



CUMBERLAND
COUNCIL

Designing and Delivering Accessible and Inclusive Programs: A Toolkit

About This Toolkit

Disability is an issue that affects a significant proportion of the population. Cumberland Council strives for a community in which all people can participate and live as independently as possible. The purpose of the Designing and Delivering Accessible and Inclusive Programs Toolkit, is to provide Council staff with information, tips and links to resources to help mainstream Access and Inclusion in the design and delivery of all Council programs and services.

How it was Developed

Cumberland Council delivered a two-hour workshop facilitated by the Australian Network on Disability which started with a focus on disability awareness, Councils legal obligations and guiding principles in creating inclusive environments and behaviours. The second half of the workshop focused on consulting with staff on what they perceived as barriers in creating more accessible and inclusive programs. Participants then worked in groups to identify and provide feedback on what was required to overcome these barriers. The feedback collated from this workshop contributed to the development of this resource.

Barriers Identified in Workshop

- Not understanding access requirements of participants prior to running program/activity and the accessibility of registration systems.
- Cultural or social barriers preventing sharing of disability information with Council.
- Confidentiality issues relating to sharing disability information.
- Building and venue restrictions.
- No budget allocation for resourcing of modifications.
- Communication methods used to promote programs.
- Understanding of potential barriers to participation.
- Understanding how to design for accessibility (specifically mentioned in relation to communications and marketing).

What is Needed to Overcome these Barriers?

- Understanding how to ensure all programs provide opportunity for the community to enquire about accessibility in advance.
- Establishing a formal process to ask participants about access or adjustment requirements prior to program commencement (during promotion of program).
- Encouraging the sharing of information through promotions e.g. including people with disability (visible/non-visible) in imagery and providing multiple contact options for people to advise or ask about accessibility.
- Promoting programs on multiple platforms to ensure reaching the widest audience.
- Understanding inclusive language to use in promotions and information about programs.
- Understanding how to provide all promotional materials and information in accessible formats i.e. consider compliance with WCAG for digital platforms; easy English versions and alternative formats of hardcopy information.
- Identifying alternative participation options where venues restrict access.
- More funding to remove known barriers and to make necessary modifications.
- Education about privacy and confidentiality when managing disability information.
- Understanding how to provide accessible registration systems e.g. digital platforms, multiple communication methods available, easy English versions and providing translators.
- Understanding how to effectively seek feedback from the community about the accessibility of Council programs.
- Regularly reviewing programs with reference to feedback and universal design principles i.e. considering physical, sensory, communication, cognitive requirements for participation in each program/activity.

Council would like to thank and acknowledge all staff members for their input and involvement in the development of this resource.

What is Access and Inclusion?

Accessibility focuses on the ability of a system to match the needs of the individual¹. Everyone should have equal access to Council information, products and services, regardless of ability.



Inclusion focuses on involvement and empowerment, where the worth and dignity of all people are recognized¹. This means people of all abilities, ages, cultural and religious backgrounds and genders, are valued, respected, have equal access to opportunities.



Why is Access and Inclusion Important?

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 states that all Councils are legally required to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The Cumberland DIAP aims to ensure that people with disability have full and equal access to all Council information, facilities, services and programs.

The DIAP covers four focus areas, including:

- 1 { • Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours
- 2 { • Creating Liveable Communities
- 3 { • Supporting Access to Meaningful Employment
- 4 { • Improving Access to Mainstream Services through Better Systems and Processes

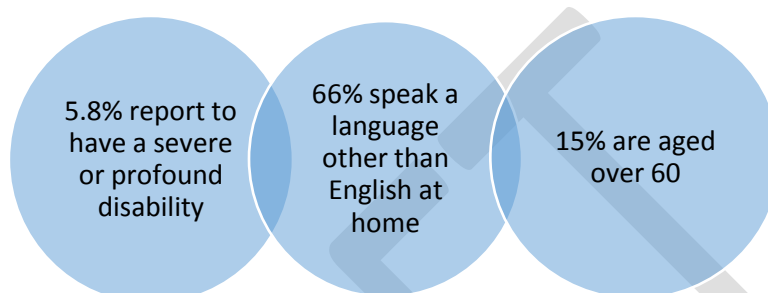
Each of these areas have a list of actions assigned to staff across departments Council wide. Is your team on track? You can download the DIAP from the Cumberland Council Website, or pick up a hard copy from Council's Access and Inclusion Officer.

