



March 21st is Australia's Harmony Day, which celebrates the country's cultural diversity. It coincides with the United Nations' [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) which is observed with a series of worldwide events and activities on March 21st each year. The special day aims to remind people of the negative consequences of racial discrimination and their obligation to determinedly combat it.

Harmony Day is an Australian Government program that centres on the message that "Everyone belongs", reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians. Since 1999, thousands of Harmony Day events have been staged in childcare centers, schools, community groups, churches, businesses and federal, state and local government agencies across Australia.



Disability Advocacy Network Inc
P O Box 912, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650



POSTAGE
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AUSTRALIA



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

For Equality, Independence & Integration

Jan/Feb/March 2017

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We are now well into 2017 and no doubt you are all back into your weekly routines, hopefully after a relaxing summer break - with any luck the hot weather is gradually moving on to leave us with a cooler Autumn.

Firstly, I would like to welcome a new face to DAN: Erica Batchelor commenced in early February and has taken on the role of Wagga Advocate following Kate Russell's resignation. Erica looks forward to meeting you all - call into DAN's office and say hello.

As you are all aware, following the agreement made at our AGM last October, DAN is in the process of merging with DAIS Albury. Much work is being done behind the scenes by the Merger Steering Committee to ensure that the process is being followed in a timely and business-like manner, ensuring that both agencies are comfortable with the decisions. There is more information on the merger on page 3 and 4, please take the time to read this report and come in and talk to us if you have any queries or concerns regarding the merger. Your comments are very important to us.

As the merged organization comes together, a new Board will be formed. If you or someone you know may be interested in being a board member please contact DAN for an information package and application form. Applications for a position on the Board close on 28th April. 2017.

We were sorry to hear that long-time member and dedicated former Chairperson, Brian Couper is unwell. Best Wishes Brian from all of us at DAN.

Joan.

Disability Advocacy Network Inc Office Hours

Wagga Wagga & surrounding towns
31 Fitzmaurice Street, WAGGA WAGGA
Monday to Friday
9:00am to 4:30pm/by appointment only

Tumut & surrounding towns
Tumut Neighbourhood Centre
173 Wynyard Street, TUMUT
1st Tuesday of the month
10:30am to 3:30pm/by appointment only

Young & surrounding towns
Young District Community Hub
2C Campbell Street, YOUNG NSW 2594
2nd Tuesday of the month
10:30am to 12:00pm/by appointment only

Cootamundra & surrounding towns
Intereach Office
24 Bourke Street, COOTAMUNDRA
2nd Tuesday of the month
1:30pm to 3:00pm/by appointment only

Temora & surrounding towns
Temora Community Centre
225 Hoskins Street, TEMORA
3rd Tuesday of the month
10:00am to 12:00pm/by appointment only

West Wyalong & surrounding towns
West Wyalong Community Health Centre
186 Main Street, WEST WYALONG
3rd Tuesday of the month
1:30pm to 3:00pm/by appointment only

Leeton & surrounding towns
Leeton Community Centre,
3 Wade Ave, LEETON
Tuesday & Thursday - by appointment only

Griffith & surrounding towns
6/26 Ulong Street, GRIFFITH
2nd & 4th Thursday of the month
By appointment only

Narrandera & surrounding towns
Narrandera Shire Library
39-51 East Street, NARRANDERA
By appointment only

This Newsletter is published quarterly by:
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Ros Griffin/Swie Madden

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All contributions and enquiries are welcome and should be addressed to the Editors at the above address.

Joan Page - President
Stan Warren - Vice-President
Sue Maxwell - Secretary
Chiu Phua - Treasurer
Thara Pech - Publicity Officer
Lyn Butler
Ros Griffin

Staff members

Swie Madden - Manager
Amie Favier - Advocate
Erica Batchelor - Advocate
Belinda Black - Advocate

Disability Advocacy Network Inc's
A B N is 21 281 328 946

**Donations of \$2 and over
are tax-deductable**



Editorial



Welcome to the January, February, March edition of Advocacy in Action. Also, welcome to the two new Advocates, Erica and Belinda.

