



People with disability are diverse and have unique care needs based on their disability, culture, and personal circumstances. All clinicians need to ask about the needs of each person with disability in order to provide person-centred care.

People with disability are at increased risk

COVID-19 may present particular risks for some people with disability because we may have:

- difficulty practicing hand hygiene and barriers accessing hygiene facilities.
- difficulty performing social distancing because we may need assistance from others and may live with other people with disability.
- the need to touch objects or others, or be touched by others to perform everyday activities.
- difficulty understanding information or managing change.
- co-existing health conditions, and complex comorbidities.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP ME – A CHECKLIST FROM A PERSON WITH DISABILITY

Communication

- Talk directly to me, not my support person.
- Ask how we can best communicate. (E.g. interpreter, gestures, signs, sounds, symbols and pictures, or devices)
- Provide an Auslan or spoken language interpreter for me or my support person.
- Listen to me, express empathy, make time to connect and learn what is normal for me.
- Provide me with a [Julian's Key Health Passport](#) to help me communicate my needs.
- If I have a cognitive disability, I am at increased risk of developing delirium (confusion) many [Eat Walk Engage](#) strategies are helpful.
- Changes in my behaviour may signal pain, distress or changes in my health.

Information and decision-making

- Include me in decision-making with support if I need it.
- Ask for information about me from the people who know me best.
- Check whether I have understood by using the [Teach-back technique](#).

- Use Easy Read materials where possible.
- Explain [Ryan's Rule](#) to me and my support people.

Support networks

- Identify and acknowledge the people that support me as a valuable resource.
- Gain consent to share information with support people.
- Support my key contact person and provide them with information about me as things change.
- Link me in with HHS services such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Liaison Officer, Nurse Navigator or Social Worker (if available and appropriate).

Discharging me from hospital

- Ensure the supports I need are in place before you discharge me.
- Ensure that my support person and I have a written plan and discharge summary.
- Provide a handover to my GP, support coordinator and disability service provider.
- Ensure my support people and I know what to do if I need emergency help.

CHECKLIST CONTINUED

Indirect patient care

- Ask if I am an NDIS participant and update HBCIS – remember I do not have to tell you my NDIS participant number.
- Document my complex care needs.
- Inform all members of the care team about my needs, particularly at handover.
- Ask me if I have a My Health Record, [COVID-19 Plan](#), advanced care plan, [positive behaviour support plan](#), enduring power of

attorney and/or statement of choices.

- Use [positive behaviour support](#) approaches and minimise [restrictive practices](#) – including sedation.
- I have an equal right to access healthcare and to be included in my healthcare decisions and discussion about my needs. Familiarise yourself with the [Queensland Ethical Care Framework](#) and [Human Rights Act \(2009\)](#).



INFORMATION FOR HEALTH WORKERS

COVID-19 information

The Commonwealth Department of Health have developed numerous [resources](#) with information for clinicians who are supporting people with disability.

General disability care information

- The [Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability](#) has resources for working with people with intellectual disability including the [Comprehensive Health](#)

[Assessment Program \(CHAP\)](#).

- The [ABLEx series](#) includes learning materials about intellectual disability health issues. Courses can be accessed for free, with additional paid options.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

- The Queensland Health intranet [NDIS page](#) provides links to key resources to understand the scheme. More information can be found at www.ndis.gov.au

INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS

COVID-19 information

- The [Australian Department of Social Services](#) has a range of Easy Read and Auslan resources about COVID-19.
- [Queenslanders with Disability Network \(QDN\)](#) has a range of easy read COVID-19 resources.
- A person with disability may have a COVID-19 plan that can assist clinicians, or you may like to advise them to develop a plan based on the [QDN Person Centred Emergency Planning for COVID-19](#) guide.
- The [National Indigenous Australians Agency](#) has COVID-19 resources and information.
- [Raising Children](#) and [Children and Young People with Disability Australia](#) have information for parents, carers and young people.

Support services for consumers

- 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) a confidential health advice service. You can phone and talk to a registered nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call.
- Community Recovery Hotline on 1800 173 349 for Queenslanders in home quarantine as a result of COVID-19.
- Australian Disability Information Helpline on 1800 643 787. The Disability Information Helpline provides information and referrals for people with disability who need help because of COVID-19. Its available Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday and Sunday 9am to 7pm.
- The [Combined Advocacy Groups of Queensland](#) links consumers to independent advocacy.