

ANNUAL REPORT

2011-2012

Contact Information

National Disability Services Annual Report 2011–12

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National Disability Services (NDS) would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the many people who have agreed to allow photographs of themselves at work and in the community to be used in various NDS publications. We also thank our members who were instrumental in arranging for the photographs to be taken.

Cover Photo: Aevgen Aslan has worked with Greenacres for 11 years and is one of their highly skilled operators in the BOC valve refurbishing section.



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Section 1: National Reports

Foreground: Samantha Gimson
Background L-R: Donna Senescall, Claire Heine, Beryl Gearside

Report from the president and chief executive

For the disability sector, 2011–12 was a period of significant progress on some fronts and uncertainty on others.

The year opened with the Productivity Commission's delivery to the Australian Government of its seminal report on Disability Care and Support. The report outlined the main architecture of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which, if implemented, would transform the disability services system. The Commission estimated that to establish the NDIS, government funding of disability services would have to double.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the case for major reform. A public campaign, which NDS and its members participated in and funded, culminated in large rallies around Australia in April 2012. In a tight fiscal environment, the following month's Federal Budget committed \$1 billion to launch the NDIS – including \$122.6 million for sector development which NDS, in particular, had sought. NDIS launch sites in five locations around Australia were subsequently announced. This was significant progress.

But the year ended with many unanswered questions about the design, funding and implementation of the NDIS, highlighting that the future of the NDIS was far from secure.



Ann Sherry AO, CEO, Carnival Australia; Ken Baker and Tim Walton at the 2011 CEO Meeting in Canberra

Policy advice and information

NDS's extensive work on the NDIS has been guided by four aims:

- promote the NDIS to politicians and build public support, principally through the Every Australian Counts campaign
- influence the design of the NDIS through the production of policy papers and advice to policy-makers
- engage with members to keep them informed and gain their input
- provide practical support to disability service organisations to prepare for the new system.

For Australian Disability Enterprises, uncertainty about the NDIS was magnified by questions about the implications of other changes: the Australian Government's vision for supported employment (released in May 2012), a review of funding and the introduction of new performance indicators (about which NDS raised concerns).

Uncertainty for Disability Employment Services (DES) Employment Support Services was acute because of their participation in an open tender process. NDS unsuccessfully opposed the tender process because of its potentially disruptive impact, but influenced the selection criteria and, through a parliamentary inquiry, helped persuade the government to review the performance framework. NDS participated actively on several advisory groups and provided submissions to the government on key open employment developments. NDS also partnered with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote stronger engagement by employers with DES providers.

Other policy priorities for NDS included: securing commitments from governments to fund the additional wage costs arising from the Equal Remuneration Order, raising awareness in Safe Work Australia about disability-specific workplace health and safety issues and working with the National Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council to align the national training package with the needs of the sector.

NDS's policy capacity expanded through the National Policy Research Unit and NDS competed successfully to join FaHCSIA's social policy research and evaluation panel. The Unit published original policy research on topics including the 'Economic Benefits of Disability Employment and Support to Learn: Educating Children with Disability.' NDS was also represented on the National Disability Research and Development Steering Committee.

International relations remain important to NDS. The Asia-Pacific Partnerships Project fosters relationships between NDS members and non-government disability organisations overseas, and NDS occupies a leadership role in Workability International.

NDS held three national conferences, several state conferences and numerous forums during 2011–12. A highlight was the national conference 'Preparing the Disability Sector for the New World' held in Adelaide in May 2012. It combined up-to-date policy information with practical advice for organisations. NDS members benefited from the international expertise in not-for-profit management given by Peter Brinckerhoff at this conference.

NDS produced 475 News Updates informing members about policy developments, funding opportunities, new resources and consultations at state, territory and national levels.

During 2011–12, NDS made more than 40 written submissions to government on diverse topics including: the proposed consolidation of anti-discrimination laws, the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, the definition of charity, the national review of community housing regulation, access to telecommunication services, the Gonski review of education funding, implementing the National Disability Strategy and the Federal Budget.

NDS is represented on key advisory groups to the Australian Government and state and territory governments. These include committees advising governments on the design and development of the NDIS and the implementation of reforms to the Disability Support Pension. They include ministerial appointments to the National Not-for-Profit Reform Council, the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council and the National Disability Strategy Implementation Reference Group.

The National Disability and Carer Alliance (formed by NDS, the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations and Carers Australia) helped ensure that the NDIS campaign connected with service providers, people with disability and families and carers.



Peter Brinckerhoff – speaking at the New World Conference, Adelaide, May 2012

Members, staff and governance

Over the past year, NDS's membership grew 10% to 890 members and associates, of which 807 are organisations. The growth reflects high interest in the major changes underway in the sector and the creation of a new national position within NDS to drive membership growth.

NDS conducted a membership survey in early 2012 which found a high level of overall satisfaction with NDS, while identifying potential for NDS to strengthen its membership services which are expanding.

State and territory committees ensure that NDS remains responsive to priorities and members' needs across Australia. The national NDS Board includes the eight state and territory chairs and six directly-elected members. The Board has three committees – Audit and Risk, Governance and Remuneration (the last of which was formed in 2011–12). Eight national policy committees, which link to state-based sub-committees and networks, advise the Chief Executive on emerging policy issues.

After an extended review, and with pro bono assistance from legal firm Clayton Utz, NDS revised its governance policies, clarifying the important role and responsibilities of divisional committees.

To assist its understanding of the diverse conditions in which organisational members operate, the Board meets in different locations (which, during 2012, included Darwin and Perth) and has presentations from NDS state managers.

To assist in managing the risks inherent in the large number of projects that NDS administers, the Board regularly views a compliance schedule which indicates the financial and delivery status of all projects. The Board has recently adopted a whistleblower policy.

NDS's current strategic plan expires at the end of 2012. Given the large changes looming – not least the proposed NDIS – the Board commenced an in-depth process in June 2012 to develop a new multi-year plan.

Across all its offices, NDS employs around 100 staff to implement its strategic directions and priorities and to manage its projects. Their considerable commitment, initiative and skill are an enormous asset to NDS.



Senator Mitch Fifield – Shadow Minister for Disabilities – speaking at the Preparing for the New World Conference, Adelaide, May 2012



The Hon Jenny Macklin – Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister for Disability Reform – speaking at the Preparing for the New World Conference, Adelaide, May 2012

Finances

NDS ended the year with a surplus, with the NSW Division the main contributor to this surplus. The company has a strong cash position, although most of the cash held is unexpended project income.

Government-funded projects continue to be the principal source of NDS's growth over recent years. Among the largest are – the NSW Industry Development Fund, Companion Card (in WA and NSW), Aboriginal Jobs Together (a NSW project to increase Aboriginal employment), Disability Safe, carecareers workforce recruitment, the Disability Parking Scheme in WA, and various quality improvement and governance projects.

We are grateful for the depth and extent of NDS members' involvement in the governance of the organisation, in contributing to NDS forums and projects, in testing policy ideas against the experience of service provision and in sharing their expertise. This is a key strength of NDS.

NDS appreciates the support it receives from the Australian Government and all state and territory governments. NDS strongly values the working relationship it has with governments to improve the support available to people with disability across Australia.



Tim Walton
President



Ken Baker
Chief Executive



Tim Walton
President



Ken Baker
Chief Executive

NDS Strategic Directions 2007–2012

(Revised May 2011)

1 Equip members to adapt to the new world

Disability service providers face a demanding future: a rising tide of regulations, intensifying competition, increased accountability and reporting requirements from governments. The financial pressure on organisations is increasing, placing at risk their ongoing viability.

To survive, or indeed thrive, in this complex world, service providers require systems to collect and manage data; skills in preparing tenders and identifying evidence of outcomes; sound internal auditing systems, and well-developed business planning and financial skills. They have to make astute judgements about the optimal structure and configuration of their organisation.

Service providers need to work out how to comply with stringent obligations regarding occupational health and safety without compromising their mission to expand the opportunities and choices available to people with disability.

