

## **Community Visitors Schemes and safeguarding of people with disability in group homes within the NDIS and OPCAT landscapes**

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### **Aims/Objectives: What was the purpose what you did? Why is your topic important? What did you want to change? What difference did you want to make?**

This study aimed to examine the powers of Community Visitors to undertake site-visit inspection in the diversified and privatised service landscape of the NDIS and OPCAT landscapes. The project focused on Community Visitor schemes in four jurisdictions: Victoria, NSW, Queensland and South Australia, and sought to gain knowledge on the optimal attributes and limitations of each of the listed Community Visitor schemes in relation to powers of site-visits and jurisdiction.

### **Methods/Process: Who was involved? What did you do? (100 words)**

The study was qualitative. We completed our ethics assessment through the University of Melbourne. We completed 20 in-depth interviews with community visitors and executive community visitors staff over the four jurisdictions. Interviews were transcribed and then thematically analysed. A report was then written up on our findings and this was distributed to the disability community and industry partners. The study was funded by a Melbourne Disability Institute seed funding grant.

### **Results: What did you find? What changed? What difference did you make? What did you learn?**

This report examined the role of Community Visitors in being able to undertake adequate safeguarding in 'closed settings' of the diversified and privatised service landscape of the NDIS. The project focused on Community Visitor schemes in four jurisdictions: VIC, NSW, QLD and SA and obtained knowledge on optimal attributes and limitations of each of the listed schemes in relation to powers of site-visits. This included innovations, resource shortages, poor information sharing with NDIS, ambiguity about site-visits to 'grey-zone' sites outside of traditional sites and implications for schemes in relation to OPCAT reporting.

### **Conclusion: How could other people use what you found out? What would you recommend other people do based on what you did and what you found out?**

The report was forwarded to disability community and industry stakeholders. A number of seminar presentations have been made including to government stakeholders associated with visitor schemes discussing funding/ resourcing and innovations/ need for change related to report findings. The national community visitor schemes coalition is looking towards creating some consistency across the various schemes as an outcome of report findings

**Alignment with the Conference Theme: How does your proposal address the conference theme of ‘New Frontiers’? How does your proposal showcase something new we can do to make the world a better place for people with disability? (50 words)**

This study reports on new frontiers of safeguarding within the NDIS and OPCAT landscapes and the role of community visitors undertaking site visits in new forms of closed and privatised accommodation settings. It highlights that new parameters, innovations and increased funding are required to maintain oversight within these new landscapes