

1. University of Melbourne

Unfitness to plead and indefinite detention of persons with cognitive impairments: Addressing the legal barriers and creating appropriate alternative supports in the community

Status: Commenced – In Progress

University of Melbourne Law School will explore social, legal and policy issues leading to unfitness to plead findings and indefinite detention in Australia for people with cognitive impairments, with a focus on the experiences of Indigenous people. The research participants are people with cognitive impairments who have been charged with a crime, and who may be subject to unfitness to plead processes.

This work aims to develop practical and legal solutions through a combination of building good practice in the community and providing policy and legal analysis. Upon completion of the project a comprehensive report on the results will be produced, detailing a flexible supported decision-making model for the criminal justice system that is sustainable and can be used as good practice in other jurisdictions.

2. National Disability Services

Market design and evolution for better outcomes

Status: Commenced – In Progress

National Disability Services' Centre for Applied Disability Research, in partnership with Curtin University Not-for-profit Initiative, will assess the supply and sustainability of disability services in Australia. The work will inform policy development to foster a strong competitive and efficient supply of disability services and support achievement of the objectives of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The research intends to monitor the impact of the introduction of the NDIS, identify change in the structure of the sector and assess sufficiency of supply. This project will focus on; the actual financial performance and sustainability of organisations; identify organisations at risk; and develop recommendations regarding the strategies required to maintain or develop an effective, efficient and responsive market for disability service users.

3. University of Sydney

Identifying facilitators to living on and off Country in Central Australia

Status: Commenced – In Progress

The University of Sydney will identify the factors that inhibit and enable Anangu and Yarnangu people with disabilities in the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands to live a life they desire on or off Country. The study will use culturally appropriate qualitative research practices to explore the diverse experiences and realities regarding individual and community health and wellbeing.

The research findings will provide recommendations for alternative service system models of support, that will enable Anangu and Yarnangu people with disabilities to make choices about where and how they live to achieve optimal individual and family outcomes. Learning from the research will contribute to the current national government policy and research priority areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

4. Southern Cross University
Preventing abuse and promoting personal safety in children and young people with disability

Status: Commenced – In Progress

The Centre for Children and Young People at Southern Cross University project will develop an in-depth understanding of what helps children and young people with disability to feel and be safe. Extensive qualitative research will be undertaken through interviews and focus groups with children and adults with disability, and key institution providers. Intensive work using creative research techniques will enable children and young people with significant support needs, who are a rarely heard group, to participate in the study.

Preventing abuse of people with disability is critical to the success of both national and state disability and child protection policy. The research will support the development of policy and practice to recognise incoming models of support for children and young people with disability in both specialist disability and mainstream systems.

5. Flinders University
Anticipating and addressing the impending shortage of skilled disability support workers

Status: Commenced – In Progress

The National Institute of Labour Studies at Flinders University will determine how well the disability sector and workers are placed to meet the growing and changing needs of people with disability, their families and carers. The research will assess both supply and demand for disability-related skills. It will identify areas of mismatch and gaps between the skills/services being demanded by people with disability and the skills/services the disability sector and its workforce are able to provide.

The research includes a detailed national assessment of the adequacy of current modes of skills acquisition for disability support workers. A quantitative analysis will analyse nationally-representative data on vocational training enrolments, completions and subsequent employment outcomes. The findings will be further explored through qualitative analysis of data obtained from in-depth interviews with people with disability, training providers, disability support providers, and disability sector workers.

6. La Trobe University
Enabling mainstream systems to be more inclusive and responsive to people with disabilities

Status: Commenced – In Progress

La Trobe University will investigate the journey of people with cognitive disabilities through the hospital system to find evidence of processes and practices that will enable mainstream services to identify and respond to the particular needs of people with disability. The health system can often be unresponsive to the particular requirements of people with disabilities and their families, as a consequence of their needs and circumstances being poorly understood within a healthcare context.

