



afford news

Winter 2024



The Australian Foundation for Disability acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their deep connections to land, sea, and community.

From the Editor

Welcome to the winter edition of Afford News, our quarterly magazine for clients, families, and carers.

We have an exciting new feature to announce: A place to call home. It is replacing our In Season feature. Here, we highlight current Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) vacancies in East New South Wales, West New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. You can find A place to call home on pages 4-7.

We celebrate the successes of Afford clients Samantha and Blake. Samantha is one of our Assistance with Daily Life (ADL) clients. Blake is a trainee in our School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) program.

We explore how the NDIS is making sure it is as inclusive and accessible as possible and share some things you might like to know about Home and Living Supports.

Lastly, at our In depth feature on page 16 we look at how Afford is supporting and safeguarding your right to express your sexuality and have relationships of your choosing.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Afford News. Happy reading!



Inside

- 3 From the CEO**
- 4 A place to call home**
Accommodation spotlight
- 7 Service spotlight**
Jean and Stephen's SIL home
- 8 Client story**
Samantha's life-changing journey
- 10 NDIS for everyone**
Diversity and inclusion initiatives
- 12 5 things to know about**
Home and Living Supports
- 14 On the job**
Blake learns work ready skills
- 16 In depth**
Relationships and sexuality

On the cover:

Samantha shares her journey towards independence.

From the CEO



Supporting our clients to be as independent, happy and successful as possible – whatever that means for them as individuals – is at the core of what we do.

That's why, in this edition, we're launching a new feature segment that is focused on home life: A place to call home.

You might've heard the saying "Happiness begins at home". Well, we think that's true! An important part of our work is supporting people with disability to live in the way that best suits them. We work closely with our clients and their family or support people to make sure we understand their living needs and goals.

A place to call home will highlight current Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) vacancies in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

Protecting Afford clients' human rights is another all-important part of what we do. Our clients are adults. They have the right to express their sexuality and have relationships of their choosing. That's why we developed a comprehensive Sexuality and Relationships Policy. It was launched in November 2023 and is being followed with staff learning modules that will support our clients to have access to education and information regarding dating, sexuality, relationships and consent, if they want it. We explore the policy and how we are putting it into practice at In depth.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Afford News, and that wherever you are, you're keeping warm and cosy!

Jo Toohy

Chief Executive Officer

A place to call home

Current vacancies in some of Afford's Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) homes.

Afford is one of Australia's most experienced providers of SIL and SDA. We have been supporting people with disability to find happy, safe and accessible homes for more than 70 years. We are committed to making sure that your experience of SIL or SDA is positive and fulfilling. To do that, we work closely with you to understand your needs and assisted living goals. We also take care to match you with housemates with common interests!

Here are some of our vacancies in New South Wales East, New South Wales West, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

New South Wales East



 4  3  Accessible

This SIL home is currently empty! It's seeking housemates who would enjoy living in a neighbourhood with lots of food options, easy access to public transport and lots of things to do in the community. The house is wheelchair accessible, with two spacious living rooms and accessible bathrooms. The backyard has a lovely view, with gardens and a garage gym.



 4  2  Accessible

Four fun housemates are wanted for this empty SIL home! The house is wheelchair accessible, and the bathroom has a ceiling hoist. The backyard has a beautiful garden with fruit trees and an outdoor entertainment area. The garage has a table tennis table for indoor fun. It's perfect for people who like living close to lots of food options and public transport.



 5  1

Seeking quiet housemates who enjoy getting involved with household tasks and group activities! You'll join an existing male and female who like games, TV and arts and crafts, and work or go to day programs. This lovely home offers spacious living rooms, an accessible kitchen and bathroom, beautiful gardens, and a large backyard with a swimming pool and outdoor entertainment area.

New South Wales West



 4  3  Accessible

Seeking a male in his late teens or twenties to join this quiet, spacious home! You'll earn bonus points from the two male housemates if you love the NRL (especially St George Illawarra Dragons), arts and crafts, and parks and walking trails. This home has open plan living, an outdoor entertainment area, two living rooms and a swimming pool with a hoist.



 4  2  Accessible

This home is ready to welcome another male. You'll join three male housemates aged 26-64. You could be a homebody who enjoys TV, movies and chess, or someone who gets out and about for work, day programs and walks. This home has a renovated kitchen, accessible bathroom and big backyard with an undercover entertainment area and garden.