In this edition you will read a lot more about the merger between DAN and DAIS. The Steering Committee is working very hard to complete the merger in the next few months.

The Steering Committee is also advertising for Board Members for the new organisation which will be called Regional Disability Advocacy Network (RDAC). If you are interested in becoming a member or know someone who might be interested in applying to join the new Board, the notice on page 4 will tell you how. If you have any questions please contact Swie.

The Advocacy Support Group has a big year ahead with all its meetings and activities. I can see from the photos of this group that they all have a good time together.

Several support groups in the region are being promoted on pages 12 and 13 and if you like books you might like to go to the Book Fair at the Showground on the weekend of 6th and 7th May.

And finally, food! The recipe for Cauliflower Gratin looks really delicious and I'm sure you'll find this recipe perfect for the cooler autumn and winter weather ahead.

Until next time,
Best wishes from Ros.

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The Disability Advocacy Network Inc is funded by the Australian Government
Department of Social Services (DSS)



Recipe Corner

Whole cauliflower gratin



INGREDIENTS

- 1.2kg whole cauliflower, trimmed
- 50g butter
- 1/3 cup plain flour
- 2 cups milk
- 3/4 cup tasty cheese, grated
- 1/3 cup parmesan, finely grated (see note)
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon thyme leaves

METHOD

Step 1 - Preheat oven to 200C/180C fan-forced

Step 2 - Place cauliflower on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave on HIGH (100%) for 8 to 10 minutes or until just tender.

Step 3 - Meanwhile, melt butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add flour. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until bubbling. Gradually add milk, stirring until smooth. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes or until sauce has thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in 1/2 cup tasty cheese and 2 tablespoons parmesan. Season with salt and pepper

Step 4 - Pour 1/3 of the sauce over the base of a 5cm-deep, 22cm round ovenproof dish. Place cauliflower in centre of dish. Top with remaining sauce and sprinkle with remaining tasty and parmesan cheese.

<http://www.taste.com.au/>

RIDDLES



The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
Footsteps.

The more there is the less you see. What am I?
Darkness.

You will always find me in the past. I can be created in the present, But the future can never taint me. What am I?
History.

What disappears the moment you say its name?
Silence.

A boy fell off a 100 foot ladder. But he did not get hurt. Why not?
He was only on the first step.

What is easy to get into, but hard to get out of?
Trouble.

A seven letter word containing thousands of letters. What am I?
Mailbox.

What has four wheels and flies? Garbage truck (flies)

What is harder to catch the faster you run?
Your breath.

What English word has three consecutive double letters?
Bookkeeper.

You can see me in water, but I never get wet. What am I?
A reflection.

Which ring is square?
A boxing ring.

What gets tighter when stretched?
A budget



www.doriddles.com/riddle

Self Advocacy Support (SAS) group

Report from February meeting:

- Confirming December 2016 voting - 2017 Chairperson: Michael Ingold
2017 Secretary: Jacqui Meyers
- Set meeting dates for 2017 (see below)
- Discussed choice of topical training sessions.
- Held Friendship Circle session (Team Leader: Michael Ingold)
- It was agreed that members will work as a team and those who don't may leave the group.
- Members will take turns to be the Team Leader at the monthly Friendship Circle sessions.



Report from March meeting:

- Elected Social Activity Co-ordinator
Leonie McClean was happily elected by the majority of members present.
- Confirmed topical training sessions for the next quarter, and agreed to have a social gathering over dinner at Sportsmen's Club on 24th of March - 6:30pm start.
- Held Friendship Circle session (Team Leader: Kane Meyers)
- It was agreed that member/s with the most attendances in 2017 will receive a small surprise gift at the end of the year.



Disability Advocacy Network Inc (DAN)

Self Advocacy Support Group

(For people with an intellectual disability)

The group meets once a month.

WHEN: 2nd Monday every month

WHERE: DAN's office, 31 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga.

TIME: 4:30PM – 6:30PM

Refreshments will be provided.

