

SUMMER FOUNDATION NEWS

SUMMER FOUNDATION

CONNECT & SUPPORT

COVID-19
RESPONSE

Welcome to our autumn update. We are in the midst of a unique crisis that poses a particularly significant threat to the lives of people with disability and complex needs. Many of the people we support are already susceptible to chest infections and pneumonia because of their limited mobility. COVID-19 makes this threat considerably greater when people are stuck in hospital.

The Summer Foundation has made the bold decision to re-deploy some of our expertise to provide tangible, direct support to people with disability at this difficult time through new key response projects.

Our **Discharge Follow-up Service** will make phone contact with people with disability with complex needs who are being discharged quickly from hospitals to make sure their supports and essential services are in place.

Following on from this project is a service that will help people with disability discharged from hospital by searching for housing that aligns with their housing needs and preferences.

Our **Phone Outreach project** will connect with people in the Summer Foundation network to check on their health and wellbeing, and provide practical information and support with problem solving.

For further details about our Connect & Support initiative, please go to: summerfoundation.org.au/summer-foundation-connect-support-covid-19-response/

You can also read about some of our other work in this update.

Stay safe,



Di Winkler, CEO

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COVID-19 OFFICE UPDATE

These are challenging and uncertain times for all due to the continuing spread of COVID-19.

We are changing the way we work to help ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone that we work with.

The entire team is now working from home and we are working hard to deliver many of our planned face-to-face events online.

See our events page for details:

summerfoundation.org.au/events/

While our staff are now working from home we continue to be available to support you.

You can contact us via email to:

info@summerfoundation.org.au

OUR EXISTING AND ON-GOING RELEVANT PROJECTS INCLUDE:

For hospital staff working with people with disability being discharged to the community:

- NDIS and discharge planning info and resources for hospital staff: summerfoundation.org.au/documents-category/for-health-professionals/
- Leaving Hospital Well Community of Practice: summerfoundation.org.au/our-focus/pathways-home/for-hospitals/community-of-practice/

For housing providers, housing seekers and the people supporting them: thehousinghub.org.au

For support coordinators and allied health professionals supporting people with disability and complex needs living in the community:

- Upskill community of practice: summerfoundation.org.au/project/upskill/

The NDIA has also created an information page to help prepare and support NDIS participants and providers at this time. Please head to:

buff.ly/2x0frm1



FOCUS ON HOUSING

An NDIS Housing Options project is being run by the Summer Foundation for Queensland and WA this year.

This project aims to explain the housing options and supports possible under the NDIS to people with disability and housing providers.

It will also help everyone better understand the housing needs of NDIS participants including the needs of people who would be eligible for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA).

Over the next 12 months, the Summer Foundation will be working to provide:

- Information for people with disability about housing options
- Information for housing providers about NDIS supports and SDA
- Events to inform and connect NDIS participants and housing providers
- Special support for NDIS providers seeking to provide SDA in Indigenous communities, rural areas and for people in hospital or aged care

Although we had to suspend Housing Possibilities workshops we had scheduled for Queensland and WA, we presented some of the information and introduced our new housing and SDA related resources in webinars.

These resources are now available for download from our NDIS Housing Options project web page:

summerfoundation.org.au/project/ndis-housing-options-project/

The project has been funded by the Australian Government.



SDA SUPPLY REPORT RELEASED

Our second Specialist Disability Accommodation Supply in Australia report has just been published.

Produced with Social Ventures Australia, the latest report finds that there are more than 1,766 new SDA places in the construction pipeline as at 30 September 2019.

Combining this with the 1,190 New Build SDA places reported in the latest NDIS Quarterly Report as at 30 September 2019, this means there are now nearly 3,000 SDA places that are new or in the pipeline.

The SDA market remains in its infancy and there is much more to do to create an SDA market that delivers the scale of housing anticipated, however we are encouraged by the continued growth and development of the market.

"A key challenge for developers and investors looking at SDA is understanding where and what to build," said Summer Foundation CEO Di Winkler.