Personalisation in service planning and funding is growing. Although driven by attractive values such as consumer choice and personal empowerment, the design, implementation and management of individualised funding models – depending on which version is chosen – raise complex and contentious issues.

Actions

NDS will:

- continue to inform members about this new world and its implications
- assist members with skills and strategies to achieve sustainability
- influence governments to reduce red tape and implement funding models that fully reflect the cost of service delivery, including compliance
- influence the development and implementation of personalisation and individualised funding
- help prepare the disability sector for new workplace health and safety regulations
- influence the government's vision for Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs), the outcome of the ADE Price Review and government procurement from ADEs
- secure improvements in the Disability Employment Services (DES) program, minimal competitive tendering for the 2012 DES contract and expanded government employment of people with disability.

2 Identify and respond to the unmet need and changing demand for disability services

The disability services system is under severe strain. Every jurisdiction has queues for disability services including accommodation support, respite, community access, therapy, employment and assistive technology. Accelerating and re-shaping the demand for services are factors such as: population ageing, the growing prevalence of autism, increasing recognition of the rights of people with disability and changing community expectations about the role of government.

The proposal for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which NDS has strongly promoted, presents an historic opportunity to increase the funding and system changes that are needed. Realising this opportunity will require a large, coordinated and sustained effort.

Actions

NDS will

- continue strongly to urge governments to establish a National Disability Insurance Scheme and National Injury Insurance Scheme which provide equitable no-fault entitlement to disability services for all Australians who require long-term support
- promote the continued expansion of non-government disability services in response to unmet need because they are generally more efficient, responsive and mission-driven than government services and for-profit services
- seek funding formulae from governments that represent a fair price and reflect the changing support needs of clients.

3 Respond to workforce development, recruitment and retention issues

Across the disability sector, service providers have difficulty recruiting and retaining appropriately qualified staff. Contributing to the shortage are the low public awareness of careers in disability services and the availability of more generous employment conditions among government-owned disability services. At the same time, more complex skills are required from disability support workers as service models and philosophies evolve. Rather than just providing personal care, workers now support individuals in managing personal relationships, in creating and pursuing their own goals in the community, in learning empowerment skills, and in managing challenging behaviours.

Staff quality is the most important determinant of service quality and should thus be a matter of interest to all stakeholders. Traditionally, investment in skills development in the cash-strapped disability sector has been low, but the demand for training and professional development to equip workers with relevant skills is growing.

Actions

NDS will

- continue to seek an outcome from the Equal Remuneration Case that results in increased wages for disability service workers, fully funded by Commonwealth, state and territory governments
- drive the disability workforce agenda with governments, including through the implementation of the National Disability Workforce Strategy and the promotion of carecareers around Australia

4 Reduce cross-program barriers that prevent services from responding to the needs of people with disability

Bureaucratic and jurisdictional boundaries are barriers for people with disability whose service needs are complex or alter as they reach a new life stage. These barriers adversely affect people ageing in group homes unable to access community aged care programs; people moving from school to employment; and people wishing to retire from supported employment.

The Australian Government's focus on increasing workforce participation provides an opportunity to strengthen the employment pathways and reduce the risk for people with disability.

The National Disability Agreement includes a commitment, which NDS helped secure, to make community aged care package funding available to people ageing in group homes, but has done little overall to improve service pathways. The National Disability Strategy, endorsed by COAG in February 2011, is a major opportunity to advance a whole-of-government perspective.

As the only organisation that represents the broad spectrum of disability services at national and state levels, NDS is uniquely placed to negotiate across programs and levels of government to find solutions to cross-program barriers.

Actions

NDS will seek to influence

- the development of an implementation plan for the National Disability Strategy
- the implementation of the National Health Reforms, including the redefined responsibilities for Home and Community Care, to ensure improved health care is available for people with disabilities
- the Productivity Commission's Report on Aged Care Reform in terms of its disability implications and government's response to the report
- the government's workforce participation agenda, with a view to increasing the employment opportunities available to people with disability
- local government uptake of access and equity infrastructure.

5 Promote service improvement through promoting research and disseminating research findings

Governments invest little in disability research. NDS sought and welcomed the increase in research funding under the National Disability Agreement which ministers announced in March 2008. However, the research commitment is still only a small fraction of total expenditure.

Good research and reliable data are needed to drive service development and innovation. With support from the NSW Government, NDS has established a national policy research capacity which will enable it to foster policy and service innovation and form research partnerships.

Actions

NDS will

- continue to engage with stakeholders to develop a national disability research agenda that is responsive to the needs of the sector
- undertake in-depth work relevant to policy development and service practice through the new National Policy Research Unit
- form research partnerships and bid for available funding from government and philanthropic sources for research projects that can deliver benefits for the disability sector

6 Be seen as the peak voice for disability service providers

To achieve the above strategic actions, NDS needs to be recognised by governments and others as the leading non-government voice on disability service issues – an essential source of advice for both state and federal governments, parliamentarians, media and peak bodies in allied fields. NDS will be seen as authoritative, reasonable and progressive.

Actions

NDS will:

- engage in regular interaction with governments, including through representation on relevant advisory committees and meetings with ministers and departmental officials
- respond to all governmental and parliamentary inquiries relevant to disability services
- raise and respond to issues through the media; and
- promote disability issues in the public arena where resources allow.

7 Build NDS's capacity, consistency and sustainability

To position itself effectively as a strong, influential and consistent voice for disability services, NDS must function effectively and efficiently as a national organisation.

NDS will ensure that its governance arrangements, structures, systems and processes: its exchange of information across offices and its utilisation of staff skills all enable this to be achieved.

The growth of NDS over recent years has been substantial, but uneven. NDS's structure as a national company should enable it to support capacity growth in all states and territories.

A diversity of income sources is an important foundation for NDS's independence. Income from diverse projects has grown over recent years, but project funding presents its own challenges. It is time-limited, requiring good management skills to ensure that expectations are met and budgets are managed and benefits are sustained.

Actions

NDS will

- finalise the review of its governance policies achieving an appropriate balance between local decision-making and central accountability
- use its national structure to develop capacity and influence across all state and territory divisions
- move to a unified financial system and continue to improve and streamline financial reporting and risk management systems
- continue to increase its capability for developing and managing projects
- strengthen its financial sustainability by broadening its funding base
- bid for projects that enhance the capacity of member organisations to deliver high-quality disability services.

About NDS

National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak industry body for non-government disability services. Its purpose is to promote and advance services for people with disability. It represents over 800 organisations which collectively support people with all forms of disability. NDS's members range in size from small support groups to large multi-service organisations and are located in every state and territory across Australia.

Structure

NDS has a national office in Canberra and offices in every state and territory. The organisation, as a whole, is governed by a Board which includes the elected chair from each state and territory as well as representatives elected directly by members.

Origins

Formerly ACROD, NDS can trace its roots back for more than 65 years. In 1945, state and territory bodies formed the Australian Advisory Council for the Physically Handicapped to assist with national coordination. In 1963, in response to disability service providers' realisation that they had many common interests regardless of the particular group they served, the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled was established. This evolved into ACROD which, in early 2007, became National Disability Services to provide a strong, inclusive and enlightened voice for disability service providers from across Australia.

Membership benefits

Information

Given the complex challenges confronting the disability sector, up-to-date information is an essential resource for service managers. NDS members receive a flow of timely information and analysis regarding, not only government policies, programs and funding contracts, but also service delivery and management issues such as governance, risk and quality assurance. Information is delivered to members via regular email news updates, regional and state forums, national conferences and issues-based committees and networks.

Policy influence

NDS provides a robust, independent and rational voice to governments – federal, state and territory – on behalf of disability service providers. NDS bases its positions on consultation with members, supported by research and argument. Through NDS, members have an opportunity to influence government policy.

Networking

NDS provides members with opportunities to meet, exchange information and form mentoring relationships and business partnerships. Members are offered a range of development activities and receive discounted registration fees at NDS regional, state and national conferences and events, where available.