The group also organises social activities - If you are interested in joining the group, why not give it a go. It is free to join.

For more information, please ring DAN's office on 69 219 225 - The Chairperson or Secretary of the group will return your call.



The group is supported by DAN's Advocate.

Self Advocacy Support Group

(For people with an intellectual disability)

2017 Meeting Dates
(Every 2nd Monday every month)

February 13

March 13

April 10

May 8

June 19 (3rd Monday)

July 10

August 14

September 11

October 9

November 13

December 11

Meeting Time:

4:30PM – 6:30PM

Meeting place:

DAN's office, 31 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga Wagga.

SAS Members' Coming Activities

(Non-members - by invitation only)

Social gathering

When: Friday, 24/3/2017

Time: 6:30pm start

Where: Sportsmen's Club

Transport: Courtesy bus available (6921 3245)

Cost for meals: \$20 - \$25

For more information, ring DAN on 6921 9225, Leonie will return your call.

Australian Self Advocacy Project - consultation.

When: Monday, 10/4/2017

Time: 4:30pm start

Where: DAN's office

For more information, ring Swie at DAN.

NDIS Supports Information Session

When: Monday, 8/5/2017

Time: 4:30pm start

Where: DAN's office

For more information, ring Swie at DAN.



In the last newsletter it was announced that Disability Advocacy Network (DAN) was going to merge with Disability Advocacy and Information Service (DAIS) based in Wodonga, to create a new organisation.

The merger can only happen with the support of members of both organisations. The proposal to merge was presented to members of both organisations at their respective Annual General Meetings and it was well supported.

These are some of the questions that we were asked, and the answers:

Why merge? What is wrong with the way things are?

In a changing world the government is changing the way it does business. It is different from what it was 25 years ago when it funded local organisations to provide services that met local needs, resulting in every organisation doing things differently.

Now the government wants to work with a smaller number of, but larger organisations which can deliver similar service across Australia in a cost effective way. We are in a competitive environment. We need to adjust the way that we do things.

What will the new organisation be called?

After we held a naming competition, it was decided to call the new organisation **Regional Disability Advocacy Service (RDAS)**. The name reflects the fact that the focus of the organisation is to advocate for people with disability in regional and rural areas including regional centres like Wangaratta, Wodonga, Wagga Wagga and Albury.

What region will be covered by RDAS?

RDAS will still cover Northeast Victoria and Southern NSW, the region currently covered by DAIS, plus the Riverina and Southern Slopes region covered by DAN.

Will there still be an office in Wagga Wagga?

Yes: The head office will be in Wodonga. The offices at Wangaratta, Wagga Wagga and Leeton will stay to provide locally based service.

Do you have any other questions about the merger?

If you have any questions or want to comment about the merger, please contact Martin Butcher, Executive Officer of DAIS on (02) 6056 2420 or Swie Madden, Manager DAN 6921 92265.



Courtesy: DAIS/DAN Merger Steering Committee

DAIS/DAN Merger Steering Committee

Call for applications to join a new Board to take a new Direction

Are you a leader who wants to make a difference and support disability advocacy in Regional Australia?

Regional Disability Advocacy Service (RDAS) is being established in 2017 as a merged organisation between Disability Advocacy Network Inc (DAN) based in Wagga Wagga and Disability Advocacy and Information Service (DAIS) based in Wodonga. Both organisations have about 25 years history of providing Advocacy to people with disability. The two organisations have come together with a shared vision and purpose, that by working as one, they would have greater impact with the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

RDAS is calling for applications from people with a range of skills and experience to contribute to the governance of the new organisation. RDAS prides itself on being a disability focused and managed organisation. People with personal life experience of disability, either themselves or as a carer/family member, are encouraged to apply. Your insight into disability related issues is relevant and will assist in the systemic advocacy undertaken. People with professional skills and experience in legal, financial, governance, public relations and management are equally valuable.

To indicate your interest, you are asked to complete an application form outlining your experience and why you would like to be a member of the RDAS board. After receiving an application form you may be asked to attend an interview.

