user, most often the mother (59%) (AIHW 2014: Appendix B, Table B57).

## 7 Profile of a service user by broad primary disability group

People using disability support services are diverse and, as such, it is not surprising that their characteristics and use of services vary. As an example of this, some selected characteristics of service users by broad primary disability group are presented in Table 7.1. The broad disability groups presented here are based on the national standard disability groups (AIHW 2013a; see also Section 3).

Compared with other service users:

- service users with an intellectual or learning disability were generally younger (average age of 25); more often male and born in Australia; slightly more likely to be Indigenous; more likely to use accommodation support and respite services; more likely to be either employed or not in the labour force; and more likely to have an informal carer and to require assistance in the three broad life areas
- service users with a sensory or speech disability were often older (with an average age of 45); less likely to be Indigenous; more likely to use community access services; and the least likely to use employment services
- service users with a psychiatric disability were the least likely to have an informal carer; the most likely to be in the labour force but unemployed; and the most likely to use employment services
- service users with a physical or diverse disability were the most likely to be born overseas; and the second most likely (after service users with a psychiatric disability) to use employment services (Table 7.1 and Figure 7.1).



**Table 7.1: Selected characteristics of service users by broad primary disability group, 2012–13**

Selected characteristics	Intellectual/ learning	Physical/ diverse	Sensory/ speech	Psychiatric	All service users <sup>(a)</sup>
<b>Service users (number)</b>	<b>134,005</b>	<b>78,935</b>	<b>26,341</b>	<b>56,391</b>	<b>312,539</b>
Percentage change since 2008–09	16.7	15.8	1.1	13.3	11.9
Percentage change since 2011–12	4.5	–1.0	–13.4	–0.6	–1.6
<b>Age</b>					
Mean	25.4	41.6	44.5	40.2	33.6
Median	21	46	45	40	32
<b>Sex (%)</b>					
Male	65.1	55.1	50.6	53.8	59.1
Female	34.9	44.9	49.4	46.2	40.9
<b>Indigenous status (%)</b>					
Indigenous	6.1	5.8	4.2	5.1	5.8
Non-Indigenous	93.9	94.2	95.8	94.9	94.2
<b>English proficiency group (%)</b>					
Australia	94.5	79.0	80.5	81.5	87.0
Born overseas, EPG 1	2.0	5.9	6.7	5.7	4.0
Born overseas, EPG 2–4	3.4	15.1	12.8	12.8	9.0
<b>Services used (%)</b>					
Accommodation support	17.7	10.9	6.3	16.2	13.9
Community support	57.3	42.7	56.2	4.7	44.5
Community access	20.5	9.4	33.0	15.6	17.7
Respite	18.2	9.5	3.2	4.7	12.2
Employment	33.0	49.5	23.1	71.5	41.5
<b>Labour force status (%)<sup>(b,c)</sup></b>					
Employed	28.9	13.3	23.7	11.4	19.7
Unemployed	30.0	57.1	56.3	73.0	49.4
Not in the labour force	41.1	29.6	19.9	15.6	30.9
<b>Has an informal carer? (%)<sup>(c)</sup></b>					
Yes	74.1	67.4	46.2	38.4	66.8
No	25.9	32.6	53.8	61.6	33.2
<b>Always/sometimes need assistance in? (%)<sup>(c)</sup></b>					
Activities of daily living	84.5	66.1	60.5	41.7	71.1
Activities of independent living	95.1	76.8	65.7	70.5	84.3
Activities of work, education and community living	96.3	80.4	68.8	78.2	87.1

(a) 'All service users' includes 16,867 service users for whom the primary disability group was 'not stated/not collected' (including service users who used only recreation/holiday programs (service type 3.02) and who did not provide a response).

(b) Service users aged 15–64.

(c) This data item has a relatively high rate of 'not stated/not collected'.

#### 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 appendix to this bulletin, separately published as *Disability support services: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014).
3. 'Intellectual/learning' includes the categories of 'intellectual', 'specific learning/attention deficit disorder', 'autism', and 'developmental delay'; 'physical/diverse' includes the categories of 'physical', 'acquired brain injury', and 'neurological'; 'sensory/speech' includes the categories of 'deaf-blind', 'vision', 'hearing' and 'speech'.

## Acknowledgments

This bulletin and additional tables were prepared by Felicity Murdoch and Brendan Brady of the Functioning and Disability Unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. The contributions of Pamela Kinnear (Continuing and Specialised Care Group Head) and Liz Clout (Functioning and Disability Unit Head) are gratefully acknowledged.

The successful completion of the Disability Services National Minimum Data Set collection in 2012–13 owes much to the service users and service providers who contributed information, and to staff of the Australian Government and state and territory government agencies who undertook the collection and commented on the bulletin.

## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADD	attention deficit disorder
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
BCC	Basic Community Care
DES-ESS	Disability Employment Services Employment Support Service
DS NMDS	Disability Services National Minimum Data Set
EPG	English Proficiency Group
NDA	National Disability Agreement
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

## Symbols

—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable

## References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2013a. Australian demographic statistics, June quarter 2013. ABS cat. no. 3101.0. Canberra: ABS.

ABS 2013b. Migration, Australia, 2011–12 and 2012–13. ABS cat. no. 3412.0. Canberra: ABS.

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2013a. METeOR (Metadata Online Registry). Person—primary disability group, NDA code N[N]. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 28 May 2013, <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/511282>>.

AIHW 2013b. Disability support services: appendix 2011–12. Disability series. Cat. no. AUS 173. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2013c. Australia's welfare 2013. Australia's welfare series no. 11. Cat. no. AUS 174. Canberra: AIHW.

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SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2014. Report on government services 2014. Canberra: Productivity Commission.

## 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 <<http://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: Appendix 2012–13* (AIHW 2014). DS NMDS data cubes are also available on the AIHW website <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/disability-data-cubes/>>.

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

- AIHW 2012. Changes in life expectancy and disability in Australia 1998 to 2009. Bulletin no. 111. Cat. no. AUS 166. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2012. Incontinence in Australia: prevalence, experience and cost 2009. Bulletin no. 112. Cat. no. AUS 167. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Incontinence in Australia. Cat. no. DIS 61. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Diabetes and disability: impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions and comorbidities. Diabetes series no. 20. Cat. no. CVD 63. Canberra: AIHW.

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