NDS members are able to access practical resources, services and products to assist them to deliver high quality, responsive services.

NDS has established corporate relationships that offer opportunities for members to save on the everyday costs of business. Providers include AccessPay, Holman Webb Lawyers, OfficeMax, Presidential Card, Qantas Club, Virgin Australia Lounge, Echelon and CGU Workers Compensation.

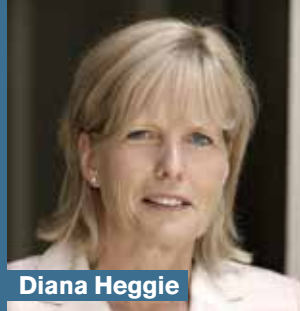
NDS Board



Tim Walton



Sanjib Roy



Diana Heggie



Rohan Braddy



Anne Bryce



Richard Dent



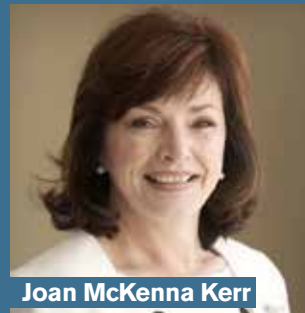
Kerrie Langford



Dale Luttrell



Jon Martin



Joan McKenna Kerr



Vicki O'Halloran



Lynn Quirk



Andrew Richardson



Scott Sheppard



Angela Tillmanns



Gordon Trewern

PRESIDENT

(Current)

Tim Walton
Chairperson NSW Division

Chief Executive Officer
Australian Foundation for Disability

VICE-PRESIDENT

(Current)

Sanjib Roy
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
Yooralla

VICE-PRESIDENT

(to December 2011)

Diana Heggie
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
SCOPE (Vic) Ltd

Rohan Braddy
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
Mambourin Enterprises Inc

Anne Bryce
Elected Member

(from December 2011)
Chief Executive Officer
Achieve Australia

Richard Dent
Chairperson VIC Division

(to December 2011)
Chief Executive Officer
E.W. Tipping Foundation

Kerrie Langford
Chairperson ACT Division

Chief Executive Officer
Advance Personnel (Canberra) Inc

Dale Luttrell
Chairperson TAS Division

Chief Executive Officer
Eskleigh Foundation Inc

Jon Martin
Chairperson SA Division

Chief Executive Officer
Autism SA

Joan McKenna Kerr,
Chairperson WA Division

Chief Executive Officer
Autism Association of Western
Australia

Vicki O'Halloran
Chairperson NT Division

Chief Executive Officer
Somerville Community Services Inc

Lynn Quirk
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
Connect 2 Group

Andrew Richardson
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
House with No Steps

Scott Sheppard
Chairperson VIC Division

(from December 2011)
Chief Executive
UnitingCare Community Options

Angela Tillmanns
Chairperson QLD Division

Chief Executive Officer
Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland

Gordon Trewern
Elected Member

Chief Executive Officer
Nulsen

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Ken Baker

COMPANY SECRETARY
Ken Baker

AUDITOR
Ernst & Young

The Campaign for a National Disability Insurance Scheme

The last 12 months have seen the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) go from a good idea in the hearts and minds of the leadership of the disability community to become a first order political issue with bi-partisan political support.

Since July 2011, we have seen the release of the Productivity Commission's final report into 'Disability Care and Support', the government and opposition announce in-principle support for the introduction of the NDIS, more than \$1.3 billion in new money allocated to launch the NDIS from state and federal budgets, and, most recently, the NDIS launch sites announced.



John Della Bosca

None of this has happened by accident. The Every Australian Counts campaign has pressed for each government and opposition announcement. Through continued campaigning we have built a social movement with more than 130,000 supporters. Campaign activities have included more than 200 community NDIS forums; 900 DisabiliTEA events attended by over 30,000 people nationally; 'Spread the Word' week, where we letterboxed in excess of 300,000 homes; hundreds of lobbying events in local communities and in Canberra and, most recently, in April the 'Make it Real' rallies in capital cities throughout Australia.

The campaign has been supported by disability organisations around the country which have volunteered their time, energy and resources. Our achievements so far are a direct result of this effort.

The campaign started this financial year with 10 staff spread across the country. During the year, as the needs of the campaign changed, six of these staff moved to other roles. It is important we acknowledge the contribution of Kirsten Deane, Daniel Kyriacou, Pauline George, Laura Breeding, Lisa Cox and Mary Butterworth for their efforts on the campaign. The remaining campaign staff members are James O'Brien, Fiona Anderson and Geraldine Mellet.

Despite our progress, the NDIS is still a long way from being a reality. The campaign has entered another year of campaigning with the key aims of seeing the NDIS legislated and a commitment from both major political parties to fully fund the scheme.



John Della Bosca



Kirsten Deane



Daniel Kyriacou



Fiona Anderson



Geraldine Mellet



James O'Brien



Laura Breeding



Lisa Cox



Mary Butterworth



Pauline George

NDS National Committees

NDS's national committees provide advice to the Chief Executive on relevant policy matters. This information is then channelled through the Chief Executive to the NDS Board.

They also facilitate information exchange among NDS's members and monitor developments within states and territories in order to identify common trends, service innovation and nationally significant issues.

The national committees, with their corresponding chairperson and NDS co-ordinator, are as follows:

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON ACCOMMODATION

Committee Chair

Adam Carrozza
General Manager
annecto: the people network

NDS Co-ordinator

Philippa Angley
National Policy Manager
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON AGEING AND DISABILITY

Committee Chair

NDS Co-ordinator

Philippa Angley
National Policy Manager
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY ENTERPRISES

Committee Chair

Robert Styling AFSM
General Manager Human Resources
Phoenix Society Inc.

NDS Co-ordinator

Paul Musso
Policy Adviser
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Committee Chair

Glenn Rappensberg
Chief Executive
Novita Children's Services

NDS Co-ordinator

Philippa Angley
National Policy Manager
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON WORK, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Committee Chair

Phil Farrow
General Manager
Government and Sector Relations
Bedford Industries Inc.

NDS Co-ordinator

Susan Smith
Project Manager Disability Safe
NDS New South Wales

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON OPEN EMPLOYMENT

Committee Chair

Kerrie Langford
Chief Executive Officer
Advance Personnel Inc

NDS Co-ordinator

Brendan Long
National Manager Employment and
Economic Policy
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Committee Chair

Grant Vukasinovic
Programs Manager
Greenacres Disability Services

NDS Co-ordinator

Philippa Angley
National Policy Manager
NDS National

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE

Committee Chair

Geraldine Harwood
Chief Executive Officer
OPTIA

NDS Co-ordinator

Paul Musso
Policy Adviser
NDS National

NDS Honours



President's Award

L-R: Ken Baker, Neil Preston OAM and Tim Walton

Neil Preston OAM

At the 2011 NDS CEO Meeting, the President's Award was presented to Neil Preston OAM for his tireless service in the disability sector over the last 15 years and in recognition of his ongoing contribution to and involvement with NDS and the sector.

Neil was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 2008 for 'wage justice and quality assurance for workers with disability in Australian Disability Enterprises'.

Neil came to the disability sector as the Chief Executive Officer at Greenacres Disability Services in 1996. He has since actively campaigned for this service and the sector generally with state and federal governments to build stronger partnerships in service provision and to provide additional funding to meet the growing unmet needs of people with disability.

Neil has been on the NDS NSW State Committee since 1988 and was Chair from 2001–2005. He served on the Board of NDS for four years and is currently Chair of the NSW Ageing and Disability Subcommittee and of the Aboriginal Resources and

Pathways Project Reference Group. Neil is a member of the NDS National Committees on Australian Disability Enterprises and Ageing and Disability. He has presented at numerous NDS conferences and forums.

Neil was a key contributor to the work of developing robust, equitable wage assessment tools that would set fair rates of pay for supported employees and in the subsequent development of the 'Greenacres Association Competency Based Wages System' which is one of the three most widely used wage assessment tools for supported employees in Australia. He was also a pioneer in the development of a retirement program for supported employees seeking to leave the workforce and enjoy a fulfilling retirement.

