



National Centre for  
Disability Advocacy

# Advocacy workforce survey

## For individual workers in the disability advocacy sector

### Opening page: About this survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand the individuals who make the disability advocacy sector what it is. The [National Centre for Disability Advocacy](#) (NCDCA) will collect similar information each year to track trends, and changes and use the information collected to understand the training and development needs of the sector. The NCDCA will share the data collected with [Disability Advocacy Network Australia](#) (DANA) to assist them in their role as 'advocate for the advocate'. The better the DANA understands the staff in the sector, the better DANA is able to advocate for the needs of the sector.

The information collected will be shared back with the advocacy sector in a deidentified manner after the survey closes. The survey is open from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and **closes Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023**.

All questions in this survey are optional and many have free text options to provide additional context and feedback. We welcome all information you feel comfortable providing.

This survey is being conducted using Typeform and has 44 questions. Autosave of progress has been enabled, meaning you can begin the survey, return to it later and your responses will save in the browser you are using. Even if you close the browser, when you click the survey link to begin completing the survey again your responses will appear. The NCDCA will not be able to view any of your responses until you press the submit button at the end of the survey.

### Who is this survey for?

This survey is for people who complete paid work in the disability advocacy sector **and** at least 50% of their role relates to completing disability

advocacy-related work under a disability advocacy funding stream. A disability advocacy funding stream includes:

- the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP),
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) appeals program,
- State-funded government disability advocacy programs.

This survey is **not** intended to be completed by people involved with the National Disability Representative Organisation (DRO) program or advocacy-like services delivered under the NDIS Information, Linkages, and Capacity Building (ILC) program.

People who should take part in this survey include:

- Disability advocates (of all models),
- Supervisors and team leaders,
- Intake officers and administration officers,
- Managers and executives

If you have any questions about this survey, including whether you should complete it, please contact the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA) at [ncda@dana.org.au](mailto:ncda@dana.org.au)

## Information about you

This section relates to you as an individual worker in the disability advocacy sector.

### 1. What is your current role?

*You can select more than one option if you hold multiple roles.*

Individual advocate	NDIS appeals advocate	Systemic advocate
Citizen advocacy coordinator	Administration officer	Finance officer/ bookkeeper
Policy/ research officer	Manager/ CEO	Other

If other, please specify:

### 2. Where do you do the majority of your work?

*You can select more than one if you work across jurisdictions.*

Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Victoria
New South Wales	Tasmania	South Australia
Northern Territory	Western Australia	Victoria
Nationally/ Australia wide		

### 3. Which of the following best describes your location?

*This is where you conduct your work, which may not be where your organisations office is located.*

Capital city	Outer urban area	Major regional centre
Rural/remote town or area	Prefer not to say	Other

If other, please specify:

### 4. Do you work from home?

All of the time	Part of the time	Never
Prefer not to say		

### 5. If you work away from home, on average, how many minutes does it take you to get to work?

*This is the amount of time it takes to get to work from when you leave your house, one way.*

Less than 10	10 - 19	20 - 29
30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59
More than 60	Prefer not to say	

### 6. What is your age group?

19 years and under	20 - 29	30 - 39
40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69
70 and over	Prefer not to say	

### 7. What is your gender?

Female	Male	Non-binary
Another preferred term	Prefer not to say	

If you have another preferred term, please describe your preferred term if you feel comfortable:

8. Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

Yes - Aboriginal	Yes - Torres Strait Islander	Yes - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
No	Prefer not to say	

9. Do you identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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Free text for comments.

10. What is your country of birth?

Australia	Other	Prefer not to say
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If other, please specify:

11. What is the primary language you speak at home?

English	Other	Prefer not to say
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If other, please specify:

12. Do you speak any other languages?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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If yes, please specify:

13. Are you fluent in Auslan?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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14. Have you used your language or Auslan skills in your advocacy work?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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15. Do you identify as living with a disability?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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16. Do you care for someone living with a disability informally?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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## 17. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Year 11 or below (including a Certificate I or Certificate II)	Year 12	Certificate III/ Certificate IV
Diploma/ Advanced diploma/ Associate degree	Bachelors degree	Graduate certificate/ Graduate diploma
Masters degree/ Doctoral degree	Prefer not to say	

Free text for comments.

## 18. What was your field of work before you started working in the advocacy sector?

*Please select all that apply.*

Administration	Education	
Law	Social work	Defence
Allied health (psychology, speech pathology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry, dietician etc)	Health (dental, pharmacy, nursing, assistant in nursing, medical staff etc)	Disability (support work, disability employment service (DES), support coordination, case management etc)
Retail/ hospitality/ customer service	Other services/ community work	Government (federal/ state/ local)
This is my first position after study	Other	Prefer not to say

If other, please specify:

## 19. If your previous field of work was in the disability sector, what was your role?

Free text

## 20. What is your employment status in the advocacy sector?

Permanent full time	Permanent part-time	Contract full time
Contract part-time	Casual	Volunteer
Other	Prefer not to say	

If other, please specify:

21. During the week 23-29 October 2023, how many hours were you paid for?

*This includes taking paid leave such as annual leave or personal leave.*

None	Less than 10 hours	11 - 20 hours
21 - 30 hours	31 - 38 hours	Over 38 hours
Prefer not to say		

