

# your voice your choice

SEPTEMBER 2016



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# Welcome to Your Voice, Your Choice

Hi, and welcome to the Your Voice, Your Choice monthly newsletter from The Disability Trust.

This month you may have noticed that we have a new format. What do you think? Let us know at [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au).

This month we look at the Ultimate Guide to the Rio Paralympics, we look at the latest on the Canberra 'cage' story, we look at how over 1000 reports of Abuse in NSW has only resulted in 18 prosecutions, we

profile Alastair McEwin, Australia's new Disability Discrimination Commissioner, we hear from 15 year old Connor McLeod who designed some of the tactile features in the new \$5 note, we catch up with Bethany Hamilton and the latest on her surfing prowess, and we have the usual NDIS update.

"Your Voice, Your Choice" aims to provide the questions, and hopefully most of the answers, that will keep you informed and able

to use your voice to achieve your choice.

If there is a topic, issue, program, funding, article, event, or anything for people with disabilities, their families and carers, and people working in the sector, that we should know about, then contact us at [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au).

Editor: Sean O'Neill

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The Disability Trust is a highly respected provider of services to people with a disability.

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The Disability Trust covers an area from South East Sydney, to South West Sydney, south through the NSW Southern Highlands, Goulburn, Queanbeyan and the ACT, Cooma and south east to Bega, and all along the Coast from Sydney to the Victorian border.

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...creating an inclusive world

*The newsletter is aimed at covering a wide variety of stories and issues across the disability sector. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of The Disability Trust. Should you have a story or information that you would like included in the newsletter please contact the Editor, Sean O'Neill at [sean@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:sean@disabilitytrust.org.au).*

# Ultimate guide to the 2016 Rio Paralympics

THE 2016 Rio Olympics are over, and the Paralympics are just getting started. Australia has been a successful Paralympic nation, most recently finishing fifth on the medal tally at the London 2012 Paralympic Games; winning 32 gold, 23 silver, and 30 bronze medals at the event.



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The 2016 Australian team of 336 features 178 athletes — including six pilots and guides for vision-impaired athletes — one ramp assistant, and 158 staff. It's the largest team sent by Australia to a Paralympics since 1988, with 89 of the athletes making their debut.

Here's everything you need to know about the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

## WHEN IS IT ON?

The Opening Ceremony for the Paralympics begin at 7:15am (AEST) on Thursday, September 8, from the Maracana Stadium.

Athletics and Swimming action both begin on Friday, September 9.

The Closing Ceremony begins at 9am on Monday, September

19, signalling the end of the Games.

## WHAT CHANNEL IS IT ON?

Channel 7 will broadcast the Paralympic Games for the first time in their history. The Games will be broadcast on 7TWO, with

events set to screen across the 'Screens of Seven' with 7live.

An free app, '7live featuring the Paralympic Games', will also showcase the events.

## COMPETITORS TO WATCH

### AUSSIÉS

**Evan O'Hanlon - Athletics: 100m, 400m**

O'Hanlon is the fastest Australian ever, after posting a world record time of 10.79 in the 100m event in 2014. The 28-year-old has cerebral palsy on his left side, and will be looking to add to his six Paralympic Gold Medals; three from Beijing in 2008, and two from London in 2012.

**Kurt Fearnley - Athletics: 1500m, 5000m, marathon, relay**

There Paralympics will be Fearnley's fifth and final Games, with the 35-year-old already having won three gold medals, six silver medals, and two bronze medals.

**Melissa Tapper - Table Tennis: singles**

Tapper is an extremely unique athlete, qualifying for both the

Olympics and Paralympics in table tennis. The 26-year-old jokes it was never her plan to become the first Australian to compete in both the Olympics and Paralympics.

"It never was an ambition to be the first person to compete at both Games," Tapper said.

"I've always just wanted to compete at my best. I work towards that every training session, so finally making the Olympic team is just a bonus."

## The Rollers – Wheelchair Basketball: 12 member team

The men's Wheelchair Basketball team is one of the favourites heading into Rio, after walking away with the 2016 World Championship. Led by captain, and Paralympic veteran, Brad Ness, The Rollers have won medals in four of their past five Olympics, and are hoping to add another to that collection.

## WORLD STARS

**Matt Stutzman - Archery: USA**

Known as the 'Armless Archer', Stutzman incredible shoots without arms. The American was born without arms, and recently hit a target from 283 metres, breaking the world record for the longest distance by any individual.

Stutzman's method is intriguing, setting the bow on his shoulder, and drawing it back with the trigger underneath his jaw bone. He then moves his jaw slightly back, before putting a small amount of pressure to release the bow.

# Wollongong council taking action on access

Wollongong is leading the way when it comes to access and inclusion for all its citizens, according to NSW Minister for Disability Services John Ajaka.

The minister made a visit to Wollongong City Council in Early September to mark the launch of its Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), which will be required by all councils from July 2017 under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

The Plan was adopted by Wollongong Council on 27 June 2016 for implementation from 1 July 2016, and it is the first completed Disability Inclusion Action Plan in NSW.

The plan outlines actions the council will take in the next four years to improve services for people with disabilities. It has some compelling statistics about access in the Wollongong area, including that almost 17% of all the respondents to a recent survey about access in Wollongong listed 'Fully accessible services / facilities / events' as the

number one priority of the DIAP.

Mr Ajaka said he had encountered many people who were not able to visit the beach, playground, shopping malls or offices due to problems with access, which is why he directed councils to put the plans in place.

"We need a change of attitude in government, local government, communities and organisations, and by setting the example we will ensure the rest of the community will follow," he said.

"Mr Mayor, to you and your councillors, congratulations on this plan. I'm sure many other councils will be looking at this carefully and following your great example."

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery said he believed all citizens had "a natural right



to be just part of our community".

"Everyone should have access to our services, and the free opportunity to move through the city and enjoy this wonderful location in which we live," he said.

You can get copies of the Wollongong Council DIAP by calling 4227 7111 or emailing [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

## Warilla Girls Model Life

Summer-Kiarah Lamont is not one for making excuses.

The 11-year-old from Warilla has Autism and global developmental delay – an intellectual disability which slows her development.

Summer-Kiarah doesn't let the challenges in her life get in her way or stop her from 'dreaming big' and helping other people doing it tough.

The animal lover doesn't hesitate on spending some of her pocket money each week on one item for either a homeless person or for animal charities.

This generosity of spirit saw 'many people' nominate Summer-Kiarah for the Face Of The Globe Modelling Competition.

In late August Reanna headed up to Surfers Paradise, Queensland to take part in the prestigious competition.

Reanna Brennan said her daughter was in the top 9 girls taking part in the junior category.

"The winner gets a sponsored trip to Paris and London next year," Ms Brennan said.

The Disability Trust funded the Queensland trip, paying for Summer-Kiarah and her mum's flights and accommodation.



Speaking to the Illawarra Mercury, Summer-Kiarah said she was looking forward to the competition.

