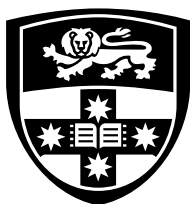# DISABILITY INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY PLANNING (DIEP)FORUM

LOCKYER VALLEY DIEP FORUM

Citation:

Villeneuve, M., Yen, I. (2023). *Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning Forum: LOCKYER VALLEY.* Centre for Disability Research and Policy, The University of Sydney, NSW, 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

"The first one I talked to was flooded in with clients, couldn't get out,... They were safe, but the complexities of the flood created more heightened emotional anxiety and increase in a different support was needed for that. But being isolated, that had to fall to sort of one person essentially."

PURPOSE

This report documents learnings from a facilitated Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP) forum in the Local Government Area (LGA) where it was hosted. Invitation to participate was extended to stakeholders from the community, health, disability, advocacy, emergency services, and government sectors.

THIS DIEP FORUM WAS HOSTED BY LOCKYER VALLEY COUNCIL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK

Date:	11 October 2022
Location:	Gatton Shire Hall

The focus of the DIEP forum was on learning together about:

- *ways we can work together to ensure people with disability are aware, safe, and prepared for emergencies triggered by natural hazards and other emergencies (e.g., house fire, pandemic).*
- *actions we can take to make sure people and their support needs are at the centre of emergency management planning.*
- *barriers and enablers to the inclusion of people with disability before, during, and after disasters.*

This report is one part of a larger program of partnership research to develop Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) policies and practices in Australia.

Findings, reported here, contribute multi-stakeholder understanding about knowledge, resources, and possibilities for developing Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) policies and practice at the local community level.

Findings in this report are unique to the LGA where the DIEP forum was hosted. It can inform critical reflection and action-oriented planning for ongoing development of inclusive local emergency management and disaster recovery practices that leave nobody behind.

INTRODUCTION

For too long, disability has been kept in the *"too hard basket"* because government and emergency services have not had the methods, tools, and guidance on how to include people with disability[1].

When it comes to disaster risk reduction, people with disability have been overlooked in research, practice, and policy development. A growing literature reveals that people with disability are among the most neglected during disaster events. A key barrier to their safety and well-being in emergencies has been the absence of people with disability from local emergency management practices and policy formulation.

The research shows that people with disability:

- are two to four time sore likely to die in a disaster than the general population[2].
- experience higher risk of injury and loss of property[3].
- experience greater difficulty with evacuation[4] and sheltering[5].
- require more intensive health and social services during and after disasters[6].

Stigma and discrimination marginalise people with disability from mainstream social, economic, cultural, and civic participation, including participation in emergency management decision-making.

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[1] Villeneuve, M. (2021). *Issues Paper: Clearing a path to full inclusion of people with disability in emergency management policy and practice in Australia*. Centre for Disability Research and Policy. The University of Sydney, NSW, 2006. http://www.daru.org.au/resource/clearing-a-path-to-full-inclusion-of-people-with-disability-in-emergency-management-policy-and-practice-in-australia. Multiple formats including: pdf, word, Easy Read, infographic, video animation.
[2] Fujii, K. (2015) The Great East Japan Earthquake and Persons with Disabilities Affected by the Earthquake – Why is the Mortality Rate so High? Interim report on JDF Support Activities and Proposals. Paper presented at the Report on the Great East Japan Earthquake and Support for People with Disabilities, Japan Disability Forum.
[3] Alexander, D. (2012). Models of social vulnerability to disasters. *RCCS Annual Review. A selection from the Portuguese journal Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*(4).
[4] Malpass, A., West, C., Quaill, J., & Barker, R. (2019). Experiences of individuals with disabilities sheltering during natural disasters: An integrative review. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, 34*(2), 60-65.
[5] Twigg, J., Kett, M., Bottomley, H., Tan, L. T., & Nasreddin, H. (2011). Disability and public shelter in emergencies. *Environmental hazards, 10*(3-4), 248-261. doi:10.1080/17477891.2011.594492
[6] Phibbs, S., Good, G., Severinsen, C., Woodbury, E., & Williamson, K. (2015). Emergency preparedness and perceptions of vulnerability among disabled people following the Christchurch earthquakes: Applying lessons learnt to the Hyogo Framework for Action. *Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies, 19*, 37

Multiple categories of social vulnerability intersect with disability which amplifies risk[7].

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Disability became prominent in the disaster policy agenda after the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) entered into force in 2008.

- Article 11 of the UNCRPD requires nations to take all necessary measures to protect the safety of persons with disability in situations of risk, including disasters triggered by natural hazard events**.**
- The UNCRPD also reinforces the right of people with disability to have equal access to programs and services that all citizens enjoy. This includes emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction programs and services.

Built on the foundations of the UNCRPD, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) (2015-2030) firmly established people with disability and their representative organisations as legitimate stakeholders in the design and implementation of disaster risk reduction policies, calling for "a more people-centred preventative approach to disaster risk" (p.5)[8].

People-centred approaches place people and their needs at the centre of responsive disaster management and also position them as the main agents of development and change[9].

Australia, as a signatory to the UNCRPD and SFDRR must find ways to ensure everyone is well prepared for disasters triggered by natural hazards. This includes people with disability and their support networks.

NATIONAL POLICY

Australia's state/territory governments have principal responsibility for emergency management legislation, policies, and frameworks.

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[7] Twigg, J., Kett, M., & Lovell, E. (2018). Disability inclusion and disaster risk reduction. *Briefing Note. London: Overseas Development Institute*.

[8] Stough, L.M. & Kang, D. (2015). The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and persons with disabilities, *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science, 6*, 140 – 149. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13753-015-0051-8

[9] Villeneuve, M. (2021). Building a Roadmap for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Australian Communities. *Progress in Disaster Science*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2021.100166

3

Australia's national strategy, frameworks, and principles guide how emergency response is scaled. It is underpinned by partnerships that require government, emergency services, NGOs, community groups, emergency management and volunteer organisations to work together[10].

Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework invite shared responsibility with individuals and communities to help everyone plan for and respond better to disasters. But we haven't had the tools to include people with disability and the services that support them in emergency preparedness and disaster recovery planning.

> Research in Australia, led by the University of Sydney, is helping to address that gap. This research has influenced the development of Australia's new Disability Strategy through the co-production of person-centred capability tools and approaches that support multiple stakeholders to work together to identify and remove barriers to the safety and well-being of people with disability in emergencies.

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31 includes, for the first time, targeted action on disability-inclusive emergency management and disaster recovery planning. This is significant because it requires all governments, community organisations, and businesses to include people with disability in their emergency management and disaster response and recovery planning.

This means that:

- everyone must find effective ways to include the voice and perspective of people with disability **in planning and decision-making** to increase the health, safety, and well-being of people with disability before, during, and after disasters.
- emergency and recovery planning should **include the services that support people with disability as a local community asset** for emergency planning and recovery. Planning for emergencies must extend to working with disability service providers to help them to understand their disaster risks and make effective plans for their services, staff, and the people they support.
- government and emergency services need to **find ways to work in partnership with people with disability and the services that support** them – because disability-inclusive

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[10] https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/handbook-australian-emergency-management-arrangements/

4

emergency planning and disaster recovery require collaborative effort!

Local emergency management plans need to identify and plan for the extra support needs of people with disability in emergencies. Local Government (local level) emergency plans direct the:

- actions of emergency services agencies, emergent groups (e.g., spontaneous volunteers); and
- use of local resources (e.g., emergency management NGOs) to help with emergency response, incident management support, relief, and recovery.

Coordination at the regional level may be needed to ensure the response is effective and tailored to the situation and nature of the emergency (e.g., bushfire vs flood). When the scale or intensity of the emergency increases:

- State/territory arrangements may be activated to provide support and resources locally.
- Inter-state/territory may be activated for additional assistance
- National emergency management arrangements are also in place when assistance exceeds the capability of the state/territory to respond.
- National coordination may also occur in times of catastrophic disaster, national or global disaster (e.g., pandemic), and when international assistance has been offered.

To ensure inclusion, emergency management, governments and emergency planners (at all levels) need to understand the support needs of people with disability, review current plans, and develop community assets and contingencies that are better matched to the support needs of people with disability at all stages of disaster management (preparedness, response, recovery).

Interdependence of people with disability and the services that support them

Research has recognised the interdependence of people with disability and their support networks in achieving safety and well-being before, during, and after disaster. This literature acknowledges the important contribution of community, health and disability service providers to:

- enabling preparedness with the people they support and
- leveraging their routine roles and responsibilities to build local community resilience to disaster

5

These services are optimally positioned to contribute to inclusive emergency planning and risk reduction because:

- they are on the frontline of community-based care and support.
- these relationships equip providers with an intimate knowledge of the functional needs of the people they support.
- they have a deep understanding of the accessible spaces and places within communities that promote and enable participation.
- community-based providers are often seen as the link between people with disabilities and their families and the wider community, forming a crucial component of support networks.

Research in Australia shows, however, that community and disability organisations are not adequately prepared for disaster themselves nor are they integrated into emergency planning.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission signed a legislative amendment that took effect in January 2022. It requires all National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Registered service providers to:

- ensure continuity of supports which are critical to the safety, health, and wellbeing of NDIS participants before, during, and after a disaster, and
- work with their clients to undertake risk assessments and include preparedness strategies within their individual support plans.