To obtain our information pack including application form, please contact Martin Butcher on 02 6056 2420 or Swie Madden on 02 6921 9225.

Applications close Friday 28 April.

NDIS Information Sessions



NDIS; Straight Up!

This workshop offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and carers a better understanding of the NDIS, how to prepare to access the NDIS, and to start 'pre-planning'.

When: Tuesday, 11/4/2017

Where: Tolland Community Centre, Wagga Wagga.

Time: 10:30am - 4:00pm

When: Tuesday, 12/4/2017

Where: Cootamundra

Time: 10:30am - 4:00pm

For more information - Trisha 6057 4700

Community Information Sessions

These sessions are designed to offer people general information about the NDIS.

24/3/2017 - Leeton

10:30am - 12:00 noon. Leeton Library, Corner Sycamore Street and Dooley Lane, Leeton.

24/3/2017 - Narrandera

2:00pm - 3:30pm. Community Services Building, 4 Victoria Square, Narrandera.

For more information: Charlotte Russell
National Disability Insurance Agency
T 02 62699948 **W** www.ndis.gov.au
E nswsouth.actengagement@ndis.gov.au

Murrumbidgee NDIS Provider Forum

An opportunity for the sector to receive up-to-date information, discuss important issues relevant to service delivery, and to network with other providers.

When: Thursday. 6/4/2017

Where: Wagga Wagga RSL, Corner Kincaid & Dobbs Streets

Time: 10:00am - 1:00pm

Registration: <https://www.regonline.com.au/registration/checkin.aspx?EventId=1963254>

For more information: John Carrigan - 02 9256 3111 or john.carrigan@nds.org.au

40,000 Books! Don't Miss It!

the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga

BOOK FAIR

Saturday 6th May (8am - 5pm)
Sunday 7th May (9am - 4pm)
Wagga Showground

*HUGE categorized stock *Fiction & Non-Fiction
*BIG range of books for Children & Youth
* Plus CD's, DVD's, Sheet Music, Craft Magazines, Texts,
Reference, Mills & Boon, Westerns, Large Print

*Realistic Prices * Bring a carry bag

Entry: Adults \$2 Children free
Barbeque available all weekend
www.waggarotary.org

Get NDIS Ready (Carewest)

Find out what the NDIS means for you and the important people in your life.

GRIFFITH

When: Tuesday. 28/3/2017

Where: Griffith City Library, Banna Ave, Griffith

Time: 11:30am - 1:30pm

NARRANDERA

When: Wednesday. 29/3/2017

Where: Narrandera Community Services Building, 4 Victoria Square, Narrandera

Time: 11:30am - 1:00pm

TEMORA

When: Thursday. 30/3/2017

Where: Temora Ex-Services Memorial Club, 130 Baker Street, Temora.

Time: 11:30am - 1:00pm

Light refreshments provided - all welcome.
RSVP for catering purposes by 24/3/2017
to Melissa.Thatcher@cw.org.au or
call 1300 227 393.

Mental Health Reform

"Beyond the Talk - A Panel Review on: Where we go from here"

(Local, State and Federal and the Transition into NDIS)

How do we continue to work together in a market based environment? Will competition affect how we work together? What are practice examples of working together?

When: 29th March 2017

Where: International Hotel, 2 Lake Albert Road, Wagga Wagga.

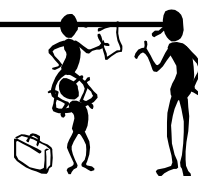
Time: 8:30am - 11:30am

Cost: \$40.00 (including breakfast)

For more information
contact Michele Saffery on 6971 9904
Tickets can be purchased through the Wagga Civic Theatre or by phone 6926 9688 or
<https://tinyurl.com/WaggaBusinessBreakfast>



COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD



Recently Diagnosed with Dementia ?

Alzheimer's Australia NSW invites you to join a group information session to find out about the support, services and programs available.