"I can't wait. Hopefully I do well and get to go to London," she said.

Ms Brennan said she was very proud of her daughter, who has for the past two years attended the Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia) school at Barrack Heights.

"I am very proud of her as she has overcome many things in life, including her several disabilities and us having a house fire in 2013," she said.

Unfortunately Summer did not place in the Face Of the Globe competition. However Summer is looking forward to the Grand Final of the Miss Country Girl Australia in April 2017 in Brisbane. Summer previously won the Miss Country Girl Australia Regional Final in Penrith in early 2016, and will join 15 other regional finalists in the Grand Final.

Ms Brennan said "As you can imagine, this is a lot for a little girl to take. But Summer has such a beautiful loving personality and although she has these disabilities and tragedies occur, she still does everything she can to help raise funds and items for charities like Red Cross, Rainbow Child Foundation and the RSPCA.

"She recently donated a couple of boxes of items to RSPCA that she collected from friends and family or bought with her own money. She also had two garage sales where she sold donated goods to raise funds for chosen charities, Rainbow Child Foundation and RSPCA.

"I'm very excited for this opportunity for Summer to make new friends and gain confidence."

# Autism cage student receives personal apology from Education Directorate



The Director-General of the ACT Education and Training

Directorate, Natalie Howson, has personally delivered a letter of apology to the child at the centre of the autism cage scandal.

Ms Howson, who joined the directorate in June, met the boy and his family and gave them the directorate's continuing full support.

The family said it was now happy with the early transfer of the boy to high school, despite initial concerns.

The boy was moved into high school in May, six months ahead of schedule, but the dedication of extra resources and commitment from staff has proved beneficial.

ACT Education Minister Shane Rattenbury said he understood there was significant, regular contact with the family at the time the story broke in March 2015.

Joy Burch was education minister at

the time. She resigned in January 2016.

"I understand that verbal apologies and full support were given to the family at the time of the incident," Mr Rattenbury said.

"Earlier this year, during discussions with the family, it was suggested that a formal written apology to the child would be beneficial in moving forward. With my support, the new Director-General Natalie Howson wrote to the student with a formal apology."

## A thousand allegations of abuse for just 18 prosecutions in NSW

More than 1000 incidents of abuse and neglect of people with disabilities have been reported to the state government in the past two years, the NSW Ombudsman has revealed, but only a tiny fraction have been prosecuted.

These include nearly 500 criminal allegations of abuse of people with a disability by employees and residents in supported accommodation, according to figures published by the Ombudsman.

Some 275 of these criminal allegations are against employees and include sexual offences, assaults and fraud against people with a disability in supported accommodation services run or funded by the state government.

A further 210 criminal allegations have been made against "clients" or residents of these facilities for sexual offences and assault, including assault causing serious injury and involving a weapon.

About 40 per cent of the employees facing allegations were found to have behaved unacceptably, a spokeswoman for the Ombudsman said.

The total number of incidents reported was 1140. But just 18 people have been prosecuted over the allegations.

"The decision to initiate a criminal prosecution is that of NSW police," an Ombudsman spokeswoman said, while adding it was not known how many investigations were pending.

The Ombudsman called for a specialist law enforcement unit to have jurisdiction over vulnerable people, such as people with a cognitive disability and the elderly.

The Ombudsman said it was developing a program to improve the skills of people who worked in the sector.

The system of reporting complaints about abuse in government-run and funded facilities to the Ombudsman was implemented in late 2014, the state government said.

A spokeswoman for the department declined to say how many reports made to the Ombudsman had also been referred to the police for prosecution.

## LIMB DIFFERENCE NO BAR TO THIS LITTLE BOY

IT'S not unusual for a mum to be proud of her son – that's what mums are like. But the obvious joy and encouragement shown by Mornington's Anita Duesterhaus for her 18-month-old bundle of joy is enchanting.

Malakye was born without a right forearm and hand.

In the great scheme of things, such an omission should hardly be noticed, so Ms Duesterhaus's defence of her progeny, even while he was in her womb, is unsurprising.

"I was offered a termination at 34 weeks," she said last week.

"There was nothing wrong with my son other than he never grew his right

arm, so it shocked me that a termination would even be considered as an option at that late stage of pregnancy.

"He was born at 38 weeks, healthy and gorgeous, and with the cutest little stump I ever did see."

Mrs Duesterhaus has set up an Instagram page: malakyes\_mummy, to share her son with the world. She hopes it will inspire other parents facing a diagnosis of limb difference in a child.

Malakye was not classed as having a disability by Centrelink, which led to a long battle for Mrs Duesterhaus to be able to access disability services, such as physio and occupational therapy.



"I spent a lot of time googling and watching YouTube while trying to find different ways I could help my son achieve his milestones," she said.

"Finally, when he was almost one, we were taken on by Biala Peninsula disability services in Mornington.

"After six months, Malakye no longer needs to attend as he is at normal development for a child of his age.

"I can't wait to see what his future holds as I know it will be filled with great things."

# What it feels like to have an 'invisible' disability



*Metro UK website reporter Simon Robb talks about why it's important to have all inclusive*

*disabled toilet.*

Living with an 'invisible' disability is not easy, especially when it comes to using disabled facilities.

I was diagnosed with a bowel disease when I was 18 and had just enrolled at university.

When I heard the words ulcerative colitis for the first time, what I actually heard was, 'wave bye bye to your social life'.

At its very worst, I would need the toilet at least 17 times a day. I had also dropped two stone, couldn't absorb nutrients and found it hard to

concentrate in lectures.

On the surface I looked relatively healthy, but people who knew me could see I was finding day-to-day life a struggle.

No matter where I went, I would have to plan ahead and make sure there was a toilet within reach.

Despite a number of recent campaigns on social media, bowel diseases like Crohn's and IBS are still considered a taboo subject.

But recently Asda (a large English supermarket chain) issued a new disabled sign depicting the familiar person in a wheelchair emblem, but now including a standard man and woman symbol.

The sign reads: 'Not every disability is visible'.

Looking back, one of the hardest parts to deal with was people's reactions to me using the disabled facilities – but I

had little choice.

I've had mother's with small children tut at me, a member of staff at a supermarket asking me why I needed access to the disabled loo, and an embarrassing confrontation with an elderly man at a coffee shop.

In front of all the customers, he said: 'Toilets like these are designed for people like me.'

Back then I didn't have the courage to stand up for myself and asked my friend if we could make a swift exit.

This is why disabled toilet signs, like the one in Asda, is imperative for people who look physically-abled, but beneath the surface suffer with health complications.

I'm now in remission and haven't needed to use a disabled toilet for several years – but there are people still out there who are faced with the same discrimination I was.

## Australia's new Disability Discrimination Commissioner Alastair McEwin

Although Mr McEwin has only been in the job since August 1, he says that his priorities as commissioner will start with listening to the needs of the community.

"I'm going to meet with as many disability communities and stakeholders around the country within the next three to four months, I'm going to listen to them and ask them what they think the priorities should be for my five year term," he says.