Neil resigned as CEO of Greenacres in 2011, but continues to work with Greenacres and to contribute to NDS and the disability sector.

National Office Staff as at September 2012

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM	Ken Baker Patrick Maher	Chief Executive Chief Operating Officer
EXECUTIVE SUPPORT	Melissa Trethowan Pauline George Yosheila Jeelall	Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive National Office Manager Personal Assistant to Chief Operating Officer National Administration Coordinator Receptionist and Office Administration Assistant
POLICY	Philippa Angley Gordon Duff Margaret Gadd Brendan Long Gabrielle Mullen Paul Musso	National Policy Manager Executive Officer – National Policy and Research Unit Asia Pacific Project Officer National Manager Employment and Economic Policy Policy Adviser – Sensory Disability Policy Adviser – Australian Disability Enterprises
HUMAN RESOURCES	Berice King	Human Resources Manager
FINANCE	Gayle Reed Christine Grabe Amar Malde Steven Ngo	Financial Controller Accounts Clerk Accountant Assistant Accountant
COMMUNICATIONS	Daniel Kyriacou Katherine McLellan	Corporate Communications Manager Communications Officer
MEMBERSHIP	Belinda Allen Emerson Riley	Membership Development Manager Membership Services Officer
CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT	Julie Walton Miriam Sosin	National Conference and Events Manager Events Assistant



L-R: Steven Ngo, Belinda Allen, Amar Malde, Miriam Sosin, Gayle Reed, Berice King, Daniel Kyriacou, Patrick Maher, Julie Walton, Ken Baker, Gordon Duff, Gabrielle Mullen, Philippa Angley, Yosheila Jeelall, Paul Musso, Melissa Trethowan



Section 2: State and Territory Reports

State and Territory Committees

Australian Capital Territory

Chair

Kerrie Langford

Vice-Chair

Susan Healy

Committee Members

Paul Chemello	Jacinta Cummins
Miranda Garnett	Lynne Harwood
Cheryl Pollard	Tina Siver
Eric Thauvette	Amanda Tobler

ACT Manager

Justyn McDonald (to April 2011)

Deb Sazdanoff (Acting from April 2011)

New South Wales

Chair

Tim Walton

Vice-Chair

Andrew Richardson

Committee Members

Sherie Avalos	Anne Bryce
Matt Donnelly	Adrian Ford
Scott Holz	Pennie Kearney
Hugh Packard	Neil Preston
Kerry Stubbs	Rob White

NSW Manager

Glenn Jones (to December 2011)

Patrick Maher (Acting from December to June 2012)

Scott Holz (from June 2012)

Northern Territory

Chair

Vicki O'Halloran

Vice-Chair

Eileen Farrell

Committee Members

Ian Campbell	Ian Fisher
Narelle Higginson	Greg McMahon
Kim McRae	Joseph Smith
Steve Vitone	

NT Manager

Jenny Upton

Queensland

Chair

Angela Tillmanns

Vice-Chair

Joanne Jessop

Committee Members

David Barbagallo	Peter Callaghan
David Curd (from December 2011)	
Kaye Deeley	Judy Dickson
Robert Evelyn	Bruce Milligan
Lynn Quick	Moe Turaga (to March 2012)
Stewart Thompson (from December 2011)	

QLD Manager

Valmae Rose (until March 2012)

Len Airey (from May 2012)

South Australia

Chair

Jon Martin

Vice-Chair

Nicholas Mihalaras (from August 2011)

Committee Members

Geoff Blackwood	Andrew Daly
Aileen Dawson	Max Dyason (to August 2011)
Robert Depold	Phil Farrow
Michael Forwood	Janine Lenigas
Bernadette McAlary	Cathy Miller
Glenn Rappensberg	Wendy Wake-Dyster (from August 2011)

SA Manager

Noelene Wadham

Tasmania

Chair

Dale Luttrell

Vice-Chair

Paul Byrne

Committee Members

Donna Bain	Steve Daly
Mary Ann Gays	Karen Frost
Geraldine Harwood	Darryl Lamb
Janette Martin	Paul Mayne
Catherine Viney	Darryleen Wiggins
Ian Wright	

TAS Manager

Margaret Reynolds (to February 2012)

David Clements (from February 2012)

Victoria

Chair

Richard Dent (to December 2011)

Scott Sheppard (from December 2011)

Vice-Chair

Estelle Fyffe

Committee Members

Kathryn Arndt	Rohan Braddy
Warwick Cavanagh	Jennifer Fitzgerald
Bruce Giovanetti	Diana Heggie (to October 2011)
Daniel Leighton	Valerie Lyons
Sanjib Roy	Pam Ruecker
Scott Sheppard (to December 2011)	

VIC Manager

Rhonda Lawson-Street

Western Australia

Chair

Joan McKenna Kerr

Vice-Chair

Michael Tait

Committee Members

Gerri Clay	Judy Hogben
Robert Holmes	Hayley Horwood
Debbie Karasinski	Greg Lewis
Karen Miller	Marcus Stafford
Gordon Trewern	Tony Vis

WA Manager

Terry Simpson

Australian Capital Territory

Throughout 2011–12, NDS ACT has worked with the NDS ACT Committee to identify and work through priorities for our members and the sector as a whole. The challenge of meeting current service delivery demands while focusing on the future of person centred services, self directed funding and individual packages through an NDIS continues for our members.

NDS ACT is represented on several working groups for the disability sector, community sector and government including: the Joint Community Government Reference Group, Community Sector Reform Advisory Group, ACT Peaks Forum, ACT Workforce Working Group and Disability ACT Service Provider Forum.

NDS ACT has been working closely with the Community Services Directorate to identify and address reforms affecting community services and, specifically with Disability ACT, to identify disability sector specific needs with the move towards an NDIS. Areas identified by the NDS ACT Committee include:

- people with disability receive support from a skilled workforce
- NDIS/financial readiness for a new world
- NGOs are effective, viable and accountable.

Through its involvement in working groups, as well as direct representation to Disability ACT and the Minister, NDS ACT has represented its members in the following areas:

- fair funding from the ACT Government to all service providers to meet requirements under the equal remuneration order, regardless of current rate of pay
- reversal of decision of the ACT Government to keep back 0.34% of indexation per year for three years for reform projects
- review of the Social Compact that outlines the relationship between the community sector and government
- budget submission for 2012–13
- budget response for 2012–13
- the ACT Government to focus on NDIS readiness
- Submission to Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Bill 2010.

A number of forums were held in 2011–12, including joint chaired forums with Disability ACT. Joint chaired forums focused on updating the sector on government initiatives and developments and provided the opportunity for the sector to voice their concerns on current issues.

Topic specific forums included: Equal Remuneration Case, Portable Long Service Leave, Optimal Individual Service Design, Putting a Price on Support Needs in Direct Funding – The UK Experience, and The ACT Disability Sector into the Future – People at the Centre of Decision Making about their Supports.

NDS ACT released 31 News Updates during the year on a range of topics such as changes to legislation, prominent issues and sector opportunities.

Projects (special project funding)

Backfill Project

This Disability ACT project aims to support the sector financially by providing reimbursement for backfilling positions of attendees at specific courses run by Disability ACT. Agreement has been reached with Disability ACT to look at other opportunities which support the sector that may be included in funded projects in the future.

Joan Berry Scholarship 2012

The NDS ACT Joan Berry Scholarship 2012 offers an opportunity to people working in the disability services sector for financial assistance to pursue professional development opportunities. Melinda Mitchell, our previous winner from House with No Steps, has found the scholarship an invaluable support during her studies. Applications have closed and are currently being reviewed.

Projects that did not receive special funding that were commenced or completed in the 2011–12 financial year included: Progress for Providers, Quality systems and requirements for ACT services, Effective Demand Management in the ACT and Review of the ACT Individual Support Package Program.