When: Tuesday, 28/3/2017

Where: The Dunne Room, St Michaels Parish Centre, Johnson Street, Wagga Wagga.

Time: 10:30am - 1:00pm

Bookings are essential -
Alzheimer's Australia NSW 02 8875 4667.

WASG Superhero Picnic

(Wagga Autism Support Group)

When: Sunday, 2nd April 2017

Where: Collins Park, Wagga Wagga.

Time: 11am - 2pm

For more information contact Wagga Autism Support Group 6922 9744

FACETS

Parents and Carers of People with a Disability Support Group

When: Thursday 20/4/2017

Where: Young District community Hub, 2C Campbell Street, Young.

Time: 10:00am

For more information, contact Cathy Daley
6382 6328 or 0437 126 328

Early Days Workshops

(Autism Spectrum)

1. Understanding Behaviour - 22/3/2017

2. Tips for Everyday Skills - 23/3/2017

Where: Both workshops - RSL Club, Dobbs Street, Wagga Wagga.

For more information, ring 8977 8353 or
edworkshops@autismspectrum.org.au

Cootamundra Parkinson's Support Group

When: 19/4/2017, 17/5/2017 & 21/6/2017

Where: Cootamundra Library, 61-71 Wallendoon Street, Cootamundra.

Time: 2:00pm - 3:00pm

For more information,
ring Helen Eccleston 6942 2418

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES: LEISURE TIME

After school activities for kids with a disability provided by the Leisure Company, for school aged children, offering school pick-ups, recreational and social activities.

When: Wednesdays and Thursdays

Where: 73 Peter Street

Time: 3 - 5:30

Cost: \$15.00 per session

For more information, contact Sarah Manly
6921 2330 or sarahm@theleisurecompany.org

RAD - Recovery Approaches to Dementia - Dementia Support Information Session

When: Wednesday, 12/4/2017

Where: Narrandera Library.

Time: (will be advised upon receiving registration)

Dementia Recovery Education & Support Groups - Leeton Reference Group Meeting

For anyone who has attended RAD program) Will be reviewing the program; your feedback and suggestions will be appreciated.

When: Monday, 10/4/2017

Where: Leeton Library

Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm

(A light lunch will be provided)

Dementia Support Information Session

We would like to set-up a Dementia group in Narrandera. Members of the community are invited to come along and contribute to the planning of the group which is due to commence in May 2017.

When: Wednesday, 12/4/2017

Where: Narrandera Library, 39-51 East Street, Leeton.

Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm

RSVP: by 6/4/2017 for catering purposes.
(Morning tea will be provided)

Bookings for the above are essential - For enquiries or to register, contact Lynda or Hannah at Centacare on 6923 3888 or
macmillanl@centacareswnsw.org.au or
hamiltonh@centacareswnsw.org.au

NDIS and the Murrumbidgee District

The NDIS has been introduced in stages since it started because Australia is a big country and NDIS is a big change and it is important for the government to ensure that the NDIS is well supported and put into action properly. Disability service users who have already been on the system and new participants will enter the NDIS scheme progressively. The NDIS will become available in the Murrumbidgee district from **1 July 2017**. You may have to wait up to 6 months prior to the NDIS rolling out in your areas to meet the NDIS access requirements. The NDIS' Murrumbidgee district covers the local government areas of:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| • Albury | • Greater Hume Shire | • Murrumbidgee |
| • Berrigan | • Griffith | • Narrandera |
| • Bland | • Gundagai | • Temora |
| • Boorowa | • Harden | • Tumbarumba |
| • Carrathool | • Hay | • Tumut Shire |
| • Conargo | • Jerilderie | • Urana |
| • Coolamon | • June | • Wagga Wagga |
| • Cootamundra | • Leeton | • Wakool |
| • Corowa Shire | • Lockhart | • Young |
| • Deniliquin | • Murray | |

If you live in one of the above district areas, are you going to apply to be an NDIS participant and not sure what to do? Please contact NDIS on 1800 800 110, speak to one of the Advocates at DAN or Dave from DAIS' office on 6046 2420, they should be able to provide you with the answer you wanted and/or direct you to the right people.