The NDIS Practice Standards incorporate these legislated requirements. The new Practice Standards now require service providers to effectively develop, test, and review emergency plans, and to plan for the continuity of critical supports during emergencies to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the people they support.

Emergency planning is also a requirement for aged care providers. During an emergency, providers must continue to maintain quality care and services to care recipients. This is a requirement under the Aged Care Act 1997.

Although this requirement has been part of Aged Care legislation since 1977, **this is a new role for ALL service providers who have** not traditionally been included in emergency planning policy and practices.

6

DISABILITY INCLUSIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DIDRR)

The [Collaborating4Inclusion](#) research team at The University of Sydney Impact Centre for Disability Research and Policy leads partnership research to co-produce methods, tools, and policy guidance for cross-sector collaborative action on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR).

Our research focuses on community capacity development in the areas of **Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP)** and **Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP)** to activate cross-sector collaboration to achieve DIDRR[11,12]. By learning and working together, our aim is to build the community capacity needed to take disability out of the *"too hard basket."*

DIDRR is an emerging cross-sector practice requiring social innovation to develop responsive disaster risk reduction practices that focus on the support needs of people with disability in emergencies and that place people with disability at the centre of development and change. DIDRR approaches seek to identify and address the root causes of vulnerability for people with disability in emergencies through participatory and community-based approaches that engage all persons.

DIDRR requires actions of multiple stakeholders working together with people with disability to identify and remove barriers to the safety and well-being of people with disability before, during, and after disasters.

P-CEP activates capability-focused self-assessment and preparedness actions of multiple stakeholders to enable personal emergency preparedness tailored to individual support needs; resulting in the identification of and planning for unmet needs that increase disaster risks. Certificate training in P-CEP facilitation is available through the University of Sydney Centre for Continuing Education. Learn more here: https://collaborating4inclusion.org/leave-nobody-behind/pcep-short-course/

DIEP activates inclusive community-led preparedness actions of multiple stakeholders that focus on pre-planning for the extra

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[11] Villeneuve, M. (2022). Disability inclusive emergency planning: Person-centred emergency preparedness. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Global Public Health*. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190632366.013.343

[12] Villeneuve, M. (2021). Building a Roadmap for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Australian Communities. *Progress in Disaster Science*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2021.100166

7

support needs of people with disability in emergencies and building community willingness and capability to share responsibility for the organization and delivery of supports, so that nobody is left behind.

Learn more: www.collaborating4inclusion.org

Developing Shared Responsibility for DIDRR at the local community level

Our partnership research presumes that stakeholders must learn and work together toward DIDRR development and change. The DIEP forum was designed to support that objective. The following provides a brief overview of key stakeholders in terms of their potential to contribute to DIDRR.

Emergency services personnel include paramedics, firefighters, police officers, state emergency services workers. These personnel, who work alongside numerous emergency volunteers[13], are usually the first support people think they will rely on in a disaster. Indeed, emergency services and other agencies are typically the first organized to respond. This includes issuing information and warnings for hazards (e.g., bushfire, flood, storm, cyclone, extreme heat, severe weather)[14].

Community engagement is a critical component of emergency management practice which helps to build community resilience to disasters[15]. Before emergencies, community engagement activities typically involve providing awareness campaigns, information, tools and resources that enable people to understand their disaster risks and take preparedness steps. To be included, people with disability need the same opportunity to:

- *access, understand and use this information,*
- *participate in emergency preparedness programs in their community, and*
- *be included as a valuable stakeholder in all phases of local community disaster risk management[16].*

Local Council links to community groups are a fundamental vehicle for the delivery of measures to increase inclusion for people with

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[13] Varker,T., Metcalf, O., et al., (2018). Research into Australian emergency services personnel mental health and wellbeing: An evidence map. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 52*, 129 - 148 https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867417738054
[14] https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/australian-warning-system/
[15] https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/handbook-community-engagement/
[16] Pertiwi, P.P., Llewellyn, G.L., Villeneuve, M. (2020). Disability representation in Indonesian Disaster Risk Reduction Frameworks. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2019.101454

8

disability and the services that support them and build whole-of-community resilience before, during and after disaster.

In addition to their emergency management function, local councils are linked to emergency services, Organisations of People with Disability (OPDs), and community-based service providers through their community development, disability inclusion and community engagement roles. However, there is wide variability and ineffective integration of these critical responsibilities of local government[17]. This impacts local emergency management and disaster recovery planning and perpetuates inequity for people with disability, their family and carers because their support needs in emergency situations are not understood.

DIDRR requires development of leadership, support, and coordination functions within local government for working together with OPDs, community service and disability support providers, and emergency services. Integrated planning and reporting across the community development and emergency management functions of local councils is needed to achieve safety and well-being for people with disability, their family and carers in emergencies.

Organisations of People with Disability (OPDs) and Disability Advocacy Organisations can play a significant role in disaster policy, planning and interventions. Through their lived experience, leadership, and roles as disability advocates, OPDs represent the voice and perspective of their members with disability. OPDs have in-depth understanding of the factors that increase risk for people with disability in emergencies. They also have access to informal networks of support and communication. This information is not readily available within mainstream emergency management. Listening to people with disability and learning about their experiences is essential to understanding and removing the barriers that increase vulnerability in disasters. Disability Advocacy organisations and OPDs play a critical role in supporting and representing the voice and perspectives of people with disability.

Carers (e.g., family and other unpaid support people) face the same barriers as the individuals they care for in emergencies. Like OPDs, **Carer Organisations** can play a significant role in safety and well-being outcomes for people with disability and their carers by representing their perspective in disaster policy, planning and interventions.

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[17] Drennan, L. & Morrissey, L. (2019). Resilience policy in practice – surveying the role of community-based organisations in local disaster management. *Local Government Studies, 45*(3), 328-349. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/03003930.2018.1541795

9

Community, health and disability service providers (e.g., paid service providers and volunteers) are an untapped local community asset with potential to increase safety and well-being for people with disability in emergencies. Harnessing this potential is a complex challenge. It requires:

- developing effective links between personal emergency preparedness of people with disability and organisational preparedness (including service continuity) of the services that support them.
- understanding how such requirements could be developed and governed within the diverse service delivery context, funding models, and roles of service providers in the community, health care and disability sectors.

In this landscape, some people receive disability supports from multiple service providers and agencies, while other people are not connected to funded disability services (e.g., NDIS) but may receive support through mainstream community groups and activities. The situation is increasingly complex for people who have limited or no support networks, fewer people they rely on and trust, and fragile connections to community programs and neighbourhood centres[18].

New ways of working are needed to ensure duty of care for both the staff and the people they support. This will require clarity on the responsibilities and expectations of service providers and the people they support in emergencies. This should include both specialist disability supports and mainstream community services for people of all ages.

STUDY CONTEXT

Lockyer Valley Region – People with Disability and Emergency Management Arrangements

Background
The Lockyer Valley is bordered by the Southern Downs local government area in the south, Toowoomba local government area in the west, Somerset local government area in the north-east, Ipswich City in the east and Scenic Rim local government area in the South East.

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[18] Villeneuve, M., Abson, L., Pertiwi, P., Moss, M. (2021). Applying a person-centred capability framework to inform targeted action on disability inclusive disaster risk reduction. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2020.101979

Its topography is dominated by the mountains of the Great Dividing Range to the west and south and the wide flood plain of Lockyer Creek in the north. The climate of the local government area is classified as "sub-tropical with no dry season".

According to ABS statistics the population of Lockyer Valley Regional Council is 40,229 (2017) which is forecast to increase to 51,529 by June 2031. No other population details are provided.
Land use is dominated by rural land uses, followed by national parks, forest reserves and catchment protection areas, and urban land use.

Key hazards in the region are bushfire, floods, landslides, tropical cyclones, east coast lows, and severe thunderstorms. Also mentioned in the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) are road accidents, aviation accidents, Hazchem and industrial accidents, railway, earthquake, dam burst, pandemics, heatwaves, animal diseases, and terrorism.

The Local Disaster Management Plan
The Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) coordinates and supports the response capability of different agencies. Entities involved in the LDMG include local government, emergency services, emergency service volunteers, Queensland government departments, other agencies (government, private sector, NGOs) and community service organisations. The Disaster Management Act requires the LDMG "to ensure the community is aware of ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a disaster" (page 80). As such, "one of the key long-term objectives of the local group is to provide this information in a timely, coordinated and accessible fashion" (page 80).

The Local Disaster Management Plan also describes an approach to risk assessment, and risk treatment with broad agreement that the protection of life and property will take precedence over environmental protection (page 82). Further, it provides details on its approach and processes for prevention of, response to, and recovery from disaster events. Of relevance for people with disabilities, a Recovery Sub-Plan incorporates elements of human-social recovery, which includes personal support, psychological services, temporary accommodation (not evacuation centres), financial assistance and repairs to dwellings.

The Plan does not specifically note the number of people with disabilities, or address their assistance needs in preparing for, coping with, and recovering from disaster situations.

11

METHODOLOGY

Design

We adapted the **Structured Interview Matrix** (SIM)[19] methodology as an innovative approach to disability-inclusive community engagement with multiple stakeholders.

