

## Disability Done Different: Episode 21

Kirsten Deane on...fighting the good fight

### Podcast transcript

Audio Length: 00:35:05

Hosts: Roland & Evie Naufal

Guest: Kirsten Deane

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#### Intro

**Maia:** DSC are a team of 33 people all working together to bring specialised training and consulting expertise to providers in the disability sector.

**Maia:** A quick note that this week we're taking it back to an earlier more innocent time before COVID 19 when we recorded this beautiful episode with Kirsten Deane. It's one of our favourites. Enjoy.

#### Start of Interview

**Roland:** Welcome, Kirsten Deane to Disability Done Different, Candid Conversations. Welcome, Evie, and welcome, Maia.

**Evie:** Hey.

**Maia:** Hello.

**Roland:** Evie and I were talking this morning and we are genuinely excited to have you in the studio, Kirsten. There's so much about you that we're interested in but we also genuinely like you. We had dinner with you not that long ago and you came home singing Kirsten's praises.

**Evie:** Yes. [Laughter].

**Roland:** We're fans basically, so it's great to have you in the studio. A little bit about Kirsten's background and you'll fill in more as we go. Prior to the disability sector

but even in the work you did before in academia and in journalism, you were interested in disability, but then came and was instrumental in the shut-out report. A driver of the Every Australian Counts Campaign and right through to it becoming successful. We'll certainly be talking about that. You went and worked in the NDIA. Then returned to Every Australian Counts. I'm often involved because I've got three adult daughters in talking about careers and career choices. Do you put very bloody difficult in the search engine when you're looking for your next career move? [Laughter]. It seems that you take on some really difficult tasks. You've even gone back and said, "That was really freaking hard. I think I'll do it again."

**Kirsten:** It's funny. I don't perceive them as difficult. Possibly, the things that you might be thinking are difficult are probably not the things that I find. I think the job that I've got now, running Every Australian Counts is an incredible privilege. I get to talk to people with disability and their families every day. Then I have a chance to gather up, what I'm trying to do is gather up all of their experiences and play that back to the NDIA, and play that government and say, this is what's not working, this is what needs to change, and this is what people with disability want. That's the incredible privilege. Every single day I get to see the amazing things that the NDIS does and I get to see the absolute crap where it lands people. I get to see everything in between. I think I've got a privileged job.

The part that I find tough about it I suspect is not the thing that you might think is tough about it, is that because I'm a parent, I have a daughter with disability, I have lots of friends who have disability, I have lots of friends who have kids with disability. These are my peeps. This is my community. These are my people. When I have to sit beside someone and hear again how they're not getting what they need from the NDIS and the crap they've been put through and how stressed and how overwhelmed they are and to have to sit next to someone and give them tissues while they cry and things like that. That's actually the hardest part of my job, because these are my people and my heart breaks for them. The toughest part of my job is that I'm part of this community, I identify with everyone. When I hear these heartbreaking stories, my heart breaks. I got home and cry. That's the part of the job that I actually find...

**Roland:** Tough.

**Evie:** The toughest.

**Roland:** I'm guessing at what you think I might find tough, because you said it a couple of times. I followed Kirsten after she left the National Disability and Carers' Alliance to be executive officer post-Kirsten. There are a couple of things about that. One is, I always felt like the great pretender and I'd always introduce myself as the new Kirsten. Everything had been achieved by the time I'd turned up at National Disability and Carer Alliance. The NDIS was very much happening due to a lot of the work that Kirsten and other colleagues had done. It was just a weird situation of being something so successful, as it was being successful but not being responsible for it. I had to a number of times say, I'm the new Kirsten and Kirsten

did this before me. What I found difficult in that role was the politics. The herding cats. One of the questions I wanted to ask which is deeply sincere is, how have you managed to get so much done without pissing people off? I've never heard a bad word about you, and I've been around a lot of circles where you're circling.

**Evie:** [Laughter].

**Kirsten:** I think I have managed to piss some people off along the way. I think if you talk to some people in government, you won't get quite a good a review. I don't know why. You'd have to ask other people.

**Evie:** I can answer.

**Roland:** You have a theory, Evie?

**Evie:** Yes, I have a theory. Roland mentioned before that we had dinner a few months ago, just before you came, I was saying to dad, Kirsten has this amazing ability to really challenge you and tell you you're wrong about something. In a way that doesn't feel threatening. I was just reflecting on this conversation that you and I had, where I was saying how much I love this YouTuber who interviews different people with Disability. You were just gently questioning me: Why do you find that interesting? What is it about watching these people that's novel or interesting to you? I had to go away and be like... it was a really challenging question in front of quite a few people I really respect too. I didn't feel threatened at all, which was...

