



## Illawarra & Shoalhaven *DISABILITY NEWS*

Information about Disability and Services for People with Disabilities, their Families and Disability Service Providers

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Sept 2011

# Living With Epilepsy

*“The bureaucratic system on attending school with an impairment imposed many hurdles.”*

Graeme and Margaret Crawford from Camberwell in Victoria know only too well the difficulties and worries that accompany a diagnosis of epilepsy. Their son, Sam, was diagnosed with the disorder at the age of four.

As a young baby, Sam contracted a virus, causing severe acquired brain damage, which resulted in spasticity down his right side, severe sight impairment and, eventually, the onset of uncontrolled and debilitating epilepsy – extremely life-limiting effects for him to deal with. By the age of 12, Sam’s epilepsy had deteriorated to the extent that he was having between one and two seizures each day.

Despite facing so many challenges, including the exhaustion and interruptions caused by his seizures, his physical impairment and having limited eyesight, Sam successfully completed Year 12 at Balwyn High School.

Sam’s father, Graeme, says: “Sam received great support and encouragement from his school and his full-time integration aide,



allowing him to attend school, like other children his age. However, there were many challenges. Teaching staff knew little about epilepsy, and so, I addressed all staff annually about what to expect should Sam have a seizure event. This helped allay their fears. The bureaucratic system on attending school with an impairment imposed many hurdles, which are not to be understated.”

After secondary school, Sam attended Swinburne TAFE and completed a three-year course in Work Education and another in Dynamic Website Design.

During the last 15 years, Sam has been cared for by a medical team, headed up by

Professor MJ Cook and Associate Professor MA Murphy of St Vincent's Hospital, who have worked tirelessly in trying to find some relief for him. Over the years, Sam has tried all available medications, including participating in clinical trials of new ones, along with undergoing gruelling neurosurgery many times in order to improve his quality of life — though most have had little or no success.

Sam's retired parents provide 24/7 care for him and are well aware of the restraint that his condition puts upon his life and all of those around him. Graeme says: "Sam's condition, not to mention dealing with the recovery of each extensive surgery, has had huge impacts on our whole family. Despite everyone working hard to ensure that he doesn't miss out and that he gets about, Sam is somewhat imprisoned at home. His quality of life is, therefore, very limited. Maintaining a close group of friends for him imposes more demands on us."

Sam has had a long-term association with the Epilepsy Foundation and gained work experience there as part of his time at Swinburne TAFE. He has participated in the Superfits Programme for many years and enjoys the outings with the group. His longer-term aspirations are to be able to live a normal, independent life, free of epilepsy and the restrictions that imposes.

People with epilepsy or their families can call the Epilepsy Helpline on 1300 852 853 or visit [www.epilepsyaustralia.net](http://www.epilepsyaustralia.net)

#### *Snapshot on epilepsy*

- Epilepsy is a brain disorder, which involves repeated, spontaneous seizures of any type. Research suggests that about 4 percent of the Australian population will develop epilepsy at some stage in their lives.
- The highest incidence occurs in children in the first year of life.
- Purple Day was founded in 2008 by then nine-year-old Cassidy Megan from Canada. It's since achieved international recognition through the internet - in particular, social media — with many embracing her simple

message: wear purple and spread the word about epilepsy!

**Article supplied to Link Disability Magazine April 2011 by Epilepsy Australia. Subscriptions to Link can be done at**

**[www.linkonline.com.au](http://www.linkonline.com.au)**

**or by phoning (08) 8210 3223.**



Epilepsy Australia provides assistance to over 400 000 Australians living with epilepsy. Epilepsy Australia conducts a national helpline that will take callers to their local Epilepsy Australia Affiliate. To talk to an epilepsy counsellor, to help deal effectively with the difficulties caused by epilepsy call 1300 852 853.

## Understanding and Supporting Carers

Carers NSW is offering free training for service providers from government and non government services. The training is to:

- Build the capacity of both government organisations and non government service providers in health and community care to support and work with carers, and
- Raise the recognition of the role and value of carers in both government and non government service provision.

