

Please find below our answers to the questions on notice, with our apologies for the delay:

- 1. In your submission you refer to the National Toilet Map. I note it is a Commonwealth initiative, but I am interested in your push for better data gathering, could you outline what is missing?**
 - a. While supportive of the initiative, it could be improved by adding missing toilets (such as through Continence Health Australia Great Dunny Hunt). There is also the capacity to include a range of information about toilets, including opening hours, features, photos and so forth. Adding such additional detail for more toilets would provide more information for potential users.
- 2. What is needed to be included in a dementia-friendly designed toilet?**
 - a. While the prevalence and impact of dementia is of growing concern, and does comprise some of our advocacy efforts, in terms of design we believe that is something better addressed by medical and accessibility experts.
- 3. Are you aware of any dementia-friendly designed toilet?**
 - a. We do not have a specific example of a dementia-friendly designed toilet in Australia, though they may exist.
- 4. Is there any specific policy that needs to be examined or amended to address barriers for people with disabilities accessing public toilets?**
 - a. This is outside the scope of our policy knowledge, and better addressed to disability advocates
- 5. Do you think an audit of accessible public toilets managed by councils and state government should be undertaken and if so, what are the basic standards that should be included?**
 - a. A wide audit may be unnecessary, but there would be value in a mechanism to identify inadequate toilets and plan for improvements.
- 6. What is the current level of community engagement by local and state governments when designing new public toilets?**
 - a. We do not have specific knowledge to answer this question.
- 7. What are the consequences for seniors when public toilet access is limited or unclear?**

- a. A lack of public toilets, or a lack of knowledge of their existence, can be a disincentive for seniors to utilise public spaces. This can limit opportunities for exercise and socialising. Alternatively, people may respond to limited toilet facilities by restricting their fluid intake, which can also have health and wellbeing implications.

8. Can you explain the concept of the “loo leash” and how it affects older people?

- a. ‘Loo leash’ is a term used by the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) in [this report](#). They describe it as how the “Knowledge of the lack of facilities nearby acts as a ‘loo leash’, deterring some from venturing far beyond their homes.” This can contribute to worse health outcomes and social isolation.

9. What role should councils play in increasing toilet provision in parks and public areas?

- a. We believe that all levels of government should act, within their authority and jurisdiction, to improve access to public toilets for seniors and others.

10. What features make toilets more dementia-friendly or senior-friendly?

- a. In terms of seniors, we have suggested sanitary bins be provided in all toilets, automatic toilet seats, and provision of disposable toilet seat covers along with cleaning sprays and wipes. We are concerned that best-practice dementia-friendly design principles have not been adopted. However, we are not experts in this area and defer to the work being done by Dementia Australia in this regard which we have included in our submission.

11. How can improvements to the Public Toilet Map better support confident community participation?

- a. Yes, we believe so. Sufficient public toilets, in terms of quantity, location, and accessibility, would assist community participation by seniors and others.

Kind regards,

Luke Smith

Policy and Engagement Officer

National Seniors
AUSTRALIA