

1985

In Tamworth, a small group of locals set up an association to advocate for people with an intellectual disability called Citizen Advocacy Northwest. In Newcastle, a service called Self-Advocacy Newcastle began.

1992

Disability Advocacy Service Hunter (DASH) is officially established in Newcastle to advocate for all people with a disability.

DASH becomes a separate entity from Newcastle Community Access.

1994

Self-Advocacy Newcastle stops operating and a service called Newcastle Community Access forms an advocacy working group to prepare a tender for federal advocacy funding.



2006

DASH and Citizen Advocacy Northwest join forces to become Disability Advocacy NSW (DA) and gradually expand to cover the Mid North Coast region.



2007

DA establishes offices in Coffs Harbour and Armidale.



2008

Lobbying to establish a Community Legal Centre on the Mid North Coast begins as DA advocates find the region has no access to a community legal centre.

2010

Commonwealth and NSW governments offer funds to establish a community legal centre in Port Macquarie and DA successfully tenders.

2011

To reflect the diversity of the services it provides and the alliance between legal and social advocacy, DA changes its name to Advocacy Law Alliance and registers the business names Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre and Disability Advocacy NSW.

Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre opens its doors in Port Macquarie, with DA also opening an office in Port Macquarie.



2013

NDIS legislation is passed and the Hunter region becomes a NDIS trial site. DA becomes one of the first services in Australia to establish a NDIS Appeals support program.





2016  35 STAFF

Disability Information and Advocacy Service in Bathurst joins to become DA's new Central West region.

DA opens a new office in Parramatta and Lower Blue Mountains to service the Sydney West region.

DA also established offices in Dubbo and Broken Hill to better service remote regional populations.

The NDIS trial period ends and the scheme is rolled out across the rest of Australia. NDIS Appeals program grows beyond Newcastle to Sydney and other regions.

2017 

DA begins icare independent advocacy program.

2018  40 STAFF

DA begins federally funded Decision Support program for all of NSW.

DA successfully tenders to extend its National Disability Advocacy Program funding to further establish its work in Western Sydney and Nepean-Blue Mountains.

2019  48 STAFF

Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre receives additional state funding and opens a second office in Coffs Harbour, now covering six LGAs.

DA begins supporting people to tell their story at the Disability Royal Commission.

2020  55 STAFF

Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre employs a disability law specialist solicitor to assist DA clients in all DA regions across NSW. This service becomes known as Disability Law NSW.

MNCCLC is funded to provide some specialised programs to assist with bushfire recovery and COVID-19.

2021  60 STAFF

On its 10th anniversary, Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre rebrands to become Mid North Coast Legal Centre (MNCLC).

Following the #StandByMe campaign (2016-2020) to retain state funding for disability advocacy services, the sector is restructured based on recommendations of the Ageing and Disability Commission.

The new NSW Disability Advocacy Futures Program begins, and ALA successfully tenders for regions it has a presence in. This outcome in late 2021 sees significant increase in staff numbers in 2022.

2022  80 STAFF

DA recruit staff in Ballina and Central Coast and increase numbers in other areas.

A new national pilot program Disability Advocacy Support Helpline (DASH) begins planning and recruiting.

2023  98 STAFF

DASH, a national phone based advocacy and referral service, is rolled out to complement DSS National Disability Advocacy Program Services.