The aim of the research is to produce resources for use by health policy makers, hospital administrators, health care providers and disability services to improve the quality of individual and community support. It will also provide knowledge and tools

to empower people with disabilities and their families to access mainstream services in ways that will ensure they receive optimal support and service.

7. National Disability Services

Models for facilitating community participation of people with cognitive impairment

Status: Commenced – In Progress

National Disability Services' (NDS) Centre for Applied Research leads a research consortium to bring conceptual clarity to the diverse manifestations of community participation for people with cognitive disability and identify the promising staff practices and organisational strategies for supporting community participation. The study will develop a typology for understanding community participation and identify practices for achieving it from both the literature and case studies of best practice in Australian disability or mainstream services. These findings will inform an action research approach to understanding the challenges for organisations in implementing or re-orientating services to deliver the elements of best practice.

Research findings will enable NDS to provide policy advice regarding models for delivering effective support for community participation for people with cognitive disability. It will also help to identify requirements for consequent funding, organisational strategies, and ways to inform the wider community about the social conditions and contextual factors needed to optimise participation of people with cognitive impairment.

8. Monash University

Housing, technology and support innovation within a National Disability Strategy: Post-occupancy evaluation research to impact Australian policy and best practice

Status: Commenced – In Progress

Monash University will lead a research consortium to identify, examine and document models of housing and support across Australia for people with significant and permanent disability who are eligible for the NDIS. The study will focus on the separation of funding for equipment and support from the provision of housing, including enablers and barriers within different models.

The research will identify different characteristics and design of traditional, new and changing systems of housing and support for people with disabilities. This includes physical/built environment, use of integrated technology and support services. Project findings will be translated into panoramic virtual tours to assist people to identify best practice. Practical resources and design guidelines for appropriate housing and supports will also be developed, to inform government policy and support the delivery of the NDIS.

9. Central Queensland University

Enhancing social and communication skills, and improving education and employment outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people with disabilities in rural, remote and metropolitan areas of Australia

Status: Commenced – In Progress

Central Queensland University will lead a research consortium to build on the success of previous work in digital enterprise for children and young people with disability, with the aim of improving participation in education and employment. This project will identify ways to increase use of information technology for young people with

disabilities in regional and remote locations through the use of outreach activities and access to online programs.

The study aims to increase the rate of participation in further education, employment and entrepreneurial activities of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth with disabilities in rural, remote and metropolitan areas of Australia. The final goal will be the creation of an intervention model that can be easily replicated in any mainstream setting throughout Australia, including schools, further education institutions, community settings, and workplaces.

10. First Peoples Disability Network (Australia) Limited

Community-driven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research program “Living Our Ways”

Status: Commenced – In Progress

The First Peoples Disability Network will use a culturally-appropriate co-production approach to establish a qualitative knowledge base of disability from an Indigenous perspective. The research will collate and analyse narratives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with lived experience of disability to better understand the implications for disability data, research and policy development.

The primary outcome is a research agenda for undertaking disability research by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The project will describe a structural frame for conducting research with the First Peoples disability community, and identify priorities for further research as identified through consultation narrative.

11. National Disability Services Limited

The enhancement of the Centre for Applied Disability Research (CADR) clearinghouse

Status: Commenced – In Progress

National Disability Services Ltd will build an open online collection of disability research which provides a comprehensive repository of the latest and most relevant national and international resources related to disability. End users of the Clearinghouse are anticipated to be existing or potential disability service providers, disability and related allied professionals, people with disability, their families and carers, and government policy-makers and program-makers.

The CADR Clearinghouse aims to become a dynamic ‘meeting space’ for collaboratively identifying, sharing, disseminating and critically examining the evidence underpinning disability policy and practice by engaging with disability researchers, practitioners and advocates to translate research into resources that better meet the needs of end users. Research activities undertaken for the Clearinghouse include the development of specifically targeted material such as research summaries, policy and practice guides, consumer briefs, podcasts and webinars.