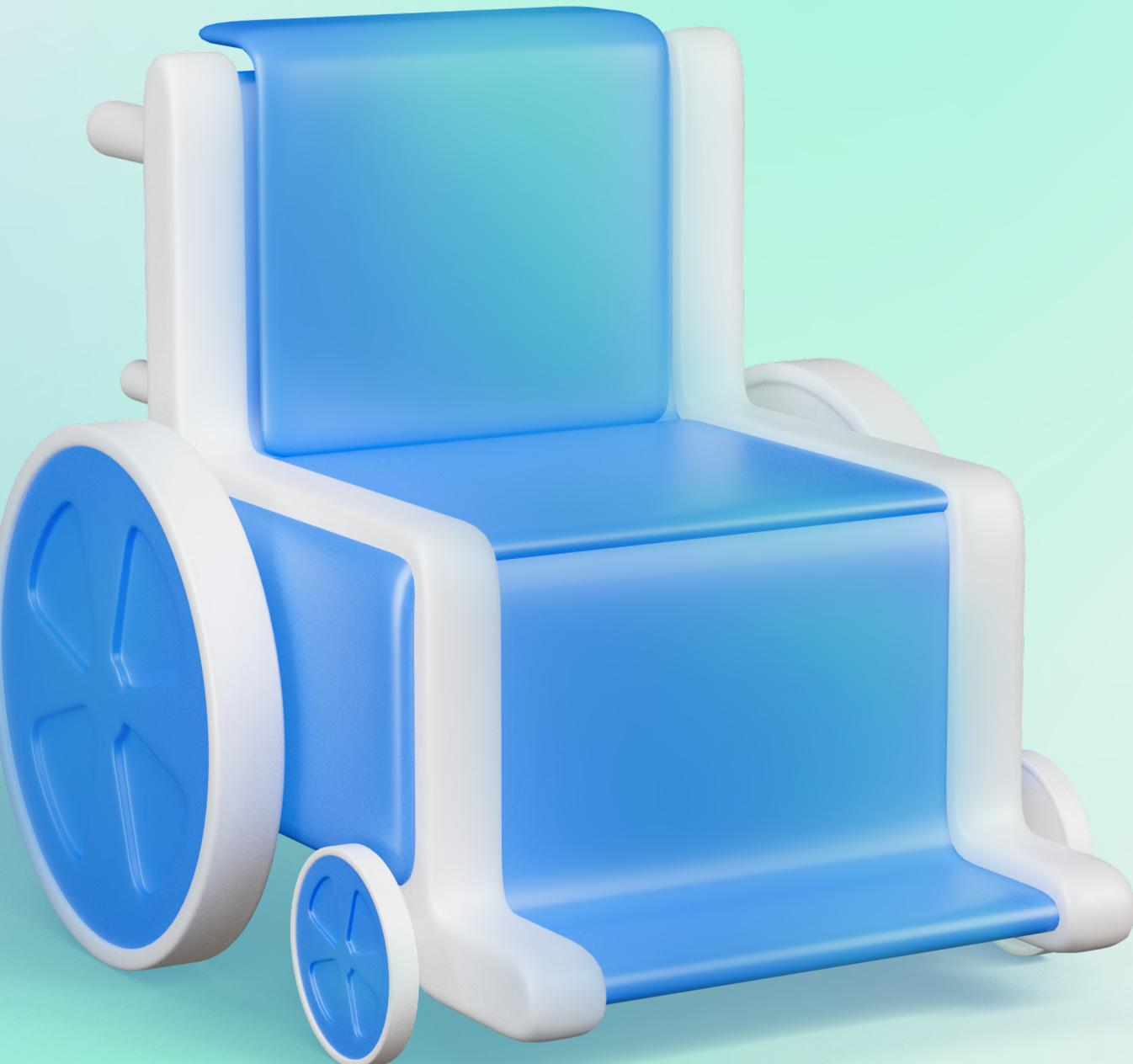




IDEA9106 Design Thinking

Human-Centred Research Report

How might we increase **💼 job availability**
for **⚠️ disabled people in Australia**
during the high inflation period
from a **🌍 multicultural perspective?**



ultraHD group



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" This research aims to provide insights and recommendations on how might we reduce the cost of living pressures for people with disabilities in Australia from a multicultural perspective."

The cost of living in Australia has soared significantly in recent years, placing heavy financial pressure on numerous households. Meanwhile, COVID-19 is sweeping across the globe, leaving a trail of suffering in its wake. As patients struggle with the long-term effects of the disease, the world is grappling with a host of aftermaths. The pandemic has spawned a horrible storm of skyrocketing housing prices, soaring energy costs, and a warming planet, all of which have converged to create an **era of high inflation**. For people with disabilities (PWD), who often face **additional expenses** and **limited workforce** related to their disability, the cost of living pressures can be especially challenging.

The design brief outlined the challenges that negatively impact people's quality of life and well-being due to the rising cost of living. These effects can be felt disproportionately by those with limited financial resources. This research focuses on finding ways to address this issue, particularly the **job availability** for disabled people, who are a specific and vulnerable population. The primary objective

is to identify the root causes of the financial burden faced by disabled people in Australia and propose possible solutions.

To achieve our research objectives, we conducted primary and secondary research, including interviews with PWD, organizations, experts in the field, and the general public. We analyzed common themes and patterns from the interview, and consulted reports and publications to gain a deeper understanding of the **status quo** and existing solutions, so as to **develop ideated solutions** that meet the specific needs of PWD. We also try to take the approach to investigate from a **multicultural perspective**, given the diversity of Australia's population.

Overall, this research aims to provide insights and recommendations on how might we reduce the cost of living pressures for PWD in Australia from a multicultural perspective, enabling them to live fulfilling lives and thrive despite the financial challenges they face.

Project Overview



Macro Context
High inflation



Target Audience
Disability in AU



Research Aspect
Employment



Perspective
Multicultural

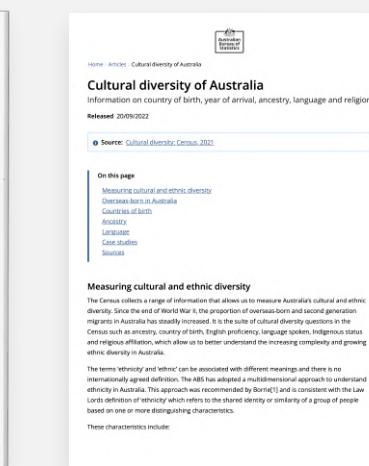
Background Research



Background



For a comprehensive understanding of Australia's current economic and social environment and the challenges faced by people with disabilities, we conducted secondary research incorporating statistical data, news, reports, and academic papers. This background research focused on scanning the cost of living, employment, disability, and diversity issues and solutions in AU.



Hotly discussed topics like climate change, the shifting political and economic landscape and the carryover effects of pandemics have had a significant impact on the **cost of living** in Australia (McDonald, 2022; Fry et al., 2022). In 2022, the Consumer Price Index in Australia rose by 5.1%, marking the highest annual increase in the past two decades (McDonald, 2022). **COVID-19** resulted in an increase in both inflation and unemployment rates, meanwhile generating some job opportunities for the post-pandemic world (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2023; Kelly, 2021).

Typically, having a job is one of the ways for most families to alleviate the financial pressure caused by inflation. But for PWD, having a job is not an easy task—disabled individuals in their working age are twice as likely to be unemployed

compared to non-disabled individuals (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2022). It cannot be ignored that the percentage of PWD in Australia is not low, with nearly one in five people in Australia has a disability (ABS, 2018), higher than the global average of 15% (World Health Organization, 2023). Those **disabled people often face barriers to employment**, including negative stereotypes, lack of public awareness, and discrimination. Almost one-fifth of the young disabilities experienced discrimination by employers and others when seeking employment (Australian Network on Disability [AND], n.d.). Ableism has also contributed to social prejudice among the public due to the **low awareness** of the various types of disability and the right perspective, exacerbating the potential discrimination from employers and colleagues in the workplace (United Nations Human Rights, 2019).

18%
People in AU has a disability



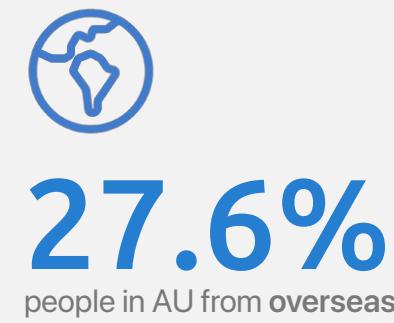
1/5 young disabled job-seekers experienced
DISCRIMINATION



Background Research



Background



England

India

China

New Zealand

Philippines



Top 5 countries
of birth in AU 2021

Diversity is an unavoidable topic when investigating the demographics of Australia. The cultural and ethnic diversity is reflected in its population, with more than a quarter of its residents being born overseas (ABS, 2022). While China, a country with a strong East Asian culture, has surpassed the U.K. to be the primary source of permanent migrants to Australia, bringing a wide range vibrant cultural traditions and customs together with other countries all over the world (ABS, 2021; Phillips & Simon-Davies, 2017). In a country with such a diversity of population and abilities, the convergence of differences has led to numerous challenges in the face of the ever-changing global landscape.



HIGH
Cost of living



HIGH
Disability rate



HIGH
Cultural diversity



LOW
PWD Employment rate



LOW
Comprehensive & new research

Several scholars took the approach on researching disability in **multicultural** theories. Anastasiou et al. (2016) analyzed social justice issues including employment by treating disability as part of cultural diversity, while Selden, S. C. and Selden, F. (2001) also allocated disability into multiculturalism to investigate the diversity of social structures. However, **very little literature** examined the employment of PWD under such a complex social structure as Australia, and most of the existing articles were published before the pandemic widely affected people's work habits and the rise of mobile Internet that created new employment patterns. Similarly, in addition to academics, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare also has pointed out that there is a **data gap** among disabled people with multilingual background.

LACK OF NEW LITERATURE



Therefore, there is a need to explore the factors that facilitate or hinder employment opportunities for disabled people during the high inflation period in the Post-COVID-19 Era, and how they vary across different disability groups of Australia.

Background Research • Solution Scan



Background



🏛️ Government, 📦 companies, and 🏛️ organizations all over the world have taken initiatives attempting to address the cost of living pressure of PWD, specifically their finance, employment, and discrimination issues.

They usually advertise and promote on platforms such as TV, radio, Internet and social media to inform the public about disability assistance policies and services. They also work with the community and media press.

“ Apple don’t care.”

ROBERT SHAW
Former Apple disabled employee

“If you’re not eligible for the NDIS, you get virtually nothing.”

BRUCE BONYHADY
Architect of the NDIS scheme

“ I left because their values of welfare and care were rubbish.”

A DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKER
Former Disability Services Australia staff



National Disability Insurance Scheme

Run by AU gov. that provides **fundings** for PWD to improve their quality of life.

It has been criticized for the **complex application**, too much **unnecessary expenses**, and its failure to solve the underlying problem as the biggest disability support program by government.