¹ PwC Australia for the Centre for Inclusive Design, *The Benefit of Designing for Everyone*, May 2019

Who is our Community?

The Cumberland Community is one that is extremely diverse, another reason why Access and Inclusion is important. Accessible and inclusive services and programs mean increased participation, not just for people with disability, but many other diverse groups too.

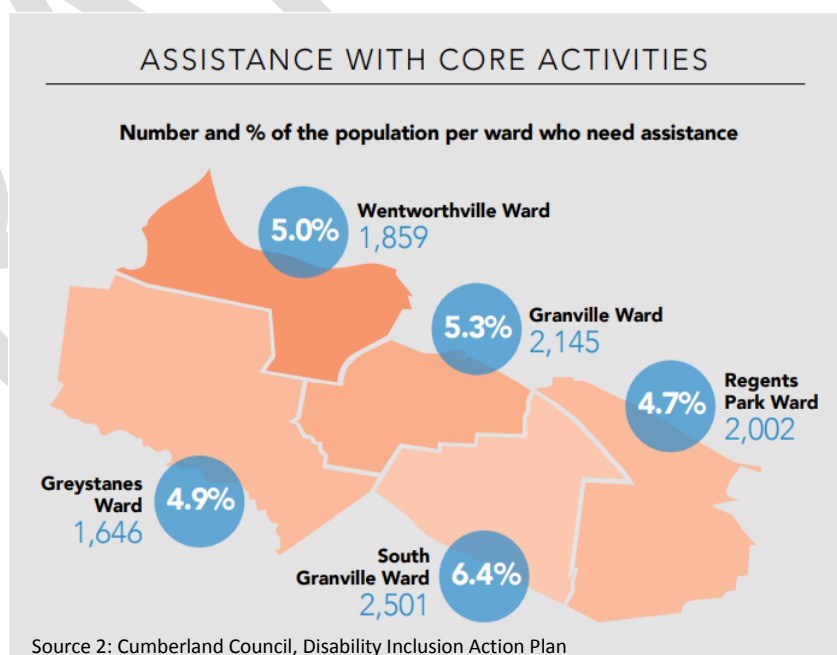
Total Population: 226,051



Source 1: Cumberland Council, Cumberland Community Snapshot

People with disability and carers

- 5.8% (12,503) of residents reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to severe or profound disability².
- 19,249 carers (11.2% of population) provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age³.
- More than 12,319 people in Cumberland receive the disability support pension⁴.



Source 2: Cumberland Council, Disability Inclusion Action Plan

As seen in the information extracted from our Community Snapshot, a significant proportion of our community (16%) need assistance in their day-to-day lives, or provide unpaid support to people who do. Access and inclusion across all Council services, programs and events is essential in ensuring the equal participation of these people.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, *ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015*

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016*. Compiled and presented by .id, the population experts.

⁴ Data provided by Department of Social Services, September 2016

The Social Model of Disability

In the past, disability was viewed as the issue of a person who experiences an impairment that prevents their participation in different aspects of life.

The new universally recognised model of disability is the social model. This model has the view that people with disability are not disabled by their impairment, but rather by the barriers in the environment that hinders their full participation.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability's definition states:

'Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others⁵'

Example:

A person may use a wheelchair to enable independent mobility. With the use of the wheelchair the person is able to get around without assistance. However, when the built environment prevents a person from using their wheelchair to gain access, it is the environmental condition that disables the person.



⁵ United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006

Categories of Disability

For the purpose of understanding the diversity of disability, below are explanations of different categories of disability. Some disabilities are visible, (apparent by looking at a person) while others aren't. It's important not to make assumptions as to whether or not a person has a disability and to remember that individuals experience disability differently.



Physical Disability

This term is used when an individuals' mobility is affected. For example, someone who is a quadriplegic, or an amputee is a person with a physical disability.



Intellectual Disability

This term is used when an individuals' ability to learn is affected. For example, a person with down syndrome is a person with an intellectual disability.



Neurological Disability

This term is used when an individuals' brain and/or central nervous system is affected. For example, acquired brain injury or dementia.