Inclusive community engagement is a crucial first step in redressing the exclusion of people with disability from emergency planning. It breaks down professional boundaries so that people can learn and work together to identify local community assets, tools, and resources that will impact whole-of-community resilience to disaster.

Here's how we do it:

The academic research team partners with Local Government to host a Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP) forum in their community.

As host, Local Government partners invite multiple stakeholder participation, striving for equal representation of:

- *people with disability, (informal) carers, and representatives and advocates;*
- *community, health, and disability organisations that provide community-based services and supports;*
- *mainstream emergency services including non-government organisations involved in community resilience and disaster recovery work; and*
- *government staff with diverse roles involving emergency management, disability access & inclusion, community development & engagement.*

The research team pre-plans the forum together with the local government host who promote the forum through their networks. To support interactive dialogue, we aim to recruit 32 participants.

The makeup of participants in each DIEP forum reflects the nature of the Local Government's connections to their community as well

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[19] O'Sullivan, T.L., Corneil, W., Kuziemsky, C.E., & Toal-Sullivan, D (2014). Use of the structured interview matrix to enhance community resilience through collaboration and inclusive engagement. Systems Research and Behavioural Science, DOI: 10.1002/sres.2250

as the availability, willingness, and capability of participants to attend. Participation can be impacted by other factors including competing demands on one or more stakeholder group and unexpected events that impact attendance of individuals (such as illness) or an entire sector (such as community-level emergencies).

Data Collection

Originally developed as a method for organisational analysis and strategic planning, the Structured Interview Matrix facilitation technique has been used as a data collection method in participatory research.

The SIM methodology was adapted in this study facilitate inclusive community engagement and promote the development of knowledge and connections between different stakeholders.

SIM employs a graded approach to collaboration. We applied the SIM using a three-phase process.

| 1:1 Interviews conducted by participating stakeholders | Small group deliberation | A facilitated plenary discussion with all stakeholders |

Overview of the SIM Facilitation Process

The first phase involves a series of one-on-one interviews conducted by the participants themselves. An interview guide, prepared by the researchers, consists of four questions. On arrival, participants are assigned to a group and each group is assigned one interview question. The interview matrix is structured so that each participant has the opportunity to ask their assigned question of three people and respond to a question posed by three other participants.

13

Participant interviewers are instructed to ask their question and listen to the response without interrupting. They are also asked to record responses in writing on a form provided.

To support dialogue between participants, pairs take turns asking their interview question over a 10-minute duration. Additional time is provided for participants who needed more time to move between interviews or who require more time to communicate or record responses. The process is repeated until each participant has interviewed one person from each of the other groups. The facilitator keeps time and guides the group so that participants know how to proceed through the matrix.

To extend opportunity for interaction and dialogue, we add a fourth "wildcard" round whereby participants are asked to conduct one more interview with someone they do not know, who they haven't yet interviewed, and who is not in their "home group."

The second phase involves each group coming together to discuss, review and summarise the individual responses to their assigned question. Following their summary of responses, group members are encouraged to add their perspective to the small group deliberation.

The small group discussion involves information sharing and deliberation, where participants assimilate information provided by others, express their viewpoint, develop shared understanding, and potential solutions.

To prepare a synthesis of findings to their question, each small group is invited to identify the main findings to be shared in the large group plenary. Each of these small group discussions are audio recorded.

The third phase involves a large group plenary discussion which begins with each group presenting their main findings followed by a facilitated discussion with all participants. The presentations and plenary discussion are audio recorded.

Interview Questions Guiding this DIEP forum

Group 1: From bushfires to COVID-19 to floods, Australia has had its share of disaster events. How have disasters impacted you, your organization, and the people you support? Probe: What worked well? What helped that to happen?

Group 2: We all need to prepare for emergencies and disasters triggered by natural hazards. What steps have you taken to prepare for emergencies? Probe: If you have, tell me more about your plan.

If you haven't what could you do? Is there anyone who could help you get started?

Group 3: In a disaster in your community, some people with disability will have extra support needs that impacts how they manage in an emergency. How do you or your organization enable people with disability to be aware, safe, and prepared before, during, and after emergencies? <u>Probe:</u> What resources, tools, training helps you? What resources, tools, training are needed?

Group 4: Emergency services is usually the first support people think they will rely on in a disaster. In a disaster in your community, what OTHER SUPPORTS could people with disability count on? <u>Probe:</u> Think about where you live, work, and play and the assets near you.

Facilitation Process

The interview matrix technique has the advantage of accommodating the voices of a large number of participants in each session (12 - 40) while ensuring that the perspectives of all participants are heard. This approach overcomes common challenges to inclusive community engagement by ensuring that people can fully engage in the process and benefit from their participation while maintaining efficiency.

The DIEP forum brought together diverse stakeholders who do not typically work together. Inclusion of people with disability was supported by: (a) extending invitations to people with disability and their representatives to participate; (b) welcoming the attendance and participation of support workers; and (c) providing the means to support their engagement (e.g., Auslan interpretation, barrier free meeting spaces, safe space to express ideas, accommodating diverse communication needs, participation support).

Following arrival, participants were assigned to one of four mixed stakeholder groups. A morning orientation provided background information on DIDRR including what it means and the timeline of its development in Australia. It was explained that the focus of the DIEP forum is on learning together about:

- *ways we can work together to ensure people with disability are aware, safe, and prepared for emergencies triggered by natural hazards and other emergencies (e.g., house fire, pandemic).*
- *actions we can take to make sure people and their support needs are at the centre of emergency management planning.*
- *barriers and enablers to the inclusion of people with disability before, during, and after disasters.*

15

Participants were introduced to the Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) framework[20] including a brief case study to illustrate the importance of considering extra support needs of people with disability in terms of functional capabilities and support needs rather than by their impairments, deficits or diagnosis.

The P-CEP covers eight capability areas including communication, management of health, assistive technology, personal support, assistance animals, transportation, living situation, and social connectedness[21]. Introducing the P-CEP framework served the purpose of supporting shared learning among participants, grounded in a common language for identifying and discussing the capabilities of people with disability and any extra support needs they have in emergencies[22]. The remainder of the forum was facilitated according to the three SIM phases.

Each DIEP forum took place over approximately 5 hours including the morning orientation and nutrition breaks. The length of these consultations is important to ensure time invested in meeting new people and engaging in meaningful discussion with people from different backgrounds. This facilitates the development of new community connections and the opportunity to renew or deepen existing relationships[23]. Opportunity for informal networking and engaging in extended discussion during nutrition breaks provides additional opportunities to develop connections between stakeholders.

At the end of the workshop, participants were invited to complete a questionnaire to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the workshop and what key things were learned.

Data Analysis

Data consisted of: (a) scanned record forms from the individual interviews; (b) transcribed audio recordings of the small group deliberation; and (c) transcribed audio recordings of the large group plenary.

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[20] https://collaborating4inclusion.org/home/pcep/
[21] Villeneuve, M. (2022). Disability inclusive emergency planning: Person-centred emergency preparedness. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Global Public Health*. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190632366.013.343
[22] https://collaborating4inclusion.org/disability-inclusive-disaster-risk-reduction/p-cep-resource-package/
[23] O'Sullivan, T.L., Corneil, W., Kuziemsky, C.E., & Toal-Sullivan, D (2014). Use of the Structured Interview Matrix to enhance community resilience through collaboration and inclusive engagement. *Systems Research and Behavioural Science,32*, 616-628. https://doi/10.1002/sres.2250

Data were analysed by Local Government Area (LGA) to produce findings that reflect the nature of the conversation in each community.

Analysis proceeded in the following way for each LGA.

- *All recordings were transcribed verbatim and imported into a qualitative analysis software program.*
- *Data was de-identified at time of transcription.*
- *Record forms and transcripts were read in full several times before identifying codes.*
- *Open coding was used to first organise and reduce the data by identifying key ideas coming from participants. This was conducted by two researchers independently followed by discussion of emergent findings with the research team to support reflexive thematic analysis.*
- *Reflexive thematic analysis[24] was used to group codes into categories. This process involves both expansion and collapsing of codes into categories; creation of new categories; identification of patterns in the data; observation of relationships and the development of emergent themes for each LGA.*

Our goal was to provide a rich, thematic description of the entire data set and report on findings for each LGA that reflects the contributions of everyone who participated in the forum (i.e., this report).

Since this is an under-researched area and the consultations involved multiple stakeholder perspectives, our aim, here, is to identify predominant themes and give voice to the multiplicity of perspectives in each LGA report.

DIEP reports are shared back with our government hosts and all participants to support ongoing feedback and dialogue on disability inclusive emergency planning.

Stakeholders are encouraged to use the report to progress inclusive community engagement and DIDRR actions in their community.

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[24] Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 11*(4), https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

"A personal situation for another person was flooding in their area...their mother was impacted for days, it surrounded their house, and they couldn't get to their mother... so then their mother didn't know how to charge a phone, that was something that she did for her. And along with that, her son was impacted, so he ended up being impacted and the whole street flooded, then she couldn't get to her son... She was very anxious at the time and didn't know who to turn to or where to go for support."

DIEP Participants

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Person with Disability or Carer	5
Disability Service	6
Community Service	15

18

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Health Service	1
Organisation or Advocate representing people with disability or carers	0
Government	3
Emergency Service	0
Other (no identified)	2
TOTAL	32

FINDINGS

What did we learn together?