NDIS Unsure who to complain to?

there is no wrong door

If you call any of our offices we will help you get to the right place

I'm not happy with the provider of my disability supports

NSW Ombudsman

1800 451 524

nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au
ombo.nsw.gov.au

I'm not happy with the NDIA's actions

Commonwealth Ombudsman

1300 362 072

ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
ombudsman.gov.au

I'm not happy with a product or service I bought

NSW Fair Trading

13 32 20
fairtrading.nsw.gov.au



Fair Trading



MANAGER'S REPORT

The beginning of 2017 reminded both DAN's staff and Board members of the busy and challenging year ahead with the merger and the NDIS roll out dates in our region.

Being one of the DAIS/DAN Merger Steering committee members, I have been extra busy recently. Attending a number of the meetings and promoting the merger with the necessary information to related stakeholders. All of those that I have spoken to indicated that the merger is a good move under the current NDIS culture and tight government budgets. They also expressed their continued support of the new entity.

I have also been busy with the recruitment process to fill the positions of Kate Russel and Rachel Cody. Due to personal reasons, Rachel decided to resign from DAN at the end of January. We are sorry to see her go. I am very pleased to welcome Erica Batchelor and Belinda Black to the team here at DAN. Both Erica and Belinda have extensive experience working with people with disabilities. Erica will be undertaking the advocacy role in Wagga Wagga and surrounding towns, while Belinda will be looking after the Leeton, Griffith and Narrandera areas.

Self Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU) has contacted most Self Advocacy support groups throughout Australia, including DAN's group to consult the members for their ideas and feedback on a preferred national model or approach for supporting group self advocacy. As readers would agree, Self advocacy is important for many people with a disability. Members of DAN's Self-Advocacy Support group have agreed to meet with SARU's

representative and be part of this consultation.

All of DAN's Advocates have been busy too. This financial year, we have handled more issues (175) as at 28/2/2017, compared to 151 issues as at 28/2/2016. Interestingly, the number of Community Education provisions is exactly the same as this time last year, ie 31. (See next page for some of the photos taken during recent consumer training sessions).

As it is less than three months until the NDIS is rolled out in our region, there have been numerous NDIS forums available, both for people who have a disability and Parents/Carers. Those of you who are interested in attending, please ring DAN's office, we should be able to direct you to the closest venue. Please also see the Coming Events page in this newsletter.

IDEAS of Tumut is a free telephone information service for people with disability, their family, carers and other supporters. IDEAS' March/April 2017 newsletter featured many interesting and important articles, especially the article on Planning for the NDIS. They include: NDIS Access Checklist, Self Managing your NDIS fund, Accessing Funds in the NDIS Budget, etc. If you wish to obtain a copy of the newsletter, please give IDEAS a call on 1800 029 904.

Until next time,
Swie



About KinCare



KinCare is a leading family owned and operated provider of disability services and in-home support. We have over 25 years experience in supporting children and adults with disability to enjoy the best life they can.

KinCare provides disability services in the home and in the community. Whether you have an acquired brain injury, intellectual, physical, sensory or neurological disability or degenerative disease, we can provide support services to help you achieve a more independent today and brighter tomorrow.

Our Disability Support Services

We provide NDIS, state government and privately-funded care to Australians with disability. Our support will help you achieve your goals and enjoy a great a lifestyle. We will work with you to improve your quality of life, health and wellbeing.

NDIS Approved Services

KinCare is a registered provider of services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). We work with you to ensure that services are tailored to your unique lifestyle and needs so that you have the best chance of achieving your goals.

We really understand the NDIS. We will work with you to ensure your NDIS plan provides the best possible range of services and supports to help you to achieve your goals - whatever they may be.

Our philosophy is to tap into your life's passions so you can connect your goals to the lifestyle, relationships, learning and career choices you find most fulfilling. We will get to know you, your family and carers and ensure that we fully understand your goals for the future so that the supports and services we provide are tailored just for you.