Attention will also be paid to newly arrived Australians and people who speak English as a second language, with Mr McEwin saying, "all people with disability, no matter their background, no matter where they come from, no matter what level of socio-economic disadvantage they may have, will be on my radar."

Employment barriers for older people and people with disability are also high on his list, and Mr McEwin explains that discrimination in the workforce comes in a number of forms including the far from obvious.

"There is so much subtle discrimination going on," he explains. "It might be a

snide comment that an employer might make about an employee with disability in front of others."

The ability to commute on accessible transportation, to easily enter their place of employment and have access to housing that is designed for their needs, are also examples of discrimination he describes.

However, Mr McEwin says, "most of [the discrimination] is around attitudes" which he believes, are everyone's responsibility to change. One place to start is with children and "school programs where they are taught to embrace diversity - not just about disability, but sexual orientation, people from overseas, people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds," he says.

"Teachers play a really important role in that respect and I urge the government and the education department to think about the way they can work the curriculum and about embracing human rights for people with disability," he continues.

Another broader societal attitude that needs to shift is around the negativity that is often associated with people



with disability by the able bodied, Mr McEwin says.

Commenting on questions about the competition of everyday tasks that were asked during the ABC's recent 'You Can't Ask That' episode on people in wheelchairs, Mr

McEwin adds, "we need to get away from asking questions that focus purely on just their disability".

"If you have someone in a wheelchair, they have hopes, they have dreams, they hurt, they bleed just like anyone. I think it's ok to ask around things like, what does it mean for you to be employed, but don't focus specifically on the disability."

Mr McEwin says that the attitudes often start young as "children are naturally curious, but if they see something and they're taught by the adults around them to focus on the negative, then that's when their curiosity will be shaped in different ways so again it's a very subtle form of discrimination."

# The cool thing you probably won't notice about the new \$5 note



I'VE been looking forward to tomorrow since I

was 12 — three years ago. It's a big day for me. Some people have used the word "historic" but I don't know about that. I'm only 15.

Tomorrow is the day the new \$5 bank note enters circulation. I played a big part in its design. I heard that everyone thought it was ugly, but I couldn't see that. Literally.

Today's \$5 note is Australia's first bank note that blind people can read, which I campaigned for.

I'm typing this using special software because I'm completely blind. Technology has helped me to do stuff other 15-year-old kids can do.

The \$5 that comes out tomorrow isn't ugly to me. It's the first Australian bank note that Australia's 360,000 blind people, like me, can read.

The part I played in its design you probably can't see, but I can feel. It has tactile markings on it. I'm so excited to run my fingers over those bumps

on the note and mentally count, in my mind, to five as I do it.

Before today, I could only tell the difference between coins. That's fine for the tuck shop, but what about when I get older? Mum won't be around forever to help me. I realised I'd need to learn how to use notes, because — hopefully — when I'm older, I'll have more money than just coins to deal with!

I was already thinking about this when I was given some money for a Christmas present inside a card, but had no idea how much it was and how generous or tight-arse the present-giver had been! It was frustrating and slightly embarrassing.

If I come across something that doesn't sound right, I like to do something about it rather than just complain. So me and mum logged on to Change.org and started a petition asking for the next print of bank notes to include tactile markings.

At first, the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) refused to include tactile markings for the notes that come out today. I found out that Australia actually prints banknotes with tactile markings on them for other countries and sends

them there, but they wouldn't do it here. Can you believe that?!

Me and mum had to find a way to prove that there was a need for bank notes for blind people here. When 57,000 people signed my Change.org petition, we kind of proved that need. We could then ask those signers to contact the RBA and put the pressure on. Still, they refused.

Then me and mum went to Canberra and met a politician who worked in the treasury. We delivered our petition to him. After that, things started to change and sound more positive.

Tomorrow, me and mum will be celebrating but we also want to thank those 57,000 people who've really helped Australia's blind community.

Now when I grow up, I won't have to rely on trusting that people have always given me the right change. I can feel the markings on the bank notes and tell them if they've given me the wrong change and also think to myself: I did that.

Above all, it means I can be independent. I can't wait for that. That feels good.

*Article by Connor McLeod*

## How Smartphones Are Helping Australia's Deafblind Community Reconnect



Instead of collecting dust in a drawer, your old smartphone could be used to assist on of the 288,000 Australians living with no hearing or sight use technology to reconnect with family, friends and the wider community.

Not-for-profit mobile phone recycling program MobileMuster is collecting unwanted smartphones during the month of September to be donated to Able Australia, where they will be used to educate people with deafblindness on how to use speech recognition and Braille readers.

Michael Doherty broke through many

barriers when he first received his smartphone through a donation. Using a braille display, he sent his first unassisted SMS to his sister. Every week he collected phone numbers from old friends, family and supports and reconnected with his lost world.

Through these conversations, his independence grew to a point where he was actively arranging his own social life, using taxis and going on holidays. He quickly learned how to take photos and was able to send them to his friends so they could share in what he was doing.

Every week he explored new territory on his phone, like setting an alarm to wake up in the morning, checking the weather or using a calendar instead of relying on his memory. Michael says his life has been transformed by his smartphone and it enables him the independence that we all take for granted.

"Deafblindness is very much Australia's forgotten disability," Able Australia's Scott Darkin says. "Nine out of ten deafblind people will experience depression and anxiety and the simple act of donating an unwanted phone is an easy way to show your support to Australia's deafblind community".

"We know there are approximately 25.5 million unused mobiles sitting in homes and business around Australia" Spyro Kalos from MobileMuster says.

iPhone 4 and above, Samsung Galaxy S4 and above, LG Nexus 7 and above, Nokia Lumia 540 and above are eligible for donation to the program.

Each smartphone is checked to confirm it is working, and any data left of the phone is wiped to ensure privacy.

Information on where the drop off points are located, as well as how to post the phones in yourself is at [www.mobilemuster.com.au](http://www.mobilemuster.com.au).

## You Can't Ask That

You Can't Ask That is a TV series currently on ABC. It gives the public a chance to ask the awkward, embarrassing, naive, funny, silly, compassionate, even prejudiced questions they've always wanted to ask, but never had the courage or proximity to do so. The first 2 episodes featured questions to short statured people and people who use wheelchairs. Go to [www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/you-cant-ask-that](http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/you-cant-ask-that) to see the episodes.

## SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Social media allows anyone with internet access to connect with other people and publish their own content. Through it, we receive a wealth of information and interaction that allows us to keep up important relationships and get things done.

However, for people with a disability such as a hearing, sight or mobility impairment, social media websites and applications have their own barriers.

In late 2011, Media Access Australia undertook research on the accessibility of the most popular social media sites. Funded by the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), the 'SociAbility: social media for people with a disability' review was published in 2012, enabling all users to have equal access to the inclusion which social media allows.

Yet the social media landscape changes rapidly and some tools decline or disappear, others add useful new features, and some new tools surge ahead in popularity out of nowhere. So Media Access Australia has updated the information for 2016.