Findings are grouped into 7 learnings, summarized in the following table and discussed below.

Key Learnings in Lockyer Valley

1.	Animals are front of mind
2.	Supports AND relationships are impacted by disaster

Key Learnings in Lockyer Valley

3. Communication can enable or hinder decisions and actions in a disaster

4. There are resources and opportunities in abundance in this region

5. "Red tape" makes things worse

6. What current preparedness looks like in the community

7. The accessibility and appropriateness of evacuation centres

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Learning 1: Animals are front of mind.

We learned that **animals** are front of mind in this community. Animals are considered in disaster planning because they occupy a role in people's lives. Animals can be a deciding factor if people decide to evacuate or shelter in place.

"they're away from home and they've got to leave their animals. They don't know if they're going to be returning say if life happens or a bush fire, so they've always had to have a plan A or B in place." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"A lot of people won't evacuate if they have to leave their pet behind. And then it's about, well, can we facilitate having some pets at the back of the evacuation centre? What about people, the farmers, with livestock? Quite a large amount of livestock, can we perhaps find a local person in the community who has land on higher ground that we can take the animals to?" (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"My plan is about leaving and evacuating more than staying, having water for my dog. Extra food, blankets, a leash and a pet bowl. Planning for me and getting in my car and leaving." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"..animals was the main thing. They didn't care about anyone else, but their animals. Some of them have been affected by prior floods or bush fires, which

20

made them have an emergency set up in place, which is good." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"Just that thing about the pets. Could I just say something that's from personal experience? In the first flood, well just after, I volunteered down at Laidley to help people with their houses and stuff like that. The people that I was helping, married couple, asked me if I would help the single mom next door with four young girls. I went next door; mum was pretty distraught because all the furniture had to go. You can't keep the beds because the mattresses would get mould and all that. She was pretty distraught. I was taking a lot of stuff to the rubbish dump and all that sort of stuff. At the end of the second day, I was in the kitchen, her young 14-year-old daughter asked me if I'd like a drink. She gave me a can of orange juice and she stood in there and she was telling me about, when rescued, this year, they came up with a boat to the veranda. Or near the veranda. And they were walking out through the water to get into the boat. Walked them out but my dog was on the veranda, and I didn't want to go without the dog, so she'd gone back to get the dog. Apparently between the boat and the veranda, it must have been about 20 feet or something, so she grabbed the dog and she started crying and she said, "I was walking back with the dog, the water hit me and pushed me up against the fence and I was holding onto the dog. I was holding onto the dog and holding onto to the fence. And I thought I was going to die because they weren't going to let me take the dog…. All she was worried about was the dog. I just wanted to put that in. They ended up, they took the dog, but that was wrong too. That must have been terrifying for her." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"But we also got to be careful too, by removing their pets away from them, we could also go into where they have meltdowns because their pet is their comfort zone. We need to probably look at it separate." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"Pets was a big one, especially with children, and that's on a personal level. My daughter, we were stuck out last flood. I got in, because my daughter was at school, and my daughter's dog was at home with my husband, he was looking after the animals, but she just cried because we couldn't go home for three weeks, our roads had washed away, so that was a big one." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"..first person I spoke to, the Bush Fire's came close. This was about Bush Fire's and COVID, so the Bush Fire's did come close to this person's home, but they were able to fill up bathtubs and other things, and take them around to some of the other places primarily for animals, but also the people, because people were able to get out, but the animals weren't. (G1-Lockyer Valley)

".. that's the thing is that for a lot of people, it's not just a pet, it is a necessity". (G2 Lockyer Valley)

"Because they knew that there was going to be something constant when they got out of there that they were still going to, if they didn't have their home, they still had their animals. Yes, it's difficult to keep a cat contained in a container, a carrier, and sometimes a dog too because they're not used to being in that carrier or that crate. So it would be good if people could crate train their animal. That's a safe place to be. That's where they get their toys, that's where they get their treats and things. That would make the whole experience for everybody, the people that are providing the care for the animal, the person that owns the animal and the animal themselves. It would make the situation a lot less stressful. [Person's name] would have [Name of animal] on his knee and [Name of animal] would be glued to me in a situation like that. But we've got to be aware that the person sitting next to us may have an allergy, may have a fear of

21

a certain type of animal. So having them at least in an adjacent area would be good." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"..he worked tirelessly with not just Brisbane city council but the other councils. The Sunshine Coast further up and Gold Coast and Logan and that about people being able to take their animals with them. And there was a few councils that, "Yeah, okay fine, but they can't be with the people." They had to be at the back. But they arranged for vet nurses and volunteers to come in and take the dogs for a walk, feed them, pet the cats, keep them calm and everything. And that gave people a lot of relief knowing that their animals were safe" (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"..there is a local organisation that lately, that will accept animals during a disaster, which I didn't know. Apparently, there's somewhere in Gatton too" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Learning 2: Supports and relationships are impacted by disaster.

The data also told us that the impact of disaster is not just an immediate **reduction in supports** but that it has consequences for people because of the **changes in daily routine and relationships.**

"..they found it hard to access services, mental health, healthcare, surgeries were put on hold or the face-to-face meetings even with your GP, that wasn't happening and it was really difficult for people with disabilities. Those restrictions that were put in place, hard to get mask exemptions, being able to attend places like you were just talking about before. Employment, working from home and their fight for reasonable adjustments during the restrictions that were put on place" (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"The first one I talked to was flooded in with clients, couldn't get out, so that was... They were safe, but the complexities of the flood created more heightened emotional anxiety and increase in a different support was needed for that. But being isolated, that had to fall to sort of one person essentially. And the way to support that was using a lot of distraction and diversion, focusing on interests and interest in playing board games and cards. The family was together, so that was a positive thing, and they could continue with routine and consistency, which was very important. And the challenge was keeping them focused on the distraction, because as soon as there was a focus on what was going on, it was very heightened anxiety." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"A personal situation for another person was flooding in their area. However, they were fortunate not to be flooded in or have any flooding, however, their mother was impacted for days, it surrounded their house, and they couldn't get to their mother. How that impacted even the phones were cut off, so then their mother didn't know how to charge a phone, that was something that she did for her. And along with that, her son was impacted, so he ended up being impacted and the whole street flooded, then she couldn't get to her son….She was very anxious at the time and didn't know who to turn to or where to go for support." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Travels, impossible to travel, whether it be travel to clients or just get staff, either way, or even just get out of your house, it just depends on where they

22

were. One of mine was stuck at a client's house. He said it was very, very tense, because the client had a routine and of course, that was all gone, because the staff wasn't changing. It was the same person, they were there all the time, it was just full on, so that was very difficult." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"a lot of support services aren't able to operate in that face-to-face capacity, that they generally do. So, even those sorts of reminders of some people need those reminders about taking medications to make sure that they're actually being taken." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

The reduction in supports has implications for **duty of care and dignity of risk** issues, precarious to navigate because of the tension in understanding disability.

Supporting people with **what they need** as opposed to what is thought to be needed.

"He was isolated at home and from his social life, which was at that time walking his dog who actually sat on his knee the whole time, and there was nothing on the shelves at the supermarket. But he was also very grateful to the organisation that dropped sandbags and other things. He also couldn't use his Nippi motorbike to get anywhere, because it's only got small wheels, and so having that wasn't really helpful in the floods. But he did get assistance from this organisation that came in, lifted his furniture. He got flooded twice. Now, he coped, because he has the right attitude. In fact, he said a couple of people came and wanted to give him some psychosocial support and he said, "No, and I'm good." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I guess the challenges were the after effect, so it was a secondary effect for those people on the ground after the disaster, so I guess following up with them and dealing with what's happened in the communities" (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Getting people to accept help." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I think we have to be careful with help. How do we encourage individual resilience without reducing capacity. People with disabilities that I know well, some of the most resilient people I know because they've had to do it by themselves, and they haven't had this support. So I think we have to be careful with rescuing and help". (Reflection-Lockyer Valley)

These changes can impact people's **mental health and wellbeing,** something that is not always visible or measurable.