This is an interactive education session focusing on identifying who our carers are, the diversity of the caring experience, the impacts of caring, and what carers want and need to support them in their caring role. The session will also include information on Carers NSW programs and services, as well as external pathways for supporting carers.

Where - Averil Fink Room, Level 18, 24 Campbell Street, Sydney

When - Wednesday 21 September and Tuesday 22 November

Time - 9.30am – 1.00pm

For further information contact the Education and Training Team on 92804744 or email us on [education@carersnsw.asn.au](mailto:education@carersnsw.asn.au).

## Fun Courses for People with a Disability



Kiama and Shoalhaven Community College is pleased to be participating in the 'Inclusive Community Education Program, Pilot' funded by the Respite Directorate of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), Department of Family & Community Services NSW.

The purpose of this program is to provide:

- Recreational and social activities for adults with disabilities, building social networks
- Regular respite opportunity-weekends or evenings

Classes in Drama, Art, Dance, Cooking, Gardening, Craft and more.

Eligibility Criteria - People with a disability who:

- Are aged 18-45 years
- Living at home with an unpaid carer (can be in receipt of Carers' Pension/ Allowance)
- Live in the Kiama, Shoalhaven or Shellharbour local government areas
- Can be participating in day programs (not in residential care)

Where and When - Classes are on now and run through to June 2012 Places are available in all classes. Classes run from 5.30 pm to 8.30pm on the following days and locations-

**Kiama College Campus** - Wednesday evening Jewellery making followed by Folk Art.

**Shell Cove Community Centre, Shellharbour** - Thursday evening Craft. Upcoming classes in photography, music, gardening, drama, etc.

**Shoalhaven College, Bomaderry** - Tuesday class Folk Art, followed by Basic Gardening and then Leatherwork up to Christmas.

Wednesday evening class learning African Drumming.

Transport - In special circumstances

transport assistance may be available

Support - Fully qualified Disability Support workers attend all classes to ensure the well being of students

Cost - This is a fully funded program with no cost to participants or carers

More Information/Enrolments: Students can start the courses at any stage. Contact the Coordinator, John Kenny on 0434 989 253 or the Kiama Community College on 4232 1050 for information, advice and enrolments.

## Behaviour Management and Communication for children with high support needs

*Presented by ASPECT,  
Autism Spectrum  
Australia*



**Listen With Your Eyes – Positive Behaviour Support** - 9.30am - 2.30pm We will discuss the impact of communication, social

and sensory characteristics of autism on the child's behaviour. We will share visual communication strategies to assist comprehension and expression.

**Positive Behaviour Support** - 6pm - 9pm. We look at what the child is trying to communicate to us when they use tantrum and problematic behaviours.

To register, please complete registration form - download from [www.noahsark.nsw.edu.au](http://www.noahsark.nsw.edu.au)

Where and When - Tuesday 25th Oct 2011 at St Georges Basin Country Club, Sanctuary Point

Cost - Professionals - \$27.50 (including GST) per session. Concession rate for Parents/ Carers of children with high support needs - \$16.50

Parents and professionals are welcome at either or both sessions.

Fax to 4422 5156 or email to [nowra@noahsark.nsw.edu.au](mailto:nowra@noahsark.nsw.edu.au), ph 4423 5022. RSVP by Wed 19th Oct 2011.

## Disability Information Assistance Line (DIAL)



Human Services  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care



### Illawarra and Shellharbour

Providing information for people with disabilities, carers, families, service providers and interested community members. We are a central point of contact for information provision about disability services including:

- Programs and services
- Referral to counseling or advocacy services
- Self advocacy and support groups
- Forums and Workshops
- Gaining access to services, aids and equipment
- Illawarra and Shoalhaven Disability News

Phone 4295 9800 or email [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au).



## Shoalhaven Information and Advocacy



Human Services  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care



### Kiama and Shoalhaven

Providing services for people with a disability, frail older people and their carers. Our services include:

- Information - We are a central point of contact for information provision about

all programs and services

- Forums and workshops
- Individual advocacy and support
- Referral
- Counselling - short term access to local counselling services

Phone 4428 9002 or email [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au).