For more information, Ring KinCare Health Care Services on 02 6151 0005

Email: maryjane.rudd@kincare.com.au
Web: www.kincare.com.au

Wagga Autism Support Group - Super Hero Picnic



Wagga New Advocate

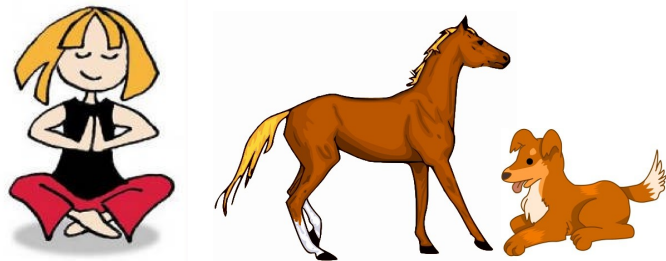
Hi my name is Erica and I am the new disability advocate for the Wagga Wagga area.



I come to DAN with a lot of experience working in the area of health and disability over the years and have a good knowledge of what services and supports are out there in the area for our clients, their family and carers.

I enjoy working actively with the local community and being able to share my time, information and knowledge with others who are in need.

Outside of work I love doing yoga, walking our dogs and spending time with family and our animals. I look forward to getting to know the DAN's existing clients, staff and meeting new faces who are welcome to drop by the office and when out and about at meetings and workshops.



The role of disability advocate will be a new and welcome challenge for me and hope I am able to fulfil the role successfully, being a useful support person and agent for change for those in our community who identify as having a disability and those who help care for them.

Thank you for inviting me to join DAN's team.

Erica Batchelor

Outreach New Advocate

Hi my name is Belinda Black. I have recently started as the Advocate based in Leeton.



I have been working in the disability industry for approx. 13yrs now, I started as a volunteer with a young female from the Turkish community helping her with her family after school and on the weekends.

I started working within group homes in 2010 and have since developed a big passion for people's rights. I believe all people have the rights to freedom and choice within their lives and in 2014 I lost a client to cancer which changed me. It has driven me to want to fight for the rights of people with a disability, to ensure that they have the same access to medical and professional supports that everyone else gets.

I am also a mum of a child with Autism so I have lived experience of dealing with schools and trying to access supports for my child daily. My child also sees a specialist in Sydney every 3 months so I understand how hard it can be accessing the supports, and being able to afford them.

I have been working as an advocate within the multicultural community in Griffith, I see how important it can be to have access to an advocate and the difference they can make in people's lives. I am honoured to be given this opportunity and look forward to the future.

Belinda Black

Smile! - You are on camera 😊



PHOTOS:
Satisfied workshop participants from:
1 - Kurrajong's Wagga Wagga Skills Options.
2 - Kurrajong's Wagga Wagga Culinary Capers & Maintenance.
3 - Kurrajong's West Wyalong Skills Options.
4 - The Leisure Company Wagga Wagga.
5 - Temora Pinnacle Community Services.

RECENT NAME CHANGES

OLD NAME	NEW NAME	PHONE NUMBER
• Kurrajong Waratah	→ Kurrajong	1300 764 620
• Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW	→ One Door Mental Health	1300 554 660
• Richmond Fellowship of NSW • Richmond PRA Limited	→ Flourish Australia	1300 779 270
• Home Care	→ Australian Unity	1300 160 170
• Wagga Wagga Community Access Support Services • Northcott	→ Northcott	1800 818 286
• Family Link • Community Resource Centre • Aged Concern	→ CareWest (Live Better Community Services)	1300 227393
• Baptist Community Services	→ Baptist Care Murrumbidgee	1300 275 227 69 376101
• Housing	→ Dept of Family and Community Services NSW	1800 422 322 6921 0099

NB: IDEAS of Tumut (1800 029904) might be able to help you with other name changes not listed above.

Accessing the NDIS

Information you need to know to access the NDIS

Availability in your area

The NDIS is being introduced progressively around Australia from 1 July 2016. To participate in the NDIS right now, you must live in an area where the NDIS is currently available. In some of these areas, you also need to be a certain age.