"Watching people go through it was emotional and having nothing to download. Burnout of staff, it was just a consecutive thing that just went down. And one of them was saying, he was working at the tip at the time and he was just watching truckloads of rubbish come in, being dumped, and it was people crying about their belongings being just rubbish, trashed. So that was very hard on him, let alone what they were going through." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"And you are going into where these people have been flooded and volunteers are coming in and they don't know the sentimental value of what has just been lost. That's heartbreak." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"There's a lot of mental health and PTSD in this area around the floods, because we keep getting them. So, I've seen children freak out when it rains. I know

23

myself, there's a point where I start getting really... Because we just keep getting them over and over" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"..offering the community counselling because we've been hit so many times, there's like some post-traumatic stress around that, so how do we support that? I know I've seen children who will get terrified when it starts raining, so because we've had some traumatic experiences during the floods…We've had some lived experience talking about throwing their hands up saying I need you to do this for me. I can't cope with this, so just providing that various understanding that not everyone fits boxes." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"It's very important when you are dealing with those that are extremely shy for whatever reason, to not connect, to not break the trust that you have with them. If you break the trust, you go back two spaces, not back just one. You cannot. I highlight that. One of the most important things with those in need that have a mental health issue is if you break their trust" (plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"Decision making can be very difficult for people. Especially, for example, some people with complex mental health issues might need a really high level of support around decision making." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"We're totally missing something because we connect to a people that can connect. We're really missing the people that can't connect, who can't connect because of mental health. They can't connect because they can't physically get there. They can't connect because they don't communicate the way we communicate..." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"I think the people that are suffering and not being able to connect during floods are people that are suffering and not being able to connect to other supports. They're isolated. They don't have the network around them. They don't have the circle of support. Any of us have had a circle of support and resources, then we can get through a flood, but it's a much bigger picture. If we could find people who are isolated and develop a circle around them, and that's a community-based circle, not a paid support circle, then we could look after them all the time, not just during floods". (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"..high anxiety. Just when there's flooding around, because if you've lived through 2011 in Lockyer Valley, there's always something emotional going on when the rain comes. Losing someone, so someone who's actually died during our flood event from disabilities/health related. People being separated from family and the concerns that raises, like someone stuck on the Sunshine Coast and some are here, and family worried about that. Safe, but high anxiety. Poor communication with internet and phones often not working." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Emotional health or mental health, physical access, so effects on independence or freedom, loss of assets, equipment, work, finances or hope for some people; Loss of ability to connect, difficulty in accessing support, healthcare or negotiating systems. People withdrawn or isolated; difficulty communicating when people didn't have or know how to use technology, so poor internet, power outages, mobile phone coverage" (plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"This was an organisation, it seemed to them to be the greatest challenge, because people became very withdrawn due to isolation." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

Learning 3: Communication can enable or hinder decisions and actions in a disaster.

The data also found that **communication** was an area of importance. Examples of different dimensions of communication is reflected in the following categories of quotes. Communication can both enable or hinder a person's decision making when it comes to disaster, it has implications for how people will respond and act.

Communication –**technology**. Here we learned that communications infrastructure and technology literacy will vary for individuals.

"Technology was not available or if they did have it, they didn't know how to use it." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Especially during a flood and not knowing what's happening really. Some organisations think that they're communicating well, but they're not communicating in an inclusive way, so the internet just does not cut it". (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Technology was a good thing, but it was also a bad thing when we had power outs". (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"we didn't realise that the Sunday area and Airlie Beach and Hideaway Bay, I think it was called, had been hit because they were cut off. So it was word of mouth. People were driving through and saying, "Hey, you need to send an outreach team out to here because actually there's people who have no power on." So yeah, a lot of times it's word of mouth communication." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"They don't do social media. They've still got the basic mobile that just sends a text, receives a text, makes a call, receives a call. They're out in whoop whoop and all their lines go down. They've lost their fence. There was a lot of farmers that came in that I helped. They'd lost their fencing that they were trying to contain their stock. The furthest thing from their mind was registering for the emergency support. But that had to be done within seven days. Well, that first 7, 8, 9, 10 days was all about scrambling to make sure the stock are safe, get the fencing up, start the de-silting dams, things like that. Plus, the fact that they're of that generation that they don't have the internet at home. And even if they did want it, there are a lot of places around the valley that don't have internet access. And I'm not far out of, I'm only part way between Plainland and Laidley. A day like this, I'd find it very hard. Overcast days, rainy days, windy days. And I joke, if a large flock of birds go over, my internet goes out. So, I can understand that people in more remote areas that either can only get Telstra or can only get Optus or can only get satellite internet, it makes it very difficult for them. Hence, I liked the idea from the lady about the walkie talkies for their local community. "(G4-Lockyer Valley)

"That's the thing. Even at Mount Sylvia in 2011, they put up an extra tower because there was no reception. And you said I'd take seven days to apply. Some people were trapped longer up in the mountains. They were trapped." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"Even at my place in Gatton, if I want to talk to someone seriously, I have to go jump in my carport to get good reception because that's shocking." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

Communication – **enabling pathways**. These quotes demonstrate that whilst initial communication may be clear there potentially remains a dilemma of 'what next'?

"From a council perspective, it's quite tricky, because staff are stressed, the community are stressed. There's a lot of uncertainty, anxiety, how do you deal with that? How do you support that? Oh, that was the other thing too, one of the first person I spoke to said, "I couldn't get to an evacuation centre." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I just want to say hats off to all the NDIS; all support workers, support coordinators, but I would like to mention, I'd really love to see more communication between support workers and people who are trying to support people during the floods." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"How do we let the families know that these people are in isolation? And that can transfer. Yes, it may have been for flooding, I mean for the COVID, but similar challenge, if they're flooded, how do we let the families know that these people are isolated? Obviously, it affects the ability to continue with day-to-day life." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"we're talking about the what-if in the middle of a disaster. What if the power's out? What if your phone is dead? You can't charge it up. What if the guy at number 10 hasn't got a generator or he's running out of fuel so you can't charge your phone up? What if you have no range?" (G2- Lockyer Valley)

Communication – **coordinated response** mechanisms has implications for what is felt at the front line. Lines of communication and who is responsible for what communication appears to be an issue that has been highlighted.

"Lack of resources of individuals to be resilient themselves, they needed help for food. Lack of resilience due to the limited knowledge of Australian disasters. And again, knowing who needed help, that came up a few times. People wanting to help, but not knowing where. And from a personal perspective, I live in the Grantham locality, but when it came to even this year, the flood this year, all the volunteers went through volunteering in Queensland. How ridiculous is that? When you're on the ground, coordination, you need to be able to help people, because there's people out there that want to help, but they can't connect to help. It's madness, absolute madness." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I look after a huge area, and I've been to molten fires. We identified some of those gaps where there was the communicational problems, how emergency services can't turn up, how ambulance can't get there for the simple reason is you're only a one person in a massive community." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"How do you get those resources to the community? They provide food, so they also had the issue of how we get food from our premises out to people or how do we get supplies in to be able to keep cooking food, so that was a big one there" (G1-Lockyer Valley)

26

"In an emergency situation, yes, we have the emergency people responding, you can call the community recovery team, but they don't know the local area, and also what's going to be a priority, even though that's life threatening for me, or for other people on life support machines with electricity being lost and things like that. Where's the priority going to lie in that emergency situation?." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"While there was response available, it took a while for emergency response to actually get to the people who needed it." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I was in the community hubs in Laidley and Gatton and we were there for about a month and some days nobody came. So there was a communication issue but it certainly wasn't seven days." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"There must've been a lot of misinformation going around because I sat and nobody came to Laidley. It was just so sad. All of the services all around and nothing." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"when I was at the hub, nobody knew, nobody that was there... I spoke to the community recovery team. Nobody knew about the meals for cars. So, cars was something that weren't covered in the flood grids. So, there was a real disconnect there around. So, we shared that information of course, and that was really good" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"I've been in foster care for many years, and my children have disabilities. I also connect with a lot of disabilities for children within the area. There's a lot of different groups around but they don't seem to talk to each other." (Reflection--Lockyer Valley)

Communication – **accessibility considerations** are required to ensure people understand the information to make informed decisions.

"..my brother doesn't have the same communication skills that we have, so there are people in the community that need people to be proactive, because they can't be reactive because he's not going to communicate that he has a need." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"One thing that was mentioned was about providing resources in various languages because we've got a big multicultural representation in this area." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"Be aware of the hearing impaired, the vision impaired, the literacy issues. It's okay to put flyers out but, hey, what about the vision impaired?" (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"..having it as broadly dispersed as possible. Not just assuming, "Look, we put out a text message, everyone's going to get that." They may not. Of course, in times of emergency, another big reflection that everyone I spoke with, it is very time sensitive and very time pressured. So, sometimes responses aren't perfect, but the more proactive planning that's put in place, the better the response will be and the more aware of at least the big range of different responses it should or can be offered is important." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"So, I was telling them in regard to first flood we had, and second flood in the beginning of the year, we have a lot of people they can't speak English well. They have no knowledge where they can get help. They have no number to call. So, very basic things I tell them about where they can get help" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

27

"Hearing, yeah deaf. I feel like, as a community, I think we need to keep in mind people that are vision impaired, how are they going to get to a community centre and stuff like that. I feel like people need to be more proactive in a way to, if they get an alert from council, SMS, or if they see a post on Facebook or whatever, "A disaster is coming," maybe just be proactive and be safe and go to a community centre to be safe to put you out of danger" (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"How council responds, and the emergency dashboard, flood monitoring cameras, so you can monitor how the rivers rise and that's really important within the community, and you can kind of contact different services. But, we also reflected on the importance of making that communication more universally accessible, because people communicate in different ways. If you drop off flyers, people who are blind or vision impaired won't be able to read that. If you do radio announcements, people who are deaf or out of hearing, they'll not be able to access that. So, of course one type of communication won't fit everybody's support" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"it comes back to what you said before, not everyone's got internet and not everyone's got telecommunications and stuff like that. But we've got to the stage where we'd set up a group on Messenger and we were just chatting on Messenger and that's where everyone knew what was happening. All right. And then there was, I even said to the people, you may not even need it, but there's always a soup kitchen and if you just go down there for a conversation, that's all you need." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

Strategies used to distribute communication has the **potential to unintentionally exclude** people if the communication strategies are not inclusive. This speaks to an untapped resource / relational gaps because people are missing from the table, aptly surmised in the following quote:

"Yesterday got me thinking about the amazing work that was done during the floods, and what worked, what didn't work. And how really, it's crucial that we hear the voice of people with disability, and how we can support them better".
(Reflections – Lockyer Valley)

Learning 4: There are resources and opportunities in abundance in this region.