"We have a vision for Australia where people with disability have access to high quality housing that is everything they might need and want in a home. We hope this report will inform the next phase of investment in SDA towards that vision."

Read the report here: summerfoundation.org.au/specialist-disability-accommodation-supply-in-australia/



Housing Hub

Find the home that's right for you

HOUSING HUB REVAMP

A new-look Housing Hub is on the way!

The revamped website will have a number of extra features, including improved search and matching functions and the ability for housing seekers to create their own profiles.

"Our goal is to match housing seekers with a home that is just right for them, as quickly and easily as possible," said General Manager, Housing Matching, Alecia Rathbone.

"We're doing this by placing our housing seekers at the centre of our design approach. One of the new features will allow them to create their own housing profiles, focusing on their individual needs and wants. The Housing Hub will automatically compare new home listings with peoples' profiles, and let people know if there is a possible match."

The site will also feature more detailed listings and greater online support for housing seekers and providers promoting their properties.

The Housing Hub recently marked its second birthday. From humble beginnings as a government funded pilot project in 2017, the site has grown to now list vacancies from housing providers (including developers of Specialist Disability Accommodation) in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, the ACT and Western Australia.

It has listed around 800 properties and has been viewed by more than 90,000 people.

You can visit the Housing Hub at: housinghub.org.au



PROFILE - TOM BUTLER

In December 2019 Tom Butler's long journey to become his own provider of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) ended in success, when he moved into his purpose-built unit.

In January 2000 Tom was visiting home in Tasmania after completing his first year at the Australian Defence Academy in Canberra. The day before he was due to head back he went for a swim with mates. *"I very thoughtlessly took a very deep dive into what turned out to be very shallow water,"* he said. *"I broke my neck and was left a complete quadriplegic at the C4-5 level."* Tom was 19 at the time.

Tom lived with support in a unit next to the family house for a number of years, but over time felt he needed to move and in 2016 bought a small block of land. *"I took a bit of a gamble and bought it without knowing whether I could live by myself even with the NDIS rollout on the way, and knowing that the finances would be very tight."*

Tom heard about SDA in 2017. *"A couple of inquiries and a significant amount of reading later it dawned on me what a game changer SDA was,"* he said. *"From that point on SDA became my main focus..."*

Tom was able to ensure the design for his unit met all the requirements to be registered as SDA. Building started in 2018. It took most of 2019 and he moved into the unit last December.

He has a positive message to anyone thinking about building their own SDA: *"If you're like me and have always wanted to build your own home then it's a no-brainer, do it!"*



TOM'S TOP TIPS:

- Building houses can take a long time. So can getting approved for SDA and registering as a provider.

You need to pursue both at the same time to avoid big delays.

- Read the SDA Price Guide, Rules, and Design Standards. And then read them again!
- Ask lots of questions. I have a Facebook page "NDIS self providers of SDA" and there is also "NDIS SDA Needs" which have people helping each other out.
- Reach out to banks like Bank Australia to get an idea of your borrowing capacity. They are a community bank and know about SDA, and can potentially lend money taking into account the future SDA income.

You can read more about Tom's SDA experiences here: summerfoundation.org.au/tom-butler-q-and-a/

MEDIUM TERM ACCOMMODATION FUNDING

A new type of transitional housing funding was announced in December. Medium Term Accommodation (MTA) funding is intended to support NDIS participants while they wait for their permanent home to be ready.

Announcing the new funding, the Minister for the NDIS, Stuart Robert, said: *'We don't want people in hospital or aged care settings any longer than they have to be and by introducing funding for medium term accommodation, we're addressing those challenges.'*

Mr Robert said MTA also responded to a number of key COAG Disability Reform Council commitments and would help deliver on the government's target of no new younger people entering residential aged care by 2022.

MTA has been introduced into the NDIS Price Guide as a new support item. The Summer Foundation is currently seeking more information about this funding stream.