## Unlocking Potential: VALID Keys to Success Conference



**11th & 12th of October 2011**

**Bell City Event Centre, Preston, Melbourne**

VALID invites self advocates, families, planners & facilitators, program coordinators, managers and case managers to a conference on how the new approaches are working in reality. We will hear real stories of how people with disability & their families are

- \* doing their own planning
- \* taking control of their own Individual Service Plan (ISP)
- \* finding real jobs
- \* creating their own homes with ISPs
- \* managing their own staff

We will hear updates on ISPs, the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme), The Disability State Plan, Review of the Vic. Guardianship & Administration Act and more!!

This conference will provide individuals, families & facilitators with inspiration, ideas and examples of what works!

For more information contact VALID ph 03 9416 4003, freecall 1800 655 570,

Email: [bookings@valid.org.au](mailto:bookings@valid.org.au) or go to Website: [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

## Federal Government makes a start in establishing the NDIS, but a long journey ahead



The Federal Government will take the first steps to establish a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), as recommended by the

Productivity Commission and advocated by the disability sector.

An NDIS would transform the provision of support services to Australians with significant disability. The vast majority of people with disabilities, their families and the community congratulated the Government on its endorsement of the vision articulated in the Productivity Commission's final report on Disability Care and Support and looks forward to strong progress in implementing the reforms.

On August 10, the Federal government released the Productivity Commission's final 1,000-page report on Disability Care and Support. While supporting the Productivity Commission's vision, the Government has yet to endorse its recommendations or commit the additional funding required to implement the NDIS beyond an allocation of \$10 million to support a newly-established technical advisory group.

In the plan set out in the report the NDIS would be implemented in stages and not fully implemented until 2018-19. Regional launch sites would operate in 2014 to enable the new system to be tested and fine-tuned.

The Productivity Commission concluded that while full implementation of the NDIS would require an additional \$6.5 billion a year, the social and economic returns will outweigh its cost.

In its 18 month inquiry into the disability services system, during which it received over 1,000 submissions, the Productivity Commission found the current system to be fragmented, under funded, inequitable and providing little choice to people with disability and their carers.

## Basketball- Wollongong NRE Hawks & CUA Jammers



The Disability Trust Sport and Recreation Services are proud to announce a new partnership has been formed between the

Wollongong NRE Hawks and the CUA Jammers. The Hawks will be attending training sessions to assist participants in developing their skills.

“The Hawks have had a long history in supporting The Disability Trust CUA Jammers program and this new arrangement of the Hawks becoming ambassadors of the program is a fantastic new step in support of a great program. The CUA Jammers program is one the top basketball development programs for intellectually disabled persons in Australia. It’s fantastic to have such a well established and run program here for the people of the Illawarra” said General Manager Mili Simic.

The Disability Trust would like to thank the Wollongong NRE Hawks for their support and recognition of our basketball program and more importantly those who participate in it.

If you would like to enquire about the Basketball program or another Sport and Recreation Service please contact Michael or Ryan at The Disability Trust on 4255 8000.

## Friends of The Disability Trust

The Disability Trust Sport & Recreation Services is pleased to announce the formation of a new community group of local businesses who aim to increase the range of services and community support. Those involved with this new initiative include:

Daniel Norris – Ray White

Nathan Heard – Heard McEwen Lawyers

Peter Frankie – True Value Lawyers

Mili Simic – GM Wollongong Hawks

Troy Taylor – Score Memorabilia

Brian Goodall - Coca Cola Amatil

The group will be running some great events

over the next twelve months to support The Disability Trust Sport and Recreation Services and everyone is invited to support these events.

## Catholiccare Family Relationship Services



Wollongong Workshops Term 4

- Kids and Me - for parents who have had children removed from their care
- Teens and Parents - Building Bridges
- Keeping Kids in mind (post separation)
- 123 Magic and Emotion Coaching
- Grassroots Parenting
- Rollercoaster (post separation)
- Mental Health First Aid

For bookings or information call 4227 1122.