 5  2  Accessible

A female housemate of any age would be a great fit for this lively home. Join the existing male and female resident, who enjoy TV, singing karaoke, shopping, being social and visiting family, going out for drives, and colouring and arts and crafts. There's plenty of room for everyone, with a lounge and dining area, open-plan family room and rumpus room.

Visit the SIL page on our website to learn more about SIL at Afford, or to search for SIL vacancies near you. 🐦

Queensland



 3  3  Accessible

With room for two more superstar housemates in this SDA home, guys or girls aged in their 20s or 30s would be a great fit. You'll join a video game loving 18-year-old male. Each of the bedrooms has its own accessible bathroom. The kitchen is accessible too, and there is an outdoor entertainment area for hanging out in.



 5  2  Accessible

This entire home is currently empty – what an opportunity! It's recently renovated and feels modern and spacious. It has five bedrooms, two bathrooms, accessibility features and a secure backyard with a large swimming pool and outdoor entertainment area. It's a short walk or drive to parks, shops and beaches in Redland Bay, which offers a relaxed coastal atmosphere and a strong sense of community.



 5  2  Accessible

This social all-male house would suit males who enjoy music, cars and fishing – just like the two current housemates! With five bedrooms, this home has room for three more residents. It has two separate living rooms, a large kitchen, living and dining area, an accessible bathroom, wide doorways and a covered entertainment area in the backyard – perfect for those who enjoy the outdoors.

Visit the SDA page on our website to learn more about SDA at Afford, or to search for SDA vacancies near you. 🐦

South Australia



Learn more

Mawson Lakes SIL



5



2



Accessible

Four lovely ladies aged 24-56 live in this relaxed and comfortable SIL home. They enjoy eating and chatting together, watching TV and YouTube, singing, and playing board games. They also enjoy contributing to jobs around the house and spending time with their support workers. The house has a large garden and entertainment area, central heating and cooling, ramp access, and an accessible bathroom and kitchen.

Victoria



Learn more

Pakenham SIL



5



2



Accessible

This home is looking for another male or two, any age okay! You'll join three guys aged 33, 51 and 62. Their interests and hobbies include playing the guitar, watching TV, puzzles and bible readings. Together they enjoy the footy, having dinner and going for drives. The backyard has vegetable gardens and a large outdoor entertainment area with views of Pakenham.

Service Spotlight

Jean and Stephen have been living together in an Afford SIL home for seven years.

In their Supported Independent Living (SIL) home, Jean and Stephen can do things for themselves and make their own decisions. They have access to a driver who can take them where they want to go. They also have support with everyday things like managing medication.

Jean and Stephen's home is a safe space to enjoy their hobbies. They like walking to the nearby park to sit in the sun or exercise, and enjoy gardening together too. Stephen does a lot of cooking, which is a skill he has developed. Jean says his cooking is getting better!

Stephen loves music and has a huge music collection. Jean enjoys relaxing after work by watching TV and reading horror magazines.

Jean and Stephen have a perfect balance of friendships, independence, hobbies and support. Jean says: "It's really good, living together is awesome and it's the best thing I've ever had."






Samantha's journey towards independence with ADL

For the past two years, Samantha has been receiving Assistance with Daily Life (ADL) supports from Afford that have been “100% life changing.”

Samantha is a remarkable woman on a journey towards independence.

After years of living with the isolating effects of depression, anxiety and ADHD, Samantha reached out to Afford for help.



With ADL, Samantha now benefits from experienced and caring one-on-one support workers who understand her needs. Now she is living a more fulfilling life.

“I struggle with it every day, so I have support workers three days a week,” says Samantha. “They are fantastic. I can’t say enough good things about them.”

In Samantha’s day-to-day life, ADL gives her the opportunity to live more independently, both at home and in her community.

“My support worker comes to my house... They help me with things like cooking and cleaning, but most of the time, we go out.”


Community activities have also given Samantha the confidence to go out and do the things that improve her quality life. She says her support workers help her to stay motivated.

Thanks to ADL supports, Samantha has made significant improvements to her health and wellbeing, after spending so much of her time isolated at home.

“One of my biggest goals was to lose weight and get healthy. I weighed 137 kilos, and now I’m down to 80.”

For Samantha, ADL means having the support she needs to keep moving forward, especially when life gets stressful.

“If I’m feeling down one morning... they try to lighten the mood, joke with me, and make me feel comfortable. Like I said, I was just homebound. Having the opportunity to go out and having the supports to help me... it’s been 100% life changing.”