(National Disability Insurance Agency, 2022; Burton, 2022)



Disability Employment Services

An Australian gov. program that provides support to PWD to seek a stable job.

Now it is criticized for being **too focused on finding jobs** for disabled people rather than assisting with long-term career development that suits their individuality.

(Department of Social Services, 2023)



Technical and Further Education

Australia provides TAFE for disabled people to develop their occupation education. It provides necessary **capacities** and **confidence** for PWD to find a job in the future.



(TAFE NSW, n.d.)

Diversity & Inclusion Plans by Companies

Large enterprises now paid more attention on the rights of PWD, providing many job opportunities for people with disabilities that match their abilities.

Some giants like **Apple** are still criticized by their own disabled employees that they might **not actually accommodate** flexibility with work schedule for PWD regarding their capacities, as well as accessibility facilities at workplaces.

(Australia Post, n.d.; Apple, n.d.; Tech Advisor, 2014; Kasana, 2019)

Disability Services Organizations

Many disability services organizations were founded to provide **various support** for PWD, such as helping them find a job, protecting their rights, and fulfilling their daily needs.

Some of their staff and the public criticized those organizations for too focused on money to actually care about disabled people, even become a **money grab**.

(Australia Post, n.d.; Apple, n.d.; Tech Advisor, 2014; Kasana, 2019)

Assumptions



Background



Based on the secondary research, we found that Australia is a high-welfare country with a large number of people with disabilities, and the government has many programs to help them with their daily lives and employment. Combining statistics and reports, we generate the following assumptions:

It's hard to find a job for people with disabilities than those who without disabilities in AU.



The combined assistance from the government and various organizations **supports disabled people well**.

Cultural and linguistic barriers could be a challenge for people with disabilities in AU from other countries.



People with disabilities in AU still suffer from **discriminations**.

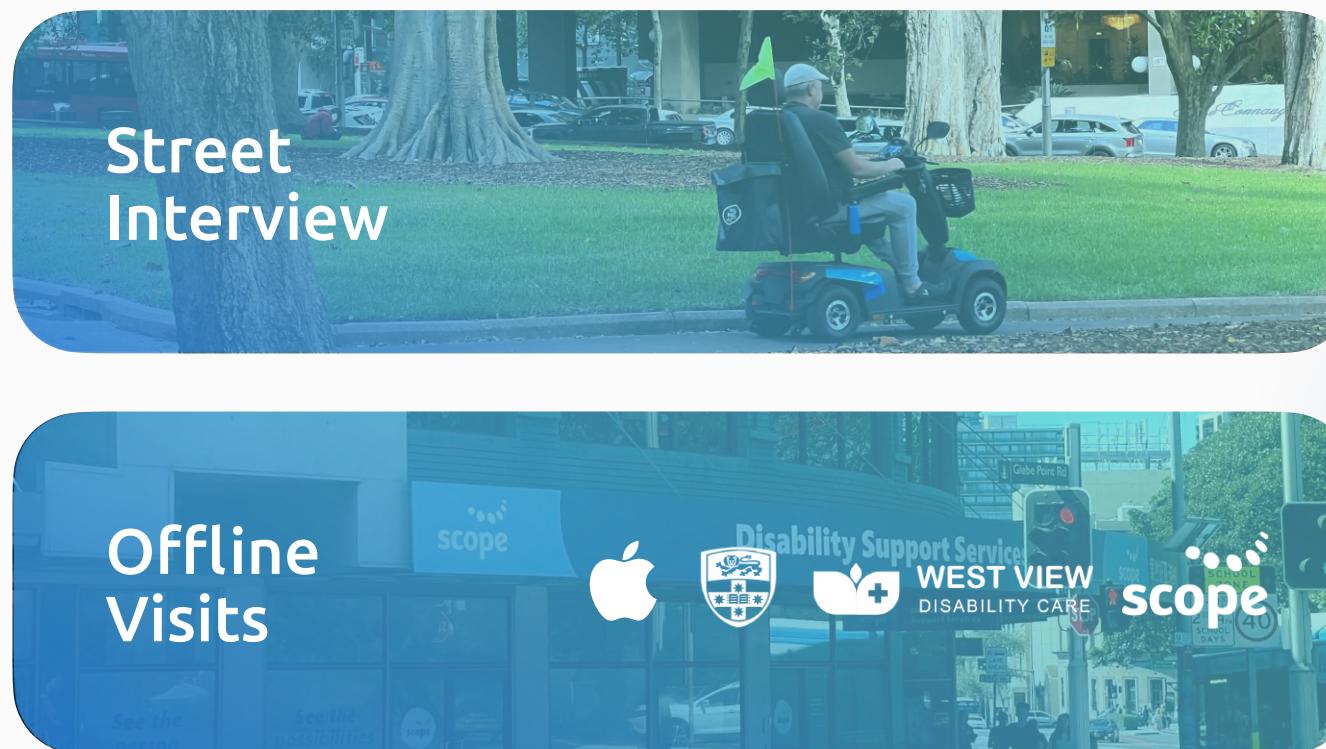
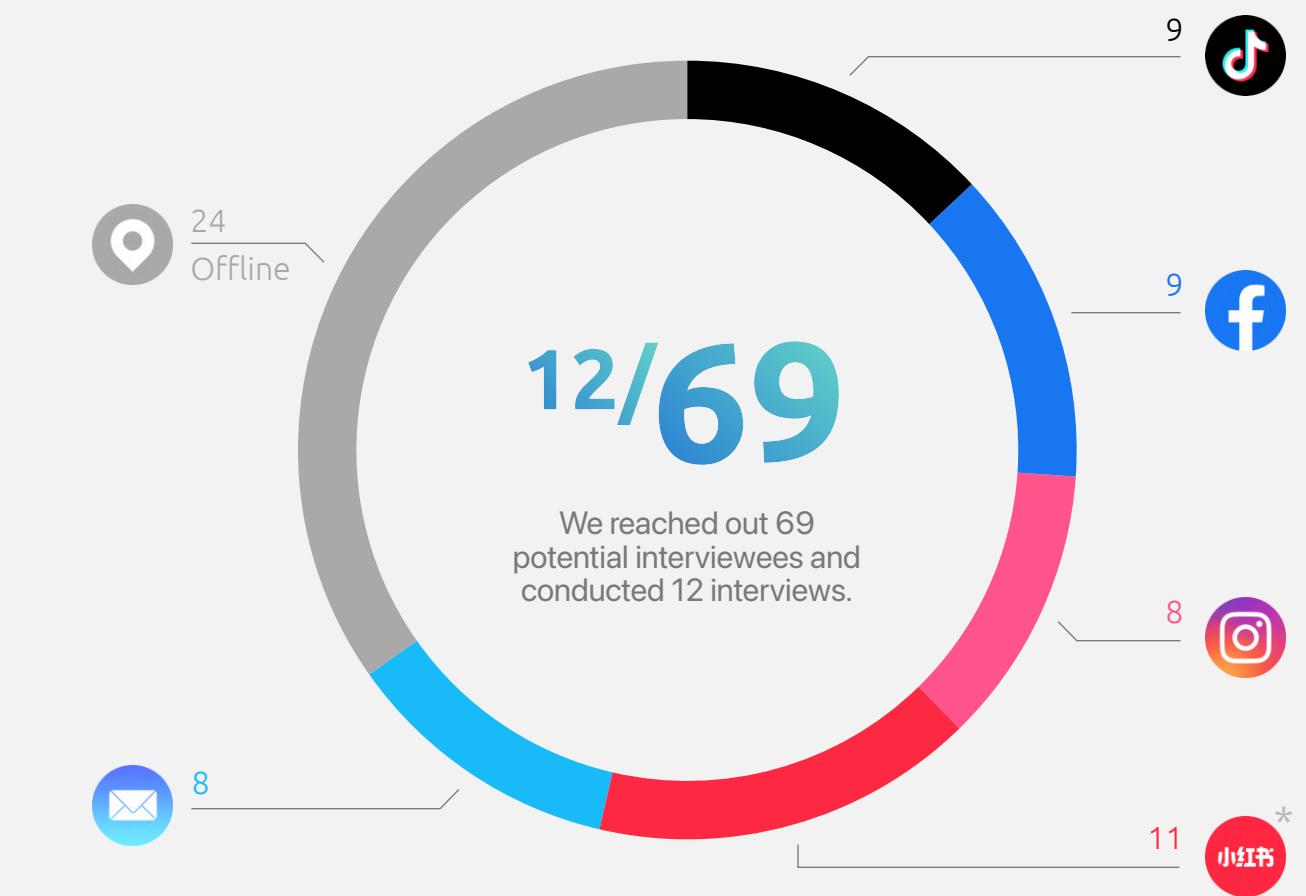
Interview • Data Collection

→ See consent letter in Appendix A (P19)



We attempted to reach out to people with disabilities through both offline and online methods. We conducted street interviews, visited and sent enquiry emails to disability service organizations and companies with disabled staff, and explored on multiple social media platforms.

We initially planned **face-to-face** interviews but found it difficult to locate intended interviewees within the disabled community who were often wary of strangers. We also received **nearly no response from organizations** and companies. Thus, we eventually conducted online interviews with a diverse group of individuals, recruited via **social media platforms** and **personal networks**. Limited participation from some individuals with disabilities was addressed through the use of accessible interview methods and obtaining informed consent. Caregivers, lawyers, and ordinary individuals were also interviewed to perceive the insights from the general public.



* Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book) is a social media platform in China.

Interview • Willing Participants

→ See transcripts in Appendix B (P20-38)



People With Disabilities

Dr Dinesh Palipana
Aussie of the Year 2021
Order of Australia recipient

Colin
Surfing enthusiast
Rare disease patient

Disability Allies

Chairperson
Australian Chinese Community Association

Senior Official
China Disabled Persons' Federation;
Mobility impairments

Caregiver
Disability center worker

Tourettes Patient
TikTok influencer

Gastroparesis Patient
TikTok influencer
62.6K followers

Nursing Student
RMIT University

Saudi
with a disabled family member

Admin
USYD Disabilities Collective

General Public

Alan Zhang
Principal Solicitor
VISIONLEGAL

Grace
High school student
in Sydney

Joe
PhD at USYD

* Gastroparesis Patient was unable to participate at the last minute due to health reasons; Admin was unable to participate due to schedule.



“Hi We’re the students at the University of Sydney. We are currently conducting a project focus on increasing the job availability for people with disabilities to improve their quality of life. Are you available for a brief anonymous interview now or when you’re off work?”
“No. I’m busy.”



Disability Support Services is ahead on the right.



Helpful building manager

Let me check...
We don’t have this organization in this building.



Thank you for your email. The best place to contact to get help with your research project would be the Apple Accessibility team through this website: <https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT209585>

Good luck on your studies!

Regards,
Apple Sydney

This project’s challenges seem to have been destined from the moment we chose people with disabilities as our target audience.