We learned that there are **resources and opportunities** in this region. Categorically described, resources related to training and existing resources within the community. Similarly, opportunities that were emphasised included the value of lived experience and ability to learn from each other; economic opportunities; opportunities for individualised support and inter-agent community collaboration.

Resources– **training** for community and support services.

"a lot of services that are making sure that their staff and volunteers have basic first aid and health, that they're having the communication skill set. We have to have that open communication with their clients, and their participants that they're supporting, and that also that it was mentioned that there are a number of support workers that have been trained and are currently implementing

28

evacuation plans with the clients that they're supporting, and that there was a number of lived-experience people that have said that they've already implementing some of those leakages into existing services that are existing in the community, such as being able to be aware of the bomb, the local council page and support." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"Talking about basic first aid and mental health being a way that we can train for staff and volunteers who might be supporting people with mental health disability. Communication, I think that's a big thing about how do we make that communication really great during those times, and talking about training for a basic counselling skill set, I think, so we're working within that counselling framework. Implement evaluation planning and training, okay. Or implement evacuation planning and training, so something potentially that support workers or organisations, or community centres could be doing with people with disability. Okay. How are we going to check in appropriately? So is it face to face? Is it a home visit? Is it telephones or emails?" (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"One was around training on how to understand B.O.M and read weather patterns so that as part of being prepared. We did mention about patches in the Lockyer Valley that don't have access to internet, and also, when it really hits it, B.O.M usually drops out." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"think it's ARVT, which is training volunteers through one of our workers, [Person's name], who's through the Red Cross now. Through the Red Cross, delivering training to people who want to be volunteer in times of emergencies" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"..up to date first aid was a valid training to have to be able to help with an emergency in regard to that." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"..money being provided by the government to recruit service locations that have not been impacted. So not enough money, not enough training for the disaster recovery workers, for the people to support clients in that organisation, burnout of staff." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"From lived experience, just a touching base around making those support plans really personalised; enhanced holistic support, and training volunteers. So I was talking about [Person's name]'s programme and what she was doing around, there was a lot of people in the community put their elbows up, but there was also some training that could be done for volunteers so that they could, for example, be placed at the hub and then have some supports, some training around that." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"Or doing the PCEP training". (G2-Lockyer Valley)

Resources – there are **existing resources** in the community but some of these resources may be **episodic,** available only after the disaster event.

"we only received funding in July to assist people with the flood. So several months after, but the first and second flood event here, and the major flood event across Queensland, and I know there's a range of, again, they're purely legal so they're not going to be what everybody needs, but some people do need that assistance with insurance, with tendency, with discrimination, with emergency plans and stuff, and having spoken with a number of those services in the last few weeks, they're all over-resourced and there's not enough clients, but coming here today it's clear that they're still... and of course, speaking with our

29

lawyers and stuff, we know that there's a need, but we just aren't able for whatever reason to access it". (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"...because it all comes down to that dashboard as well. The city council has got a dashboard. If we can get everyone going to that dashboard to find out information, we've all got the same information". (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"Buddy system is you ring each other. When COVID hit, [organisation name] set up a buddy system where we would ring each other every day…..Some people just took that to the next level and they're ringing every hour. But, hey, that's what they needed." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"the awareness of availability services and resources such as the SES, fire brigade, rescue helicopters and community centres. And also finding the services that are able to get a person with a disability with certain needs and requirements in and out of a disaster area that will cater for either a wheelchair or a motorised scooter and allowing that extra time for that to happen to load it in and whatever." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

Opportunities – learnings from **lived experience of disaster** and sharing stories are seen to be valuable.

"Them having their own experience and how it would affect themselves. And that actually made them open their eyes to how would it affect me in a sense they're on a property, they've got animals and seeing what was happening to other people, and then thinking about themselves and their loved ones, and now starting to put their practises in place for themselves. And that is all of them." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"So being isolated at homes, that was the Bush Fires, so they participated in saving neighbours properties. That was something that worked for them". (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"And so being able to assist people in the recovery process opened their eyes to, "Oh, I think I'll do some further learning on how to better do this." And she also mentioned that a lot of people in the frontline support are people that were isolated and lost jobs, income, et cetera, and that psychosocial support was something that she particularly was interested in following up with." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"Knowledge and experience from previous disasters, so having that background. The ability to research and community connection, which is very important" (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"First person I spoke to lives in a flood prone area, so in that sense he knew it was flood prone, so he was able to prepare, made sure he had generators on standby, stocks of food and fuel and stuff like that, so that worked well". (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I personally realised because I'm on anti-rejection medication, and it wasn't until I was cut off and I realised that the chemist was at risk too, that I could be in trouble. So, it made me realise I really need to, rather than just having my... I usually go like bimonthly at a time, but probably need a bit more to make sure I've got that month all the time, and not leaving it until the last minute." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

30

"a lot of people had their own personal effects, whether it's in the 2011 flood or 2013. I know we all have been affected in some way, shape or form, but 2011 was a wakeup call to save them, their family. It's only just, recently, I think, businesses have had to look at outside the circle because, A, we've got staff, we've got clients, we've got this, and we've got that. We've had to look in a bigger circle. What I'm thinking, that maybe could work for council, is areas of attachments. Laidley itself, do Laidley Centre and then all the spots outside. Where is your nearest food support in the community in connection? That goes to that particular thing and then have a list of what to do, what to listen to, because not everyone's on Facebook. Not everyone has mobile connection when you get the alerts. Use radio, TV, those type of things"- (G2-Lockyer Valley)

We also learned that references to lived experience was not just about lived experience of disaster but **lived experience in this community**.

"Because most people multicultural living in Gatton, they work in seasonal workers…So, they really affect with these things because they lost their job, they lost their connect, they lost their car, they lost their money, they lost their financial, disappointing, no work, stay in home. Even some people, they need interpreting for English to get access to health, or they get some money from government if they need help, or if they eligible for these things, and hope they get some voucher for shop from our community centre." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"I actually know of a couple, a family, that we supported those lives just near the Clifton, Warwick turnoff. There near Grantham and they bought this beautiful house there and friends told them, "Easy." And they go, "Ah, it's a high set house." They came up from New South Wales, that's high set, it's okay. They got flooded. They got stuck. They got out." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"But there's also, not like people that aren't local to the area. The backpackers or the international students that, for whatever reason, choose not to live on campus. They live in town or out in the farming areas. They're not aware of it. They just don't understand that the way the water floods and the way the water travels here and there's the itinerant or farm workers as well, they don't speak English. I had so many of them that they just did not speak English." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"How do we reach the ones, the vulnerable sort of at-risk people who don't have those connections, but then how do we even just reach out to that product level of the community centres? And there's so many community centres across." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

Opportunities – **workforce participation.** Whilst this was only a small area of discussion, this opportunity was worth noting because obtaining employment due to disaster was not mentioned in other DIEP forums in Qld.

"led to an interest in volunteering, which then led to gaining skills, and then ultimately gaining employment from that." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"A couple of examples of a positive was it led to people wanting to volunteer in the community. Through that volunteering, they gained skills and experience, which often led to them getting paid employment, so that was a really positive outcome and that come up twice in our group". (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

Opportunities – **interagency collaboration** was enabled because of

31

disaster events; it brings people and partners together.

"from an organisational perspective, what worked was assisting to get the equipment to support people and helping people get connected to food services, fields, doing their ongoing check-ins" (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"..what she did notice was that different government organisations that normally wouldn't come together on certain situations, when these disasters happen, that all falls away and everybody gets in and helps each other." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"..they said an enhancement of the holistic services of support has brought the services closer together. So working together as a whole has brought those services together to work with the community, with those clients. That's worked well." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"I think a lot of that's around the communication again, because I think four legal aid, that four legal community legal stepped up and were supporting the people for free around insurance issues, because there were a lot. But, there were massive gaps, especially around driveways." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"Again, that communication between organisations, because when someone calls up, if you can help them with one area, that's really great, but if you can point them in the direction of multiple other areas, if unfortunately, it's going to be a number of organisations, at least one person is trying to provide as many referrals as possible. Not one, and then one, and then one, at least they sort of have a bit of a game plan as to this one, this one, this one next, not this one, and then this one, and it's this slower process, so the faster they can access the variety of services they need, the better." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"Lately, we saw that it was the locals, the sports clubs, the charities, the business owners that all pitched in to feed, clean, support the people that were affected. The bottom line is people need to be proactive instead of just waiting and saying, "Oh, council needs to do this," or, "I need to get help from the government for this and I need to do this." That's why we like the community centre. We've had some check in days and we're going to have more and that is to help people build their disaster recovery kits or their evacuation kits." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"At the moment, they're organising hampers that are going to be delivered to people who've been affected by the floods. We've got a lot of people also who've been affected by all of them, not just the floods. Okay, there was some talk around generators. So, having generators is part of their preparedness plan rather than leaving it to the last minute to get somebody who's on life support through generator." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"..so it's trying to find that way of actually building that relationship and trying to make sure that we're providing as much support as possible, and linking it up to the other services available, but yeah. That's tricky, but it's incredible to see the work that's already been done here within the local community. Just trying to sort of support that work that's already being done and build on that with the community. Again, not on top of the community, but alongside them because there's already so much work that's clearly being done." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"We want to be working together to say, "Oh, okay. These guys are already looking after that, but we might be able to just support with this," and know under their assessment what they can and can't do to support that client." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

32

Opportunities – **capacity building activities** that support individuals and groups. The activities can be **structured (such as community centres) or unstructured** – naturally occurring within community.