Limited childcare may be available for some workshops.

## Hoarding and Squalor Service



The Hoarding and Squalor Service - Illawarra is a service aimed at

providing assistance to people living in poor living conditions, including domestic squalor. Squalor is a complex circumstance that requires a dedicated and collaborative service response provided by professionals.

Clients referred will be assessed for suitability for the program and consideration will also be given to sustaining the client in the community once their living conditions have been addressed and improved. This includes looking at future provision strategies as well as provision of support and care services.

The project is funded by Human Services NSW, Ageing Disability and Home Care to continue to operate until June 2012.

Referrals can be made via the Customer Service Centre at Catholic Community Services on 1800 225 474.



## Noah's Challenge Adventure Race

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Oct 2011

It is amazing how a 'life challenge' can inspire someone to truly amazing efforts, both physical and mental and gain the immeasurable satisfaction of accomplishment just through participation. The best thing about the Noah's Challenge is that you can choose the level of challenge to suit you, have fun, get fit and do something positive for a part of the community that really needs your help!

As the underpinning motivation you can keep in mind that your personal challenge responds to the daily challenge that many families face every day and for whom the Noah's Ark Centre of Shoalhaven organisation exists to assist.

Challenge yourself, then challenge your mates, get your sponsors behind you and together we will help meet the challenge for these kids and families in need and have fun doing it!

The adventure race consists of canoeing, mountain biking, running and orienteering. Go to the Noah's Challenge website [www.noahschallenge.com.au](http://www.noahschallenge.com.au) for more information and to register.

## Statewide Consultations

**with Aboriginal People with disability, their families and carers on NSW Government Person Centre Approaches.**

When - commencing Mon 10th Oct, 2011

Where - Lismore, Ballina, Casino, Mulli Mulli, South Coast

Venue - to be notified

For further information please contact Damian or June on 9519 5005 or at [damiang@adnsw.org.au](mailto:damiang@adnsw.org.au) or [juner@adnsw.org.au](mailto:juner@adnsw.org.au).



## Sexuality Courses



### ISSUES IN SEXUALITY & DISABILITY

This course is a pre-requisite to Sexuality Program Planning. This two day accredited course will cover the underpinning knowledge of issues necessary for participants to support people with disability in the area of sexuality and relationships.

When - 9am-4.30pm, 27 & 28 Sep 2011

### SEXUALITY PROGRAM PLANNING

To be eligible you must attend Issues in Sexuality & Disability. This two day accredited course is designed to take participants through the steps of planning, delivering and evaluating a sexuality education program.

When - 9am - 4.30pm, 23 & 24 Nov 2011

For further information please contact: Professional Education Unit on ph: 8752 4349, Fax: 8752 4392 or Email: [education@fpnsw.org.au](mailto:education@fpnsw.org.au).

Application forms can be downloaded from our website: [www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au).

Where - House With No Steps, 102 Auburn Street Wollongong

Cost - \$360 per course

## National Carer Strategy

For the first time in our history, Australia has a National Carer Strategy. On 3 August 2011, the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin MP, the Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon MP, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers, Senator Jan McLucas launched the National Carer Strategy, which includes \$60 million in new funding over the next four years.

The Strategy delivers on the Australian Government's commitment to better respond to the needs of carers, and helps to ensure carers have the opportunity to take part in all aspects of society, including the chance to participate fully in work, community and

family life.

The Federal Government would like to thank all those people who took the time to attend consultation workshops or provide written submissions to inform the development of the Strategy.

For more information, go to [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au). To download a copy of the National Carer Strategy, go to [www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/carers/pubs/national\\_carer\\_strategy/Documents/national\\_carer\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/carers/pubs/national_carer_strategy/Documents/national_carer_strategy.pdf).

## Disability and Mental Health Conference

Developmental disabilities, challenging behaviour & mental health: research to practice and policy Conference on Fri 30th Sept 2011 at the University of Sydney.

To register visit the website: [sydney.edu.au/health\\_sciences/disability\\_community/research\\_practice\\_policy/](http://sydney.edu.au/health_sciences/disability_community/research_practice_policy/).