We used to see disabled people on buses, trains, and on the streets, but when we walked out on a sunny afternoon ready to conduct street interviews, we only encountered one disabled person who refused to be interviewed for the whole afternoon. **They are sensitive.**

We visited the front desk of The Inclusion and Disability Services of USYD to inquire about speaking with some staff in their leisure time, and the receptionist kindly told us to send an [email](#). We did, but it seemed to disappear into thin air.

We visited Apple Broadway and Apple Sydney, communicating with kind-faced staff to request their help in connecting us with disabled employees for interviews when they get off work. The Apple Genius kindly told us to send an [email](#). We did, and surprisingly, Apple replied. However, it seemed they weren’t eager to have their employees be interviewed.

We searched for disability service centers on Google Maps. Some were **permanently closed**, and some were **nowhere to be found**. Contacting staff via [email](#) or phone was almost always rejected or ignored.

Offline interviews were nearly impossible, so we turned to online approach on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Xiaohongshu. We sent private messages, joined group chats, and browsed group posts to reach more potential participants. **Unread, read but not replied, and rejections were the common.** Most of the time, we did further communication via [email](#).

Disabled people often face more **health issues** than ordinary people, which also caused some people who had agreed to be interviewed to back out at the last minute.

But fortunately, our interviews eventually gathered valuable information.

Stay tuned for the next page.

Interview • Affinity Map

→ See the full map in [Miro](#)



Interview • Key Findings



INCLUSIVITY & DISCRIMINATION

An inclusive workplace is essential for people with disabilities, in which Australia is friendly to those with physical impairments. However, people with disabilities in Australia are still facing discrimination and ableism, and the public awareness and education are needed to promote inclusivity. Inclusive issues also exist in obtaining government support for multicultural groups. Individuals with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds often face additional challenges when accessing support services.



SUPPORT PROGRAMS & ORGANIZATIONS

Australian government's disability support programs like NDIS and job training have limitations in effectively covering the daily lives and career needs of people with disabilities. Some disability service organizations have been criticized for using a significant portion of government funding for their own profits. Moreover, the application process of disability pensions is complex and time-consuming for people with disabilities, and now is harder to apply than before. Existing job training programs should be more flexible to accommodate the varying work capacities of people with disabilities. The government also lacks comprehensive outreach and publicity for disabled support programs.



MENTAL HEALTH

A positive attitude can be particularly beneficial for people with disabilities, who may face unique challenges that can lead to mental health issues, helping them to build resilience and confidence on their abilities. Social connections and advocacy are important for people with disabilities. With confidence and social linkage, people with disabilities can better find and enjoy their careers.

Original assumptions from background research	Interview findings from user insights
A person sitting at a desk with a laptop.	It's hard to find a job for people with disabilities than those who without disabilities in Australia.
A keyboard with a dollar sign.	The combined assistance from the government and various organizations supports disabled people well.
Three people of different ethnicities standing together.	Cultural and linguistic barriers could be a challenge for people with disabilities in AU from other countries.
A red circle with a diagonal slash.	People with disabilities in Australia still suffer from discriminations.
	Due to discrimination, the limitation of support programs, and mental health risks, many PWD in AU still face employment issue.
	Some PWD still have trouble accessing the help. Gov. support is not comprehensive and is complex to apply, while some org. are 'money grabs'.
	PWD from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds often face more challenges to receive support.
	Discrimination still exists, especially for those who have hidden disabilities. But it's not common on physical disability.



LOGIC CHAIN of user needs

BEFORE BEING EMPLOYED

they need easier access to support programs like NDIS and a fair career opportunity to help them get

EMPLOYED

and they need a more inclusive workplace in terms of attitude and accessibility

THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

they need mental health support while multicultural disability group need special support

LATENT NEEDS

User Needs

Many disabled people that are able to work but not yet employed need an **easier access** to the disability support programs in Australia in this high inflation period.

“ Man, now it's harder to get government pensions than before.

People with disabilities in Australia need a **fair career opportunity** and **more inclusive** work environment.

“ Many people think I can't do the job **simply because** I'm disabled.

People with invisible disabilities need better public awareness for less discrimination, thereby providing broader career opportunities and enhancing mental health. Disabled people in Australia that not yet employed need more efficient and sufficient **financial support** and **career training** to better survive before and at work.



User Issues

The **application process** for disability pensions is complex and time-consuming, particularly for those with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

“ I feel it's embarrassed to talk about my disability situation.

Disabled people need **social linkage** and **emotional support** to reduce isolation and build confidence.

“ I'm disheartened by not being employed and being isolated.

Many people with disabilities still suffers from **discrimination** from employers and the public.

“ People are even afraid of talking to me, it's ableism!

Key User Groups



User



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Able to work but not yet employed

AGE / GENDER / LOCATION

18-65 / Any gender / in Australia



With multiple-culture background

18-65 / Any gender / in Australia



With Hidden Disabilities

18-65 / Any gender / in Australia



With Physical Disabilities

18-65 / Any gender / in Australia

DISABILITY TYPE

Any

Any

Hidden/invisible disability

Physical disability

CULTURAL & LANGUAGE

Any

Multiple culture background; Limited English proficiency

Any

Any

INCOME LEVEL

Low to moderate

Low to moderate

Any

Any

KEY IDENTIFIERS

May lack of career training;
May have little access to disability support information

May have limited English proficiency;
May come from cultures with different attitudes towards disability

Disability cannot be told from appearance;
May not require visible assistive devices

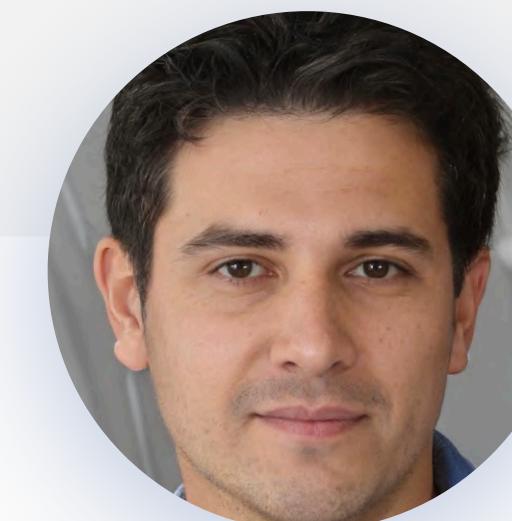
Mobility impairments;
May require assistive devices



Deniz Çetin

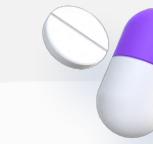


After a car accident, Deniz sustained physical injuries that now require a **wheelchair** for mobility. He used to enjoy a successful career as a restaurant chef but got the sack after the accident. Now he is trying to start his own travel agency in Tasmania to earn living cost and chasing the dream, and he still remains **passionate** on cooking.



FREELANCER | 35 | TAS
MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

Lisa Jung



Lisa is a recent graduate with a major in Digital Marketing and is currently **seeking for a job**. Although she requires medical care for her Tourette syndrome, it does not affect her work performance much. In addition to her professional interests, she is also passionate in makeup and dancing. But she's **not confident** in real life.



GRADUATE | 22 | SYD
TOURETTE SYNDROME

GOALS

- To get support on **starting his own travel agency**
- To have a **larger house** for a better in-house mobility using wheelchair

FRUSTRATIONS

His disability hindered his movements, making it difficult for him to cook in the kitchen of the restaurant, which led to his **unemployment**. He also lacks of start-up capital for his own business.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

As a skilled chef, Deniz took pride in creating dishes delight the rich diversity of his patrons. But he's not proficient with electronic devices and **not good at English** as a non-native speaker.

GOALS

- To get **sufficient pensions** especially before finding a job
- To work in an **inclusive** workplace without discrimination on hidden disability

FRUSTRATIONS

She frequently encounters disapproving looks and **ridicule** from others when she can't control herself and makes a sound, especially in the public spaces.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

She is a bachelor's student who has **excelled academically**. She has a TikTok account sharing her daily life and is a **online social butterfly**.





How might we increase job availability for disabled people in Australia during the high inflation period from a multicultural perspective?

Australia has now experiencing a high inflation era especially after the pandemic. This problem statement is rooted in the challenges faced by disabled people living in Australia, who are already vulnerable in the employment sector and are further affected by the current economic status, leading to a higher unemployment rates.

Government has developed support programs to increase their job opportunities to better cover their cost of living. However, in such a cultural diverse country, disabled individuals with **multicultural**

background still have **less accessibility** to those beneficial programs.

Our primary and secondary research showed that there are **executive issues** with the disability support programs and organizations, while low **public awareness** of disabilities leads to discrimination and exclusion of disabled individuals from job opportunities. Through interviews with potential users, their allies, and the public, we found that **employment is one of the important overlap points of the status quo of Australia and the needs of disabled people.**

It's noteworthy that in the early stages of the project, we did not recognize the potential approach could be taken from a multicultural perspective in terms of job availability for people with disabilities in Australia.

However, after investigating government reports and statistics, as well as conducting a portion of interviews, we discovered that the **multicultural disability group is a significant population that deserves attention.** Not only are there a lack of research and currently pressing challenges for this group, but it was also frequently mentioned by our interviewees.

REFLECTION ON DECISION PROCESS

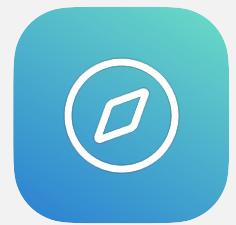
How we take the further approach to apply multicultural perspective in this research



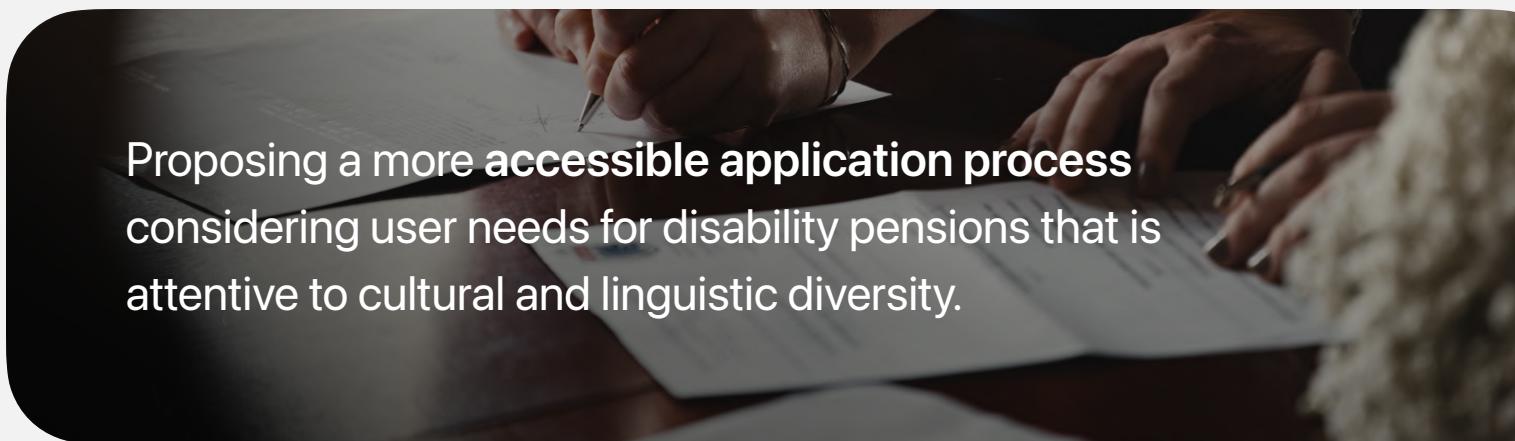
Opportunities



Planning



Leveraging the findings of background and user research and based on problem framing, we have explored several potential design opportunities for the future planning.