Psychological Disability

This term is used when an individuals' thinking processes, emotions or behaviours are affected. For example, post-traumatic stress disorder or schizophrenia.



Sensory Disability

This term is used when an individuals' ability to hear or see is affected. For example, someone who is blind or deaf, is someone with a sensory disability.



Development/Learning Disability

These terms are used when an individuals' ability to complete a task or use certain skills are affected. For example, a person with dyslexia or on the autism spectrum is a person with a development or learning disability.

Universal Design and Access and Inclusion

Universal Design is the design of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability⁶. The first step to developing and delivering accessible and inclusive services and programs, is recognising and understanding the barriers.

Understanding Unintended Barriers

A barrier is an environmental condition that prevents a person from participating on an equal basis with others. Environmental conditions might include:

- People's awareness of accessibility and inclusion
- Social or cultural attitudes towards people with disability
- The built environment
- The digital environment
- Communication methods
- Policy and procedures

The biggest barrier to access for people with disability are people's attitudes and behaviours. In a report by National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, people with disability were consulted on what they experienced as the main barriers to participating in community life. Over half of submissions (56%) identified exclusion and negative social attitudes as critical issues in creating barriers and reported daily instances of being excluded, marginalised and ignored. At best they reported being treated as different. At worst they reported experiencing exclusion and abuse, and being the subject of ignorance and prejudice⁷.

⁶ Department of Social Services, *National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020*, 2010

⁷ Department of Social Services, *'Shut Out: The experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia'*, 2016

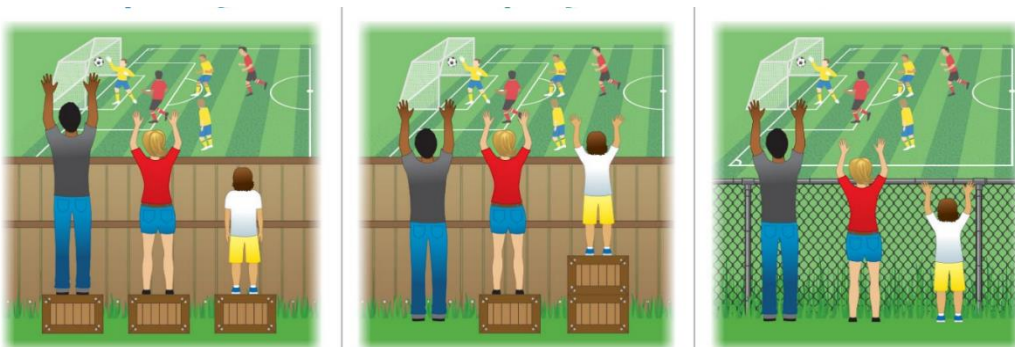
Removing Barriers

When developing and delivering programs and events, it's important to consider access and inclusion at all stages of the process in order to prevent barriers to access. Some important questions to ask yourself when developing or delivering an event or program include:

1. What is the aim/purpose of the program?
2. What are the potential barriers?
3. How could these barriers be removed, or what alternative options could be offered to still achieve the aim/purpose of the program?
4. What information/resources are required to facilitate change?

Removing barriers to access and inclusion may seem tricky, however, there are many simple solutions, some examples are available in the case studies on page 12 and 13. The below image shows three images of three people of various heights watching a sports game, the final picture depicts an ideal, barrier-free situation.

- In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.
- In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.
- In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The third image is an example of universal design, design that benefits all.



Source 3

Accessible Venues

When choosing a venue for your next event or program, be sure to check its accessibility. Things to look out for include:

- Accessible entrances (if there are steps to the entry, is there also ramp access?).
- Lifts and accessible bathrooms
- Proximity to public transport and accessible parking

Tip:

You can also use the 'Access and Inclusion at Events – Guideline Checklist' to ensure you've covered all bases. This checklist will assist you to incorporate access considerations when planning and delivering Council events, programs, services and information. You can find this checklist on the intranet at Seniors and Disability → Access and Inclusion → Resources.