**Roland:** And you're still thinking about it.

**Evie:** Exactly. I've got the voice in my head sometimes, actually, even when I'm just walking down the street and see something interesting, who may or may not have a disability. I'm got the Kirsten voice in my head that says, "Now, why do you find that person interesting?" [Laughter].

**Kirsten:** I'm trying to live my values. I have a set of values and I'm trying to live them. I want to be the person who walks the walk and just doesn't talk the talk. I guess I'm also trying to be genuine. I'm a journalist. I love asking questions, I'm genuinely curious about the world.

**Evie:** That's a great quality.

**Kirsten:** I genuinely wanted to know what is it that you find interesting about it? I think one of the ways you build relationships and consensus is by trying to understand where people are coming from. Then trying to move forward with that. Sometimes the moving forward is you agree. Sometimes the moving forward is, yes, I see your point, but I don't agree. Sometimes there's a compromise. One of the things that really distresses me about where we are now, both in civil society and in politics is that we are doing two things, we are either in our own bubbles only talking to people who agree with us and who think similarly. It happens. It's human nature. You tend to be friends with people who have similar interests and a

common set of values and things. There is a bit of a bubble thing happen. What happens is that trying to speak civilly and have a genuine public discourse about issues that are tough has become insight, because everyone just ends up yelling at each other. Yelling that the other side don't understand, which is what I will prefer to do is if we sit down, try and understand different perspectives, we might not get there, we still might not agree. I don't want to stand there and yell at you if I haven't really thought about it from your side of the table.

**Evie:** I also read online, Kirsten, that you started a PhD after your daughter was born. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

**Kirsten:** It was actually before she was born. I started, for all of my sins, I started my life as a journalist. I got a bit frustrated with that and I moved into academia. All of my academic work, my research interest was always in disability. I had a really strong interest in disability for a really long time. I went over to the University of California at Berkley to start a PhD. The PhD was looking at social and cultural attitudes towards intellectual disability. Then while we were there, Sofie, who's our eldest daughter who has down syndrome, was born. I've always had a really strong professional interest in disability. Then we had Sofie and the professional became very personal.

**Evie:** Did you ever finish the PhD?

**Kirsten:** No. It's a bit of a sore point. I didn't ever finish it.

**Evie:** I suspected you might not have. Actually, I was saying to Roland before we started, this is one of my favourite things about you because maybe this is really more about me than you, but I think it's really cool that you didn't finish your PhD about societal attitudes toward disability, but you did write the Shut Out Report, which is arguably one of the most influential pieces of writing that's ever been done in Australia's disability sector on that topic. We could argue about the importance of academia versus the importance of papers like that. Wow. What an outcome.

**Roland:** Can we just reflect on that for a moment. We interviewed Jordan O'Reilly a little while ago, I don't know if you got to hear or not, Kirsten. He's fantastic, but he's the darling of the industry, everybody is talking about Jordan or talking to Jordan. He quotes the Shut-Out Report.

**Evie:** From memory.

**Roland:** From memory, yes. He gives us a quote. We've talked to Rhonda Galbally. We've talked to a bunch of people and Shut Out just keeps coming back. Why do you reckon that is?

**Kirsten:** I think for a couple of reasons. What people don't remember is that Shut Out was written because there was a promise to a national disability strategy. Before the

government went out and did the national disability strategy, they promised that they would go out and talk to Australians with a disability, their families, people who worked in the sector about what the issues were. The information that fed into Shut Out was born of those consultations. Those consultations were carried out by the national people disability and carer's council that I was on at the time. To be honest, nothing that came up in the consultations for the national disability strategy was new. We heard lots of stories that people had told many times before. What hadn't been done before is perhaps telling those stories to the rest of the Australian public in a way that they could grasp and was relatable. I think what I was trying to do with Shut Out was that I had been to many of these consultations, I had read the submissions, I had read and heard what people had to say. What I was trying to do was bring a story together for the rest of the Australian public about what everyday life was like for people with disability. What were the kinds of problems that people faced every day? What needed to be done about them? The real issue was people I didn't think that unless a person with a disability or a family member, you didn't understand what the issues were.

