



# Newsletter

Summer 2019/2020

## From the EO



RDAS prides itself on providing **independent, free** and **local** advocacy to people with disability. To achieve this RDAS is dependent on the support of governments to recognise the importance of advocacy and provide funding to organisations like RDAS.

It is also important that, from time to time, governments review the sector to ensure that the money provided is being used effectively and accounted for.

Last year the NSW Parliament asked the Aged and Disability Commission to undertake an independent review of the Disability Advocacy in NSW and report to parliament in December.

The review found that:

- there is still an important place for disability advocacy to be supported and funded in NSW,
- the disability advocacy sector has been under funded and under resourced, and
- there is a need for a more co-ordinated approach to disability advocacy in NSW.

We are positive that the NSW Government will accept the recommendations of the review and commit to funding advocacy provision past June of this year.

Regards,

Martin Butcher



## Meet the new Chairperson

My name is Paul Power and I am the new Chairperson of the RDAS Board of which I have been a member of the Board for 2 years.

I currently work for a disability employment service where we assist people with disability to find meaningful, sustainable employment. In my role, I work across a big area which includes both Southern NSW and Northern Victoria which covers the majority of the RDAS footprint. Part of my role is to travel and understand the regions in which I cover which has allowed me to gain an understanding of the diverse issues impacting people with disability.

Since the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October there has been a few changes to the RDAS Board. Long serving Directors Sue Maxwell and Jen Tait have unfortunately retired from the board. Both Sue and Jen were involved in the establishment of RDAS and have contributed hugely to the success of RDAS. We also farewelled Kate Fielder who was a director for a year. I would like to thank Sue, Jen and Kate for their contributions.

We have welcomed Len Robinson on the Board. Len is a member of one of RDAS' Self Advocacy Groups and will be a great addition to the team.

Regards,  
Paul Power





On 5 April 2019, the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, and Minister for Families and Social Services, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, announced the establishment of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

In Australia, royal commissions are the highest form of inquiry on matters of public importance. Recent inquiries and reports have shown that people with disability are more likely to experience violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation than people without disability.

What we learn from the Royal Commission will help inform Australian governments, institutions and the wider community on how to prevent, and better protect, people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation in future. The Disability Royal Commission will run for three years until 2022.

**The Disability Royal Commission wants to hear from you about any issue relevant to its Terms of Reference arising for you, a family member, a friend or someone you work for or with, or as a carer.**

Here at RDAS we can help you to write a submission to tell your story in the best way that best suits your needs/abilities. An RDAS advocate will help you through the submission process, accessing supports such as legal support from the Disability Royal Commission Legal Service (DRLS) as well as counselling support through the National Counselling and Referral Service (Blue Knot Foundation) as needed.

Please contact RDAS today if you would like more information or wish to make a submission:

**Wodonga (Head Office)**  
132 Melbourne Road,  
PO Box 982,  
Wodonga VIC 3689  
Telephone: (02) 6056 2420  
Fax: (02) 6024 6809  
Email: [admin@rdas.org.au](mailto:admin@rdas.org.au)

Access & Support, along with members from our Advocacy and Justice Support Programs provided a stand at the 2019 Henty Machinery and Field Days.



With everybody involved we generated one hundred and fifteen (115) conversations with community members and champions from as far as Queensland and South Australia. From the event, Access & Support subsequently assisted 6 new clients on topics including testing their eligibility for the NDIS, providing information about how the NDIS works and several other disability related matters.

Promoting the NDIS, My Aged Care and other mainstream supports, we exposed the Regional Disability Advocacy Service (RDAS) brand to a possible 20,000 people, offering show bags with magnetised note pads, coffee cups, baseball caps, specific brochures, business cards and the most popular items of course, lollies and bottled water!





resourcing  
inclusive  
communities

An initiative of Family Advocacy

## Making the most of NDIS funding



Our **NDIS SELF-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP** will cover the key components of self-managing an NDIS package. Hear from two families who have over 10 years' experience in supporting their family member with disability to self-manage their plan.

This workshop is for people with disability and families who want authentic choice and control; and current self-managers who need more information on the nuts and bolts of self-management. We encourage you to bring your current plan to the session.

**Tuesday 18 February, 9am - 3.30pm at the Wagga RSL Club, Wagga Wagga**

\$30 for people with disability and family members; \$50 for professionals

**Register at [www.ric.org.au/events/](http://www.ric.org.au/events/) or call 1800 774 764**

## The Walkabout Barber visits the Riverina



Brian Down is the walkabout barber. Brian has a mobile barber shop that he tows around to communities offering free hair cuts and talking to people about their mental health, culture and disability inclusion. He often uses his own personal experiences as an example.