Using Person First Language

Language is an incredibly important part of access and inclusion. Although words may seem insignificant, they are a huge contributor to the attitudes, behaviours and perceptions of people toward people with disability. Whether you're in conversation or creating a flyer, person first language is the 'best-practice' form of inclusive language in Australia. Whether we're developing or delivering programs, it's extremely important that person first language is the standard language used. It focuses on the person before the disability, you can find some examples below:

Person First Language	Not Person First Language
Person or people with disability	Disabled person or people
Person who is blind	Blind person

Person first language can be used when referring to many different groups of people, for example, people who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse rather than 'CALD people'.

Use simple English

- Avoid jargon or complex words where possible. This will benefit people with intellectual or learning disabilities, but also children and people with low English literacy skills.

Ask for input

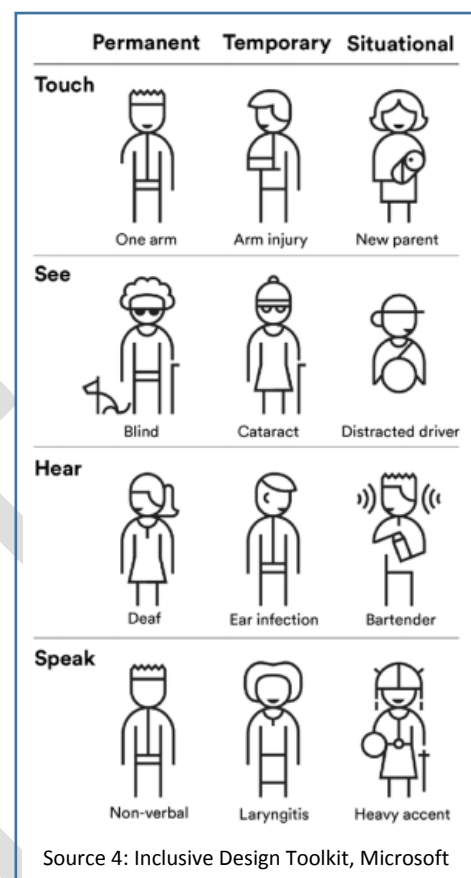
- We often ask about dietary requirements, but to be inclusive it is best practice to ask participants if they require any adjustments that will further enable them to access and participate in the activity or event.

Promote accessible features

- If you know you will have certain things features in place to increase access and inclusion, you should promote these in your marketing materials. For example, you can add 'This venue is wheelchair accessible' or 'Personal hearing loops are available upon request' on your flyers.

Offer alternative communication methods

- Ensure you have alternative ways to deliver your message to the community. For example, provide a plain text version of your flyer, or provide a method of communication that people can use to get the information they require.



Tip:

Remember, being inclusive doesn't just benefit people with a lifelong disability. Sometimes people experience temporary, or situational disabilities that may prevent them from easily accessing services and programs.

Case Study 1 - National Tree Day Event

1. What is the aim/purpose of the program?

- National Tree Day is a call to action for all Australians to put their hands in the earth and give back to their community. It's a day to venture outdoors and get to know your community, and most importantly, to have fun! This day focuses on planting trees and protecting nature.

2. What are the potential barriers?

- The physical environment (e.g. uneven, grassed surfaces or hard to dig soil), may prevent the participation of people with limited mobility or people who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

3. How could these barriers be removed, or what alternative options could be offered to still achieve the aim/purpose of the program?

- Placing temporary matting (access mats) to provide level access to planting sites for people using wheelchairs, prams and mobility aids;
- Use PVC piping to enable participants to plant from a seated position;
- Ensure planting plots are prepared for participants who are unable to dig;
- Provide educational information sessions with no physical or practical component.

4. What information/resources are required to facilitate change?

- Access Mats – Ask Council's Access and Inclusion Officer on how to book these.
- Promotion – Promoting all accessible features and alternative options of participation prior to the day. For example, stating in promotional material that accessible toilets will be close by, matting will provide access to planting sites, pre-dug planting plots and different options for participating in educational activities are available.

Tip:

You can book in Council's Access Mats for your next outdoor event on the intranet at: Seniors and Disability → Access and Inclusion → Resources.

Case Study 2 – School Holiday Programs

1. What is the aim/purpose of the program?

- The aim of Council's school holiday programs is to provide fun, social and physical activities for school-age children during school holiday periods.

2. What are the potential barriers?

- The social interactions involved in the various activities offered at School Holiday Programs may restrict or prevent equitable participation of children whose communication is impacted by disability e.g. speech, hearing, comprehension.