You won't be concerned about them if you don't know what they were. You can't get involved if you don't understand that there's a problem. What I was trying to do with Shut Out was reach out beyond people with disability and their families and tell their stories to the broader public in a way that would make a difference and that was true. I read all of those submissions and they were heartbreaking. I felt this incredible responsibility to try and bring that together in a way that would touch people in the way that it kind of touched me. What I wasn't trying to do was not write another dry government report that would sit on a shelf somewhere. What I was trying to do was tell a story that other people would read and get a hold of and say, we've got to do something about this.

**Roland:** It was the seminal piece; it was a turning point piece for a lot of work that followed, a lot of work that you were involved that followed.

**Evie:** I'm really curious to hear your perspective on the state of politics today is all about shouting and really having a lack of consensus anywhere and the NDIS at least at its beginning was kind of an exception to that. It's a very rare piece of policy that's had bipartisan support. We can list dozens of other policies and equally worthy causes that should have had that type of support and didn't. What do you think it is about the NDIS that have managed to get that type of bipartisan support at the beginning and now, as well, in principle if not in detail?

**Kirsten:** It's interesting. I've been asking lots of times, what do you think the secret of Every Australia Counts was and to me, I think it's a funny question because I don't really think it's a secret. It was an old-fashioned grassroots community campaign. It had all the hallmarks of all of the usual things that people do for grassroots community change. I think the reason it was successful is because the people who worked on the campaign created a vehicle, they created a platform, they created some opportunities. It was people with disabilities and their families who did all of the

hard work. They took it and ran with it. Why does the scheme have really bipartisan support and why does it still have really strong support? Because people with a disability and their families went out and changed people's minds. They told their stories. They told their story about what their life was like now and what it could be like under NDIS and that's what changed politicians' minds. When we started Every Australian Counts, we had so many challenges in getting this big complicated idea up. Disability issues were very low on the political totem pole. There was very little political will to do anything about it, but it wasn't a great understanding in the Australian community about what the issues were that faced people with disability in their family.

There was even less willingness to do anything about it. It was a very hostile political environment. We're talking about the Rudd Gillard, Rudd Abbot years. It was a very hostile nasty period of time in our political life. Didn't have any money to run a really big, fancy lobbying campaign. Right around the time that Every Australian Counts was running was when there was a proposal for a mining tax. The miners threw everything at that to get that down. It sunk without a trace because they had the money to do it. We didn't have the money to do those kinds of things. What we had was people with disability and their families. It was those people going to go see their local MPs. It was talking to people in their community. It was talking to people in their families. It was holding events. They did all the hard work. Every Australian Counts belongs to them and the success of it belongs to them. It was them that built the bipartisan support for the scheme.

**Roland:** You did it again. You just deflected.

**Kirsten:** I gave away all the credit.

**Roland:** Yes, exactly. [Laughter]. It's a real skill. Was there a moment in those three years, three to four years of really hard work where you thought, "Shit, this is not going to happen?"

**Kirsten:** I used to lie awake in bed and worry that it wouldn't because the story of the NDIS is that there was a proposal for something like the NDIS sitting in the senate in the Whitlam years. It got through the lower house, it was sitting in the senate and then Whitlam was dismissed, and it never saw the light of day again. That was 30/35 years before. The moral of the story is, if you miss your shot, it doesn't come around again.

**Roland:** There were so many moments where the wheels could have fallen off. Was there any one particular one?

**Kirsten:** No, it was a constant worry that it could, because when you're trying to get something as big as the NDIS, you have to get political support, you have to get community support, and the bit that everyone forgets, you also have to get bureaucratic support. If the boffins are in, if the public servants are in, in treasury or in what was then Faxia were arguing against this, it made your life even harder.

You had firefights going on, on multiple fronts. Yes, at any one given time, you knew you were against it. I felt that weight really heavily. I felt it for all the people I had spoken to and that I knew who were depending on it. I also had a personal, a really personal interest in this. In that, my daughter was one of the – and we were one of those families that never got any support. Her future was riding on it and the future of my other children were riding on it. Without an NDIS, the story is that once parents are no longer around to provide support and care for a person with a disability, often other family members including siblings then have to take on that role. It's not just Sofie's life that was riding on the NDIS, but it was also my other two kids. Never get in the way of a mother trying to fight for something for her kid. Yes, there wasn't one moment where I thought, shit, this is all going south. It was constant. Yes.