He and his crew of barbers toured the Riverina during January providing free hair cuts to children from diverse backgrounds, getting them ready for school. RDAS went along for the ride, visiting Leeton and Albury, providing information about services and handing out return to school packs as a way of engaging with the communities.

Brian and his wife Leah have a son with severe autism. Brian said "It was my son that gave me the inspiration to open a barbershop in Newcastle. Getting his hair cut was very traumatic for him due to his sensory issues." "I wanted to create a place where he, and others with sensory issues felt safe and included. I know that I will not always be around to cut his hair. I wanted him to learn to receive hair cuts from other people and still feel safe" Brian said.





## Self Advocacy Support (SAS)

The last quarter of 2019, SAS group members were busy with activities in the community and attending meetings. The photos below say it all.



Consultation on Mobile Technology as a tool to increase social inclusion - NSW University/SAS Sydney.



Discussion on accessible places in Wagga Wagga.



Monthly Saturday SAS meeting.



Monthly Monday SAS meeting followed by Fire Drill.



Monthly Monday SAS meeting .



Wagga Social Activity group meeting.



5km Wagga Lake Run and Ride - 29/9/2019 2019.



Monthly Lockhart SAS meeting.



## Community Education

The photos below were taken during the National Disability Standard 4 “Feedback & Complaints” and “Knowing Your Rights” training sessions at various Kurrajong outlets.



Wagga Wagga Kurrajong Timber group 1



Wagga Wagga Kurrajong E-Waste group



Wagga Wagga Kurrajong Timber group 2



Wagga Wagga Kurrajong Recycling group 1



Wagga Wagga Kurrajong Recycling group 2



## Celebration of 2019 IDPW

The International Day of People with Disability was celebrated in style at the Dance Party by about 300 people from across the Riverina and from as far as Blacktown on Friday 29.11.19, to celebrate the abilities and achievements of People with Disability.

The party was held at Kyeamba Smith Hall, Wagga Show Grounds. The theme was Black and White and boy were there some groovy outfits on show! A few escapees, friendly Mexicans, thirsty draculas, lively skeletons, a run-away bride, a joyful nun, all out to dance the night away. Everyone got down and boogied. The photo booth, as usual, was very popular!

RDAS' Self Advocacy Support Group members and volunteers from various other disability services worked extremely hard in organizing and helping out at the party. The food was expertly cooked and served by the volunteers from the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga and the ladies from Inner-Wheels. Local businesses donated goods used for lucky door prizes. The Community Princess Foundation, Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga and Intereach made generous financial contributions.

Dr Joe McGirr MP officially opened the party and the Mayor of Wagga Wagga, Cr Greg Conkey spoke to the crowd about the importance of celebrating IDPWD and how pleased he was to see such a big turnout. Even our Deputy Prime Minister joined in the celebration.

Miss Wagga Wagga, (Hannah Smith) and the Wagga Wagga Community Princess, (Brittany Hackett) joined in the dancing

and presented the best costume and lucky door prizes. The official cake was cut by Luke Hevern from Leeton.

The event provided a great opportunity for people with disability, their families and carers from across the region to get together, relax, laugh and just have a great time.

Everything went off without a hitch and the night was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. A big thank you to the Steering Committee members, all volunteers and business services who helped make the 2019 Dance Party such a roaring success. As you can see, everybody definitely had fun. Rock On !!

After twenty two (22) years involvement with the Dance Party, Swie Madden of RDAS, was presented with an appreciation gift for her efforts over the years.

















## Contact RDAS



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Regional Disability Advocacy Service provides an independent voice. The information contained in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of the organisation as a whole or any of its funding bodies.

If undeliverable return to  
PO Box 982 Wodonga VIC 3689



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### Consultation: Review of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014

HAVE YOUR SAY

People with disability, their families and carers, Disability service providers and any other parties who wish to provide feedback on the Review of the Disability Inclusion Act, 2014 are invited to attend a workshop to be held on:

11 February 2020 - 10:00 am – 2:00 pm  
at Wagga Wagga International Hotel,  
2 Lake Albert Road, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650  
(Morning tea and lunch will be provided)

For registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/consultation-review-of-the-disability-act-2014-tickets-89693727353> or ring (02) 9716 3429.

### Disability Advocacy Review in NSW

Ageing and Disability Commissioner has developed the Disability Advocacy Review reports in relevant accessible formats. The reports are now available for your perusal at:

[www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au) in

1. [An accessible version of the full report.](#)
2. [An easy read guide explaining the purpose of the review, and recommendations.](#)

The Department hopes that the reports will prove useful. If you have any questions or issues with the documents, please get in touch directly with:

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