



# Specialist Disability Accommodation Alliance

## Position Statement Onsite Shared Support

Onsite Shared Support (OSS) is an innovative support model which offers people with disability the opportunity to make choices about their housing that would otherwise not be possible.

During this momentous year – where the Australian government has introduced a draft NDIS bill<sup>1</sup> and is due to respond to the NDIS Review Final Report and the Disability Royal Commission Final Report<sup>2</sup> – there is an opportunity to instigate lifechanging reforms for people with disability. Ensuring OSS is accessible and delivered optimally can change the lives of many Australians.

### How it works

OSS is delivered to a group of people living independently in specialist disability accommodation (SDA) in the community. Individual dwellings are located in close proximity to each other (e.g. in an apartment 'cluster') with 24/7 OSS costs shared among the tenants; services are delivered from a separate on-site overnight assistance (OOA) location. Funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), OSS is provided by one support provider for all tenants and is generally provided by a different support provider than provides tenants' individual supports. Flexible in nature, support delivered through OSS can include both planned and ad hoc support, as decided upon by each individual tenant.

### Driving innovation, choice and control

OSS delivers significant advantages for tenants and the SDA market including:

- **Fosters choice and control:** Each person who makes the choice to live in an SDA cluster of homes where OSS is offered has a choice over when and how they are supported.

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<sup>1</sup> National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No 1) Bill 2024

<sup>2</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

Tenants are jointly able to choose the company providing the OSS and select the support workers hired.

- **Enables people to live safely alone:** This offers increased privacy for tenants at times when they do not need 1:1 support through access to back-up for unplanned support needs or emergencies.
- **Innovative way of reducing costs:** 24/7 OSS services have been proven to be an innovative way of reducing costs for tenants and therefore the NDIS Scheme – making it an important part of ensuring Scheme sustainability. In addition to economic benefits, OSS can enhance community participation and improve health and wellbeing for tenants.

## Recommendations for impact + sustainability

To ensure OSS is as accessible and impactful as possible for people with disability, the SDA Alliance recommends the following:

- NDIS planners and support coordinators receive targeted training which focuses on:
  - Clear information regarding the benefits of OSS so they may promote it to prospective tenants.
  - Guidance on how they can help people to navigate the process of acquiring sufficient OSS funding in their NDIS plans.
- Ensuring NDIS participants that have been approved for an SDA cluster arrangement automatically receive the appropriate OSS funding in their NDIS Plans. Timely and consistent NDIS processes for approval of SDA housing and support in NDIS Plans will ensure good outcomes for participants.
- The NDIA consistently include OSS as a stated support<sup>3</sup> for individuals who have made the choice to live in a clustered SDA setting (inclusive of apartment, house and villa arrangements). This will provide the essential framework for the delivery of OSS to be efficient, consistent in quality, and financially viable for OSS providers.
- Best practice approach to OSS approval and funding: Progress the policy framework for SDA cluster arrangements so that economic and social options are maximised for participants requiring 24 hour supports.

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<sup>3</sup> When a support is stated, this means NDIS participants can only spend their plan funds on the supports described.