The result is a web-page where you'll find the latest updated details on social media tools, their accessibility issues, and how best to overcome accessibility challenges using a variety of web and mobile solutions. This includes Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogging tools, YouTube, Instagram and Skype.

The web-page is at [www.mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability](http://www.mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability).

## New look JobAccess website launched

The JobAccess website has been redesigned by the Department of Social Services, in consultation with people with disability, employers and service providers. The new website aims to improve access to relevant information about disability employment.

The JobAccess suite of services consists of the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator, the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline, the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service and the JobAccess service, which have been combined under one provider.

The website is at [www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au).

## Review of Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)

The Justice Department is conducting a review of the Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW).

On 30 June 2016 they released their first consultation package, which contained background papers (including an easy English version), an easy-to-answer survey and a video about the review of the Act.

Between September and the end of 2016 they will be releasing a number of further consultation packages and inviting submissions on topics of Conditions for alternative decision-making arrangements, Decision-making models, Supporters and decision-makers: appointment, powers, responsibilities and accountability, NCAT and key agencies, Medical and dental treatment and restrictive practices, Miscellaneous (terminology and other amendments to the Guardianship Act 1987).

You can use each Question Paper or the video to guide your submissions. You can also complete the surveys to share your views, instead of or as well as making a formal submission. They aim to encourage a larger number of people from the community to engage with the law reform process.

More information is at [www.lawreform.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/lrc/lrc\\_current\\_projects/Guardianship/Guardianship](http://www.lawreform.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/lrc/lrc_current_projects/Guardianship/Guardianship).

## TV Drama Focused On Autism Renewed

A television show built around the story of a family dealing with their child's autism diagnosis will return with more episodes.

SundanceTV said that it has picked up a second season of "The A Word."

The one-hour drama premiered in July on the cable channel after airing on BBC One in the United Kingdom earlier this year.

Based on an Israeli series called "Yellow Peppers," the show focuses on 5-year-old Joe, who has autism, and his family.

The boy's parents are learning to adjust to their son's new label while his aunt and uncle are working to rebuild their marriage and his grandfather, a recent widower, owns the family brewery.

## Disability Knowledge Clearing House

A new research hub is breaking new ground in providing up to date research for both people with disability, their families and carers and service providers.

The Disability Knowledge Clearing House is an online library developed by the NDS Centre for Applied Disability Research (CADR) to house or link to what will eventually be thousands of academic papers, other published research and online resources about disability.

When complete it will be the most comprehensive collection of disability research evidence and resources in Australia.

Importantly the Clearing House will house summary Research to Action Guides on important issues identified by disability sector stakeholders including people with disability, their families and carers, front-line practitioners, advocates and researchers.

Have a look at the new website at [www.cadr.org.au/clearing-house](http://www.cadr.org.au/clearing-house).

# Childbirth not the same as 'buying a bag of chips': disability discrimination case

The decision of a judge to dismiss a disability discrimination case which he described as a "trifle" and "nothing more than a try-on" has been overturned on appeal in a development described as a victory for the rights of people with disabilities.

Central Coast woman Kate Hinton launched a case against Westmead Private Hospital after it was unable to provide a sign language interpreter for her husband Anthony, who is deaf, to help him communicate with medical staff during the birth of their first baby last year.

The couple ended up having to switch to the public Westmead Hospital, which provided an Auslan interpreter free of charge.

The matter came before Judge Alexander "Sandy" Street in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, where he dismissed the case in February, comparing Mrs Hinton's request to her "buying a bag of chips" and expecting the shopkeeper to provide an interpreter.

Kate Hinton launched a case against a hospital after it was unable to provide a sign language interpreter for her husband, Anthony.

In late August the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia unanimously overturned Judge Street's decision, allowing the case to proceed under the Disability Discrimination Act and ordered that it not be heard by Judge Street.

"In the present case, the fair minded lay observer would identify from the

strong conclusions expressed by the primary judge in the hearing and his reasons (for example, that [Mrs Hinton's] claim was the equivalent of a "bag of chips", was a "try on", was a "baseless trifle", was "doomed", depended on a proposition that was "rubbish", and was an obvious "abuse of process") that his Honour might be caused to decide the case on other than its merits," the Full Court decision read.

Full Court Justices Berna Collier, Jayne Jagot and Melissa Perry rejected Judge Street's characterisation of the case, finding: "It is hardly a trifle (and still less equivalent to buying a 'bag of chips') for a woman not to be able to deliver her baby in the hospital of her choice merely because the hospital refuses to provide her husband with the interpreter required to ensure he can participate in the birth in the same way that a woman with a partner who can hear would be able to participate."

Last year, the Full Court also overturned another of Judge Street's ruling that Virgin Australia had the right to refuse to board a guide dog belonging to a man with a cerebral palsy and sight and hearing impairments. The airline was ordered to pay \$10,000 compensation.

Jonathon Hunyor, chief executive of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, which is running the case on behalf of Mrs Hinton, described the successful



appeal as a victory for people with a disability.

"This is a significant case for the Hinton's and the broader deaf community," he said.

"We thought the judge clearly misunderstood the case and the issues involved and are pleased that the Full Court rejected the judge's interpretation.

"The case is about ensuring that people who require Auslan interpretation have the same opportunities as anyone else to participate in the birth of their child.

"It also involves broader considerations of patient safety: partners and support people play a vital role in communicating medical information in emergency situation."

In a powerful demonstration why the Auslan interpreter was important, there were complications with delivery of the Hinton's baby at Westmead Hospital in May last year, with the interpreter keeping Mr Hinton informed as the baby was taken to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for treatment.

## Social media for people with a disability

Social media allows anyone with internet access to connect with other people and publish their own content.

Through it, we receive a wealth of information and interaction that allows us to keep up important relationships and get things done.

However, for people with a disability such as a hearing, sight or mobility impairment, social media websites and applications have their own barriers.

In late 2011, Media Access Australia undertook research on the accessibility

of the most popular social media sites. Funded by the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), the 'SociAbility: social media for people with a disability' review was published in 2012, enabling all users to have equal access to the inclusion which social media allows.

Yet the social media landscape changes rapidly and some tools decline or disappear, others add useful new features, and some new tools surge ahead in popularity out of

nowhere. So Media Access Australia has updated the information for 2016.

The result is a web-page where you'll find the latest updated details on social media tools, their accessibility issues, and how best to overcome accessibility challenges using a variety of web and mobile solutions. This includes Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogging tools, YouTube, Instagram and Skype.

The web-page is at [www.mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability](http://www.mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability).

# BaiMed physiotherapy's 100 100's for charity



**12th November 2016**

- Location:** Beaton Park Athletics Track.
- Sign:** Register as a team or individual
- Cost:** \$65.00 includes running singlet for the day
- Time:** 9.00am kick off with just under 2 hours of Fun & Fitness!
- Course:** 100 metres x 100 lengths in 100 minutes  
Pumping music, prizes and sprint races.