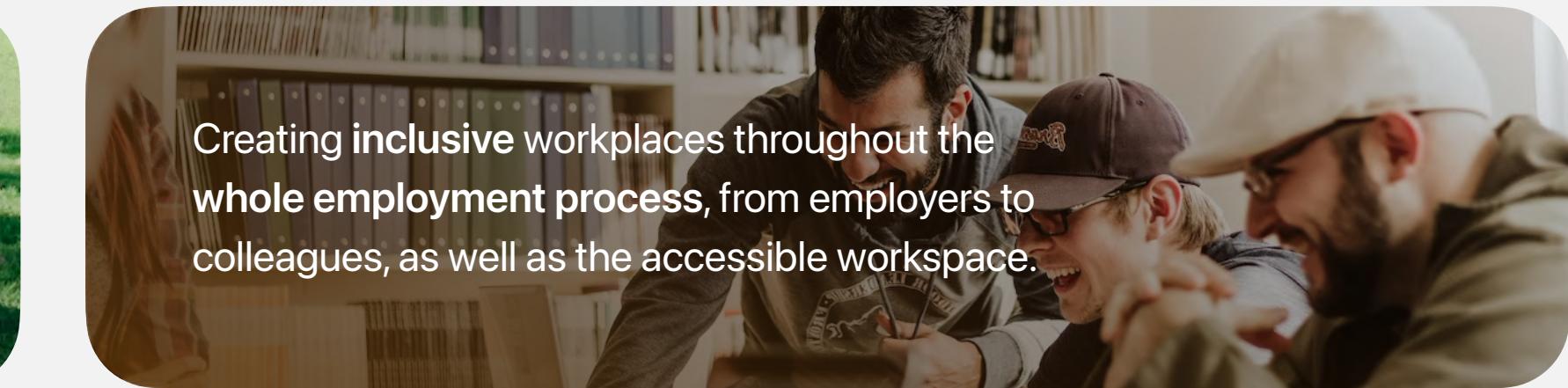
Proposing a more **accessible application process** considering user needs for disability pensions that is attentive to cultural and linguistic diversity.



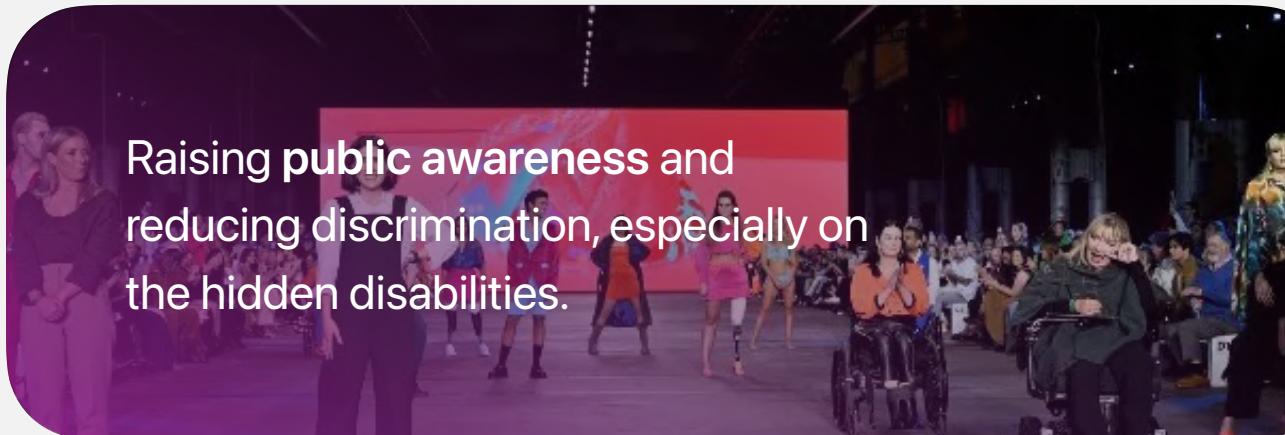
Providing more **targeted career training** and support for people with disabilities and enhancing the transition from education/training to workplace.



Initiating **activities** to improve the **mental health** of people with disabilities, which can enhance their confidence and positivity to find and maintain jobs.



Creating **inclusive** workplaces throughout the **whole employment process**, from employers to colleagues, as well as the accessible workspace.



Raising **public awareness** and reducing discrimination, especially on the hidden disabilities.



What's next

- Do more surveys and research to get in-depth user needs
- Synthesize the insights and identify specific potential solutions
- Conduct further research and prioritize design opportunities
- Prototype and test, refine and iterate

* Image sources: (Dancer, 2020; Distel, 2019; Lugo, 2019; Preez, 2018; Hui-Miller, 2022)



After completing this research report, there are a few more things we would like to discuss...

Throughout the user research journey, the most valuable and interesting part for our team was the opportunity to communicate with disabled people and organizations that support them. Initially, we faced challenges in finding disabled individuals to participate in our research, but we eventually found that most of the people we spoke with online were willing to share their experiences and perspectives with us. It was heartening to see that they were eager to talk to people and share their stories, as they often have fewer opportunities to do so due to their disabilities. Additionally, they expressed a desire for greater awareness and understanding of their disabilities among the general public.

However, we also learned that disabled people can be sensitive to how they are treated in real life due to pressures and discrimination from society. This is why we faced rejection from some of the people we approached initially. Moving forward, we will be more aware of their feelings and choose to interact with them in a more gentle and sensitive way. We may also consider conducting interviews online from the outset to reduce any potential discomfort.

Overall, the user research experience was insightful and rewarding, as it allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities for disabled people in the workforce. We believe that this knowledge will be invaluable as we move forward in developing potential solutions to address these issues.

ultraHD group



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Interview Details · Consent Letter



Appendix A

← Go back to Interview · Data Collection (P7)

Interview Consent Letter

Research topic:

How might we increase job availability for disabled people in Australia during the high inflation period?

Yes, as you can see,
when we first drafted
the consent letter,
we have not refine
our problem statement yet.

Dear participant,

Thank you for expressing interest in our short survey. We are postgraduate students at The University of Sydney, and this survey is designed for a user research report of an assignment. Our project is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and availability to all people with disabilities in order to relieve their living pressures.

Before we proceed with the interview process, we want to ensure that we have your consent to any accommodations you may require during the interview.

- This interview will be audio recorded as a supplement to the notes but will not be disclosed to anyone outside the project team, and will be destroyed when this semester ends.
- A transcript will be produced and analyzed by research investigators, but access to the transcript and report will be limited to research investigators and academic staff who might review and mark this project.
- All collected data is completely anonymous, and all your identity information, such as your name and workplace, will be protected and used only for this research report with no other purpose.
- We'll never use your personal information without your permission.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences. You have the right to ask any questions or express any concerns before, during, or after the interview.

Thank you very much for your participation! We appreciate all your answers.

Sincerely,

Ultra HD Team
IDEA9106 Design Thinking
The University of Sydney

Interview Consent Letter

Research topic:
How might we increase job availability for disabled people in Australia during the high inflation period

Dear participant,

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Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences. You have the right to ask any questions or express any concerns before, during, or after the interview.

Thank you very much for your participation! We appreciate all your answers.

Sincerely,

Ultra HD Team
IDEA9106 Design Thinking
The University of Sydney

Please sign below to indicate your consent to participate in the interview and for us to use the data collected for the research report.

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B

[← Go back to Interview Participants \(P8\)](#)

01

DINESH PALIPANA



- Born in Sri Lanka
- Doctor & Lawyer
- First quadriplegic medical graduate and intern in QLD
- Aussie of the Year 2021
- Order of Australia recipient
- Healthy Life AU Advisory Board



I came across your Wikipedia page and saw that you have worked as a doctor, lawyer, advocate, and fashion model. It's really impressive! Could you briefly share with us how you pursued your passions, especially as a person with quadriplegia?

Yeah, I grew up in Sri Lanka until I was the age of ten and then moved to Australia. I went to school in Australia and also high school, and I finished school and I didn't really know what I wanted to do, so I decided to study law. And so I was in law school and experienced depression when I was in law school. So then I started to see a doctor and I was just impressed by the doctor that treated me for depression. So I decided that I wanted to be a doctor as well. So I finished law, I graduated and then got into medical school and had a spinal cord injury while I was in medical school, which was a challenging journey. I spent about eight months in the hospital and then another three, four years rehabilitating and got back into medical school, graduated and then started work. So I'm in my 70 as a doctor now, but it's been a tricky journey because for someone with the spinal cord injury, medical school weren't that welcoming initially, but we managed to change all that and it was the same with the workplace. So it wasn't a straightforward journey, starting work as a doctor, but now it's great.

Could you be more specifically talk about how you overcome those challenges and difficulties during career journey?

Well, getting back to medical school, there were a lot of people that said that I wouldn't be able to do medicine anymore, that I couldn't be a doctor if I had a spinal cord injury, I needed to use a wheelchair, but fortunately, I had enough supporters as well. So one of the biggest things was about having allies and supporters. So doctors and lecturers that were supportive in their journey. So I think that really helped. And then it was just about really working hard to try and get through the whole thing. So it wasn't easy, it wasn't an easy journey, but I think the main thing that made a difference was having people that were supportive and just not taking no for an answer and keeping going.

I have noticed that you mentioned in Job Access website that the application process for the EAF, which is Employment Assistance Fund, was easy. Could you briefly talk about the application steps?

Yeah, so that was done with the help of employment service provider and an occupational therapist and the hospital. So there have been a couple of times where if it was for equipment or other things, a combination of those people are really helpful. So what I had to do on my end was really minimal and having these professionals and the EAF at Job Access provide that support was really easy. So from a systems perspective, all those structures are there to help people with disability. It's more about making sure that people know about it and getting employees to understand all the things that they can provide. But the EAF process was really easy.

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

01

DINESH
PALIPANA

Okay, well, but I'm wondering for those disabled individuals who are unemployed and looking for applied for similar pension or fund? Will the process be simple and easy?

Yeah, it depends because there are people who don't know that this scheme exists. There are a lot of people who don't have the same support structures. There are a lot of people who can't access the same, I guess, professionals that I was able to. So there are many gaps for people to do that. So I think it's not always as easy because even language barriers, there are people that have a language barrier in accessing these. So I don't think it's as straightforward for everyone.