“If I’m feeling down one morning...they try to lighten the mood, joke with me, and make me feel comfortable.”



As she continues to thrive, Samantha is working towards greater independence and considering the possibility of moving into her own home!

Afford is one of Australia’s most experienced providers of ADL supports.

ADL is designed to support you with everyday tasks, personal care and social activities. It can be funded through the NDIS, self-funded, or fee-for-service.

To learn more about Samantha and her ADL experience, [read our blog.](#) 🐦



NDIS for everyone

We look at how the National Disability Insurance Agency is making sure the NDIS is as accessible as possible for its 650,000+ participants.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) aims to support a better life for Australians living with significant and permanent disability, and their families and carers.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is an independent statutory agency established by the Australian federal government to administer the NDIS. One of the ways the NDIA makes sure the NDIS is as accessible as possible for its 650,000+ participants is by promoting diversity and inclusion.

Some of the NDIS' initiatives in this space are the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Strategy, LGBTIQ+ Strategy and First Nations Strategy.

The NDIA's CALD Strategy outlines its commitment to meeting the cultural and language needs of all NDIS participants. It was co-designed with more than 800 people from CALD backgrounds.

The LGBTIQ+ Strategy outlines the NDIA's commitment to being respectful and responsive to the diverse needs of people with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+, their families, carers and communities. It was developed in consultation with people with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+ and peak organisations in the LGBTIQ+ community and disability sector.

The NDIA is partnering with the First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) to co-design a new First Nations Strategy



Learn more about how the NDIS approaches diversity and inclusion.

and action plan. The NDIA is committed to working with First Nations peoples and communities. It wants to ensure they feel heard and can meaningfully contribute to the NDIS.

The NDIA understands that people with disability sometimes identify with more than one community. It recognises the diversity of participants through storytelling, education and awareness raising, and special events.

This table shows some awareness days and events the NDIA acknowledges and celebrates, along with some participant stories and videos.

NAIDOC Week (every July)	Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (every March)	IDAHOBIT Day (May 17)	Harmony Week (every March) & Harmony Day (March 17)	IDPwD (December 3)
NAIDOC Week celebrates and recognises the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	The Sydney Mardi Gras is a street parade celebrating LGBTIQ+ communities. It is full of colour and fun!	IDAHOBIT stands for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia.	This celebration of diversity brings Australians from different backgrounds together. It's about inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all.	The International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) promotes the dignity, rights and wellbeing of people with disability.
Read and watch Travis' story	Read Peter's Sydney Mardi Gras story	Read Andy's IDAHOBIT story	Watch Shee Lah's Harmony Day story	Watch a video the NDIA made about IDPwD

To read a version of this article with **hard word definitions** at the end, [read our blog](#).

5 things to know about...Home and Living Supports

Afford is a registered provider of Home and Living Supports. There are lots of different Home and Living Supports the NDIS might fund for NDIS participants, so here are five useful things to know.



1 The NDIS can assist participants to live independently

NDIS participants and their families can discuss their home and living goals as part of their planning conversation. A plan will include any supports the NDIS will fund. There are different types of home and living supports that the NDIS can fund. Which one is right for you will depend on your individual needs and goals.

2 Afford provides Home and Living Supports

When you engage our Home and Living Supports services, we work closely with you to understand your needs and assisted living goals. Our aim is to support you to live as independently as possible. We have Afford cars and vans so we can drive you to appointments, the shops, community activities, and social events. We use CareApp to stay connected with the people you choose. The app makes it easy for

us to share updates about you and Afford news with family members and carers.

3 SIL stands for Supported Independent Living

We offer SIL in all Australian states we work in, namely: New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria. We have modern and comfortable SIL homes and will take care to find the right SIL home for you. That includes matching you with housemates who have similar hobbies and interests! Our teams can provide you with a support person day and night, seven days a week if you need it. We also have access to health professionals to support you in your home if you need it.

4 SDA stands for Specialist Disability Accommodation

To ensure they will meet your needs, the NDIS has set the NDIS SDA Design Standard. It says what SDA buildings in



Australia must be like. Our highly accessible and modern homes meet the required standards and support your independence. We currently have SDA homes in New South Wales and Queensland. When we support you to find the right SDA home, we take care to ensure the house has just what you need to live as independently as possible. This might include assistive technology, wet rooms, in-built hoists, or modified kitchens and bathrooms.