Register by 26th August for Early Bird Prices

Fun for the whole family



For more information contact BaiMed on 4233 1851 or email 100100s@baimedphysio.com.au

## Free Healthy Food Sessions

For people with a disability 18+ and their carers.

Crossroads Christian Fellowship are holding free healthy food sessions. Come along to these events where they will have healthy food preparation demonstrations, healthy food sharing and meet new and old friends. You will have the opportunity to learn about good health and how to improve your health and well-being. Come along and try the tasty treats including Soups, Stir fries and Snacks.

There are 4 sessions - Fri 7 Oct, Fri 4 Nov, Fri 2 Dec and Fri 3 Feb 2017. Each session is from 7pm to 9pm and is at the Congregational Church Hall, 33 Market St, Wollongong.

To register ring Claudia on 4228 7270.

## Women's Carer Social Group

Are you providing care for a family member, friend or neighbour who has a disability, mental illness, chronic illness or is frail?

Come along to our Carer Group and meet others, have fun, go on outings, share stories and find out what is out there for you.

Held every Tuesday from 10am to 11am at the Illawarra Women's Health Centre, 2 / 10 Belfast Ave Warilla. For more information call 4255 6800 or email [gabim@womenshealthcentre.com.au](mailto:gabim@womenshealthcentre.com.au).

## Free workshop for Carers at Shellharbour

Do you care for a family member or a friend who has a chronic or mental illness, disability or is frail aged?

Come to our three day workshop and learn how to manage stress, meet other carers and find out about services that can help you. Lunch is provided.

To register please phone the Wollongong Hospital Social Work Department on 4253 4501 or email [gabriela.martinez@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gabriela.martinez@health.nsw.gov.au).

The course is for 3 weeks on Tuesday 11th 18th and 25th October 2016 from 9.30am to 2.30pm at The Disability Trusts Shellharbour Office at 11a / 75 Cygnet ave, Shellharbour City Centre.

## Walk of Pride for Mental Health

It's Time for Wollongong's fourth Walk of Pride

The Walk of Pride is about compassion, hope and pride. We would like to see the community come together and find acceptance and understanding as mental illness touches all of our lives in one way or another.

Bring your bells, drums, whistles

and make some noise as we march with our banners held high!

The march is on Thursday 13th October 2016.

Meeting outside the IPac Theatre in the Civic Plaza, Burelli Street, Wollongong at 9.30am.

RSVP to Arafmi on 4254 1699.

## Ables Nightclub

It's time to party again at Ables. This month we have the Superhero party at The Grand Hotel on Fri 9 September starting at 7.30pm. Next month we have the hugely popular and very scary Halloween party, also at The Grand Hotel.

More information is at [www.facebook.com/AblesWollongong](http://www.facebook.com/AblesWollongong).



## Kids Fund

The next Kids Fund Allocation Committee Meeting will be held in Sept 2016 to distribute charity funds raised by Kids Fund to children aged up to 18 years old.



All applications for funding need to be received by 30 Sept 2016. For information on Kids Fund eligibility criteria or application forms please go to [www.kidsfund.org.au](http://www.kidsfund.org.au). For all enquiries please contact The Disability Trust on 4255 8000.

## Art Exhibition and Grand Opening



Come & support Illawarra Art talent!

Come along to the inaugural

Ability Artists Art exhibition, showcasing art created by people with a disability in the Illawarra, on Saturday September 10th from 10am

to 4pm, at Community Gateway, 26 Atchison St Wollongong.

This event has grown out of the IDO Expo Art Competition and into its own showcase of the artistic talent in Wollongong.

Everyone is welcome to this free event and we would love you to support the talent on display. There will be Guest Speakers, Art for sale and refreshments available.

# Minnesota man with disability wins round in fight for job promotion

State's ruling on hiring practices could have broad ramifications, experts said.

In a groundbreaking decision, the Minnesota Human Rights Department found that a large non-profit likely violated a worker's civil rights when it denied him a promotion because he received services for a cognitive disability.

State Human Rights Commissioner Kevin Lindsey found "probable cause" that Opportunity Partners, one of Minnesota's largest employers of people with disabilities, discriminated against Bradford Teslow, 59, of St. Paul, who receives state-funded job support services at the Bloomington assembly plant where he packages parts for

portable refrigeration units.

Although Opportunity Partners disputes the decision, the Minnetonka-based agency said it is changing its hiring practices to allow recipients of disability services to be considered for regular work at the non-profit.

Legal experts said the decision is among the first of its kind and highlights the conflicts that many disability service providers face when they provide on-the-job training and other support services to people who also work in their facilities. These workers are often classified as "clients" or "persons served," even though they perform work and often want to be considered regular employees.

Agencies have little incentive to hire these workers, because doing so could cost them thousands of dollars in payments through state and federal disability programs, advocates say.

"This case is a poster child for why so many of these facilities are not a pathway to competitive, integrated employment but are instead a dead end," said Alison Barkoff, a national disability rights advocate in Washington, D.C., for the Centre for Public Representation.

For the rest of the article go to [www.startribune.com/minnesota-man-with-disability-wins-round-in-fight-for-job-promotion/387357271](http://www.startribune.com/minnesota-man-with-disability-wins-round-in-fight-for-job-promotion/387357271).

## Promoting Disability Access and Inclusion

The Department of Social Services (DSS) was proud to sponsor this year's Disability Access and Inclusion Award category at the National Awards for Local Government. The category recognises the important contribution local governments make in implementing the principles of the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Kiama Municipal Council, New South Wales, is the winner of the 2016 Disability Access and Inclusion Award for their Kiama Dementia Project.

This project aims to make Kiama a more dementia friendly community where people with dementia are supported to live a high quality of life with meaning, purpose and value.

## 40% to 50% Discounts available to replace your fridge or TV

The NSW Government is offering a 40% discount on fridges and a 50% discount on TVs so you can replace them with new, energy efficient models and save energy and save money on your energy bills. The discounts are offered to people with a health care card, low income health care card, pensioner concession card or veterans' affairs gold card. To take advantage of this offer you must be a NSW resident and your fridge must be at least six years old, or you own a plasma or cathode ray tube (CRT) television and want to replace it.

For more information go to [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/appliance-replacement-offer.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/appliance-replacement-offer.htm).

## National Disability Practitioners

National Disability Practitioners (NDP) is a membership association for disability support workers which focuses on strengthening occupational standards, building sector networks and creating professional development opportunities. It has resources, the latest news, a calendar of events, even its own TV show. NDP is a division of National Disability Services (NDS). For more information go to [www.ndp.org.au](http://www.ndp.org.au).

## NSW YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY NETWORK

People with Disability Australia (PWDA) is liaising with universities, TAFE, advocacy organisations, schools and community groups in NSW looking for input from young people with disability about a 'Young People with Disability Network NSW.' Take five minutes to complete an online survey (at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/VMLW5N7](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VMLW5N7)) to help identify the most important issues for young people with disability.