3. How could these barriers be removed, or what alternative options could be offered to still achieve the aim/purpose of the program?

- Council staff may be able to set communication rules as part of the activity that prompt participants to observe all communication requirements; advise participants of any specific communication requirements of other participants at the beginning of the session (with consent).

4. What information/resources are required to facilitate change?

- Council staff will need to create a process for asking participants for access/communication requirements prior to or during the registration process. Council staff will also need to familiarise themselves with the process for arranging interpreters/translators, or provide a list of alternate options for running activities based on access/communication requirements.

Tip:

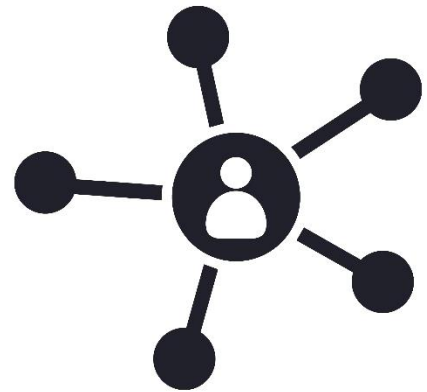
You can find Council's 'Engaging the Translating and Interpreting Service and Auslan

Interpreters' procedures and guidelines on the intranet at Seniors and Disability → Access and Inclusion → Resources.

Resources and Equipment

As a Council staff member, you have access to a range of tools that can help you when designing and delivering services and programs. These include:

- Access and Inclusion guiding checklist
- Engaging Translators and Interpreters Procedures and Guidelines
- Personal hearing loop kit
- Access mats
- Quiet Zone/Sensory Kit
- Pitch Perfect – Language and font assessment tool



To find out more about these resources or to complete a booking request form, visit the Access and Inclusion Page on the intranet or contact Council's Access and Inclusion Officer.

Always remember that Council's Access and Inclusion Officer and Seniors and Disability Services team are here to help. If you have any questions about Access and Inclusion, Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Seniors and Disability Services or working with seniors and People with Disability, you can contact us on:



- Access and Inclusion Officer – 8757 9577 or nadine.el-hassan@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
- Manager of Seniors and Disability - 8757 9801 or kylie.marsden@cumberland.nsw.gov.au

Glossary⁸

Accessibility

- The ability of a system to match the needs of the individual.
-

Disability

- A mismatch between the needs of an individual and the service environment.
-

Diversity

- The range of human difference, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, social class, ability etc.
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Inclusion

- Involvement and empowerment, where the worth and dignity of all people
-

Inclusive Design

- Inclusive Design is human centred design that considers the full range of human diversity, ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference, as part of the design process.
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Universal Design

- Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

⁸ PwC Australia for the Centre for Inclusive Design, *The Benefit of Designing for Everyone*, May 2019

Toolkit Checklist

This quick checklist will help you navigate all the content in this toolkit in a more practical way. You can refer to this checklist when designing and delivering programs to make sure you haven't missed anything. Alternatively, there is a more detailed checklist on the intranet.

Venues	Invitations/Registrations
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure there are wide, smooth paths of travel when getting into the venue and when navigating the event.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask attendees if they have any access/dietary requirements when registering so that they can be accommodated for and outline the accessibility features of the event/program.
<input type="checkbox"/> Automatic doors at entrances are ideal, but if they're not available, ensure there is a way to have the doorways easily accessible by either leaving them open, or having someone there to assist.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure digital invitations are accessible. If physical invitations are provided, ensure attendees can easily access accessible digital versions. You can also ensure you include contact details
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure accessible bathrooms are available. Check that the bathrooms are functioning and can be easily accessed – are they unlocked?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that guests and participants can register for the event in a range of ways, including by telephone, by email or online.
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose a venue that can be easily accessed by public transport or has accessible parking or drop off zones nearby.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide information about accessing the venue, including accessible parking, general parking, public transport, and venue drop off points.
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your venue understands that legally, service animals are allowed everywhere except Intensive Care Units and the Zoo.	<input type="checkbox"/> For ticketed events, companion cards and similar services should be honoured.