In terms of your quality of life, how would you rate it out of 10? It's kinda like easy question.

It's 10.

That's good! So do you think your current career has improved your quality of life?

Yeah, definitely. So they say that good work is good health, and good work is good happiness. So I get to do good work, and it's a huge part of happiness and health for me. So the career makes we spend so much time in our lives on our career and jobs, so that is a huge part of happiness.

In your inspiring Ted Talk, you spoke about how people's attitude towards differences can often be an obstacle in one's career. As someone who has faced these challenges, what are some ways you think the general public can better engage with and support people with disability to create more inclusive communities?

I think the main ones are probably to have an open mind, not to make judgments about people, not to think about what people can't do, but to focus on what people can do. So take a strength based approach and just to try, just to say yes, and not to think about how it might be hard, but just to try. And I think if you do those things, it will already start to make a difference very quickly.

Yeah, I agree. Thank you. So I have noticed that you mentioned your home country is Sri Lanka, and you said that those people may face language barriers. So are there any improvements that you would like to see to reduce the financial pressure on disabled individual with different cultural backgrounds?

I think it's breaking the language barrier and breaking the communication barrier is a really important part, whether it's accessing health care or education or work. So just to get things started for them, just to get life started for them. I think access to language and interpretive services and even making written communication simple, which is a good thing anyway, is a huge benefit. So once we start to break that communication gap, once people can actually access information and talk, then I think the rest falls into place. But I think that is one part there are also some communities where they're so isolated, whether it be geographically or within the city. So making sure that there is outreach or inreach to those communities is useful because there are some hidden social challenges within those communities like domestic and family violence, those kind of things that can make it more difficult for people. So I think if we can start to bridge some of those issues then life becomes a bit easier and the rest falls into place.

Thank you so much. I think when you post your life and work experience on social media, it's kind of way to promote such information for those people to aware more about how to help people with disability.

I feel very lucky. I think I have to do what I can to improve things for others. Thanks very much for reaching out.

Appendix B

02

A TIKTOK INFLUENCER WITH TOURETTE

Could you please provide some background information about yourself, such as your age, and your education / training background?

I am 21 & have a Vietnamese background. I was completing a degree at UNSW but decided it wasn't for me and currently am working!

What do you do for a living? What's your current position? Does it align with your education background?

I do multiple jobs - support work, after school care as well as social media marketing work. I am also a dance performer. I believe the roles align in their own way with the past degree I did which was in sociology and gender studies.

Have you faced any challenges or difficulties during your occupation? Do you think discrimination is the biggest challenge when you were seeking a job?

Yes I have, I have had MANY non understanding managers or ones that do not understand Tourettes or disability. The whole interviewing and hiring process is a lot more tedious as someone with a disability as we are presented with more challenges. Discrimination is also a very big challenge as we don't know when it will happen as an extra stress factor.

We noticed that you mentioned you suffered from discrimination in your daily life and we are very saddened by this. How did you overcome the negative effects of discrimination?

Therapy definitely helps but also keeping distracted, staying true to yourself and knowing your self worth. Telling yourself that you physically cannot help it and that people are very ignorant helps. Remembering it is a projection of others and not you.

- Vietnamese
- Tourettes advocate

In terms of your quality of life, how would you rate it out of 10? Do you think your current job improved your life quality?

I believe I have a great quality of life and am very lucky however I do face more barriers with it lowering it, not because of my disability but because of others attitudes. And jobs have increased my quality of life and its given me money to be accessible with things and make purchases however I don't believe a job is the answer to quality of life if that makes sense just as work isn't my biggest value) respecting that people have bills to pay though and have to work :))), more so believe quality of life relates to memories, friends and hobbies.

Are you receiving the disability support pension or others at the moment? (If so) Was the process challenging? What are the challenges?

I am on the NDIS and very fortunate however this isn't the case for everyone, waiting times are very bad and many others don't have access to it due to language barriers, access needs and discrimination in the system.

Are there any programs or improvements you would like to see to reduce the cost of living pressure for individuals with disabilities in the future? How do you believe the general public can assist this group? Can you share your thoughts and ideas on this?

Programs - More job training programs, Peer support mentoring, ACTUAL level playing field employment opportunities. More organizations that actually care and aren't a "money grab". General public - A shift in attitudes, Education on ableism & dismantling of it, Calling out these attitudes & being aware (e.g if someone says the word in a workplace - denormalising this!)

Thoughts - It has a long way to go and a lot of things I have seen are very tokenistic, a lot of people label themselves as "NDIS Friendly" businesses just as a way to open the market and feed off money in people's plans. I hope to see more organizations that are genuinely caring and have good intent as business can get very "stirred". I feel like there is more talk on "LGBT" inclusive workplaces and spaces which is amazing but disability is on the down-low too.

Overall as people become more educated and aware, society will better (as seen with the gay rights and feminism movement even though there's a long way to go still!)

Appendix B

03

COLIN

- 66 years old man in Tasmania
- Loved surfing before disability
- Participating in diving and sailing

Could you please provide some background information about yourself?

I am now 66. I'm on NDIS now and living in an like old people sort of complex where they have easy access to bathroom and wheelchair accessible stuff.

And I have heard that you were really into surfing. What is your major activity in your life, or what is your passion?

Yeah, I was surfing, flying skiing, jet skiing, diving, all sports. I was very active before this hit me, so yeah, I lived most of my life around and revolving surf or water in some sort sailing. So yeah, that's my past. There are my passions. I'm trying to recover, I'm trying to solve the unsolvable because the disease that I have is only like one in a million, one five in a million people, so they are never going to put research on it. It's not commercially viable, so I've had to try and work it out myself. So for nearly two years since COVID I've become a YouTube professor. I learned everything on the YouTube. Biology and everything.

That's cool. And I also heard that you are now participating in a diving program.

Yeah, I do all sorts of things that way. I swim. Yeah. I'm just trying to maintain a lifestyle that can keep me amused. Yeah, it's not fun. When you lose your ability and mobility, you become more involved in your headspace.

I'm sorry to hear that. But if you have a chance in the future, would you still willing to start your own business about tourism?

For sure. That's what I do. I don't have a retirement mentality. I always think, well, you're only here once, why do you want us to sit down for? You've got to live life.

And have you faced any challenges or difficulties during your career journey?

I think everything's a challenge in a way, isn't it? It depends how you look at it. Is it a challenge, an opportunity, or is it a burden? Depends on how you frame your mind.

Okay. So in terms of your quality of life, how would you rate it out of 10?

Well, somewhere between 4-6, depending on the day. It would be much better if I could move around a lot easier.

But do you think your interests and career improves your life quality?

What improves my life quality is my attitude, I think. If you have a down day, you're feeling miserable. How's your quality of life? And you're fully fit and mobile. You live inside your head in a way, yeah. It governs whether you are happy, sad, feel like a victim. The headspace is very important.

You mentioned that the NDIS plan is working your living expense. Could you tell me more about it? And what some disadvantages and advantages of NDIS?

Well, it's not the NDIS plan. The government gives you, like, NDIS payment, which virtually just covers mostly your rent and food. And the plan that they give you, they divide it up into three. Are you aware of that? They have one, which is most of the plan is to get people to support you. So they pay a lot of people who come here for their visa and uni money to help all the end of business. And it's out. It's like an employment service.

I have heard that there are some fraud or cheating within the organization.

Mostly between providers. The people who advertise the companies that sort of advertise, they get their clients and then bring in the migrants and send them out to look after their clients. Some of them do a lot of miss billing. They can just write receipts. A lot of them did that in Melbourne. Melbourne has always been full of crooks. Yeah. Because if you have in the early days, when ships used to just be the cargo, all the things come into ports and the people unloading the ships. They have unions and they turned into criminal gangs and stuff. Melbourne has more organized this way. If you look up crime in Australia, all the gangsters, they all come from Melbourne. But Sydney is different. We weren't really the port city. Most of the cargo and everything come into Melbourne, we were sort of always tourism, army protection. There is a criminal element there, but it's more or less where the early governors, the English elite, they lived around there and Melbourne was more or less the middle class, like all the people live more in Sydney. Really?

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

03

COLIN

[When you're receiving those pensions from the government, was the process challenging?](#)

Man, it's as bad as trying to get an Australian visa or a Chinese passport. It takes a lot of process and time and patience. And that's part of why a lot of people don't apply. It's a lot of paperwork.

[So were there like organizations or people to help you to apply those?](#)

Well, I was lucky. I virtually fell down the rabbit hole because I was approaching 65, which was the retirement age, I think. And when COVID hit, we were all confined to our houses and I didn't get any exercise, so my muscles went down very quick and I went to the hospital to try and get some rehab, some gym or some help from the doctors to get exercise more regularly. And when they saw me, they said, I know you've got to go to NDIS. So they helped me. Yeah. So they help me do all the paperwork and all that sort of stuff, because to do it by yourself is quite a task, because they are always thinking the person who's actually doing you, they're kind of self assessing you. Whereas if you go through some sort of pathway, like I did, they already have the information there and it makes it a lot easier. But if you just walk off the street into an NDIS office, wow, that would be so hard.

[Well, speaking of that, are there any programs or improvements that you would like to see to reduce your pressure or to solve your accommodation problem in the future?](#)

Well, if you're living in Sydney, you'll be paying rent too, right? And you can't do anything about it. You just have to pay it. Or if you want to be there, you got to pay it. And the Government of Australia is broken... It's not going to give out 'Christmas presents' anytime soon unless the economy, the interest rates are going to go up. If we keep printing money, our value of our dollar will go down. It's going to be very tough for the next few years, I think. The good thing is I'm not in Africa, okay, because all they give you there is a begging bowl.

[You are in Tasmania now, how's the rental price there?](#)

Well, it's one of the highest per income. You get a book in Sydney, the rent is high, but you get paid more. In Tasmania they pay you less, but the rent is still high. So the percentage after your income in Tasmania is one of the worst then there's not enough places for people, like the supply of houses isn't enough. And we can't build them like China—you guys can put up a hotel overnight! We take three years just to build a house because of the government's slowness.

Appendix B

04

ALAN
ZHANG

VISIONLEGAL

High Court of Australia



- Principal Solicitor at Vision Legal
- Admitted solicitor of the High Court of Australia
- Admitted solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW



Could you briefly introduce yourself?

Education—I received bachelor of Arts in English Literature in 1992. Then I continue with my law study Diploma Law in University of Sydney, held by the Law Profession Admission Board. That qualification was received in 2009. And I continue with my postgraduate study in law. And I have been a lawyer since a solicitor in New South Wales in 2009 until today.

Have you ever noticed or learned about information related to disabled people in your daily life? How do you learn about it?

Yes, I know about the disabled people through NDIS, which is National Disability Insurance Scheme. And I also have contacts with the disabled people in occasional occasions, for example, in church, in a meeting with clients. And general information about disabled people are quite relatively available in the general public domain.