## Carers NSW is here to help.

Are you caring for someone with a disability or who is frail or elderly?



This six week phone group program, will allow carers to connect with other carers, share experiences and get support from people in similar situations. Phone group discussions will occur weekly for one hour, over six weeks, beginning on 13th Oct.

For more information contact Bozena or Nadia at 9280 4744.

## Being A Healthy Woman

This book is to help women with intellectual disability or low literacy skills, learn more about their health. It also provides a list of resources on disability for women with intellectual disability, family members or health care professionals. It can be found at

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2010/being\\_healthy\\_woman.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2010/being_healthy_woman.html)

Copies are available ph 9887 5450 or Email: [bhc@nsccha.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bhc@nsccha.health.nsw.gov.au).

# NSW Disability Budget 2011-12



## Budget 2011-12

The NSW 2011-12 State Budget, announced in early

September, marked the launch of Stronger Together II which includes an additional \$341.6 million for the disability sector in 2011-12, taking the annual budget to an unprecedented \$2.8 billion. The majority of this investment, \$1.9 billion, will go to the non-government sector in grants and subsidies - an explicit recognition of their critical role in building social capital and community connectedness.

### 2011-12 ADHC Budget Highlights:

#### Decision support services

- \$4 million on decision support services to build the skills and capabilities of people with disability and improve the social contexts in which they live.

#### Accommodation and respite services

- \$82.4 million in capital expenditure to expand accommodation options for people with disability throughout NSW.
- \$22.6 million on an extra 300 supported accommodation places including 100 Supported Living Fund packages that support people with disability to live in their own communities.
- \$3.4 million on Flexible Respite for an additional 840 places for short term and time-limited breaks for families and carers of people with disability.

#### Post school and day programs

- \$2 million per annum has been allocated for payroll tax rebates for employers who hire a new employee with disability from the Transition to Work program. Businesses will be eligible for a rebate of up to \$4,000.
- \$15.2 million on Community Participation to support an additional 500 school leavers with disability.
- \$5.2 million on community engagement

for an additional 260 places for age appropriate day activities and supports for adults with disability.

#### Children, young people and families

- \$6 million on Family Support creating an additional 1,620 places to assist children and their families at the time when assistance is most effective.
- \$2.6 million to non-government organisations for an additional 990 therapy places to build the skills and capabilities of those they support.

#### Attendant Care

- \$3.4 million on Attendant Care for an additional 55 places in portable, flexible and individualised support for people with physical disability who need personal help to complete activities on a daily basis.

#### Capital Works

- \$41.3 million for work on new accommodation places in a variety of models.
- \$14.7 million to improve accommodation for people residing at the Riverside large residential centre in Orange.
- \$10 million to improve existing accommodation supports.

#### Peak bodies, advocacy and information

- \$3.1 million on peaks, advocacy and information services to support individuals and families by representing their interests and assist them to access information so they can make informed choices and participate in their community.

#### Home and Community Care (HACC)

- Growth for Home and Community Care services is \$42.2 million in the 2011-12 Budget, taking the annual budget to \$678 million (pending direct allocation of funding for the Federal Government).

For more information go to [www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf/file/0003/240717/Budget\\_summary\\_web.pdf](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf/file/0003/240717/Budget_summary_web.pdf).

Source: NDS News Update 8 September 2011

## Applications for Supported Accommodation Fund Open

Applications can now be made to FaCHSIA for funding grants through the Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund (SAIF). The closing date for applications is 20 January 2012.

A total of \$60 million over three years (2011-14) will be available through the SAIF for up to 150 new supported accommodation or respite places. The grants are to provide funding to a range of service providers for a range of innovative projects and accommodation types for people with severe or profound disability. The grants are intended to build on current best practice, influence future supported accommodation service provision and maximise opportunities for people to input into the development and delivery of supported accommodation and respite services.

The grants are targeted at adults with severe or profound disability in need or supported accommodation or respite (the mandatory target group), as well as individuals who may be on waiting lists and who may have ageing carers.