Kerrie Langford



Justyn McDonald

New South Wales

2011–12 has seen continued growth in NDS NSW with expansion in a number of projects and Industry Development Fund activities.

This year we have welcomed Scott Holz as State Manager. Scott brings a wealth of sector experience to the role along with a firm commitment to ensuring the successful uptake of person centred approaches across the sector.

Influence on state government/ representation of NDS members

The NDS NSW team has maintained positive and productive relationships with the NSW Minister for Disability Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) and the Department of Family and Community Services. Through these close associations, NDS NSW has ensured a regular and timely information flow between government and our members. Member feedback has informed a number of policy responses and positions submitted to government by NDS NSW this year as well as a considerable amount of joint work on specific projects.

The team has been active in influencing government over a wide range of areas. These have included responding to parliamentary inquiries on transition support for students with additional or complex needs and their families, outsourcing community service delivery and the review of the Lifetime Care and Support Authority.

NDS NSW has also maintained a strong influence regarding person centred approaches and sector reform through membership on the Ministerial Advisory Group on Person Centred Approaches and made a substantial submission on 'Living Life My Way'.

Information and networking

NDS NSW has continued to host quarterly regional meetings around the state which have provided important networking and consultative opportunities. NDS NSW's eight sub-committees have continued to meet every quarter with membership opened to all NDS members in recognition of the pace of change occurring in the sector.

NDS NSW hosted another successful state conference in February 2012. The theme 'BRING IT ON! Are YOU ready?' was set against the back-drop of the NDIS and the current shift towards individualised, portable and self directed funding arrangements.

The day prior to the state conference, the 'Leading the Way Seminar' was held for CEOs and board members. Attended by nearly 600 people, the seminar was declared by many as one of the most beneficial events NDS NSW has ever run.

Regional Support Worker Conferences were successfully run across four locations during 2011–12. The development opportunities offered to frontline support workers via the conferences were viewed as valuable by the participants and enthusiastic feedback was received following each event. NDS NSW remains committed to frontline support workers and plans to continue to support similar events in 2012–2013.

Projects

The inaugural 'NSW Disability Industry Innovation Awards' were announced by The Hon. Andrew Constance, Minister for Disability Services, at the state conference in February 2012. NDS has been working with government to co-ordinate nominations and judging for the awards, and organise an event that will showcase excellence and innovation in the disability sector.

The \$17 million Industry Development Fund continues to build capacity in the NSW disability sector through projects such as the Good Governance and Leadership Program.

The Industrial Relations and Workforce Development Project began in November 2011 and has since completed two rounds of forums throughout NSW focused on the changing industrial environment. Phases II and III of this project are under development.

NDS NSW Indigenous Programs have focused on community engagement achieving great success with new networks established and Elders engaged with both disability service providers and ADHC. The Aboriginal Jobs Together Program saw 23 potential Aboriginal trainees graduate in a ceremony in June 2012 which was attended by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Victor Dominello. The Indigenous programs now have Regional Co-ordinators stationed throughout NSW which has improved NDS NSW's presence in regional areas of NSW.

Many other NDS NSW projects also experienced high levels of success in 2011–12:

- carecareers has seen a 35% increase in the number of advertisements carried and a 53% increase in the number of applications received compared with 2010–11
- projectABLE has doubled the number of workshop participants compared with previous years
- The NSW Procurement Project secured \$3.4 million worth of jobs achieved for Australian Disability Enterprises during 2011–12
- Disability Safe launched the Psychosocial Leadership training program with considerable demand for each session that was run
- Companion Card has 15,400 cardholders in NSW with 2,300 affiliated venues and events.



Standing L-R: Ray Peckham, Robyn Smith, Vanessa Patterson, Victoria Lindemann, Joseph Archibald, Dylan Reynolds, Chloe Lyttle, Michelle Radnan, Margaret Onus, Zoe Brissett, Mardi James, Hilary Smith, Rhonda Crisp, Angela Heald, Nathan Wise, Neil Murrell, Amy Wang, Peter Hannan, Lucy Randall, Katherine Orr, Mike Field, Kylie Harding, Patrick Lloyd, Eliza Todd, Richard Hawkins, Ian McHugh, Carlos Estrada, Scott Holz, Deb Sazdanoff

Sitting L-R: Jillian Black, Pauline Stanley, Elisabeth Jaeger

Northern Territory

Introduction

2011–12 was a year of consolidation for NDS NT signified by increased engagement with both non-government and government service providers and growth in its membership.

An increase in staff members, from two to three officers, expanded NDS NT's capacity to provide more consistent support to members and undertake more complex projects focused on supporting disability service providers to deliver quality services across the Territory.

Significant change is on the horizon, with a key challenge being to ensure that the NDIS can make a real difference to the lives of people with disability living in the Northern Territory. The geographic and demographic makeup of the NT, combined with climatic conditions which render remote areas inaccessible at certain times of the year, are all factors that need to be considered and addressed in the design of the national scheme. NDS NT will continue to actively engage and lobby at local and national levels to ensure that the NDIS is able to deliver to all people irrespective of their address.

Influence on government

The NT Government regularly sought information and advice on important policy and operational matters during 2011–12. Key consultation areas included:

- development and operation of two adult secure care group homes in Darwin and Alice Springs
- review and amendment of the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Families' Standard Conditions of Funding.

In addition, NDS NT was invited to participate on the Chief Minister's Pay Equity Taskforce to determine the financial impact of the Equal Remuneration Order on community organisations.

NDS NT successfully lobbied for an additional consultation session on the National Disability Standards to be held in Alice Springs.

Regular meetings were convened with the NT Chief Minister, the Minister for Health, the Treasurer, the Department of Health CEO and senior officers from the Aged and Disability Program to enable matters of significance to be presented and discussed on a consistent and regular basis.

Consultation with, and representation on behalf of, NDS NT members

The regional representation of the NDS NT Committee was strengthened with an increase from seven to nine committee members. The division also experienced an increase in memberships in the Central Australia region.

NDS NT continued to work closely with NDS staff in other jurisdictions to ensure that it was able to deliver high quality and relevant sector development resources to its members.

Attendance numbers at Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs Regional Forums indicated a high level of interest by the disability sector in the informative nature of these events. The Regional Forum Program was extended to include a successful event in Tennant Creek that was co-presented by NDS NT and the National Disability Coordination Office Program.



L-R: Catriona McLagan, Karen Giele and Jenny Upton

Information and networking

The sharing of information and networking with key stakeholders and within urban, regional and rural communities remains an important feature of NDS's work in the NT. Regional forums, combined with participation in specific events, facilitated the expansion of NDS NT networks and provided staff with a greater awareness of local issues. During 2011–12, NDS NT took a lead role in the following key events:

- Northern Territory Careers Expo in Katherine
- City of Darwin's Disability Awareness Week
- International Day for People with Disability celebrations in Darwin and Katherine.

NDS NT, through its membership on the NT Peak Body Group, worked collaboratively with other NT peak bodies in the presentation of information sessions, training and representation to government on issues that impact across a range of community sector organisations.

Projects

Major projects completed during 2011–12 included:

- a review of the Machado Joseph Disease Coordinator position
- an evaluation of the Inaugural Northern Territory Disability Services Awards.

An additional project commenced in early 2012 to investigate the implications for remote Indigenous service provision under an NDIS in the Northern Territory. The first phase of this project is due for completion in December 2012.

NDS NT's investment in building relationships across the Northern Territory has reaped rewards in terms of NDS NT's ability to more accurately reflect the concerns of its membership and people with disability to all levels of government. NDS NT's commitment to ensuring that national policy incorporates consideration of practical application in some of Australia's most diverse and challenging environments will be strengthened through the peak body and project work planned for the coming year.

Queensland

Policy influence and member representation

NDS QLD has continued its active participation in representing the interests of members in influencing areas of policy. Access to ministerial advisers and executive members of the public service has assisted in connecting the sector with the strategic policy areas of government.