Just as you mentioned, you have contacts with disabled people in your daily life. What type of disabilities do they have? How did you get to know them?

Yeah, for example, there are some serious type as quadriplegia, and person who sit in a wheelchair, needing someone to move about. They can't have their own mobility freely, so they need some care. Some other people, mild autism, they can communicate, but their intellectual ability is sort of compromised. These are more disabled people that I have come across.

In the current era of high inflation, what kind of impact do you think those disabled people are facing? How is it different from that of ordinary people?

I think high inflation wouldn't affect the disabled people because most disabled people, they receive NDIS as I mentioned. And NDIS provides subsidies to their life, including accommodation, food, care. So I don't think the inflation will affect them to a great extent. If you talk about some, for example, disabled people, again, what I can imagine is probably their purchase of food may be more expensive or transportation maybe also becoming more expensive, but not quite sure. So in general I don't think the inflation will impact them to a great extent—NDIS is quite generous to provide to provide living cost to the disabled people.

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

04

ALAN
ZHANG

In your opinion, except for their disability, what is the biggest difficulty for those disabled people to get a job?

I'll try to actually encourage employers to be able to offer job without discrimination to disabled people. I have met some disabled people working in a restaurant and their capacity might be a little bit compromised, but they can still function quite well as to their ability to get a job. I think intellectual compromise, definitely, will impact their ability to apply for a job.

Another issue is their mobility. For example, if they can't move about freely, some of the job that requires them to be able to travel or move about freely. Like construction work, it will be very difficult for them to get a job. Some of the job that requires very low mobility can be suitable to the disabled people and there are disabled people in the job actually. So yes, there might be some impediment to apply for job but thankfully Australia is not that discriminatory to the disabled people so they can still get their jobs if they wish.

How do you think we can increase the job availability and opportunities for people with disabilities?

I think the education to the employer is quite important. Many employers probably have a kind of fear or misunderstanding of the ability of the disabled people. Probably in their mind, disabled people are disabled and they can't work at all. So the employers probably will need some education or at least better information about the disabled people's condition. Maybe they can find a good match because there are very talented disabled people in Australia—they are highly educated and can provide very good employability to employers. Secondly, I think for the disabled people, they can present themselves to give a better information, to allow other people to understand them, you know, not only their physical capacity, but also, in particular, their intellectual capacity. They are not necessarily to persuade people to employ them, but at least they give them better information about themselves. And thirdly, I was saying that if some government organizations can help them to promote their job opportunities and they can really give a lot of help to the disabled people as well.

Have you noticed any opportunities in daily life to help people with disabilities, such as charity projects like Woolworths' Round-up Charity? Have you participated in any of these? What are your reasons for participating or not participating?

I don't have particular direct experience or contact with these people. What I can see is sometimes in a train when I observe people who travel by train and there will be some assistance that can provide help to the disabled people. But I'm not quite sure whether there is a particular program run by certain organizations, maybe it will work. Also there is one organization that I heard of, like an employment agency, they give disabled people some training, which is actually my client, Tenants. And Tenants is using a certain learning center to give disabled people some training so that they can be equipped to get job. This is one kind of program that I have heard of. But there may be some apprentice or trainee programs. As I mentioned that in a restaurant I saw some disabled people, they work as waiters and I believe that the employer also take the disabled employee under a certain program. So whoever runs the program I think that will definitely help to bridge between the employer and the disabled people.

Are there any programs or improvements that you would like to see implemented to reduce their financial pressure? Can you share your thoughts or ideas in detail?

I think what the government can do is to review NDIS, because the expenses, the government budget on the NDIS is really huge. I think they can review so that they can cut down certain expenses which are not necessary or which are not on the priority. So they can save some money to expand their scope of service to the disabled people. I heard from some news that some of the disabled people, for example, during the COVID period actually they didn't need certain services. They (government) can save some money in some unnecessary or non priority items of expenditure—this money can be huge and can be used in any other area to reduce the living pressure of financial difficulties of disabled people. I think that can be quite useful. This can be having a lot of impact on redeeming the pressure, the financial pressure on the disabled people. Some other suggestions might be we can run churches or some charity organizations. They can continue to run some meaningful fundraising program to target or to assist particular groups of disabled people. And their funding can be for direct assistance to the disabled people. Or you can set up certain programs such as research program, whatever program that is urgent or in need, then they can be targeted to the disabled people directly with good objectives.

Appendix B

05

CHAIR- PERSON OF ACDA



Could you please provide some background information about the Australian Chinese Disability Association (ACDA)?

The target audience of ACDA is primarily disabled individuals and families of Chinese background residing in Australia. The founding purpose of our association is simple—in a country like Australia with high welfare support for disadvantaged groups, the government provides significant assistance, but Chinese disabled people are relatively unaware of this aspect and may not know that the government actually provides them with substantial support. Our preliminary research also confirmed this point: compared with Aussies, the proportion of non-English-speaking residents involved in disability support programs in Australia is relatively low. Among them, the proportion of Chinese is even lower for two reasons. Firstly, they are not familiar with the relevant policies issued by the government. Secondly, due to the traditional culture of Chinese society, they may feel embarrassed or even reluctant to share information about disabled family members with others. This leads to a situation where disabled individuals only get in-house help from the family silently, with no one else outside the family knowing and no way to help.

Many Chinese immigrant families in Australia are very isolated, unlike in China where they have many relatives and friends who can help out at home (in terms of daily life), but this is not the case in Australia, where a Chinese family is often a very small unit. If there is a disabled family member, it is likely to affect the whole family's life. Often, only one child or parent will take on the responsibility of caring for the disabled family member, which is undoubtedly a burden for the entire family.

We established the association to help disabled Chinese individuals in Australia by increasing their understanding and accessibility to the various organizations, welfare programs, and support available to them, so that they and their families do not have to silently bear everything on their own.

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

05

CHAIR- PERSON OF ACDA

What's your daily work to help those disabled people?

As the leader of ACDA, most of my work revolves around education, or say raising awareness. Based on the specific circumstances of each disabled person who seeks our association's help, I'll tell them what kind of institutions can assist them, whether they meet the conditions for government support, and guide them through the application process for these benefits. In terms of group activities, many disabled individuals hope to regularly communicate and share with other disabled families. As for therapies, many disabled people require specialized professionals for regular treatment, including mental, physical, nutritional, and linguistic needs. Our association essentially acts as an information platform with the functions of education, communication, and connection, providing services tailored to the needs of each disabled person.

In general, based on your experience, what are the major aspects of services those disabled people are seeking for?

We reach out to people with disabilities through social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book) and WeChat, as well as through online and offline lectures and interactions with community workers. More often than not, people with disabilities come to us for advice after learning about what we do, and the content of these consultations covers a wide range of issues.

Due to their physical condition, people with disabilities actually do not consult us very often about language and work-related issues, as these are not their main concerns. Instead, they are more concerned about which institutions can help them and how to apply for government support. After obtaining government support, they may need the help of specialized medical personnel.

Have you met some disabled people who didn't have a job? How do you feel about their living pressures? And how did they maintain their daily life?

The government's support actually includes a portion of their living expenses, which is not a lot but can indeed sustain their livelihood. Apart from that, it depends on the support from their family members.

What about those who have a job? What are the challenges or difficulties regarding their occupations?

Firstly, it's important to note that not all disabled people can work, and an assessment is required to determine if they are capable of doing so before job searching. In Australia, there are specialized agencies that assist disabled individuals in finding employment.

Secondly, even among those who are able to work, many do not work full-time.

Thirdly, from my observation, discrimination against physical disabilities in the workplace is not very common. For disabilities such as vision or hearing impairments, there are auxiliary devices that can help these individuals at work. Overall, I think the acceptance of disabled people in the workplace is quite high, and I have not seen any obvious discrimination or employers explicitly saying they don't want to hire disabled individuals. I believe that the overall work environment in Australia is very friendly towards disabled people.

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

05

CHAIR- PERSON OF ACDA

Are they receiving the disability support pension or others at the moment? (If so) Was the process challenging? What are the challenges?

Extremely complex! The application process is very very complex, both in terms of time and required materials, and there are many details to consider. This is a big challenge for people with disabilities, and even for normal people. We spend a lot of time helping people apply for pensions, which is a very complicated process with many details that are easy to make mistakes with. I think a considerable number of people need the help of family or organizations to apply for pensions, depending on their level of disability and educational background.

The success rate of applying for government pensions through our association is 100%. We bring great benefits to Chinese people with disabilities in several ways. First, after reviewing the applicant's information, we will inform them as soon as possible—usually the same day—whether they meet the requirements for government pensions. If they do not meet the requirements, we will recommend that they seek (financial) help from other organizations. Second, if we find they are eligible, we will immediately provide a list of all the required documents and reports, and help them submit the application, which has a 100% success rate—because after interacting and serving many disabled compatriots, we are very clear about whether their conditions can apply for a pension. Throughout the process, our value to them is reflected in our ability to help them apply for pensions and save them time, especially in early childhood intervention.

Are there any programs or improvements that they would like to see implemented to reduce their financial pressure? Can you share your thoughts or ideas in detail?

I think there are a few main points. First, I hope that the current pension application process can become simpler, whether it's for Chinese people with disabilities or the broader disabled community. However, due to language barriers, this complex application process may be even more difficult for Chinese people. The (complex) process and language barriers are significant challenges for Chinese people with disabilities.

Second, I hope that the government and the community can do more promotion for Chinese people and other disabled individuals with different language backgrounds to let more people know that there are subsidies and support available to them. In fact, the biggest obstacle for our association is that people don't know we exist, so we can't help these disabled individuals. Most of the time, we could help those disabled people because they already knew, heard, or saw that there were organizations that could provide them with assistance, and they also knew about "us" (ACDA), so they came to us for advice. If either of these two prerequisites is missing, they won't come to us for help. Besides the information gap, cultural characteristics also make Chinese people not necessarily willing to share their disability situations with us or seek our help.

I think the most important thing is to let everyone know about this, and if people don't know, no matter how good the conditions and support provided by the government are, they won't be able to receive pensions and help. Therefore, I think the government, community, and spontaneous action from the people can promote disability welfare and support projects, and give disabled people time to absorb and digest this information.

Appendix B

06

SENIOR OFFICIAL OF DISABLED PERSONS' FEDERATION OF 'D' CITY IN CHINA



China Disabled Persons'
Federation

- Mobility impairments
- In charge of rehabilitation

As the senior official of the Disabled Persons' Federation of D City, could you please provide some background information about the Federation?

I'm I am a senior official in charge of rehabilitation at the Disabled Persons' Federation of D City (abbreviated as the Federation). The situation of the Federation can be divided into two aspects.