The project must be ready for residents to occupy by 30 June 2014; projects to be completed by 31 December 2013 will be viewed favourably.

Source: NDS News Update 6 September 2011

## 25 year Birthday For Illawarra Vocational Services

On Friday 9th September Illawarra Vocational Services (IVS) workshop was transformed into



an Expo stage to celebrate the wonderful achievement of 25 Years of service. IVS an

Australian Disability Enterprise is engaged in lawn and garden maintenance work and was started by a group of community workers and parents in 1986.

Staff (past and present), business leaders and dignitaries attended to make the day a wonderful success. Staff received awards for years of service and attendees received promotional backpacks to commemorate the occasion.

Overall all present were delighted by the festivities and the development of IVS into the professional business we are today. Special thanks must go to the IVS Supervisors and Staff who assisted in the setup and activities on the day.

## International Day of People with Disability Events

Communities from around Australia can now register their 2011 events for International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD). IDPwD is celebrated on 3 December each year to recognise people with disability, their achievements and contributions to our communities.

As part of the day, local communities are being encouraged to promote greater inclusion of people with disability and participation of people with disability by holding or attending an event to celebrate IDPwD.

To register an event, order your promotional products or to see what events are happening in your community visit the [fahcsia.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fd899ebe99e7a7ab04a1b1231&id=3ef1869335&e=334b8efd21](http://fahcsia.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fd899ebe99e7a7ab04a1b1231&id=3ef1869335&e=334b8efd21) or call 1800 440 385. Event registrations close on 25 November 2011.

## ADHC releases Maintaining Respite Capacity Policy

ADHC has released its [Maintaining Respite Capacity Policy](#). This Policy applies to non-government organisations (NGOs) funded to provide overnight centre-based respite (MDS Service Type 4.02). The purpose of the Policy is to set out how ADHC and the NGO sector, in partnership, manage the needs of people with a disability and their families who overstay their allocated period of centre-based respite.

Hard copies of the Policy are available by emailing your request to the Respite and Carers Directorate at [respite@dhs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:respite@dhs.nsw.gov.au) or contact Pauline Mackiewicz at ADHC for more information on 9277 5655 or [pauline.mackiewicz@dhs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pauline.mackiewicz@dhs.nsw.gov.au).

Source: NDS News Update September 13 2011

## Successful Your Choice, Your Voice Conference Held

The inaugural "Your Choice, Your Voice" Disability Trust Conference held at the beautiful Murramarang Resort was an amazing success. Around eighty service users, parents/ carers and staff came together from all regions of The Trust representing all service types to engage in how the Trust can better meet their needs as service providers.

The conference was officially opened by Brenda Goguen the Acting Regional Director from ADHC and all delegates participated to make the conference something very special.

Highlights apart from the sessions included the trivia night, the fabulous Moruya Day Program Band and the Ironic Circus and vocalists, the massage and meditation room, the artwork on display and Make Your Mark Canvas, and of course the perfect weather that made it an informative but relaxing time.

## Quality Framework for Disability Services in NSW

Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) in partnership with the disability funded sector is developing a Quality Framework that will apply to ADHC operated and funded services. As part of this development, in March 2011, ADHC and National Disability Services (NDS) undertook a survey to understand the extent and type of quality activities in use by the sector and what elements are important to NGOs in a quality management system.

The survey results have now been analysed and demonstrate the extent and type of quality management activities underway in the sector.

Overall, the survey findings reveal that:

- there is a range of quality management activities in use by the sector
- three quarters of respondents undertake quality management activities
- almost one third of respondents implement a standard in addition to the NSW Disability Services Standards
- while one quarter of respondents do not use a formal quality management system, the majority use other processes

or mechanisms.

The survey has enabled ADHC and NDS to better understand the diversity of quality management activities underway in the sector and it will inform implementation of the Quality Framework for Disability Services in NSW to ensure that it meets the sector's needs and recognises systems that are already commonly used.