**Roland:** One of the most beautiful moments of all of Every Australian Counts is Sofie's also a photographer and Sofie has taken a photo of Julia Gillard.

**Evie:** Julia Gillard.

**Roland:** And...?

**Kirsten:** It's funny, how that came about was, we had been invited to see Victoria sign onto the NDIS at an event. Prior to that, a few weeks before that, Sofie and I had been invited to meet with Julia Gillard and Jenny Macklin to talk about their support for the NDIS in a small group of people with disability and their families. It wasn't a big group. It was just a small group. Sofie had taken a very great liking to Julia Gillard that day. So much so that to my horror, we were sitting down to have a cup of coffee and Sofie plopped herself down in Julia Gillard's lap.

**Evie:** [Laughter].

**Kirsten:** To have her coffee.

**Roland:** That's the prime minister.

**Kirsten:** That's the prime minister. Then next to her was Wayne Swan and Sofie's friend Julian plopped himself down on Wayne Swan's lap.

**Roland:** The treasurer.

**Kirsten:** Sofie had taken a shining. A few weeks later, we were invited to see Victoria sign onto the NDIS. The event had gone on way too long. There had been lots of speeches and lots of formalities and things like that. Sofie had got very bored and very restless and I felt was in danger of interrupting proceedings. We had given her our camera to take photos because she liked the camera and she liked taking photos and it was something she really enjoyed. Also, we knew she would focus on that and not get distracted by other things. She had been doing that. Then when the formalities were over, she was still taking photos. The prime minister



was leaving, Julia Gillard was leaving. Sofie asked to take her photo. Julia leant down and let Sofie take her photo. It happened by...

**Roland:** It's a wonderful photo and we'll include a link to it in the show notes. People will want to see that photo.

**Kirsten:** It happened by accident. Funnily enough, on that day, Sofie took a beautiful photo of Rhonda Galbally. A really lovely photo that I really love and really treasure. No one's ever commented on that. Everybody focused on the Julia photo.

**Evie:** It's the photo that Julia Gillard then used in her social media accounts.

**Kirsten:** Yes.

**Evie:** She really liked the photo.

**Kirsten:** She still does. Yes.

**Roland:** Evie's keen we don't spend too much time talking about the NDIS and that we get a bit personal. I have to ask you why did you go back to Every Australian Counts, back to somewhere you'd been before after you'd been at the National Disability Insurance Agency? That was an unusual career move.

**Kirsten:** Yes. A little bit of the backstory is that I left Every Australian Counts in a big hurry. In really difficult circumstances. I was busy working with the national disability and carer's alliance. Working on Every Australian Counts. Then my husband had a stroke.

**Roland:** Wow. I didn't know.

**Kirsten:** I didn't leave to move onto to something else. I left because my husband had a stroke and I needed to not work so I could keep the family together. That took quite some time. Then once I felt I had enough space in my life to go back to work, the National Disability Insurance Agency offered me a job. I thought long and hard about taking it. I'd never been a public servant before. I suspected that I wouldn't be a very good public servant. I felt a real sense of responsibility having fought for the NDIS, I wanted to help build it and shape it. There are two ways to do that, you can do it on the outside, or you can do it on the inside. I thought, well, I've had a go at doing it on the outside, I'll have a go at doing it on the inside. I took the job at the agency, not for a career move, but because I had this really, you might say, eldest girl sense of responsibility that I had fought for this thing and then I wanted to actually help shape it and help it come to fruition the way I had always imagined it and the way I thought that people with disability in their families had always imagined it.

That's why I took the job at the agency to try and do change from the inside. As I suspected, I don't think I was a very good public servant. I found it really hard to have to always ask permission to do things. I like the idea of coming up with an



idea in the morning and then by lunchtime it's kind of done, which is not really how it really works in a bureaucracy. I was finding that frustrating. The other thing was is that we live in Melbourne, but the agency was in Geelong and I was spending a lot of time driving backwards and forward from Melbourne to Geelong. That was hard on our family life. At the same time, again, I was really worried about the direction that things were heading. I decided that it was time to cause trouble from the outside again.

**Evie:** [Laughter].

**Kirsten:** I don't see it as an unusual move. I see it as trying to do change from the inside, trying to do change from the outside. I can see how it...

