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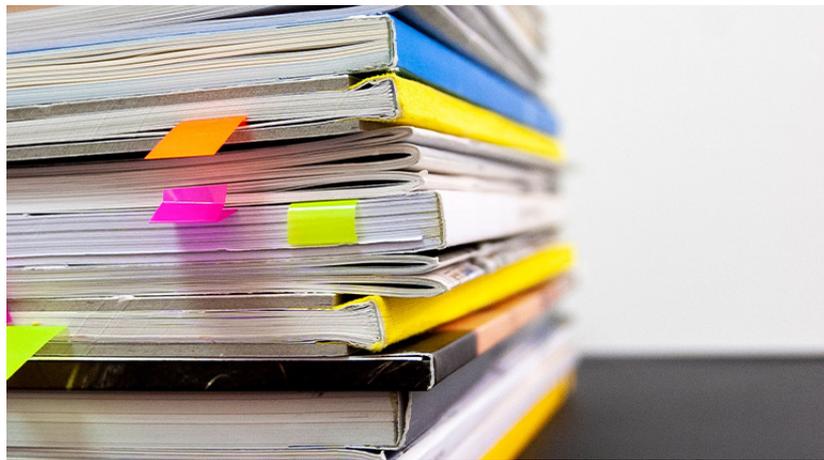
# NDIS report lays bare supported accommodation failures

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*Thousands of complaints have been made about supported accommodation in Australia, according to a new inquiry.*

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Danielle Kutchel (https://probonoaustralia.com.au/author/daniellekutchel/) | 16 January 2023 at 5:26 pm

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A bleak new report has revealed the scale of issues in Australia’s supported accommodation system.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission’s inaugural ‘Own Motion Inquiry’ into Aspects of Supported Accommodation found that people with disability had experienced thousands of incidents in group homes run by seven of the nation’s largest providers.

The inquiry made recommendations around worker culture and data collection to improve the experiences of people with disability and create safer environments for them to live in.

## A trend of complaints

The inquiry sought to identify trends in issues in supported accommodation, their cause and how to eliminate or address those issues, as well as how the commission can help deliver higher standards in group homes.

It investigated 7000 incidents and complaints about supports in group homes made between 1 July 2018 and 30 September 2022, related to seven of the biggest Supported Independent Living (SIL) providers.

Those providers were:

- Aruma Services
- Endeavour Foundation
- Life Without Barriers
- Lifestyle Solutions (Aust) Ltd
- Minda Incorporated (including Minda Housing Ltd)
- Scope (Aust) Ltd (including Home@Scope)
- The Disability Trust.

NDIS participants receiving SIL supports from these providers represent 18 per cent of all NDIS participants receiving SIL across Australia.

The seven providers have been given a report explaining the incidents and complaints that the inquiry examined, but the reports will not be made public as they contain protected information.

The investigation included analysis of the complaint management policies, procedures and systems of the seven providers.

The inquiry also engaged with those living in group homes and stakeholders representing the interests of people with disability and the industry.

### **What's next?**

The inquiry found “there is a compelling case for mandating elements of the best practice framework, particularly active support and frontline practice leadership” to address the quality of life of people living in SIL and reduce the incidents experienced.

It also made recommendations on “areas of observation and action”, including:

- The need for specific regulation of group home settings to enhance their quality and safety. The development of new practice standards specific for group homes is recommended.
- The development of organisational cultures that remove abusive and neglectful conduct by workers in the homes, and action to address bad conduct when it occurs.
- The need to consider the “broader design issue” of the level of choice and control that people living in group homes are able to exercise over their NDIS supports.
- The need for close consultation with people with disability who live in large settings, and their families, to take into account their views and preferences on their living arrangements as they change.
- A system-level approach to the interaction between the health system and supported accommodation services.
- The need for a better understanding of the supported accommodation market and how people interact with it, by improving data collection, analysis and monitoring.

The NDIS commission will now make changes to regulation and monitoring of supported accommodation, including the introduction of new standards.

It will also develop a targeted program of communication, engagement and education with people with disability in supported accommodation to help them to exercise their rights.

There will also be increased oversight of unregistered SIL providers to ensure they are meeting the NDIS code of conduct.

NDIS Commissioner Tracey Mackey acknowledged the cooperation of the supported accommodation providers during the inquiry.

“And I would especially like to thank the individual residents we spoke with, and our broader stakeholders who also inputted into this Inquiry – their input was highly useful and greatly valued,” she said.

NDIS minister Bill Shorten said the report includes several observations that will drive improvements for people living in supported accommodation and the sector as a whole.

“I believe that having safe home living arrangements are fundamental to the quality of life for every Australian,” he said.

“People with a disability have the right to a safe living arrangement, even when it is challenging. People with disability have the right to have their voice heard, particularly when it comes to the quality of their day-to-day lives.”

Further detailed consultation with people with disability is planned to inform how best to implement the changes arising from this Inquiry.

Read the report [online \(http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au\)](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au).



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Danielle is a journalist specialising in disability and CALD issues, and social justice reporting. Reach her on [danielle@probonoaustralia.com.au](mailto:danielle@probonoaustralia.com.au) or on Twitter [@D\\_Kutchel](https://twitter.com/D_Kutchel).

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