Download a copy of the NSW Disability Services Quality Systems Survey Report at [www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/file/0004/239890/Quality\\_Systems\\_Survey\\_Report.pdf](http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/file/0004/239890/Quality_Systems_Survey_Report.pdf).

## Senate Inquiry into DES tender established

A key Senate Committee - the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee - will conduct an inquiry into the purchasing arrangements for Disability Employment Services. WA Greens Senator Rachel Siewert moved the motion calling for the inquiry and the Coalition supported it.

The terms of reference focus on the Government's decision to tender 3 Star-rated Employment Support Services (and below). The Committee will look at the impact of this decision on clients and staffing, whether it represents value for public money, and whether it is the best way to improve performance and allow new players into the market.

The inquiry will also consider how well the DES Performance Framework serves the goals of the Disability Services Act 1986. This issue will be of interest to both providers of disability services and consumer groups.

In addition, the inquiry will consider 5 year contracts and the interaction with changes to the Disability Support Pension.

Submissions to the Inquiry are due to the on 26 September and can be emailed to [eewr.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:eewr.sen@aph.gov.au). The report of the inquiry is due 22 November 2011. This reporting date gives sufficient time for the inquiry's recommendations to influence the Government in relation to the conduct of the purchasing process in early 2012.

## Federal Court dismisses case against BSWAT

In a long-awaited outcome, the Federal Court has dismissed the application brought by two former supported employees (the Applicants) regarding the use of the Business Services Wage Assessment Tool (BSWAT). The application had been formally lodged against two ADEs and the Australian Government.

The case has been running for well over three years and has made its way through several jurisdictions. The case alleged unreasonable discrimination against the applicants on the basis of their disability.

In the judgement (a copy is available at [www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/FCA/2011/1066.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/FCA/2011/1066.html)) handed down this morning the judge concluded that the Applicants had failed to establish that their ADE employers had "... discriminated against them unlawfully, in contravention of s 24 of the Disability Discrimination Act, by requiring them to comply with a requirement or condition, or with a requirement or condition that was not reasonable, in having their wages assessments done by the use of the BSWAT."

The judgement is a lengthy document, which cites in great detail the extensive evidence presented by various parties during the case. An important distinction noted by the judge was that the productivity-based Supported Wage System (used mainly in open employment) and the BSWAT had been developed and applied in response to 'different considerations' arising from a jobseeker's placement in either open or supported employment.

The judge further recognised the specific support and endorsement the BSWAT had received after its development from the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, the Australian Fair Pay Commission, the trade unions and employers.

The legal team acting on behalf of the applicants have indicated that they will consider the judgement before deciding whether to appeal.

Source: NDS News Update 16 September 2011

## Smartphones and Disability = Good Match

Smartphones applications (known as 'apps') are getting more useful for people with disabilities. Users can download many fun and useful apps that are easy to use and serve specific purposes. Many software developers have created apps for people with various disabilities to help them be more independent. Today you can find hundreds of apps relating to disabilities and health. Generally apps cost a couple of dollars to purchase, however there are also a number of handy apps available that can be downloaded to your mobile device such as iPhone or iPad for free.

For example, there are apps that allow users to scan labels in grocery or retail stores using their smartphone camera, apps that with a GPS locator, provide directions to the visually impaired or blind. There are apps for just about every type of disability such as autism, blind and visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech impairment and developmental delay. There is an extensive list of some of the available apps here [stoloff-law.com/blog/iphone-apps-that-help-people-with-disabilities-be-more-independent/](http://stoloff-law.com/blog/iphone-apps-that-help-people-with-disabilities-be-more-independent/).

The Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind children (RIDBC) have developed the Auslan Tutor, a portable video-based Australian Sign Language (Auslan) teaching resource developed specifically for the iPhone and iPod touch. It is designed for families of young deaf children to assist them to learn Auslan and promote early communication between parent and child. Over 500 signs are included.

An "app", also known as Application software or simply application, is computer software designed to help the user to perform singular or multiple tasks on hand held devices such as a mobile phone or iPad.