**Roland:** Still trying to do change.

**Kirsten:** Yes. It is. That's the common thing. I tried to have a go on the inside and then now I'm back still on the outside trying to change, trying to get the scheme working the way that I think people with disability in their families really want and really deserve.

**Roland:** Yes.

**Evie:** I do sympathise with the people still trying to fight on the inside. I have to assume that most people who work for the National Disability Insurance Agency do so because they want to be a part of a really positive change. They get so much flack, not least of all from us, and so, yes, I think it's tough trying to make change in that kind of context.

**Kirsten:** Yes. I think you're right. These were people, my colleagues. For the vast majority of them, they were there because they believed in this vision of this thing and they wanted to try to make it happen. The people in there have it really hard. They don't have enough resources to do their job. There are not enough people to do the work that they've been given to do. They cop a lot of internal and external criticism. It's a really hard job.

**Roland:** We were asking you to reflect from Shut Out to the current day. You've got a microphone in front of you, can you give us a couple of minutes of the sorts of things that you would talk about?

**Kirsten:** Yes. When you ask me that, I was like... ironically, in the last six months or so, the federal government has done a consultation to inform the next draft of the national disability strategy. They've done the first part of it. They keep promising that there's going to be some more. I saw and I've read the interim report that came out from those first consultations. The part that I find incredibly frustrating is that pretty much, you could probably cut and paste Shut Out. Very little has changed. I am both, as a person who really cares about change and wants to see better things for people with disability in their families in this country, that's heartbreaking.

It's heartbreaking and both the policy and the social change sense. Then it's personally heartbreaking too. With the exception of the NDIS. I have mixed feelings about that because on the one hand, the NDIS is this incredible thing that I've helped fight for and has become a reality, but on the other hand, it is true that it has sucked all of the oxygen out of the room. There has been very little progress in other areas. What I'm thinking about saying is that, okay, we're facing so many difficulties in so many other areas. We've tried one national disability strategy and that didn't work. What's the plan for the next one? What is it that is going to actually drive the change that we want to see?

**Evie:** Just for some of our listeners who may not be aware. The NDIS only supports or provides support to about ten percent of Australians with disability. About four million Australians identify as living with a disability and only about 460,000 of those will eventually become an NDIS participant.

**Kirsten:** Also, of those 460,000, the NDIS is about giving you the support that you need to do things, go out and do things. But it is not about better public transport or helping get you a job, or your experience in schools. I'm incredibly concerned at where we're going in education at the moment. It should be an area that we are progressing in and actually outcomes for students. I feel that disabilities are actually going backwards.

**Evie:** Just while we're talking about education, Kirsten, you told me some really amazing statistics about the educational outcomes of inclusive education, which maybe I'm the only person in the world it would shock, but they were great. Maybe you can tell our listeners.

**Kirsten:** I think we've been talking about inclusive education for the last 30 years. Basically, if you talk to the researchers and the academics in the field, they will tell you there's absolutely zero evidence that segregated education delivers better outcomes for kids with disabilities. We continue to fund it, despite the fact that the evidence shows that it delivers poorer outcomes than being educated amongst your peers. I think with the advent of things like Nat Plana and the My School website and the focus on VCE results. We're actually going backwards in schools. In trying to say, hey, it's the job of schools to educate kids and get them out the door. Now, it's become the jobs to get them a score. Of course, if you're interested in scores, you don't want kids with disability in your school that are going to drag down your scores. I will use a personal example, is that Sofie went to the local primary school. The two local high schools in our area for whom the primary school but those local high schools would not have Sofie in their school.

**Roland:** It would be interesting exploring something with your, Kirsten, that probably the best program I've ever been involved in was working with eight children with a disability pre-school. 12 kids without disability in pre-school. The pre-school had to be completely redesigned to meet everybody's needs because you couldn't have that bigger group in it and just do some stuff off to the side. As a result of redesigning it to meet all of the kid's needs, everybody benefitted. I'm just trying to

follow through the logic. We've just pulled our seven-year-old out of mainstream school for exactly the no plan reasons. She doesn't have a disability, but this is not good for her. What we want is social, holistic human beings that learn in their own particular ways. I believe that if we setup systems that meet everybody's needs, and we include people with disabilities, everybody benefits.