First is the situation of disabled people in D city. There are about 200,000 disabled people in the city, accounting for about 6% of the total population, of which half of them have applied for disability certificates. One reason for not applying for disability certificates is family reasons. Disabled people from families with better conditions tend not to apply for disability certificates. Another reason is that there are marginalized groups who do not apply, such as some elderly people who were healthy when they were young but gradually developed hearing or vision impairments or mobility difficulties due to age, which already meets the standard for disability, but they do not think of themselves as disabled and do not have any need for government assistance, so they give up applying for disability certificates. These two reasons have resulted in a significant difference between the statistics of citizens with disability certificates and the actual number of disabled citizens.

Second is the situation of disability service organizations in D City. Every city, county, and township-level administrative divisions all have Disabled Persons' Federations, and there are specialized associations for different types of disabilities. Even at the village level, there are associations and liaison officers. The organizational structure of disability service organizations is relatively sound, but there are relatively few staff members, and some at the village level are part-time.

Perhaps you young people may not know that the characteristics of the China Disabled Persons' Federation are quite distinct—it is a people's organization that takes the responsibility of representing, serving, and managing disabled people, plays a role as a bridge and link, implements the Party and the country's policies on assisting the disabled, and helps to safeguard the rights and interests of disabled people at the government level.

What's your daily work to help those disabled people in D City?

Our city-level Disability Federation mainly plays the role of connecting and coordinating. The connecting part involves implementing relevant policies on disability prevention and rehabilitation issued by the provincial and national Federations. The coordinating part involves formulating policies that are suitable for our city's disability assistance needs, based on the city government's financial situation and guidance on county and township work using special funds for disability assistance.

In general, based on your experience, what are the major aspects of services those disabled people are seeking for?

In recent years, significant changes have occurred in the services sought by people with disabilities. Originally, people with disabilities were a very difficult and vulnerable group, with a clear need for rehabilitation and employment in the earlier years.

The need for rehabilitation was mainly to reduce or eliminate the obstacles and pain caused by disabilities, but it was often limited by the level of medical care. Since they already have a disability, in most cases, it means that the situation cannot be reversed, and if they can return to a healthy level through treatment, they generally cannot be considered disabled. Therefore, although the rehabilitation services provided by the Federation often only improve the disability situation and reduce the obstacles and pain caused by disabilities, many disabled people assume that the Federation can cure their disabilities, which falls within the scope of medical care.

From the perspective of people with disabilities, their expectations of the Federation are very high, and their need for rehabilitation is very urgent, but in reality, the services and help provided by the Federation are also limited by medical level and their disability situation, which may not be able to be solved in practice, resulting in a gap between expectations and reality.

→ Continued on next page



Appendix B

06

SENIOR OFFICIAL OF DISABLED PERSONS' FEDERATION OF 'D' CITY IN CHINA

The proportion of people with disabilities who have employment needs is actually small. In China, there are more elderly people with disabilities over the age of 60 than in other age ranges. For those people with disabilities who are in the employment age range, their employment ability is limited, and the obstacles caused by their own disabilities also weaken their willingness to work—still suffering, how to work? For those with only mild disabilities and employment intentions, the Federation also provides targeted training for some specific groups of disabled people, and employment is generally not a big problem, and even businesses cannot recruit enough disabled people.

For those with severe disabilities, getting employed is an extravagant hope, and their need for nursing and living subsidies is greater. With the development of technology, the number of blind and deaf-mute people in China has been gradually decreasing. For instance, China has been providing free artificial cochlear implants for children under the age of six, which will greatly improve or even eliminate their deafness.

Most of the employment issues of disabled people that society is concerned about are those who have physical disabilities. Physical disabilities account for a relatively large proportion, and our Federation is also constantly focusing on how to help these disabled people with labor capacity find employment. There is also a part of young disabled people who are active and will look for jobs independently. For citizens with intellectual and mental disabilities, our Federation will help them with some auxiliary employment, but the level of assistance provided in this area is still relatively weak, because enterprises are primarily profit-oriented, and taking on this social responsibility requires a huge investment and carries great risks.

Have you met some disabled people who didn't have a job? How do you feel about their living pressures? And how did they maintain their daily life?

At the national level, subsidies are provided to ensure the most basic aspects, such as the minimum living guarantee for disabled people, which emphasizes the "minimum" and covers the most basic needs of life. Another subsidy for people with disabilities is the Special Subsidy for Disabled People, which reimburses 80% of the market price for medical equipment related to disabilities, and provides rehabilitation treatment for disabled people who receive pensions each year. Although these subsidies can basically meet their needs, there is still a gap between these subsidies and their expectations, as different people have different requirements for their living standards.

What about those who have a job? What are the challenges or difficulties regarding their occupations?

In terms of commuting and accessibility, the accessibility facilities in cities are relatively well-equipped, especially within workplaces and factories. However, there are still issues with accessibility facilities in some old communities and rural areas, which can cause inconvenience for people with disabilities in their daily commutes. Although the government has issued regulations on accessibility and is vigorously promoting them, it will still take some time to improve accessibility in these older areas. In terms of home accessibility design, the Federation will arrange engineering teams to redesign the areas where accessibility is lacking for people with disabilities, such as installing intelligent voice systems to facilitate their daily lives, and this service is provided for free. The government has also relaxed the requirements for people with physical disabilities to obtain driver's licenses, even allowing those who lost both legs to drive modified vehicles on the road, which enabled more disabled people to go out to work.

→ Continued on next page

Appendix B

06

SENIOR OFFICIAL OF DISABLED PERSONS' FEDERATION OF 'D' CITY IN CHINA

For employment in government agencies and state-owned enterprises, some people with disabilities who have passed the exams and obtained qualifications have been blocked from employment. In these cases, we also help them defend their rights and eventually gain employment. These enterprises are required to employ people with disabilities in proportion or pay disability employment security funds to the government.

Discrimination in employment still exists. For example, some employers are afraid to hire people with mental disabilities or are very cautious in doing so, even if their mental disabilities can be improved through medication. Theoretically speaking, this also counts as employment discrimination. However, this is also limited by objective conditions. After all, if these intellectually or mentally disabled employees make mistakes in their work, it may cause greater losses or even injuries.

Are they receiving the disability support pension or others at the moment? (If so) Was the process challenging? What are the challenges? How will the Federation help them?

In China, common subsidies for people with disabilities include the minimum living allowance and the disability subsidy. In recent years, the country has implemented reforms to facilitate people with disabilities in the shortest possible time. In terms of certification and subsidy applications for people with disabilities, it is generally based on the principle of voluntary participation, which requires people with disabilities to go to the hospital for disability assessment and apply for certificates either by themselves or with the accompaniment of family members. However, now our Federation also organizes some convenient activities, such as arranging doctors to visit people's homes for disability assessments, and even conducting a household-by-household survey of disabled families who have not yet applied for disability certificates, informing them of the subsidies and assistance they can enjoy.

Since the Targeted Poverty Alleviation Campaign by the central government in 2015, our Federation has also tried various ways to serve people with disabilities. Processes like disability assessments are still necessary, as we must ensure quality control. But for people with disabilities, their wish is to have their problems solved quickly, even on the spot. Therefore, there is still a certain gap between the services we provide and what disabled people hope for. We think we have done a lot, but people with disabilities may still think we are not doing enough. This is also a gap and contradiction. In terms of process, the original process for obtaining a disability certificate required seven days, but now we try to control the process within one day, although the certification result still needs to be made public to the society... We strive to help people with disabilities solve their problems in the shortest possible time.

Are there any programs or improvements that they would like to see implemented to reduce their financial pressure? Can you share your thoughts or ideas in detail?

In my opinion, the biggest problem facing people with disabilities in China is still rehabilitation costs. They have a great need for rehabilitation, but cannot afford the fees. Although the government has gradually expanded the scope and limit of medical insurance every year, I still hope that the government can include more rehabilitation projects for disabled people in the medical insurance, so as to solve this problem at the national level.

What I care most about and hope for is that the country will pay more attention to the rehabilitation issues of disabled children—this is also a global problem. Children are the hope of a family. In this regard, perhaps we need to combine Chinese and Western medicine and seek breakthroughs between traditional Chinese medicine and Western medical methods.

Appendix B

07

A DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKER

- Chinese in Australia
- Disability centre worker

Could you please provide some background information about yourself?

I have been in Australia for about four years and I lived in Tasmania before, and I worked in the disability centre as a support worker for about one year and a half. And now I've been back to China for holidays.

Could you introduce what's your daily work to help those disabled people?

Different types have different needs. My work is like we are more like a community worker that our aim is to help this disability groups to get back into the community again. So we will do everything they want to get back into the community, like if they want to join some community activities or help them to fill up some application forms for their funding and take them to some appointments. Sometimes we have body group with them to join other groups. And I have some clients, they like shopping, so I will go shopping with them and some like fishing and some like walking the dog. And I also help them with their daily lives as well, like cooking and cleaning their house. And I will also think of some ideas about how to improve their life quality. Like if they're on the wheelchair, I want them to try different kind of wheelchair and think of like, they might want the rope on their door and rooms and think of everything to improve how to change their daily life or the facilities in the house to adapt to their disability.

I think our ambition, our job is to support everything they want to. Support everything they want to do but can't do because of the disability.

Have you ever met some disabled people who didn't have a job? How do you feel about their living pressures?

They don't have living pressures. The government pays for everything.

Have you met someone who has a job but they share their challenges or difficulties regarding their occupations, such as discrimination?

Discrimination? Not really. I have a client, she worked in the government, and our job is to provide because she's in the wheelchair. And so we provide her with transport to the work and help them to prepare lunch or to hit her lunch at the lunchtime. But she worked quite well in the government sector and she even have holiday, and we will take her to holiday on the beach. She enjoys her life quite well.

Are they receiving the disability support pension or are other fund from the government?

Yeah, I think most of them supported by the government because they have the government pension and we are supported by NDIS.

Is the process to apply for NDIS will be difficult or challenging?

It depends because if they apply earlier, like a few years earlier, it will be much easier. But now it's getting more and more difficult. And I think also with the funding, the government doesn't have enough money to support so many people. Because some people they might not realize that they were able to apply for the funding and until they say someone around them got disability and because some disability are invisible, so they didn't get it at first. And then I think there were also some scans about NDIS as well because some organizations or some PM plan managers, they might cheat the government for the funding. I think they are getting more and more serious about the process of the application for the funding.

Are there any programs or improvements that they would like to see to reduce their pressure or can you share your idea or thoughts about the improvement?

Yeah, I have a client and she really wants the government funding for her accommodation because she's in a wheelchair and her partner is not able to support her. And her house is really small that the wheelchair cannot move around. So she really need a functional facility for her. But it's very hard to get those. We say adaptive accommodation because I think the resource is very limited and public housing is so hard to apply, especially in Tasmania. Yes. I think the government should work more on this public resources.



Appendix B

08

A RMIT NURSING STUDENT



- Intern of three disabled caregivers
- Home care worker

Could you please provide some background information about yourself?

I'm studying bachelor of nursing at RMIT right now and I'm going to graduate immediately. I'm also a home care worker, casually works in three different companies.