## NSW: Disability Justice Project

The Disability Justice Project (DJP) is a two-year capacity building project in NSW funded by ADHC (Ageing, Disability and Home Care) designed to build disability services sector capacity that will best support people with cognitive disabilities who are in contact, or at risk of contact, with the justice system. The project is made up of Information resources, free training across NSW, Leader workshops and an app with clear information about legal rights.

Go to [www.disabilityjustice.edu.au/the-project](http://www.disabilityjustice.edu.au/the-project) for more information.

## Preparing for Emergencies

The Physical Disability Council of NSW has redeveloped a website which assists people with disability and their supporters to prepare for personal emergencies and natural disasters.

The website provides easy access, step by step action plans as well as tools and resources, including articles and videos, to prepare for personal emergencies such as fires in the home, personal safety, preparing service animals and pets, etc.

This is a unique and important resource for people with disability.

Please feel free to check it out, use it and recommend it to others. Check it out at [www.imokay.org.au](http://www.imokay.org.au).

# BETHANY HAMILTON: SURFING WITH ONLY ONE ARM ISN'T AS HARD AS BEATING THE STIGMA

Since losing her left arm during a shark attack 13 years ago, Bethany Hamilton has had to adapt on the waves and try to change the way others perceive her

In Bethany Hamilton's mind, winning the ESPY award for best female athlete with a disability would have been like "rewinding back to square one".

Square one being the fateful day 13 years ago when she was attacked by a 14ft tiger shark and lost her left arm. Which is why, this year, she withdrew her name from consideration.

Hamilton, now 26 and one of the most well-known surfers in the world, has overcome substantial challenges in pursuing her dreams as a professional surfer. But she says the hardest thing she still struggles to adapt to is the way others perceive her and treat her.

"It's funny," she chuckled, "when I first heard I was going to be nominated for an ESPY the first thing I thought was: 'Whoa, I'm going to be up for best female action sports athlete!' It didn't even occur to me that I was going to

be placed in the disabled division ... I don't surf disabled or compete in a disabled category."

Hamilton's comment follows Serena Williams' statement at Wimbledon that she preferred the phrase "one of the greatest athletes of all time" to "one of the greatest female athletes of all time".

The nomination came on the heels of her best performance to date in a World Surfing League (WSL) competition. In May, she took third place in the Fiji Women's Pro Competition. In the process, she beat six-time world champion Stephanie Gilmore and current top-ranked surfer Tyler Wright. She also landed her first WSL Big Wave award nomination this year for her performance on the wave Jaws in Maui in January, just six months after giving birth to her first child.

Her performances left her peers in awe.

"The hardships she overcomes to perform at the level she does in the ocean is arguably unparalleled in men's or women's sport," surfing legend Kelly



Slater said of her performance in Fiji. "I think everyone should have a full surf with one arm strapped to their side and attempt not only to paddle out but put themselves in position at heavy spots like Pipe, Jaws, and Cloudbreak, and try to get up on a short board. I'm scared to try it myself and ridiculously impressed with her talents."

To Hamilton, the fact that she surfs with one arm is irrelevant.

"I don't look at it like, 'Wow, I did a really good job with one arm.' It's just, 'Wow, I did a good job on that wave.'"

For the rest of the article go to [www.theguardian.com/sport/2016/aug/25/bethany-hamilton-surfing-espy-award](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2016/aug/25/bethany-hamilton-surfing-espy-award).

## Disability awareness campaign run by mid north coast service reaches worldwide audience



A disability awareness campaign being run by Early Connections, an alliance of five early intervention services from

Taree to Coffs Harbour, is achieving major success, reaching audiences worldwide.

The Accept Difference campaign aims to encourage greater social inclusion and acceptance of families with disability.

Last year the campaign received federal funding, allowing it to expand into paid advertising on television, radio, press and outdoor sites in the region.

Beth Todd, director of the Hastings-based Early Intervention Program, said a 30-second television commercial was spearheading the campaign.

The commercial had received more

than 10 million views globally, through social media and a website.

Ms Todd said one in five Australians had a disability, and community inclusion fostered social well-being as well as economic advantages.

She said the television commercial highlighted the plight of a mother shopping with her child, and showed her need for support and inclusion.

"It shows some local stories about individuals who are working in the community, so that personal message about inspiration from families, about the challenges they've faced and how their children are being included in the community," she said.

"It's also showing the comparisons between what's happening now and what we'd really like to happen, in terms of accepting people with differences."

For more information go to their website at [www.acceptdifference.org.au](http://www.acceptdifference.org.au).

## Maltesers "Look on the light side of disability"

Maltesers features actors with disabilities in the latest ads in its "Look on the light side" campaign.

The Mars UK brand launched the ads after winning BBC Channel 4's 'Superhumans Wanted' competition, which awarded £1m in commercial airtime to the brand that presented the best creative idea with disability at its heart.

The three spots feature disabled actors telling amusing stories of awkward everyday situations that involved their disability in some way. The ads will debut during the opening ceremony of the Rio Paralympics. One of them, which tells the story of a deaf woman whose hearing aid is swallowed by a dog, will use British Sign Language and have no subtitles, a first for English TV.

See the ads at [www.adweek.com/adfreak/british-candy-brand-will-air-funny-ad-entirely-sign-language-no-subtitles-173288](http://www.adweek.com/adfreak/british-candy-brand-will-air-funny-ad-entirely-sign-language-no-subtitles-173288).

# Welfare groups plead with PM: keep \$4 a week payment for poorest Australians

A coalition of Australia's leading welfare groups has written to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten pleading for the preservation of a social security supplement worth between \$4.40 and \$7.05 per week and paid to some of Australia's poorest people.

The energy supplement - originally introduced in 2013 as carbon tax compensation for people on the Newstart allowance, pensions and family payments - is included in the \$6.5 billion of cuts that the government has urged Labor to support after previously backing or promising to consider them.

The Australian Council of Social Service, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, Australian Unemployed Workers' Union, Carers Australia, Jobs Australia, National Welfare Rights Network, The National Council of Single Mothers and Their Children, People with Disability Australia and Welfare Rights Centre have called the move "alarming".

"Denying the energy supplement to new social security claimants will cut payments to 2.2 million people on the

lowest incomes, including pensioners, sole parents, single-income families, family carers and Newstart recipients," the groups wrote in their letters to the leaders, dated August 19.

"Its removal will mean a loss of \$4 a week to the \$38-per-day Newstart allowance, which is well below the poverty line and has not otherwise been increased in real terms since 1994."

The groups assert that a broad range of unions, business groups and political leaders have supported increasing Newstart and that this budget measure contrasts with the government's decision to retain tax cuts given to wage earners as compensation under the carbon tax package.

They also argue that it is "unconscionable" to pursue this cut for new welfare recipients, saving the budget \$1.3 billion over four years, while cutting company taxes and income tax for people earning over \$80,000, costing \$9 billion in total.