"When COVID struck, I always had more coffee at Plainland, none of the neighbours would be up till the mornings and I started meeting quite a few single men that lived on their own. I started inviting them down to have a cup of coffee. Seven or eight of us having a cup of coffee. They all lived, some down at Laidley, some down at Brightview. All lived on their own, got swapping phone numbers. We'd be phoning them, "Mate, if you ever get stuck and you can't call me. Call Bob. Call Harry. If you get stuck you'll need to."(G2-Lockyer Valley)

"So initiatives like the Pillowcase Project from the Red Cross that help educate younger members of the community and children how to build your own disaster kit." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"Actually, you can't complain with our landlord. She's been really great. She gave us some two months off." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"Everyone has a lot of knowledge, and they're eager to help and support. And we've had a lot of duplicates something. And so it was really good to hear what other ideas or what skills set someone else can bring into this support to make it a great support. And working great for our people and children with disability that live with this every day. It's great that we can have everyone be here to experience here as well, because I think that helps us add a different insight" (reflection-Lockyer Valley)

Opportunities for improvement- the **role of the community centre**.

"Also, at the actual community centres and places like that. It'd be great if there could be social workers, financial counsellors, interpreters and mental health workers available in the centres and the clinics themselves too to help people get through this difficult time and being placed out of the norm situation and circumstances and surroundings to help them to remain calm and get through what's happening". (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"I feel like community centres need to be more accessible for people with a disability and they need to be able to cater for not just normal people like myself for example. They need to be able to cater for people in wheelchairs, people who have health issues, people who have mental health issues. And it comes into, they need supplies with medication, what you were saying, and so social workers would be great.... That would be, an interpreter as well for people with this different culture and language." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"Community centres need to be able to cater for everyone with a disability, so having support workers at a community centre can really help with people that are mentally struggling throughout the disaster, and also having interpreters at a community centre can really help with that language barrier that people sometimes people face, especially in trying to help people that are from different backgrounds. Yeah, and I believe the community should be more aware and have a plan set in place to be able to prepare for disasters in the Lockyer Valley because y'all really do experience a lot of disasters, whether it be bush fire, flood, drought. I just believe that we should be well prepared for the worst-case scenario. Yeah." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"It's a lot of preparedness, like barbecues, getting together and people discussing and gathering information and planning and thinking about things beforehand.

33

People need help with the internet accessing websites and information. People need help in filling in forms, putting in applications for grants, interpreters for medical problems and neighbours are really very important, every single person talks about the importance of neighbours that can advocate, give practical help, transport and help them connect with families and friends and families and other great source of support." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"The Gatton community centre and our community centre, we're still supporting people and we're still identifying people who've fallen through the gaps, through our stuff that we've been doing afterwards. Following on, we're actually just doing check-ins again now, but people are still falling through the gaps". (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"Another lady and myself, we discussed in the recovery centres that, yes, it was great that people had somewhere to go but in their haste to get out of their home or where they were at risk of being flooded in, they may have left their medicines. So if there could be a pharmacist that would come that could contact their doctor and say, "All right, I can write a script. We can get to the chemist. What can we do for this person?" That would alleviate people's anxieties when they're sitting in the recovery centre thinking, "Oh, I need to have my blood pressure medication," or whatever. Also some childcare workers there so that they can be away from mum and dad who are dealing with the financial or trying to do the online application for financial support and everything. It also means that the children aren't listening repeatedly to that stressful situation. (G4-Lockyer Valley)

Learning 5: "Red tape" makes things worse.

We learned that **'red tape' compounds existing issues** with consequences for people's socio-economic status.

"The confusion between the local, state and federal government. They promise you everything, but there's nothing coming forward, and there's no communication on how to get the, not only that Salvation Army, the other health organisations, not health, other organisations, they get donations, and what happens to that money?... I think it's great they have planning and do and everything, but two months after, people are starting to think, "How do I get my house rebuilt?" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"Sometimes insurance companies promise to get out here, and as soon as they get out here, they find a clause in your contract to say that we can't support you. That's where I think it's great to do all this work before and during, but I think there's got to be a lot more work in the after, for the smaller people. What I mean by that, the disability people are out there that their home have been impacted and now it's impacting on their whole life. The age care system where it's impacted in there". (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"And when they're stressed and they get asked questions like, well there was one man, he said... I can't even remember what the question was, but I was helping him fill in the paperwork. And he said, "Why?" And he started to get really, really aggravated. He said, "Why do they need to know that. That is not relevant to this situation." And they're just so stressed, they just don't need another thing to push them over the edge… Actually, I did have one or two people say that it was just all too hard. "I'll just manage myself." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

34

"And there's so much red tape, so much paperwork just, "Oh it's easier if I just go out and I'll get for it myself…Then they get asked the same questions in the forms three or four times or even more. I've just told you this. I've got a very low patience level. I'll just... No too hard…And I don't know if it's because I'm me or I'm stupid or I'm just too lazy. I'll just do it myself. It's easier. Oh well, I just got washed, I should have had insurance." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

The **socio-economic impact** can be profound leading people into precarious situations.

"anyone who lives locally knows we've got a terrible, terrible problem with transport in the area. So many people are isolated and just can't access support that they need because there's just no public transport. We're in a low socioeconomic area, particularly in Langley. We are in the bottom or top five, whichever way you look at it, so cheap cars always breaking down. No insurance, it's really tricky. Facebook, okay. We're talking about spreading awareness around insurance scams during those floods, and people knocking on your door, "Knock, knock, knock, you got to evacuate." "Who the heck are you? Where are you from?" So talk about scams in that, and how can we work through that?" (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"The next one I spoke to was about farm workers particularly, because when the floods came, farm workers all lost their jobs. They lost money, they couldn't pay rent, they couldn't pay food, and they lost all hope for the future. The organisation is a person who is a multicultural person, easy to see who that is because there's only one of them here, and his role, he did see big influx of people coming for the farm workers and apart from the interpreting, because some of the documentation that's provided, not just for multicultural people, but also for people with disabilities, is incomprehensible." (G1-Lockyer Valley)

"The trouble is, we've found from running the transitional hubs, looking after those, there are a lot of people, still, that do not have internet connection. They do not have mobile phones……. it's maybe because they can't afford it, or they don't have the skills, the literacy." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"I feel from beginning of this year, we have a lot of homeless". (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Learning 6: What current preparedness looks like.

People undertake **preparedness and planning activities,** these activities range from general awareness and preparation tips, identification of support needs in everyday life, awareness of local risk and communicating the plan.

General awareness and preparation tips

"The first thing to do in a case of disaster is grab a business card. It doesn't have to be a big card and just write down three phone numbers. Your mother, your father, and your best friend and put that in your wallet because if your phone goes out, at least you've got those three numbers". (G2-Lockyer Valley)

" a lot of people said the same things. They've got your general first aid kits, we'll stock the pantry with non-perishable foods and that kind of thing. But when it really comes down to the crux of it, I think the questions, the prompts, if you

35

haven't got a plan, what could you do? Who could help you get started? A lot of people reflected on things like, well, I could get my family involved, I've got friends in the community who I could touch base with. If I can't get to my kids, if they're at school, who else can I contact to pick the kids up, if it starts flash flooding, for example? Even simple things like checking the weather reports, staying updated, seeing what could happen, knowing maybe I need to keep the kids home from school for the week. Who knows?" (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"I think as well, reflection about the importance of saving emergency numbers, but making sure that they're not just triple zero SES, which are absolutely important, but actually making sure that on your fridge or somewhere nearby, you've got not just a fridge magnet, but a handwritten or typed up list of your personal emergency numbers. Like an actual tailored list that's not just this list of just important numbers. Absolutely, some of them everybody needs, and some of those numbers will be on everybody's list or should be, but there's more important numbers for some people perhaps, or as important" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Identification of support needs, support needs are individualised.