The year commenced with the necessity for a range of responses to the Fair Work (TPCA) Amendment Regulation of 2011 (No.1). This included:

- consultation with member organisations
- the modelling of implications for service viability and outcomes for people with a disability
- negotiation of equitable timely access to consistent industrial advice
- the conduct of workshops across the sector
- meetings with state ministers on behalf of member organisations.

The above actions assisted in influencing the withdrawal of the original Fair Work Australia (FWA) Regulation. Subsequent submissions to government also influenced drafting of the replacement legislation which improved the financial impact of the Regulation on service providers. Much of this work was done in collaboration with the Queensland Council for Social Service and the state government.

Seeking direction and information from members around the 'Growing Stronger Reforms' was an ongoing focus for 2011–12. Assessment and intake practices were changed in an attempt to improve the interface between government agencies and member organisations.

NDS QLD's negotiations with the Department of Communities, the Health and Community Services Workforce Council and Skills Queensland around funding to progress a coherent, whole-of-portfolio state workforce strategy have been a priority area for policy work during the year. NDS QLD also participated in:

- the qualitative analysis of feedback for the state 10-year plan for people with a disability and participated in the review of the plan prior to submission to Cabinet
- the Positive Futures reforms
- the development of the new legislation for the whole-of-government approaches to funding
- influencing the development of a structure and framework associated with the self-directed funding program
- continued involvement in various government reference groups.

The NDIS has generated huge interest within the sector driven by NDS QLD leading discussions between the state government, sector organisations and people with a disability. Many organisations have grasped the need to consider collaborating/partnering with other organisations to improve their structure, systems and services. However, moving from a dependency model of operation to a business model will be a major challenge for many organisations.

The annual 'State of the Sector' Report recommended increased investment in disability services in the state to reach or exceed the national average so that Queensland starts from a fair and reasonable base when the NDIS is launched.

A submission was lodged with the state government for restructuring the disability sector in response to the changing focus towards self-directed support. In addition, submissions were lodged for the development of the NSW carecareers and Ready, Willing and Able initiatives in Queensland. However, the change of government in March 2012 stemmed momentum in the development of projects with the state.

Networking

NDS QLD has sought to increase sector capacity and understanding through a range of discussions, workshops and training including:

- policy and practice workshops on a range of topics
- person centred planning workshops
- grief and loss workshops with the Department of Communities and the Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability (QCIDD)
- Family Planning Queensland – sexuality workshops with QCIDD
- end of life workshops with the Health and Community Services Workforce Council and Palliative Care Queensland
- contributing to research by QUT Business School into fairness of government contracts
- conducting the first ADE Expo in July 2011
- conducting a two-day workshop for service providers on social enterprise and alternative sources of social investment
- negotiating with the Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support to establish a position dedicated to exploring issues for people with high and complex needs in the context of the NDIS
- facilitating the NDIS Readiness workshops and Service Transition workshops with the Minister, executive government and the sector
- training and development covering – governance, risk management, business planning, financial viability and sustainability and costing, pricing and budgeting.

NDS QLD continued its relationship and networking with other peak bodies as well as participating in community sector reference groups.

Projects

NDS QLD completed a 12-month Community Resilience disaster planning project in conjunction with Emergency Management Queensland and the Department of Communities to train and develop people with disability in being participants in response to disasters rather than passive recipients of assistance. The focus for this project was on the cities of Rockhampton and Townsville, both of which suffered significant weather events during the course of the project with a cyclone in the north and flooding in Central Queensland. The project proved valuable during this period.

A new Medicare Local project is underway with the aim of improving primary health care in the disability population with the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local Region. This will be achieved by understanding the primary health care needs of people with a disability in the region and improving access to primary health care providers. This is a 12-month project.



Back row L-R: Cate Houston, Catherine Goodall, Len Airey, Lynda Alsop, Jacqui Hawgood
Front row seated L-R: Michelle Ryan, Shelley Birrell

South Australia

The disability sector in South Australia has, over the past 366 days, advanced with surer steps than ever before.

Our new-found confidence is testament to the solidarity of NDS SA members and the sound relationships that exist with government and other stakeholders who offer a rich and diverse source of intelligence to the disability debate.

Soon after taking up his new portfolio, Minister for Disabilities, the Hon Ian Hunter MLC, took action on the recently released 'Strong Voices' Report. Tribute to the value placed on NDS SA's input to the report over its 18 month development period was that the majority of the recommendations made in the NDS SA written submission were included in the final report. Of the 34 recommendations in the report, 30 were endorsed by the Minister and the move towards self management was fast tracked with roll out from 1 July 2012.

NDS SA's efforts to develop and improve the service sector were stepped up to represent members' interests in this major state-based reform and also to ensure synergy with the national reform agenda. The appointment of NDS SA's State Manager to the Minister's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Taskforce will provide this vital link.

The 2012–2013 SA Government Budget, announced in May this year, prioritised a focus on disability, allocating an additional \$212.5 million. As part of this funding boost, the government committed \$20 million towards an NDIS launch site and an additional \$1 million to support not-for-profit organisations in preparing for the transition.

NDS SA and the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) have continued the Policy Partnership entered into in early 2011. The major input by NDS SA to date has been the conduct of consultations to inform the development of the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Framework'. This framework, and its associated policies, standards, procedures and guidelines, will be the first contribution to a Policy Resource Manual for the non-government service provider sector. DCSI funded the development of this resource.

Working in collaboration with relevant peak bodies and other identified stakeholders has not only proven economically beneficial, the 'combined voice' has also given strength to advancing issues of mutual interest. Of note was securing an increase in the state government's Heating and Cooling Concessions from a maximum of \$120 per year to \$158 per year, increasing to \$165 on 1 July 2012.

A vast compendium of activity reveals NDS SA's focus on influencing the actions of government; the achievement of our own strategic objectives and positive outcomes for our members. These include:

- representation on 27 external committees, review panels and consultative groups, including the 'Review of the Disability Services Act 1993'
- tendered to government a number of discussion papers, funding proposals and policy submissions including the Housing Strategy for South Australia (Green Paper), Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Framework and Access to Justice for People with Disability
- undertaking state-wide face-to-face meetings with prospective member organisations and existing members with whom NDS SA had not had personal contact within the past 12 months resulting in a boost in membership
- conducting state government/non-government forums on contemporary topics including 'What difference will the HCSCC Charter of Rights make?'; 'The management of people with disability in hospital'; Directors' OHS responsibilities and liabilities; Progressing the recommendations in the 'Strong Voices' Report; Disability support training and resource tool (D-START); DCSI management of complaints, quality and service improvement; The role of Care Concern Investigations; DCSI Screening Unit and information sharing; Accessible taxis and taxi vouchers and Specialist training within SAPOL

- conducting Employment Services Forums with Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) on topics including: FaHCSIA 10 year vision, DEEWR 2011–12 budget and servicing arrangements, DES update, and DEEWR regional and place based initiatives
- continuing the marketing function for the Companion Card Program increasing the total to 3,674 cardholders and 245 venues
- addressing a number of members' staff and families/carers groups on the NDIS and assisting with a successful community event which attracted approximately 700 people
- conducting the Inaugural South Australia Disability Awards event. A capacity audience congratulated winners Autism SA for their iModeling Project and Finding Workable Solutions for their 'Salvage and Save' Social Enterprise. Special guests included the Minister for Disabilities. Hesta Super Fund committed to ongoing sponsorship for this biennial event.

More than half the eligible NDS SA members participated in state-based committees this year. Their contribution assisted NDS SA to provide informed responses to the many requests received for input and comment. Add this voluntary involvement to that provided by the individual state committee members who represent NDS SA on the NDS National Board and seven national committees and we have an invaluable commitment to the advancement of the disability sector in this state.



L-R: Amy White, Noelene Wadham, Natasha Paling

'The South Australian Government and NDS have had a long and productive history of working together to make real improvements in the quality of life of people with disability in South Australia.

There is no doubt the current reforms occurring in the disability services sector in South Australia and indeed the nation, provide a once in a generational chance to create a more responsive and just disability support system.