Apps for Windows Phones can be found at [www.microsoft.com/windowsphone/en-us/apps/default.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsphone/en-us/apps/default.aspx), Apps for Apple devices such as iPod, iPad and iPhone can be found at the Apple App Store at [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com), Apps for Android Devices can be obtained from [www.market.android.com](http://www.market.android.com), and Apps for BlackBerry's at [appworld.blackberry.com/webstore](http://appworld.blackberry.com/webstore).

## For Your Calendar...

### Girls' Night In – 1st to 31st Oct

Cancer Council Australia - this event is an opportunity to gather all your female friends, family, colleagues for a night of fun that also raises money to conduct research into and provide support for breast and Gynaecological Cancers - ph 1300 6565 85, Email: [info@cancer.org.au](mailto:info@cancer.org.au) Website: [www.girlsnightin.com.au/](http://www.girlsnightin.com.au/)

### Dogtober – 1st to 31st Oct

Assistance Dogs Australia- Have some fun, raise funds and wear a collar. Some ideas for fundraising can be found on our website [www.dogtober.org.au](http://www.dogtober.org.au) Contact: 1800 688 364 Email: [dogtober@assisteddogs.org.au](mailto:dogtober@assisteddogs.org.au) Website: [www.dogtober.org.au/](http://www.dogtober.org.au/)

### National Amputee Awareness Week – 4th to 11th Oct

The Limbs for Life Foundation is a global nonprofit organisation dedicated to providing fully functional prosthetic care for individuals and raising awareness contact: 1300 78 22 31 Email: [info@limbs4life.com](mailto:info@limbs4life.com) Website: [www.limbs4life.com/](http://www.limbs4life.com/)

### Mental Health Week Month 1st - 31st Oct

A national mental health promotion campaign funded by NSW Health to promote social and emotional wellbeing by encouraging people to increase mental health literacy. For enquiries call Stacey Young on 9339 6008

### World Sight Day – 13th Oct

Vision 20/20 Australia - World Sight Day is a global initiative providing an opportunity to

raise the profile of the causes of blindness and vision impairment and the preventative measures. Ph 03 9656 2020, Email: [info@vision2020australia.org.au](mailto:info@vision2020australia.org.au) or go to the website [www.vision2020australia.org.au/index.cfm](http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/index.cfm).

### Carers Week – 16th to 22nd Oct

The event was established to promote and raise awareness of the valuable role that carers play in our community and to generate discussion about carer issues. Carers week also provides an opportunity for carers to come together support one another and share ideas and information. See information at [www.carersnsw.asn.au](http://www.carersnsw.asn.au)

### Children's Week - 22nd to 30th Oct

This week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. To organise, register or find events go to [www.nswchildrensweek.org.au!](http://www.nswchildrensweek.org.au!)

### National Kidsafe Day – 25th Oct

Aims to increase awareness of unintentional childhood injuries and their prevention as well as valuable work of Kidsafe - the Child Accident Prevention Foundation Of Australia in public education, advocacy and research. Ph (08) 9340 8509, Email: [Kidsafe@kidsafewa.com.au](mailto:Kidsafe@kidsafewa.com.au) or go to the website [www.kidsafeday.com.au](http://www.kidsafeday.com.au)

### National Bandana Day – 28th Oct

The annual Fundraising and awareness day for CanTeen, the organisation for young people with cancer. Contact Phone: 9262 1022 Email: [admin@canteen.org.au](mailto:admin@canteen.org.au) Website: [www.bandannaday.com.au](http://www.bandannaday.com.au)

**Would you like to receive this newsletter in printed form or by email?**

**Contact: The Disability Trust on [info@disabilitytrust.org.au](mailto:info@disabilitytrust.org.au)**

**100-102 Jardine Street Fairy Meadow NSW 2519**

**Postal: PO Box 395 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519**

**Phone: 4255 8000 or Fax: 4255 8088 Website: [www.disabilitytrust.org.au](http://www.disabilitytrust.org.au)**

*The newsletter is prepared by the Information and Advocacy Service aimed at covering a wide variety of services 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 Information and Advocacy Service.*

*...creating an inclusive world*