"I also had the pleasure of speaking with someone who has lived experience with a disability, and he expressed that, being aware of the weather, he'd really become very conscious of the weather. So, he would follow it online, he connects with the nature, he could see that the animals started to move and get restless. He said that he has first aid, and course, and being able to have that first aid course and being able to access the online weather and the supports was a part of his tools for him to be prepared for the weather changes in the environment." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"How to be prepared? I have acreage property, and the house isn't quite built yet, but potentially, I think, if a fire could come through, and if no one's actually contacted me and said, "This is what you need to do in regards to, not only is your house at threat, but your property could put all these other houses at risk." I've engaged with the fire brigade or the ones that the volunteer fire brigade that will hopefully do a back-burn. But, am I allowed to do that back-burn? How do I engage that back-burn? When is the best time to do that back-burn? I'm concerned, and I don't want to upset residents to do it, but if I don't do it, there's wildlife in there as well that I've got to protect her. So, then you're concerned. Like, "If I do the back-burn, am I going to get recalls, and everyone's going to be upset by it, but yet it could be saving lives. So, that's the part where there's that information, in a risk, is not being provided to us in the community about,

"We've got a grandson who's got severe cerebral palsy and he gets fed through a gastric tube. His feed is, even in good times, is very scarce and yeah, it's not very accessible. So you can imagine what it's going to be like in times of flood when a chemist that's due to get their shipment of whatever can't get through. It's just a case of making sure you got a, in cases like Oscar, we use Sustagen or goats milk as alternative. And if you can, you've got to make sure the guys get, the people in need, get a substitute so that they're not without their medications or, in this case, food and...Personal needs." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

"I've sort of made my plan at home around me being able bodied, but I do have a disc problem which can put me on my back for weeks at a time. And I have fibromyalgia so I need to factor those things into my plans because wake up in the morning, I could not be able to move. Well if I don't factor that in, I'm going to be stuck at home with nobody to help me because I live by myself."(G4-Lockyer Valley)

36

"You've talked about numbers. It's got all the numbers as in police station, fire stations and all that. What you got to take if you got to evacuate, especially with communities, medications, what light support or any kind of machinery they need to have. How are they going to run this machinery and all that. Transport. If you haven't got the transport, where are you going to get the transport from" (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Awareness of local risk

" ..lives on a hill and didn't think they needed to plan, but then when they started thinking about it, realised that they were isolated, they would be isolated, so there is a need." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"So knowing the risk, and what people to come in your area and tailoring your plan or your client's plan to those needs, and also, what food support services will or won't be available when the food is in that particular area as well. We also talked about... Thank you. Conversation starters, so what can help a community have a conversation about wanting to even get a plan together?" (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"So if you're new to it or you've never been through a disaster before, going to those authority sources as well as talking to people who live in the area to understand what your risk is as well." (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"As a general thing, if you're on lifesaving equipment, you need access to electricity. You need a generator. Our local pharmacy in Langley goes down is at risk, so that's a consideration, so I had some personal experience around that where I went, "Whoa, hang on a minute. Let's not leave our"... So it might be around encouraging people to have their medications maybe a month or at least a few weeks in advance and not leaving it, like we all do, until the last minute before we refill our scripts because, again, our local pharmacy is at risk, and if you're calling emergency services, and they're evacuating people or although it might be life threatening for somebody not to have that medication when it's really happening, where's the priorities going to lie?" (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"It's another lady that lives very remotely. They've got walkie talkies so that they can communicate with their neighbours and the farms because if the tower goes out, they lose power. The phone lines also get washed out in the flooding. So communities could think about those sort of proactive things for themselves." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

Communicating plans

"..it was genuine communication between families, a person, people communicating with the person and getting people in between, support workers or people in the plan, communicating that plan so that everybody's got it right." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"Having open communication, giving them information, letting them know what is happening". (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"I think the importance of planning before things hit. The importance of convening with people and collaborating and seeing what services are there, and what services are needed." (Reflection-Lockyer Valley)

Business plans

"The third was fully planned, but it was a business plan, and there were some key outcomes from that. For their business plan they relied on, I think, there's some really good checklists and things under emergency services, and they used those to set their business plans. The business plan wasn't just for their business, it was for their community, it was for their housing and the people in their housing and what they needed to put together. And they did that just on one piece of paper so that all of the managers had that checklist so that they had that with them. They've got that and they know the key numbers to phone and the phone tree, and that they can-... disseminate that information. I think that was extremely useful because it wasn't just relying on one person"
(G2-Lockyer Valley)

"One person said that they have an emergency plan in place for their work, one of their workplaces. But not the other workplace. But yeah, I think for personal work plans, a lot of people said family and those people in their, I guess, informal support community. And I think really the thing that really compels people into making the plans is just thinking about, well, this happened so recently, they're predicting it could happen again quite soon, I should really get onto it kind of thing. I think you said, people who live on a hill for example, they think it won't happen to them, but you just never know at the end of the day". (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"A lot of information about organisational plans in place, but not personal plans."
(G2-Lockyer Valley)

Organisations also take preparedness and planning activities to ensure **continuity of care,** examples of good practice is highlighted in the quotes below.

The **role of support workers** in ensuring continuity of care and support is also important.

"if you touch base on the subject, then client's going, "Too hard for me to figure out. I'm going to leave this up to you guys." For some clients with complex needs. They were talking about, with fire, they do education at home, and that this is a community member who had smoke detectors that were linked directly to her phone, they do get cut off during floods. This is another thing, place support workers that are local enough that they can access, provide support to the client. So, someone who had previously had support workers who got cut off in disasters, and then realise that that was an issue." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"it's like that practical wraparound support to ensure that, I don't want to say compliance, but just the people are actually making sure that they're well and staying well, and able to continue their sort of routine, I guess. Because one thing to have services in place, making sure that people might need that support to actually use the services or access the medications is sort of a separate thing that maybe we take for granted, and it can fall away at those emergency times." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"Thank you for carrying on from check-ins. Some of the clients you can't ring. You have to go personally to check. They are unable to support themselves, so you have to do it. That's why you have to be linked to those who are already in your group. If I get a phone call, "and Brett can you go see?" Yes, I'll go do it,

38

and you're going to say, "Well, it ain't watching my favourite movie." You just sort of do it. That's first and foremost". (Plenary-Lockyer Valley)

"The men he supports were getting quite distressed with the weather and then it started raining due to the rain had caused floods and then come again and the floods. So, then they'll get them quite distressed around that time. So, being able to have that open communication and distracting them, he was able to support them in those needs at that time and redirecting them so they'd be less stressed at that time. A part of that was distracting them with some of their interests that they already had. Prior to that, when going out and supporting, practise the emergency component, like, "In an emergency, where would you go? How do we get out? If there's a fire in this room, which room would you use? Where is the emergency exit? What do you do when you get to that emergency spot? "So, he would implement that practise to be embedded in his time when he worked with the clients. So, they're able to act out and ask questions and he encouraged them to answer the questions in regard to, and that how long they would stay there for, and when can they move in that emergency." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Interestingly, this quote also suggests that support workers prioritise day to day care needs over emergencies, again highlighting duty of care and dignity of risk issues.

"support workers talking about sometimes when they're attending clients' homes, there can be a focus on their health and sometimes it can be difficult to find time to fit in the preparedness around emergencies, because the client might not want to talk about being prepared for emergency, because they've had a tough week, and they're having health issues, so that might be their priority rather than something that may or may not happen in the future." (G3-Lockyer Valley)

Learning 7: The accessibility and appropriateness of evacuation centres.

Finally, some general comments about **evacuation centres** highlighted below.

"It's a good thing looking at evacuation centres because it was looking at having sensory tents for young children that either have disabilities or are overwhelmed, and in that sensory tent, you have the basic things, basic tools." (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"You might have headsets, you might have your play dough, you've got those types of things so that when... And they're just small pop-up tents and you could have four or five pop-up tents like that in an evacuation centre, that when children are feeling isolated, they've got the use of those sensory tents to get out of this big room and to do that, and I found that was" (G2-Lockyer Valley)

"We also reflected upon different evacuation centres and the need maybe to consider placement or areas for animals, because obviously pets are really important and there should be areas for pets, but also people with disability need assistance animals, or they have that support that they actually really actively need. So, it'll benefit the community more widely, but it'll also have a really important just direct impact on people with disability if they really need that, in therapy dog, assistance dog, guide dog. So, making sure that emergency

39

evacuation plans have those services, they have ramps, they have people if they needed someone to communicate or who are hearing impaired, various communication needs. Just the more... Obviously, you can't tailor to everybody in these sorts of general services, but the more sort of options you can think of before people arrive, the better. So, just trying to be as prepared as possible". (G3-Lockyer Valley)

"They think the disaster itself is bad, but also being in a crowd within the disaster is even worse. So you have to somehow manage that. People with agoraphobia or shut-ins as often people refer to them." (G4-Lockyer Valley)

KEY MESSAGES

This facilitated DIEP forum brought multiple stakeholders together to learn about:

- *ways we can work together to ensure people with disability are aware, safe, and prepared for emergencies triggered by natural hazards and other emergencies (e.g., house fire, pandemic).*
- *actions we can take to make sure people and their support needs are at the centre of emergency management planning.*
- *barriers and enablers to the inclusion of people with disability before, during, and after disasters.*

1. *The impact of disaster affects everyone in this community, animals are front of mind and important to many.*
2. *Supportive relationships exist in the community, in both informal and formal capacities. These are other types of supports that people with disability could rely on, collaboration enables these supports. Existing resources in the community also enhances these supports*
3. *Meaningful communication and information provision enables people with disability to be aware, safe and prepared before, during and after emergencies. There are existing resources, tools and training in the community.*
4. *In Lockyer Valley, individual and organisations demonstrate capabilities and actions in disaster preparedness activities. Leveraging existing knowledge, skills and actions will benefit the community.*

40

5. *The impact of disaster affects everyone in this community and 'red tape' causes additional barriers with consequences for people's mental health and wellbeing.*
6. *Evacuation centres function to provide refuge to everyone but its accessibility and appropriateness for people with disabilities requires further consideration.*

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