22. During the week 23-29 October 2023, how many, if any, unpaid hours did you undertake?

*Unpaid hours include accruing time off in lieu (TOIL).*

None	1 - 2 hours	3 - 5 hours
6 - 7 hours	7 - 10 hours	More than 10 hours
Prefer not to say		

23. Would you like to work more paid hours than you currently do?

Yes	No	Maybe
Prefer not to answer		

24. Are you satisfied with your salary package?

Extremely satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Prefer not to answer		

25. What is the most satisfying aspect of your work?

*Please select all that apply.*

Knowing I made a positive difference on an individual level	Knowing I made a positive difference on a systemic level	Empowering people with disability to exercise their rights
Assisting an individual at the AAT for a positive outcome	Resolving an issue/ achieving a desired outcome	Interactions with clients and colleagues
Other		

Free text for comments

## 26. What is the most challenging aspect of your work?

The number of people seeking assistance being more than we can meet (unmet demand)	Increased reporting and compliance requirements	Increased complexity of matters
Being able to meet the expectations of governing bodies	Completing advocacy for the same issue repeatedly as the system does not change quickly	Inaccessibility of systems and programs
The lack of time or resources to engage in professional development	Having a good work-life balance	Other

Free text for comments

## 27. How often do you feel stressed/ overwhelmed at work?

Never	Rarely	Once or twice a week
Often	All the time	Prefer not to say

Free text for comments

## 28. What is the cause of stress/ overwhelm in your role?

Free text

## 29. Does your organisation provide any support in dealing with stress/ overwhelm at work?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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## 30. (a) If yes, what kind of support does your organisation provide in dealing with stress/ overwhelm at work?

Free text

## 30. (b) If no, what support from your organisation would you find beneficial in dealing with stress/ overwhelm at work?

Free text

**31. How long have you been working in the disability advocacy sector?**

Less than a year	1 - 2 years	3 - 5 years
6 - 10 years	11 - 15 years	16 - 20 years
More than 20 years	Other	Prefer not to say

If other, please specify:

**32. How long have you been working for your current organisation?**

Less than a year	1 - 2 years	3 - 5 years
6 - 10 years	11 - 15 years	16 - 20 years
More than 20 years	Other	Prefer not to say

If other, please specify:

**33. How likely are you to look for another job outside of your current organisation in the next 6-12 months?**

Very likely	Likely	Not at all likely
Prefer not to say		

Free text for comments

**34. Do you think you will be working in the disability advocacy sector 2 years from now?**

Yes	No	Not sure
Prefer not to say		

Free text for comments

**35. Do you have any other comments regarding your employment in the advocacy sector?**

Free text for comments



36. Apart from funding for more advocacy, what resources (including technology) would help you to perform your work more effectively?

*Please select all that apply.*

Improved information and communication technology (including updated computers)	More effective Client Record Management system	Office space, aesthetics, workstation set-ups/furniture
Motor vehicle fleet (modern, safe, enough vehicles)	Formal guidance in relation to advocacy practice	Advocacy specific templates and guides
Nil - we are well resourced	Not sure	Other
Prefer not to say		

If other, please specify:

If specific templates and guides, what topics:

37. Have you attended any training during the past 12 months that has helped you to build your skills and knowledge?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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38. If yes, what training did you attend? Was there anything in particular that you liked?

Free text

**39. What other training and professional development would you find useful if it was available in the next 2 years?**

Topic/ area	Not important at all	Not very important	Important	Very important	Not applicable
Training for board/ management committees (governance)					
Leadership and management skills					
Outcomes/ impact measurement					
Evaluation					
Fundraising					
Attraction and retention of people					
Risk management and legal Issues					
Improving organisational culture					
Understanding public policy					
Program/project management					
Social media					
First Nations cultural competency					
CALD cultural competency					
Introduction to advocacy					

Working with clients with complex issues					
Effective communication skills					
Working with people with specific disability					
Using alternative communication methods					
NDIS appeals processes					
Supported decision making practice					
Mental health first aid					
Community development skills in advocacy					
Learning AUSLAN					
Working with interpreters (both AUSLAN and languages other than English)					
Trauma informed practice					
Other					

If other, please specify:

#### 40. What would be your preference for accessing training and professional development?

*Please select all that apply.*

Online	Group training at your workplace	Training provided in your local area/community
Travel within your state to train with other colleagues/ organisations	Travel interstate for training	Attend a conference
Other	Prefer not to say	

If other, please specify:

#### 41. If you could change two things about the NDIS for people with disability, what would it be?

Free text for comments.

#### 42. If you could change two things about the NDIS Quality and Safeguards for people with disability, what would it be?

Free text for comments.

#### 43. What are the top three recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission that should be prioritised for implementation?

Free text for comments.

#### 44. If you would like to provide any further comments, then please use the box below:

Free text for comments.

#### Closing page:

The NCDA is committed to strengthening the disability advocacy sector by building, engaging, and championing the work of disability advocacy in Australia.

We would like to thank you for spending the time to share information and insights about you, your work, and the disability advocacy sector. We would also like to thank you for the incredible work you do on a daily basis.

Please contact the National Centre for Disability Advocacy (NCDA) if you have any further questions or input.

Email: [ncda@dana.org.au](mailto:ncda@dana.org.au)

Web: <https://ncda.org.au/>