

# Younger people in residential aged care

Progress towards Government targets

SEPTEMBER 2022

# 3,163

AUSTRALIANS WITH DISABILITY UNDER 65 LIVING IN AGED CARE

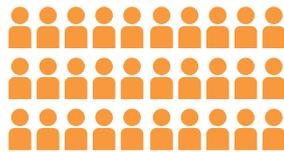


MORE THAN

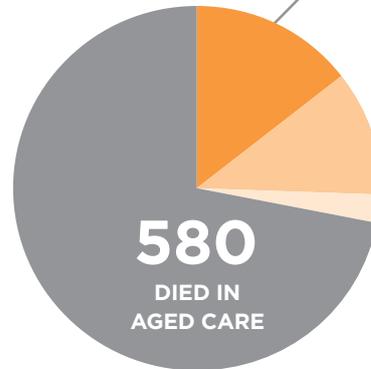
# 30



PEOPLE UNDER 65 ENTER AGED CARE EVERY MONTH!



EXITS OF YOUNGER PEOPLE FROM RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS<sup>1</sup>:



115 RETURNED TO HOME OR FAMILY  
90 MOVED TO 'OTHER' HOUSING  
21 WENT TO HOSPITAL

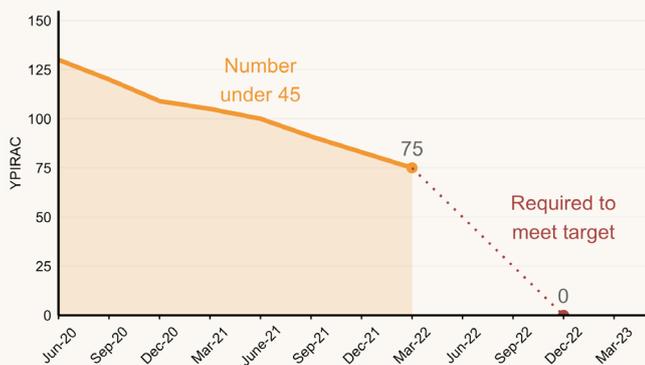
There are 3,163 Australians with disability under 65 **living in aged care**. They are referred to as younger people in residential aged care (YPIRAC). In 2019 the Federal Government committed to getting them out once and for all, and to prevent more from moving in<sup>2</sup>. In December of this year 2 of the Government's YPIRAC Targets fall due.

New Minister for the NDIS, Bill Shorten has **committed** to the YPIRAC Strategy. However, meeting the targets cannot be taken for granted.

View the progress towards each target here:

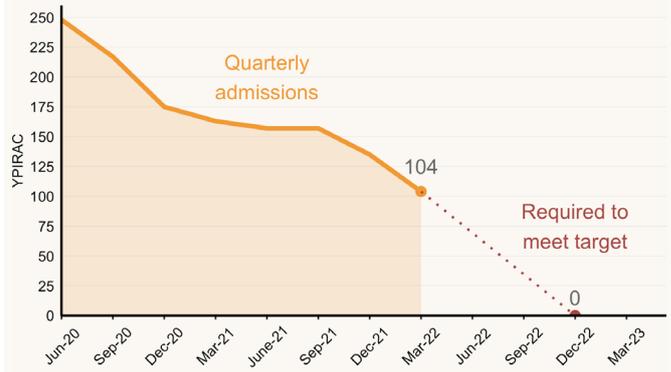
## Target 2: No people under 45 living in aged care by the end of 2022

Figure 2: Total number of people under 45 living in aged care\*



## Target 1: No people under 65 entering aged care by the end of 2022

Figure 1: Total number of people under 65 entering aged care\*



## Target 3: No people under 65 living in aged care by the end of 2025

Figure 3: Total number of people under 65 living in aged care\*



\*Source: AIHW YPIRAC Data (March 2022)

## Why are younger people still entering aged care?

The inefficiencies at the health-disability interface mean it is still easier to discharge people from hospital to aged care than secure NDIS funding for housing.

One of the key reasons is because aged care funding can be allocated to hospital patients in a matter of days, allowing quick discharge. In contrast, the NDIA currently takes, on average, 160 days to **approve funding** for housing and support for participants in hospital,<sup>3</sup> making discharge to aged care more likely. More effective hospital discharge and timely approval of NDIS plans, including funding for specialist disability accommodation (SDA), will disrupt pathways to aged care and ensure participants are able to discharge from hospital into safe and secure housing with the supports they need to live well in the community.



Younger people with disability are often told aged care is the only suitable place for them to live given their support needs. To progress through the Aged Care Assessment process, the NDIA is required to assess other housing options available to the participant. The NDIA often states that no housing is available, despite vacancies in SDA stock and other age-appropriate, accessible options.

Aged care as a housing option for younger people with disability is a barrier to achieving the YPIRAC Strategy and to younger people living an ordinary life.

**"I was told by the Aged Care Assessment teams that there was no smaller and age-appropriate accommodation available and then I was never contacted again once in aged care."**

Simone, lived in aged care in her 50s

**"I have no idea how I got to leave the nursing home, everyone thought I was happy there because I didn't say how I was feeling, I didn't think it mattered."**

Ellen, lived in aged care in her 30s

### Notes

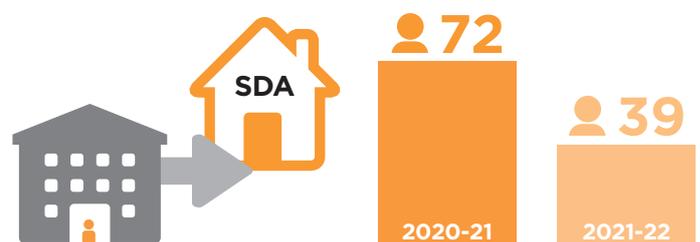
- AIHW (2022). Younger people in residential aged care. <https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Younger-people-in-residential-aged-care>
- DSS (2020). Younger people in residential aged care. <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-people-with-disability/younger-people-with-disability-in-residential-aged-care-initiative>
- The Australian (2022). 'NDIS Minister Bill Shorten's bid to free up sickbeds.' September 13.
- NDIA (2022). 'NDIS Quarterly Report to Disability Ministers: Q4 2021-2022.'
- Housing Hub & PIAC (2022). Housing delayed and denied: NDIA decision-making on Specialist Disability Accommodation. <https://apo.org.au/node/317588>

## Why aren't younger people in residential aged care moving out faster?

The average YPIRAC lives in aged care for 4.9 years, up from 3.7 years when the targets were announced.<sup>1</sup>



SDA is part of the solution to the issue; however, in the past 12 months only 39 younger people **moved from aged care into SDA**.<sup>4</sup> This is fewer than in 2020-21, when 72 people moved into SDA from aged care.



Many NDIS participants who receive inadequate funding for SDA request reviews of the decision. Reviews can take **more than 400 days for some participants**.<sup>5</sup> The NDIA's slow decision-making is due partly to flawed and opaque processes and a failure to adequately consider participants' individual needs and circumstances.

Many YPIRAC are not aware of the housing options that exist outside of aged care. The NDIA's YPIRAC planners aim to support younger people explore available housing options. However, some questions about housing goals are asked by planners in a manner that does not allow for an open discussion about needs and preferences. This suggests a lack of a committed approach within the NDIA to support participants to leave aged care.

Most young people are admitted to aged care from hospital. They often have a mix of disability and health support needs that are beyond the skills of a generic NDIS funded support coordinator. This cohort needs access to skilled navigators with expertise in disability, health and housing.