"Australia cannot afford such tax cuts when the government is moving to cut the incomes of people struggling

to survive on the lowest incomes in Australia, living in poverty," they wrote.

If this budget saving is successful, new welfare recipients will actually be worse off than if the supplement had never been introduced because the boost took into account the regular CPI-linked increase.

Bonnie Millen, acting president of People with Disability Australia, has said the transfer of this expenditure is "robbing Peter to pay Paul" and that "we should not be making trade-offs and false economies between specialist disability support and income support".

The intervention from the welfare groups comes as the Inclusive Prosperity Commission of the Chifley Research Centre, Labor's think tank, releases modelling saying that the increase in Australian inequality between 2011-12 and 2013-14 will cost individuals \$500 a year by 2019-20.

The report, which says the cost of inequality will grow to 3 per cent of GDP over the next 25 years, is evidence that Australia is "paying the price for increased inequality", according to executive director Michael Cooney.

## Quadriplegic cattle farmer Rob Cook proves it's about brains as much as brawn

Quadriplegic Rob Cook has refused to let the difficulty in getting carers to his family's remote cattle station in the Northern Territory stop him from being a cattleman.

He has relocated to Central Queensland and started an unusual new beef cattle venture, which includes running his own butcher shop.

Rob and his wife Sarah went from working the 400,000-hectare station "Suplejack Downs" in the NT, to a 2,000-hectare property at Bucca near Bundaberg.

"We tried real hard to stay in the Northern Territory but getting carers who want to live and work in such a remote area was a logistical nightmare," he said.

"It wasn't that we were looking for a sea change, it was out of necessity."

Routine muster changes life forever

In 2008 Rob had everything he ever wanted.

The 27-year-old champion bull rider was working on Suplejack Downs, married to the love of his life Sarah, and they had just had their second child when a routine aerial muster went horribly wrong.

The helicopter, which Rob was a passenger in, crashed and left him paralysed from the shoulders down.

Doctors advised the Cooks against returning to Suplejack Downs as it was so far away from medical care, but the couple were determined to give their boys, Braxton and Lawson, a chance at station life.

For four years they managed, but the difficulty in getting carers to move to and stay at Suplejack Downs — the most remote cattle station in Australia — forced them to move to Queensland where they have set up a new cattle business.

## Arts Activated Conference

There are only 12 days to go to our Arts Activated Conference, Tuesday 20 - Wednesday 21 September at Carriageworks. The Conference showcases the accomplishments of people with disability, as leaders, arts practitioners, audience and advocates, alongside best practice initiatives from arts and culture industry. It has established itself as the must attend event for those interested in innovative practice and inclusive arts and disability programs.

For more information go to [www.aarts.net.au/artsactivated](http://www.aarts.net.au/artsactivated).



...creating an inclusive world

# NDIS Update



## Self-management hiccups

Many carers say that self-managing an NDIS plan gives them more choice and control. However, some recent hiccups have made self-managing difficult for families new to the NDIS:

- Teething problems with the new online portal have left many people waiting for weeks for payments to be processed, leading to out of pocket costs and delays in plans being approved.
- Previously people self-managing their funds were given a 'float', or one month's advanced payment, this will no longer be the case.

Go to [www.myplace.ndis.gov.au/ndisstorefront/participant/self-managing-budgets.1.html](http://www.myplace.ndis.gov.au/ndisstorefront/participant/self-managing-budgets.1.html) for more.

## NDIS Champions needed

The Inclusion Hub is a new online tool to support Australian families, Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) practitioners and communities with the resources they need to navigate the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The website has been developed by Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA).

Experts have selected all the best available resources to support families and children with disability and/or developmental delay. It is the goal of The Inclusion Hub to make it easy for families, early intervention providers, early childhood educators, medical professionals and the community to have available to them resources, ideas and stories all in one place.

The Inclusion Hub encompasses a resource directory, a glossary of common terms, webinars, articles, newsletters, downloads and more.

Check out the Hub at [www.theinclusionhub.com.au](http://www.theinclusionhub.com.au).

## NDIS MYPLACE PORTAL EXPLAINED

On the same day the NDIS began full transition a new payment portal, myplace was released. It's been getting some pretty bad press since then, here's why.

What is myplace - myplace is the online NDIS hub. It's where NDIS participants engage with their chosen providers and how all NDIS money is directed.

When was it established - myplace was launched on 1 July 2016, the same day the NDIS began full transition. Before that date there was another online portal being used.

There's been a lot of talk about it in the media recently, why is that - You've probably heard about myplace because its launch wasn't a successful one. The complex system wasn't well tested and it's caused problems for providers and participants since the beginning.

What are the problems - The main problems are to do with the payment system. When NDIS providers provide services, they put in a claim for funding. This claim is supposed to be processed within two days. The issues with the portal mean this hasn't happened. It's also meant that people who are self-managing their packages haven't had access to their funds.

There's been a delay in approved plans too. So while people are having NDIS planning meetings, they aren't receiving their plans and funding packages.

What's the impact - It's been very difficult for service providers as they've had to go into their reserves to pay staff and keep their organisations afloat. A lot of NDIS providers are not-for-profit, so this is especially tough.

Some providers have said that without solutions, they won't be able to keep providing services. This is the case for many sole traders.

It also means the NDIS transition has been slower than initially planned. Its not clear yet if this delay will have wider impact.

What's happening now - The issues have been well-documented and action is being taken. The Ministers responsible for the NDIS, Jane Prentice and Christian Porter have been involved. Minister Porter called for a major review to understand the issues and resolve them. The Review was released in early September.

What about wider impact - Its pleasing to see the government taking action and realising how serious this is.

## Commonwealth Continuity of Support Program

The Continuity of Support program will make sure older people with disability who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continue to be supported as the NDIS is rolled out across Australia.

Service providers are receiving letters from the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) which outline the Continuity of Support (CoS) arrangements for older people.

It is not expected that services for clients will need to change. Importantly, DoH states that, "If a client lives in a group home, it is a priority to ensure that they remain living in their current arrangements." It specifies, "This includes clients who live in a house where there are also people under the age of 65 who will be receiving support under the NDIS."

Until clients transition to the new arrangements, they will continue

to receive their current services from their current service provider. Transition to the new continuity of support arrangements will start on 1 December 2016, and will continue in stages until it's finished by June 2019.

The Commonwealth and NSW governments are working together to make sure the transition is smooth, so that there is minimal disruption to your current services wherever possible.

You do not need to do anything to register for the new continuity of support arrangements. Your service provider/s will be in contact with you to talk about your transition to the new arrangements and when you can expect the change.

More information is at [www.agedcare.health.gov.au/programs-services/commonwealth-continuity-of-support-programme](http://www.agedcare.health.gov.au/programs-services/commonwealth-continuity-of-support-programme).