Transport	Parking
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there accessible transport nearby/arriving at the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Have you organized a number of dedicated accessible parking spots?
<input type="checkbox"/> Have you organized transport for attendees? If so, have you considered using accessible buses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is this parking close to entry points of the event?
<input type="checkbox"/> Have you advertised this?	<input type="checkbox"/> Have you advertised this?

Marketing and Communications	Wayfinding
<input type="checkbox"/> Written material should be available in alternative formats, as required, before and after the event (e.g. braille, large print, audio and electronic) where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that your event venue is accessible. Is there level access? Do signs and elevators have braille signage? Are there sufficient Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs)?
<input type="checkbox"/> Signage, presentations and written material should have accessible contrast levels	<input type="checkbox"/> Wayfinding materials should be simple and easy to read (clear directions, appropriate signage).
<input type="checkbox"/> Make written material available in plain English/Easy English alternatives	<input type="checkbox"/> The MC or event organiser should provide a verbal explanation of the layout of the venue at the start of the event. This should include the layout of the room and directions to toilets, meal areas, breakout rooms and fire exits.
Room Arrangement	Audio Visuals
<input type="checkbox"/> Book Auslan interpreters as needed, and reserve seats in the front.	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid strobe lighting and flashing or flickering lights.
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide sufficient space between tables for wheelchair access.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide adjustable height microphones, or lapel microphones if required. Also ensure these are accessible on and off the stage in the event that the stage is not accessible.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure table height is accessible to wheelchair users and people of short stature. This includes refreshment tables and buffets.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide space for Auslan interpreters (if required) and ensure a hearing loop is available
<input type="checkbox"/> Venue should be clear of obstacles, and trip hazards such as cables should be removed or taped down.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide live captioning (available through Ai-Media) when required and where possible.
<input type="checkbox"/> For standing events, provide some chairs for people who may experience fatigue. Provide guests with access to a separate, quiet area to allow them to take a break, if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Venue should be evenly lit throughout.

Presentations	Catering
<input type="checkbox"/> All videos should be captioned	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide a variety of meal options and include items that are easy to eat. This includes foods that are not too messy, and foods that do not require utensils.
<input type="checkbox"/> Presenters should describe any visual information in their presentations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure catering staff are briefed and available to assist attendees with serving items where required.
<input type="checkbox"/> For standing events, provide some chairs for people who may experience fatigue. Provide guests with access to a separate, quiet area to allow them to take a break, if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure different types of meals (e.g. vegetarian, gluten free, etc.) are clearly labelled and easily accessible.
Quiet Zones	Did you know?
<input type="checkbox"/> The Quiet Zone should be available at large, crowded or noisy events to assist with the encouragement of participation by all people. This includes (but is not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People with disability, seniors and their carers if/when they feel they need a break - Parents and children who want some quiet time - People of various religious faiths who need a place to pray 	<p>Did you know you have access to various resources and book in equipment that you can use to help design and deliver more accessible, inclusive programs and events? These include:</p> <p>- Access Mats:</p> <p>Council's Seniors and Disability Team store 2x 10m access mats at the Auburn Depot. These are bright blue mats that increase access for people who use wheelchairs, other mobility aids and prams. They also can be good wayfinding tools due to the bright colour.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiet Zones should aim to provide seating areas, activities and other services that are accessible to all (This may include quiet sensory activities, appropriate tables and chairs etc.)	<p>- Personal Hearing Loop Kit</p> <p>This kit includes 5 receivers, 1 transmitter, 5 neck loops, charging dock (briefcase), 1 earpiece and 1 mic headset. This kit can be used at trainings, workshops and presentations to increase access for people who use t-coil cochlear implants/hearing aids.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> The Quiet Zone will be considerate of weather and aim to provide necessary resources (e.g. water, misting fan, shelter from rain, and shade from the sun).	<p>- Quiet Zone Kit</p> <p>The Quiet Zone kit consists of various boxes of equipment including blankets (fluffy and weighted), pillows, sensory toys, putty, textas, children's relaxation stories, noise blocking headphones/ear defenders and more.</p> <p><i>You can find the booking form on the Seniors and Disability page on the intranet.</i></p>

For any other questions, please contact Council's Access and Inclusion Officer on 8757 9577 or at Nadine.el-hassan@cumberland.nsw.gov.au.