Whilst this period of change brings a number of significant challenges, I know NDS's tireless advocacy on behalf of the disability sector in South Australia will help us ensure service providers, clients and carers are prepared for the positive changes ahead.

Ultimately these reforms should provide the sector with encouragement and hope.

I look forward to delivering these momentous reforms with you.'

The Hon Ian Hunter MLC
Minister for Disabilities

Tasmania

Influence on state government

NDS TAS has been an active participant in all areas of major policy reform in 2011–12, working with, and on behalf of, members to provide a strong and articulate voice to the state government across a number of areas of interest.

In 2011, the state introduced new legislation focused on the provision of specialist disability services under a rights-based approach. NDS TAS engaged state parliamentarians through meetings and formal briefings to advocate for these reforms. This legislation was adopted in 2012 and NDS TAS has worked collaboratively with government to communicate the changes to members and the wider sector.

The implementation of government reforms to unit pricing arrangements continued to be an important issue for providers during 2011–12. NDS TAS staff and state committee members placed a significant amount of effort in providing representation at consultations and through regular meetings with senior officials to influence state government responses to the implementation of the reforms.

NDS TAS met monthly with senior officials from the Department of Health and Human Services and quarterly with the Minister for Human Services and Community Development to raise policy and practice issues for members and to inform government decision-making. Meetings were also held with the Premier and Treasurer's office and with the Tasmanian opposition to continue to promote the disability sector and to ensure disability issues remain on the political and policy agenda.

Over the course of 2011–12, NDS TAS participated in a number of state government policy forums and working groups to inform disability policy and practice environments such as:

- Premier's NDIS Working Group
- Self-Directed Funding Project Reference Group
- Equal Remuneration Order Reference Group
- Skills Tasmania Equity Committee.

NDS TAS commenced work with Skills Tasmania and the Department of Health and Human Services during 2011–12 to examine workforce development pressures and to identify mutually beneficial strategies to address future workforce recruitment, retention and skills development requirements for the sector.

Representation of NDS Tasmania members

NDS TAS sought comment from members and utilised the information to inform submissions in a number of areas including a major review of the Tasmanian Government's five-year whole-of-government Disability Framework for Action. The Framework for Action requires all government departments to articulate their activity to support greater engagement and participation in community life for people living with disability. NDS TAS's submission, informed by member input, took a particular focus on issues of access and support to services within the specialist system and the interaction with mainstream service provision.

NDS TAS represented members at a number of policy forums such as the Premier's Roundtable on Cost of Living Pressures and the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner's Taxi Access Working Group to provide advice around matters of relevance to government systems that relate to people living with disability.

During the second half of the 2011–12 financial year, NDS TAS commenced bi-monthly Regional Members Forums to offer members the opportunity to network, discuss issues and hear presentations on contemporary policy issues. NDS TAS has used the information provided by members through these forums and other direct consultation methods to advance policy positions to the state government on issues such as changes to government service pricing structures, financial viability and related wages pressure impacts.

In partnership with Jobs Australia, NDS TAS conducted consultation forums on the roll out of the Modern Award for members and extended this to other community sector organisations. This formed part of a wider piece of on-going advocacy work regarding wage-related pressures service providers face.

NDS TAS has again been invited to participate in the Community Achievement Awards as Expert Judge in the category of 'MAIB Disability Achievement Award'.

Information and networking

NDS TAS re-focussed its efforts in 2011–12 to ensure members remained up-to-date on state-based issues by regularly issuing News Updates. A weekly Info-E was also distributed in the second half of the year to keep members informed about upcoming sector events, funding opportunities and other relevant events.

NDS TAS is a member of the Tasmanian Community Sector Peaks Network and worked collaboratively with other community sector peak bodies to advance matters of common interest across a range of projects to improve quality, deliver more efficient services across community sector organisations and to coordinate advocacy work to government.

Projects

In October 2011, NDS TAS hosted the fifth Tasmanian Celebrating Support Workers' Conference, themed 'Strengths of our Workforce'. Topics included anti-discrimination law, occupational health and safety, assistive technology and advocacy. Preparations for the sixth conference were well advanced at the end of 2011–12.

NDS TAS's third 'Disability Support Worker Awards' recognised dedication to the sector and proven records of achieving participation, inclusion and empowerment for people living with disability. The award categories were:

- Support Worker of the Year
- Outstanding Achievement in the Industry
- Long-Term Service in the Industry.

NDS TAS held the third festival to celebrate the International Day for People with Disability which was well attended.



L-R: David Clements and Lyndell George

Victoria

Influence on state government

The major focus for NDS VIC's work with government for the 2011–12 year was influencing government to recognise and support a transition process for disability services in anticipation of the NDIS. Funding was received to prepare a Transition Plan for Disability Services 2012–2016. The extensive plan development was overseen by an expert steering committee drawn from a diverse skill base and was structured around three priority areas:

1. People with disabilities, their caring families and supporters at the centre of service delivery
2. Achieving a sustainable, integrated and equally regulated disability service system
3. High performing organisations achieving real outcomes for people with disability.

The plan was accepted by the Minister with four priorities funded for early implementation: capacity building, structural change and efficiencies, sharing evidence-based good practice and workforce.

Regular meetings with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the lead department in Victoria's NDIS negotiations, were initiated to keep them informed of our transition work. There was particular interest in a number of the resources we developed.

Members' concerns on a wide-range of issues have consistently been raised with the Minister for Disability's Office, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Disability Services Commissioner. Key among these were the costing of Individual Support Packages and that all services contracted to provide disability support using state funding should fall within the jurisdiction of the Disability Act 2006. Subsequent amendments to the Act have strengthened its regulatory scope.

Regular meetings have been held with the Municipal Association of Victoria to exchange information and share priorities regarding local government's role in disability support and access.

NDS VIC took part in an Advocacy Day led by the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) in April 2012 where the community services sector held meetings with members of parliament to present the case for adequate indexation for services. An indexation rate of 2.5% on salaries was handed down, which was less than argued for, but represented a shift by government from a mooted 0%.

Support for the NDIS Campaign in Victoria has also been a feature of the past year with all staff participating in the NDIS Rally in Melbourne in April 2012.



Rozan Perera, Uniting Care Community Options, accepting his Victorian Disability Sector Award from the Hon Mary Wooldridge MP, Minister for Mental Health, Women's Affairs and Community Services

Representation of NDS Victoria members

Extensive state-wide information and consultation sessions were undertaken prior to the development of the Transition Plan which formed a basis for the development of the plan's priorities and strategies.

Regular consultation with members occurs through a range of advisory groups which inform our representation to government. The Service Reorientation and Accommodation, Workforce, and Employment Advisory Groups have been the most active in this period. A wide range of submissions and other input has been provided including:

- The draft Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-16
- The Victorian Draft Service Agreement 2012-15
- The Day Services Handbook
- The DHS Review of the Disability Support Register processes
- Addressing Violence Against Women and their Children, April 2012
- Regulatory Impact Statement for Supported Residential Services, February 2012
- Inquiry into People with Intellectual Disabilities in the Criminal Justice System, November 2011
- Research into Relinquishment of Children with Disability, November 2011
- Opportunities for Participation of Senior Victorians, October 2011
- Review of the Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Submission, July 2011
- Proposal for government procurement from ADE Services.

Other established structures through which NDS VIC represents the interests and views of members include: VCOSS Peaks and Statewide Networks meeting, the Human Services Partnership Implementation Committee and regular DHS meetings regarding the Individualised Funding process and guidelines, the Community Visitor's Protocol, Pay Equity Implementation and the draft Service Agreement.

A Memorandum of Understanding which sets out an agreement to work on shared priorities was signed with Women with Disabilities Victoria in August 2011.

Through these representation processes we have, in many respects, influenced the policy, program or administrative design in question.

Information and networking

In March 2012, NDS VIC/Disability Professionals Victoria (DPV) hosted the 'From Strength to Strength' conference entitled 'Leadership and Innovation in a Changing World' which was a well-attended and successful event. A further highlight was the second annual Disability Awards ceremony held in April 2012 in partnership with DHS and DPV.