**Kirsten:** That's what the research shows. The research shows that when you include kids with disabilities in the classroom, everybody benefits. The reason that I think that happens is because teachers have to think about what they're teaching and they have to think about teaching to a whole different bunch of kids who all have different learning styles and who are all a little bit different. It makes you concentrate on what is it that I'm trying to get across? The other evidence shows us that particularly when you include kids with an intellectual disability, which my daughter does, that helps the kids and the kinds of strategies you would use to assist Sofie actually benefit the kids who are really struggling.

**Roland:** Included is not a teacher's aid up the back.

**Kirsten:** Yes. Provided it's not a teacher's aid up the back. Yes, the research basically says, everybody is better off. Kids with disabilities were better off. Kids without disabilities are better off when you educate kids together. The other reason that I am really passionate about it is because I think it's the way you get social change. Is that I think the kids that go to school with Sofie will not have the same kind of attitudes to people with a disability as those who don't, because they've grown up alongside her. She's just one of the girls or she's one of the kids. It changes the way they see disability. Viva the revolution. If we want the revolution, it starts with kids. The more we pull kids out of schools, I just think we're entrenching the really negative attitudes towards people with disability, as well as poor kids with disabilities are getting really crappy educational outcomes. Everybody loses.

**Roland:** This seems like such a cliched question, I wouldn't normally ask it, but do you have a social change idol or a guru or someone that you deeply respect?

**Evie:** That was a cliched question. [Laughter].

**Kirsten:** No, funnily enough.

**Roland:** In some ways, I sort of expected that.

**Kirsten:** No, I don't. I have my academic things that I follow, but it's more I just think that I'm just driven by the fact that this overarching sense of fairness and we that the joint is in pretty bad shape and we need to do something about it. Rather than following a particular philosophy.

**Evie:** Do you, dad?

**Roland:** No. You've got the microphone, we've taken a lot of your time, is there anything you want to tell us that we haven't asked?

**Kirsten:** No, only that I'm going to say that I... this isn't bullshit about EAC belonging to the people who participate in it. What I've been trying to do through the last couple of years with EAC, particularly when we're doing community forms and getting out and talking to people is that you brought disability issues to public awareness. You guys were the ones that did this. Not us and not be, you guys did it. Now we're here, don't take it a backward step. Yes, we've got to fix the NDIS, but there's also potential once things are on a bit more of an even keel, to go, what's next? It doesn't matter which area in life you look at, whether it's employment, whether it's housing, whether it's healthcare. The gap between the life outcomes and the life chances of people with disability and the rest of their communities is absolutely shameful and disgraceful in a country as wealthy as Australia. We just accept that 50 percent of people live in poverty. We don't bat an eyelid. This week, we've had Royal Commission hearings where we have heard from people with disability in their families that doctors have given them a substandard level of care because they had a disability.

We're all standing around and accepting that. My thing is that, yes, EAC gave people an opportunity and a platform and a way to bring change about. We have to keep kicking against the bricks and take on the fight in all of these other areas if we ever want people with a disability to have the same opportunities as other people in the community. I care about this on a big social change level. I also care about it on a really personal level. I've got three kids and the life chances of two are radically different from the life chances of one. I'm not prepared to stand for it. I want it to change. The thing is, it doesn't matter how you do it in big or small ways, we can't let that go. We've created some momentum and we've created a movement and we've created awareness. Now, we have to keep pushing for it.

**Roland:** Gosh, we've smart, Evie.

**Evie:** Yes. [Laughter].

**Roland:** We knew Kirsten was going to be great and we were right.

**Evie:** We have no problem taking credit.

**Roland:** It's true. Thank you, Kirsten Deane. I love the image of saying: Don't get in a formidable mom's way when she wants to make social change because this one is going to do it.

**Kirsten:** Yes.

**Evie:** #mum.

**Roland:** Thank you for everything you've done with Every Australian Counts. Thank you for everything you've done with the National Disability and Carer Alliance. Thank you for the Shut-Out report. Yes, you don't get a lot of the credit that you certainly deserve. Thank you.

**Evie:** Thanks.

**Kirsten:** I'm going to say, I'm very embarrassed, thanks.

**End of Interview**

**Outro**

**Maia:** You've been listening to Disability Done Different, Covid Conversations. A podcast by DSC that's produced by Maia Thomas.

**Evie:** Today we've been talking to Kirsten Deane who is the campaign director of Every Australian Counts. If you've liked this podcast, please subscribe at [Disabilityserviceconsulting.com.au/podcast](https://disabilityserviceconsulting.com.au/podcast) or wherever you get your podcasts.

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