Could you introduce what's your daily work to help those disabled people?

The main service that I provide for those disabled people are helping them with activities of daily living like shower, massage, home maintenance, like vacuuming floor, clean toilets. Or provide transportation to clinic or shopping center.

In general, based on your training and practice, what are the major aspects of service and support those disabled people are seeking for?

Most disabled people will often need the companionship and assistance from the home care worker to help them manage their daily tasks like showering? Something like that. For people with severe disability, like those who survived from the stroke, they will also often require daily care such as basic massaging or helping them with walking and also having meals. And some of them may also seek for transportation to doctor appointment.

Seems like your work is quite helpful and practical. So have you met some disabled people who didn't have a job? And how do you feel about their living pressures?

Actually, most of them I've been looking after for didn't have a job for decades and their living pressure are usually very obvious and heavy for them and also for their families. And I feel it's quite sad to see that people living under very heavy pressure, especially from financial.

What about those who have a job? What are the challenges or difficulties regarding their occupations?

For those who have a job, they maybe, could be discriminated invisibly from the average person or be disrespected at the working environment, working places. It may be because they are not that efficient or doing things same to the average person which caused them to be discriminate—but they often won't talk much about discrimination.

Are they receiving the disabilities for pension or others at the moment?

Yes, most of them are receiving the NDIS funding which stands for National Disability Insurance Scheme for the cost of medical, seeking therapy, physical therapy equipment like working aid worker or scooter. But not all of them can apply for funding successfully and the apply process can take a long time.

Are there any programs or improvements that maybe they would like to see to reduce their financial pressure in the future or could you share your thoughts or ideas about those improvements?

From their side? Most of them really annoyed by the precise time to receive the NDIS funding and the funding is a little bit limited because not all the living expense are covered by that funding. They basically just cover for the medical part things rather than the living things like booking wears or maybe food and drinks, something like that. Some of them are really thinking for more funds annually, so that can really help them a lot, especially for those who didn't have a job, in my opinion. I think the funding should be more flexible and can be adjustable for different situations on everybody.

Appendix B

09

A SAUDI WITH A DISABLED FAMILY MEMBER

Could you briefly introduce yourself?

Well, I'm an ESL student, master of English Studies student. I wake up very early to take my baby to the daycare centre. Then I go to university sign in delivery and to make class starts, then off to my class is I go to the library study.

Have you ever noticed or learned about the information relate to disabled groups in your daily life?

No, I haven't noticed.

But have you ever met people with disability in your life?

Yeah. There is someone in my family who had a car accident. So now he can't walk normally, he uses the wheelchair.

Oh... So you know, there's a high inflation right now. What kind of impact do you think those disabled people are facing under the high inflation?

It will prevent them from practicing everyday activities, like the normal activities and prevent them from going to work study or like even buying the necessities or needs.

So in your opinion, except for their disability, what's the biggest difficulty for those people to get a job or education?

Well, they may need like a specific tool that help them like to overcome their disability. If they can't have works, and of course, they can't pay for these tools.

How do you think we can like increase the job availability and opportunity for those who have disabilities

Well...Providing... Maybe providing specific amount of money to buy their necessities like every month, allowing them to work remotely, and pensions.

• Master's student at USYD

Have you ever noticed any opportunity in daily life to help people with disabilities such as some charity project, like Woolworth, round-up charity to donate some money for them?

No, I haven't noticed here actually, to be honest. But in my country, there are so many opportunities to donate for them. And for most people who are disabled in Saudi Arabia in the country, they get the tools that wheelchairs the physiological treatment all this is free for them.

That's great. Are there any like program or improvements that you would like to see to reduce you know, to reduce their financial pressure, like volunteers or you mentioned that your country?

Well, I don't have in mind like specific programs like if the government like, specify an amount of money for these people, this will be great because they will this will give them a chance to live... Really live a life.

How is the policies for disabled group in your country?

In Saudi Arabia, services for disabled people is free and also so to give government provide like a yearly amount of money like a pension for them for all like disabled people even if this people have chronic diseases like and health or people who are disabled or chronic diseases or diseases will have a yearly amount of money.

Is the process of applying for this difficult?

It's not difficult. They only to get a report from the doctor and apply online. That's all. The country will provide specific cars to their needs. So they don't need to drive with their legs and foot. They can drive with their hands. So depends on the need and it's all free.

Okay, thank you. Sorry how about their jobs, like how difficult for them to find a job?

Well, one of my relative was working... I think he was a soldier. But after the car accident, they provided him work in an office. They provide available work and jobs for them.

Appendix B

10

AUNTIE
COCO

- A 50 years old language teacher at a high school in Sydney

Thank you again for attending our interview. Could you briefly introduce yourself?

Sure, my name is Coco, you guys can call me Auntie Coco, I am 50 years old and work as a language teacher at a high school located at the southern suburb in Sydney.

Nice to meet you Auntie Coco, Have you ever noticed or learned about information related to disabled people in your daily life? How do you learn about this information?

Not a lot, I guess I can't see many things related to this, not such education or campaigns and staff. Like can you believe that? I thought at least there is going to be something such as rising awareness of disabilities and education for children, but no.

Right, I got the same feeling. But have you ever had met people with disabilities in your life auntie? What type of disabilities do they have? And if you don't mind, how did you get to know them?

Yeah, I used to work with one of my colleagues, and she had been through a bad car accident and after that she couldn't walk anymore, so she spent almost her whole life on wheelchair, but she is really tough.

Wow, I can't imagine how hard she must been through, especially during this I'll say challenging economic environment, so in the current era of high inflation, what kind of impact do you think those disabled people are facing? How is it different from that of ordinary people?

Hmmmm, I think they are definitely more vulnerable than before in terms of financial condition and stuff, because as I know most of them are working part-time or causal, and largely depends on government or their family donations. Not like normal people who can live independently.

True. So in your opinion, except for their disability, what is the biggest difficulty for those disabled people to get a job?

Well, unfortunately, there are still many negative attitudes and beliefs about people with disabilities, which can create barriers to employment. For example, some employers may assume that people with disabilities are less productive, less reliable, or less capable than other workers. Also, I think there is limited access to education and training, people with disabilities may face challenges in accessing education and training programs that can help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the workforce.

That's impressive, I love your thoughts. Do you think we can increase the job availability and opportunities for people with disabilities in any chances?

Hahaha, thank you, yeah, of course. But I think this is a very complex issue, is more related to rising the awareness of the their needs to the society and give more chances for these poor people for education and training. That's what I wish to see in the near future.

I agree with you. One last question Coco. Have you noticed any opportunities in daily life to help people with disabilities, such as charity projects like Woolworths' Round-up Charity? Have you participated in any of these?

Yeah, I have. Normally I will round up to donate, I found this is a good way for people like me who cares about this community, but I think most of other people would just ignored. Therefore, I believe there are some other better ways for people to notice and help disabled people using their power.

Appendix B

11

GRACE

Could you briefly introduce yourself, such as your job and usual range of activities in Sydney?

Hi, my name is Grace, I am 16 years old and I am studying in international house in Sydney, my daily range is city area.

Nice to meet you Grace. Have you ever noticed or learned about information related to disabled people in your daily life? And also how do you learn about this information?

Not really, I didn't notice any information related to disabled people in my daily life, but I have noticed that there are some facilities in the street that designed for people with blindness I guess.

Yeah, the tactile paving for blind people, right?

Yes, I guess that's the name. So I researched some information of some disable people when I got back home. And also from advertising on the walls in the street.

I see, so have you ever known people with disabilities in your life?

Not really, I don't have a way to get to know them, and I always feel distance with them.

What do you think causes those distances? Could you describe that feeling in detail?

I guess I am not familiar with this group, they often have a challenging background and life experiences, and to be honest I am a bit afraid of talking to them.

That's understandable. In the current era of high inflation, what kind of impact do you think those disabled people are facing? How is it different from that of ordinary people?

It's difficult to find a job. Even if they do find one, they cannot work for a long time like normal people, and therefore they cannot earn much money. This will increase their life pressure.

So do you think they have weaker ability than normal people?

No, I mean their energy is limited, it's not an issue of ability.

I see. In your opinion, except for their disability, what is the biggest difficulty for those disabled people to get a job?

Lack of confidence due to childhood deficiencies, would made them emotionally fragile and sensitive. This is definitely different from normal people, so that it's difficult to find a job.

How do you think we can increase the job availability and opportunities for people with disabilities?

We should not discriminate against them because of their disabilities, but focus on their abilities.

Have you noticed any opportunities in daily life to help people with disabilities, such as charity projects like Woolworths' Round-up Charity? Have you participated in any of these? What are your reasons for participating or not participating?

Not much. Sorry. But in some restaurants where we go to eat have a transparent box at the checkout, where you can donate money to support disabled people.

Are there any programs or improvements that you would like to see implemented to reduce your financial pressure? Can you share your thoughts or ideas in detail?

Still I think some jobs should be reserved for disabled people, or they should have shorter working hours and higher pay.

- Student in International House
Sydney City

Appendix B

12

JOE

Could you briefly introduce yourself, such as your job and usual range of activities in Sydney?

Hi I'm Joe, I am 26 years old and I am studying in the University of Sydney as a PhD, I normally stay in the city area, or the school.

Have you ever noticed or learned about information related to disabled people in your daily life? And also how do you learn about this information?

In my personal experience, I have had little exposure to disabled people in my daily life. However, I enjoy watching a TV show called Daredevil, where the main character is blind, and I learned about the life of a blind person through the show.

That's cool. Have you ever known people with disabilities in your life?

I do not have any close acquaintances who are disabled. However, I have noticed some homeless people on the street who seem to have mental or brain disabilities, or people with leg disabilities while taking public transport.

In the current era of high inflation, what kind of impact do you think those disabled people are facing? How is it different from that of ordinary people?

I feel that disabled people's income sources are not as high as those of ordinary people, and they often struggle to find work. If the government does not provide subsidies to increase their income, their lives will become extremely difficult.

- PhD at USYD

I see. In your opinion, except for their disability, what is the biggest difficulty for those disabled people to get a job?

Some jobs are simply not possible for them, such as being a barista, which requires the use of hands. Aside from their disabilities, the biggest challenge for them in finding jobs may be the pressure and discrimination from others. Many people may think that they cannot do the job simply because they are disabled.

How do you think we can increase the job availability and opportunities for people with disabilities?

I think the only way is through government intervention, such as government incentives for companies, such as offering discounts if they hire disabled people.

Right. Have you noticed any opportunities in daily life to help people with disabilities, such as charity projects like Woolworths' Round-up Charity? Have you participated in any of these? What are your reasons for participating or not participating?

Yes, I have. When walking on the street, I have encountered some steep slopes, which make it difficult for people in wheelchairs to get up. I have helped them push their wheelchairs because I believe they need help.

Made with jugs of Iced Americano ☕ and a heart that hopes to help people with disabilities 🚹
And thank you Rohan and Brandon 🎉



ultraHD group



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