A high level of regular communication with members has continued, both electronically and face-to-face. On average, two News Updates have been produced each week as well as an Info e-bulletin. We have held regular members' meetings (bi-monthly or quarterly) focusing on: Service Reorientation and Accommodation, Workforce, Australian Disability Enterprises and Disability Employment Services. Less frequent meetings have been held for Ageing and Disability and Children, Youth and Families. Advisory groups meet more frequently to inform work in each of the above areas and also include Research and Occupational Health and Safety. There has also been a steady flow of responses to individual member queries and requests.



L to R: Breigh Smith, Sarah Fordyce, Belinda Wallin, Rhonda Lawson-Street, Jane Farago, Silvana Trajkovska
Absent: Suzanne O'Neill, Jieh-Yung Lo and Allan Walker

A number of forums have been held which provide a key opportunity for information and networking. These include the Respite and Relinquishment Forum June 2012, Workforce Forums held in December 2011 and April 2012 as well as state-wide Modern Award Information sessions held in June and July 2012.

- on 14 September 2011, NDS VIC and the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA) hosted a 'thought leadership' forum on 'Human Rights in a Market Based Service System'; a strategic conversation addressing the tensions and opportunities in balancing these two imperatives. A paper was developed and distributed which documented the discussion and conclusions
- April 2012 saw the conclusion of the successful 'Strategic Business and Financial Planning' Project funded by DHS. This phase involved the delivery of three workshops on strategic planning by Pitcher Partners Consulting, helping organisations to position themselves for a market-driven environment. The resources developed as part of this project, including a video 'virtual facilitator' for strategic planning sessions, are now available from the NDS website
- the 'Risk Management and Controls Model' was revised and updated based on extensive feedback from the sector, supported by funding from DHS and VMIA. It is now available as an Excel tool, making for easier completion. This proven, comprehensive tool has met with a very positive response from members
- with funding from DHS, NDS VIC delivered a series of eight forums state-wide on 'Strengthening Human Rights in Disability Services' reaching nearly 400 staff ranging from CEOs to support workers. Featuring panel discussions and case studies, the forums were effective at raising awareness of human rights within organisations and prompting change to support human rights.

Western Australia

Influence on policy and service delivery

Pre-Budget Submission

The 2012–13 NDS WA Pre-Budget Submission delivered a number of successful funding outcomes. In particular was the announcement in the 2012–13 State Budget of a payroll tax exemption for employers who hire a new employee with a disability. NDS WA has now entered grant agreements with the Disability Services Commission in relation to three other recommendations in the submission: Aboriginal Engagement and Employment, Transition to Retirement and Home Ownership by People with Disability.

Representation of NDS members

State government reform agenda

Western Australia is in the midst of a major reform process around the relationship between government and the not-for-profit sector. NDS WA has been a key participant in this reform process through:

- representation on the state government's Partnership Forum and associated working groups
- support to sector organisations in relation to the implementation of the 15% funding increase in the 2011–12 State Budget
- working closely with the Disability Services Commission and key agencies on reform implementation
- the development of the NDS WA Costing and Pricing Tool and User Manual, accompanied by sector training and one-on-one support.

Individual Supported Living Manual

Funded by Lotterywest, NDS WA, in conjunction with Curtin University and stakeholder organisations, completed the development of a manual and scoring booklet for organisations to use to support and evaluate individual living arrangements.

Governance

In January 2012, NDS WA provided sector organisations with the opportunity to utilise an online governance tool. NDS WA has conducted three training sessions on the use and benefits of 'Governance Manager'.

Salary Benchmarking Project

NDS WA worked with the Human Resources Sub Committee to establish a Salary Benchmarking Project. Around 26 sector organisations participated in the project.

Work Health and Safety Project

Through funding from the Disability Services Commission, NDS WA is assisting the disability sector to prepare for the new harmonised Work Health and Safety Act, Regulations and Codes of Practice.

Information and networking

Policy Forum

NDS WA presented its first Policy Forum in 2012. 'Shaping the NDIS' provided an update on the work being done and service provider and consumer advocate perspectives on important issues relating to governance and design of the NDIS. Regional sites participated in the forum via live streaming.

Professional Development

NDS WA's Professional Development calendar of events has been expanded and streamlined into five key areas: clinical practice, frontline, management, governance and policy. During 2011–12, NDS WA delivered 71 professional development sessions with more than 1,500 attendees.

Disability Support Worker Awards

NDS WA, in partnership with the Disability Services Commission hosted, the fourth annual Disability Support Worker Awards night and gala dinner in March. More than 125 nominations were assessed by eight judges to arrive at the finalists and winners in seven categories including the new Regional Award category.



The Governor of Western Australia and Minister for Disability Services congratulate the winners of the 2012 Disability Support Worker Awards.

Back Row (L-R): His Excellency Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC, Governor of Western Australia, Christine Laut, Joy McGlashon, Craig Robb, Lindsay Neil, the Hon. Helen Morton MLC, Minister for Disability Services and Leanne Lewis.
Front Row (L-R): Jodie Cox and Nicole Naeslund

Working in the West

Over 140 people attended the 2011 'Working in the West' conference, hosted by NDS WA and the Association for Competitive Employment WA (ACE WA). The conference theme was 'Inform, Resource, Inspire'.

Country Forum

In partnership with the Disability Services Commission and the Council of Regional Disability Services (CORDS), NDS WA hosted the 2012 Country Forum during May. The forum was entitled 'Developing New Directions – Quality Services for All'.



Terry Simpson with Dr Ruth Shean, Director General Department of Training and Workforce Development at the NDS WA 2012 Professional Development Calendar Launch

Projects

Training projects for people with a disability

Through funding from the Disability Services Commission, NDS WA is providing people with disability with an opportunity to complete a six-month training program to gain the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. NDS WA also delivered a six-day presentation training program for a small group of people with intellectual disability.

Quality service improvements grants

NDS WA administered a competitive, open grants round in the area of self directed supports and services in 2011. Funding for the grants was provided through the Disability Services Commission and 13 projects were funded, totalling more than \$1.5 million.

Transition to retirement project

NDS WA has been funded through the Disability Services Commission to explore transition to retirement issues via a number of activities including case study-based action research.

ACROD parking program

A major focus of this year has been the preparation to move to the Australian Disability Parking Scheme. To do this, the ACROD Parking Program has:

- introduced the plastic pocket version of the Australian Disability Parking Permit
- developed a new application form consistent with the national eligibility criteria
- introduced an information scanning system
- undertaken an information campaign

Companion card program

More than 550 Companion Card holders responded to a survey undertaken this year. The major outcomes from the survey include:

- 90% of card holders indicated the card has assisted them to go out more
- 74% of card holders use their card at least weekly, fortnightly or monthly
- 86% of card holders said that the card was readily accepted by affiliates



The Hon. Helen Morton MLC Minister for Disability Services presents the 2012 Companion Card Affiliate of the Year Award to Mr Paul Colreavy from Hoyts

Community living and participation grants

Through this Lotterywest funded initiative, NDS WA provides grants of between \$500 and \$10,000 for equipment, resources, projects and activities that enable people with disability to participate in recreational and social activities and improve the quality of life for people with disability and their families. The grants have provided funding for a diverse range of more than 86 projects and items of equipment.



L-R: Matthew Mostyn, Alison Wood, Lesley Pereira, Geraldine Mellet, Cora-Lee Godden, Jess Fuimaono, Kerry Barker, Barbara Oosterhuis, David Rogers, Jim Vanopoulos, Frances Thomas, Terry Simpson, Helen Granville, Richard Dalglish, Gabriela Di Perna, Peter Hall, Shona Campbell-Brown, Sian Evripidou and Lynelle Bogie.

Absent: Natalie Forrest, Jill Bailey, Gudrun Benjamin, Helen Jay, Jackie Breasley, Jeremy Barrett-Lennard, Liz Turpin, Sonya Horsman and Anne-Marie Rich.

SUPPORT
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