You may meet the access requirements up to six months prior to the NDIS rolling out in your area.

How people will join the NDIS has been agreed by Commonwealth and State / Territory governments.



- Be aged less than 65 when you first apply to enter the NDIS and meet additional age requirements if you live in SA or TAS;
- Live in Australia in an NDIS area on a specified date;
- Be an Australian citizen or hold a permanent visa or a Protected Special Category visa.

Note: If some of the above requirements are not met but you live in a NSW NDIS area that is phasing and you are under 65 years of age, you may still meet the access requirements if you are in an existing qualifying program. Contact us for more information.

Preparing to access the NDIS

If you already receive supports from a State or Territory government disability program, you will be contacted by a National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) representative when it is time to transition to the NDIS.



For some people already receiving supports from State and Territory disability programs, evidence of your disability may not be needed. This is because some State and Territory programs have the same eligibility criteria as the NDIS.

If you do not currently receive disability supports and the NDIS is available in your area you can request access by calling the NDIS.

Who can help you prepare to access the NDIS?

You can choose who you work with to help you prepare to access the NDIS. You might work with a family member, friend or carer, an NDIS Local Area Coordinator or early childhood partner, a General Practitioner (GP) or other health professionals.



Becoming a participant

To become an NDIS participant you will need to meet the age, residency and disability or early intervention access requirements and give your consent to join the Scheme. In some States and Territories people currently receiving supports will be moving to the NDIS first.

If you already receive supports from a State or Territory government disability program, you will receive a letter then a phone call from an NDIS representative when it is time to transition to the NDIS.

Until you have transitioned to the NDIS and have an NDIS plan, your existing supports and services will continue.



Can I access the NDIS?

To become an NDIS participant you must:

- Have a permanent impairment that significantly affects your ability to take part in everyday activities, or have a developmental delay;



Evidence of your disability

To allow the NDIA to determine whether you meet the disability or early intervention access requirements, you may need to provide us with evidence of your disability. This includes information on what your disability is, how long it will last and its impact on your life.



Evidence of disability and functional impact may be provided by a health professional in the following ways:

- in the NDIS Supporting Evidence Form;
- in the Access Request Form; or
- via existing assessments or reports.

For some disabilities, information about impact on functionality may not be required. These disabilities are listed in the Operational Guidelines on Access at www.ndis.gov.au.

What is the role of your health professional in the NDIS access process?

GPs and other health professionals may be asked to provide evidence to support a request to access the NDIS.



This may involve:

- completing the NDIS Supporting Evidence Form or sections of the Access Request Form;
- documenting that the person has or is likely to have a permanent disability; and
- providing copies of reports or assessments that outline the extent of the functional impact of the disability.

When documenting the impact of a person's disability a GP or other health professional will be asked to write down how your disability impacts your mobility/motor skills; communication; social interaction; learning; self-care; and self-management.

If a health or education professional finds that a child aged 0 to 6 years may benefit from early intervention or disability support under the NDIS, they should refer the parents to an NDIS early childhood partner. See www.ndis.gov.au for more information.

How long will it take?

You may meet the access requirements up to six months prior to the NDIS rolling out in your area. You will commence your planning conversation in line with the timeframe agreed between the Commonwealth and State / Territory governments.



Once you are granted access to the NDIS you will be contacted to begin your planning conversation.

Until you have transitioned to the NDIS and have an NDIS plan, your existing supports and services will continue.

It is expected to take between six to twelve months for eligible people with disability to enter the NDIS once roll out starts in an area. You can talk to your Local Area Coordinator or NDIA representative about this.

More information

www.ndis.gov.au

1800 800 110
8am to 5pm (local time) Monday to Friday

For people with hearing or speech loss

TTY: 1800 555 677

Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727

For people who need help with English

TIS 131 450

Follow us on Twitter @NDIS

Find us on Facebook
Facebook/NDISAus

*1800 calls from fixed lines are free.
Calls from mobiles may be charged.