5 ADL stands for Assistance with Daily Life

ADL is for your personal care, housework, and social and community activities. When you engage our ADL services, our experienced disability support workers provide one-on-one ADL supports in the way that suits you best. This support can be provided in your own home, in the community, or in a SIL home. We will listen and support you in the way you want and need so you can live more independently. It's all about you!



To learn more about Home and Living Supports at Afford, [visit our website.](#)

On the job: **Blake is becoming work ready with SLES**

Blake is a trainee in Afford's School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) program. He is steadily building the skills he needs to make the leap from school to work.

Nineteen-year-old Blake is in his second year of SLES with Afford. From learning money management through retail roleplay and cash handling to honing essential time management and travel skills, Blake says he is building the skills he needs to succeed.

"I have gained many work ready skills during my time at SLES and that makes me feel great!" says Blake.

Afford's SLES program empowers young people with disability to transition from school to the workforce. This exciting time in young people's lives is filled with opportunity and possibility.

Blake has set himself some clear goals.

"I set myself goals to get a job. I want to work to help others and make money," says Blake.

Working with his SLES coach, Blake is researching different industries and roles to see where his skills are a match. Together they explore job platforms, shortlist interesting roles, write cover letters and submit job applications.

These are just some of the skills we support people taking part in the SLES program to develop. Depending on your individual needs and goals, we might also include things like interview skills in your work plan.

By regularly reviewing the work plan, we can make sure you are on track and get you closer to a job!

Ultimately, SLES is about setting you up to thrive in the workplace. That includes learning about coworker interactions, workplace etiquette, and conflict resolution.

Blake has even dipped his toes into the world of volunteering to gain more experience by assisting at the Caboolture Community Centre and Abbey Museum.

"After SLES finishes I would like to be working most of my days to help and meet new people," says Blake.

We're right behind you, Blake!

Afford is an experienced SLES provider. We are here to support young people like Blake to identify their goals and realise their dreams as they leave school and make their way into the world of work.

To learn more about Blake and his SLES experience, [read our blog](#). 🐦





Relationships and sexuality

Afford has a new Sexuality and Relationships Policy and staff learning module to support you to identify and reach your goals in this important area.

We recognise and support clients' rights to freedom of sexual expression, love, affection and interpersonal relationships.

The new policy talks about how we will support you to express your sexuality and have relationships of your choosing.

"It's about giving people permission to talk about and experience sexuality and relationships. In the past, the rights of people with disability to do this has not always been recognised or upheld," explains Afford's Senior Advisor Safeguarding, Jill Maginnity.

"This new direction fits in with being a whole person and experiencing a whole life. And relationships and sexuality are part of that."

We are embedding this new approach to into other aspects of our work too. For

example, we have updated our individual planning to include a question asking if you have any relationship or sexuality wants or needs that you'd like to work on.

"The right to express yourself is a basic human right. And that includes having relationships of your choosing and expressing who you are through identity, including sexual identity," says Jill.

The learning module is called Relationships and Sexuality: Your Role. It is helping to build Afford's support workers' knowledge, awareness and confidence to support you.

"The law assumes that everyone has capacity to consent unless proven otherwise. We don't want to limit people. We want to be very open and clear that this is important, and we give our staff permission to support you to identify and meet your sexuality and relationship goals."

To learn more about how Afford can support you to achieve your sexuality and relationships goals, [read our blog](#).👉

About Afford

The Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford) provides essential services in accommodation, lifestyle and recreation, and employment for people with disability.

Afford's mission is to provide innovative, flexible and high-quality support to enhance lifestyle, learning and vocational opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers. Our vision is to be the partner of choice, supporting people with disability to shape their own lives.

Everything we do is underpinned by our values of integrity, cooperation, empathy, respect and excellence.

This magazine is published to tell stories of interest to our community, to share news and information, and to celebrate our people – including our clients, our clients' families and friends, and our employees.

If you have any questions or want to suggest a story, contact brand.engagement@afford.com.au

Code of Conduct

Afford operates according to the NDIS Code of Conduct. You can also read Afford's Code of Conduct here: afford.com.au/about/publications/




blendcreative.com.au

Feedback and Complaints

Afford is committed to continuous improvement and client-centred service, so we welcome open feedback and complaints. If you want to share your feedback with Afford, or you have a complaint, please visit our website or speak to our Service Delivery Directors in your region. afford.com.au/feedback/




 Level 7, 85 Macquarie Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

 @affordau

 @affordau

 @australian-foundation-for-disability

 afford.com.au

 1800 233 673

 info@afford.com.au