

# New national website

Down Syndrome Australia has been developing a new comprehensive and interactive national website which provides resources and information about Down syndrome and a fresh new look for the federation of Down syndrome associations.

This two-year project connects people with Down syndrome, families, friends and carers, professionals and communities with the information and linkages needed to make decisions and choices.

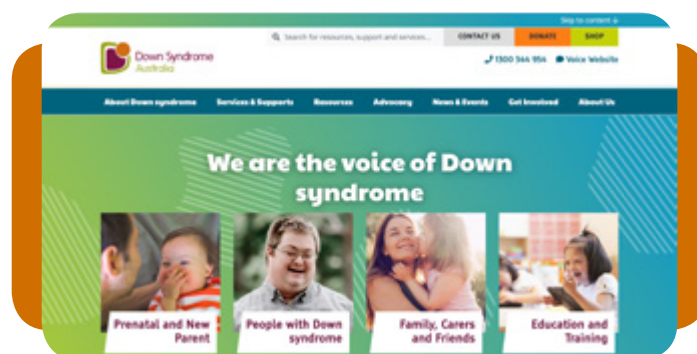
It arose out of the need to create a central space for state and territory Down syndrome associations to bring information and resources into a single national place. The portal also provides links to other organisations, services and peer-support groups.

The key feature of the portal is a national client database, which means our federation can manage information in one place and be collaborative and efficient when delivering services and information. It will also provide a single point to find and access Australia's national Down syndrome initiatives like StepUP! For Down syndrome and the World Down Syndrome Congress 2022.

The portal is designed to be accessible and usable for everyone. It offers an Easy Read function which allows the web pages to be viewed in Easy Read format and ensures that key messages are accessible and readable for a range of audiences including people with Down syndrome. This has been vital in ensuring that the site can be used by anyone to find information and offers content that is of value to all.

We have asked people with Down syndrome to be involved in the design process to make sure that the content is relevant to people who will be using it. Our Down Syndrome Advisory Network (DSAN) along with other advisory networks and representatives with Down syndrome from across the country have helped us in reviewing content to make sure it is acceptable and meets the needs and interests of people with Down syndrome.

Making the portal come to life through stories and images has been an important part of the journey.



Many people have shared their stories with us over the years through events like World Down Syndrome Day. We have brought these stories together in the website to make sure that they can be found and viewed by everyone, and to focus on the experiences of people with Down syndrome and families told from their perspective.

Our Federation's advocacy work and the work of our advisory network DSAN are all highlighted in the new portal. Submissions and position statements about key issues facing us today have been brought together in the portal to show the work that is taking place around employment, immigration, prenatal testing and inclusion in education.

Down Syndrome Australia partnered with Firefly to design and deliver the national information portal with the support of an ILC grant funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The new information portal will be found at the same web address as the current Down Syndrome Australia website (<https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/>) and will be launched in May 2020.

*Zoe Du Cann is the Project Manager: Website Implementation for Down Syndrome Australia.*