# The End of State Based Registration and Compliance

*From an article by Luke Bo'sher from Disability Services Consulting.*

At the COAG Disability Reform Council meeting on Friday 2 September state governments made a huge decision about how the NDIS will work for providers. They decided that the Federal Government will take over registering providers and assessing their compliance with national quality standards.

And even more than that – a new national, independent complaints system will be introduced alongside an NDIS Code of Conduct to allow participants to resolve grievances.

Creating a national framework for quality and safeguards and registration is a massive decision that will dramatically simplify the compliance burdens on providers, especially those

operating in multiple jurisdictions.

For the past two years, governments have been talking to people with disability, families and service providers about how providers should be registered in the full NDIS, including who sets the registration requirements and quality standards.

State Disability Ministers agreed to hand over this role to the Federal Government once we get to full scheme in 2019. This makes sense given the NDIS is a national scheme, with a national roll out. This is likely to mean that there will be a single registration process for providers across Australia, with the same compliance requirements wherever they are providing services.

There is very little detail at this stage about what this will all look like in

practice. The NDIA is unlikely to play a role in complaints because this will be done by an independent body. But whether the NDIA will undertake on provider registration and compliance checking against the standards is not yet clear.

The quality and safeguards piece of work is critical to the NDIS' success. It will be the barrier to low quality providers coming into the NDIS market and the enabler for participants to have a way to air (and hopefully rectify) their complaints when providers perform poorly.

The two big pieces of the NDIS left to work out are this one on quality and safeguards and the approach to ILC (Information, Linkages and Capacity Building). Both have the potential to make the NDIS work, or to completely hamstring the Scheme.

## NDIS: COAG council meeting to discuss major IT setbacks in insurance roll-out

The COAG Disability Reform Council met in early September to discuss major IT setbacks that have slowed the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

COAG released a communique from the meeting which concedes that the NDIS is behind schedule and that the delays have been "unacceptable".

The new NDIS MyPlace online portal has been plagued with problems, leaving thousands of people without approved care plans, which would give them access to health care and equipment.

It is the first meeting of state and territory disability ministers since the NDIS moved from a trial to a full national roll-out.

The communique showed governments would endorse a recovery strategy to get a backlog of plan approvals back on track by the end of this year.

Figures released show that 15,000 people have been declared eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme since July, but less than 2,000 of them have had care plans approved.

Chief executive of National Disability Services Dr Ken Baker said the roll-out of the new system was rushed.

"It's caused considerable stress and frustration and indeed cost," Dr Baker said.

"A key lesson out of this exercise is it was the failure, I think, to test this new system properly end-to-end before it

was launched that has led to this saga.

The NDIS MyPlace portal replaced an old system and promised to make planning and payments easier when it was introduced on July 1.

But the system repeatedly crashed and thousands of NDIS participants and service providers have faced weeks waiting to get claims and plans approved.

The Federal Government commissioned an urgent review into problems with the MyPlace website last month, and promised 100 extra staff for the National Disability Insurance Agency.

In the next three years, it is estimated 430,000 Australians will have signed up to the NDIS.

## Inclusion Hub

The Inclusion Hub is a new online tool to support Australian families, Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) practitioners and communities with the resources they need to navigate the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The website has been developed by Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA). It is the goal of The Inclusion Hub to make it easy for families, early intervention providers, early childhood

educators, medical professionals and the community to have available to them resources, ideas and stories all in one place.

The Inclusion Hub has a resource directory, a glossary of common terms, webinars, articles, newsletters, downloads and more.

Check out the Hub at [www.theinclusionhub.com.au](http://www.theinclusionhub.com.au).

## Are you NDIS Ready?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme or NDIS is the biggest change to the way people with disability are supported in Australia's history. If you would like to know more about the NDIS call The Disability Trust on 1300 DISABILITY (1300 347 224) or at [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au).

# For Your Calendar. . .

## Dementia Awareness Month - September

You are not alone...Dementia affects 70% of us.

[www.fightdementia.org.au](http://www.fightdementia.org.au)

## Childhood Cancer Awareness Month - September

Cancer claims the lives of more Australian children than all other diseases combined. Over 10,000 kids are currently fighting cancer, 1 in 5 die within 5 years. [www.cancer.org.au/news/#jump\\_2266](http://www.cancer.org.au/news/#jump_2266)

## Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week - 5 to 11 September

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week is a national campaign that aims to create a more inclusive and accessible community for everyone. [www.sciaw.com.au](http://www.sciaw.com.au)

## World Suicide Prevention Day - 10 September

The purpose of this day is to raise awareness around the globe that suicide can be prevented. [www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/wspd/en](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/wspd/en)

## Foster Care Week – 11 to 17 September

An annual event that aims to celebrate and acknowledge the work of NSW's foster carers. [www.community.nsw.gov.au/fostering-our-future/issue-42/foster-care-week-2016](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/fostering-our-future/issue-42/foster-care-week-2016)

## Parkinson's Awareness Week - 18 to 24 September

[www.parkinsons.org.au](http://www.parkinsons.org.au)

## United Nations International Day of Peace - 21 September

A global holiday when individuals, communities and governments highlight efforts to end conflict and promote peace. [www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)

## World Alzheimer's Day – 21 September

This is a day on which Alzheimer's organizations around the world concentrate their efforts on raising awareness about Alzheimer's and dementia. [www.fightdementia.org.au](http://www.fightdementia.org.au)

## Girls' Night In – 1 to 31 October

This event is an opportunity to gather all your friends for a night of fun that also raises money to conduct research into and provide support for breast and Gynaecological Cancers. Contact 1300 656 585 or [www.girlsnightin.com.au](http://www.girlsnightin.com.au)

## Mental Health Month - 1 to 31 October

A national mental health promotion campaign funded by NSW Health to promote social and emotional well-being by encouraging people to increase mental health literacy. [www.mentalhealthmonth.wayahead.org.au](http://www.mentalhealthmonth.wayahead.org.au)

## Shoctor - Defibrillator Awareness Month – October

We are calling on workplaces to show they care about Cardiac Arrest Survival by hosting their own Shoctor Event as a Defibrillator Awareness Program. [www.cardiacarrest.org.au](http://www.cardiacarrest.org.au)

## Polio Awareness Month – October

[www.polioaustralia.org.au](http://www.polioaustralia.org.au)

## Dwarfism Awareness Month – October

[www.sspa.org.au](http://www.sspa.org.au)

## Amputee Awareness Week – 4 to 11 October

Every 3 hours in Australia a limb will be lost due to diabetes. [www.limbs4life.org.au](http://www.limbs4life.org.au)

## Down Syndrome Awareness Week & Buddy Walk - 4 to 16 October

On this day, people all around the world celebrate the lives and achievements of people with Down syndrome, creating a global voice, advocating for the rights, inclusion and well-being of people with Down syndrome. [www.downsyndrome.org.au/events.html](http://www.downsyndrome.org.au/events.html)

## World Mental Health Day - 10 October

The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide. [www.who.int/mental\\_health/world-mental-health-day/en](http://www.who.int/mental_health/world-mental-health-day/en)