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Physical Disability Australia - bulletin March 2011

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National News

Hello and Farewell!

PDA bids farewell to Lois Gilmour who has been our Communications Officer for the past few months after returning from a long period of illness the previous year. Unfortunately for us, Lois has found that she needs more time to restore her personal health and therefore leaves us this month.

PDA Staff and Board wish Lois all the very best for her future and join Executive Officer Sue Egan in saying that PDA benefited greatly from Lois input and skills and wish to thank her for the time she spent with us.

Hello to Joanne Hutchins of NSW, who has taken on the role of Communications Officer, and this being her first Bulletin, we say well done Joanne and welcome to PDA. Joanne will be responsible for the quarterly newsletter, the bulletin and PDA website being maintained.

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National Disability Strategy endorsed

Source: <http://www.ahrcblog.com>

February 14, 2011

The National Disability Strategy was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments at their meeting on Sunday 13 February 2011. The Strategy is available in RTF, PDF, Easy English and a summary version on the [COAG website](#) (scroll to bottom of the Meeting Outcomes page for 13.2.2011 to see links). See also [Ministers' press release](#) and [Commission press release](#)

Captions; Australians are turning on

By Wayne Hawkins for ABC Disability

Posted February 7, 2011

More than 6.5 million Australians use closed captions some of the time while watching television. In a recent nationwide survey undertaken by The Australia Institute on behalf of The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, (ACCAN) and Media Access Australia (MAA), the statistics blow out of the water the common perception that only a small number of Australians rely on captions while watching television.

To read the full story: <http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2011/02/07/3131785.htm>

Mouse clears HIV-like virus

From: AAP

Posted: February 04, 2011 4:11AM

AUSTRALIAN scientists have found a way to boost the power of the immune system, a technique seen to be capable of clearing an "HIV-like" infection from a mouse.

Read more: <http://www.news.com.au/breaking-news/mouse-clears-hiv-like-virus/story-e6frku0-1225999892111#ixzz1Cw4D1CrS>

Members sought for Preventive Health Advisory Council

February 16, 2011

Individuals with expertise in preventive health are invited to express their interest in joining a new national advisory council to tackle chronic disease.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-nr-nr020.htm>

For more information contact the Canberra office of Talent Partners Hansen and Searson.
For more information, contact Ms Roxon's Office: (02) 6277 7220

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Energy Assistance Guide

The Energy Assistance Guide gives lots of information on all kinds of help available. The Energy Rebate could be useful to pensioners.

http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/368608/energy-assistance-guide.pdf

Pollies must join forces on disabled

By Jill Singer From: Herald Sun
February 23, 2011 12:00AM

THE political argy-bargy about a relatively small flood levy does not augur well for the millions of Australians holding out for the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The promised NDIS will require additional public funding of at least \$5 billion a year, which is roughly three times the amount to be raised by the contentious flood levy.

To read more: <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/>

Improving counselling services for Australia's carers and their families

Source: FaHCSIA website - media release
February 23, 2011

Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services. Carers and their families will be able to access improved family relationship and support services that cater specifically to their needs, under reforms to the Family Relationship Services for Carers initiative announced by the Australian Government today.

Read the full media release at:

http://www.janmclucas.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/carers_service_23022011.aspx

More disabled joining workforce: minister

Source: Ninemsn.com.au February 2, 2011
Found through PDCA Disability Education and Employment news, No 2. Vol 7

The number of people with disabilities moving off welfare and into work is on the rise. More than 140,000 people accessed disability employment services in December 2010, a 30 per cent increase on the previous year, internal government figures show.

For the full story: <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/national/8213156/more-disabled-joining-workforce-minister>

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Fix the Web

Source: <http://www.ahrcblog.com/>

February 6, 2011

[Fix the Web](#) is a new initiative in promoting web accessibility: a web-based, volunteer driven service where people with disability can report web access problems with pages and volunteers will take up the issue with page owners and seek to negotiate improvements.

Equal rights champion receives Senior Australian of the Year Award

Source: FaHCSIA – Disability E-news – Issue 166

Congratulations to equal rights campaigner Professor Ron McCallum AO on receiving the Senior Australian of the Year Award in this year's Australian of the Year Awards.

To read the full story http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/employers/Documents/disAbility_e-news/2011/issue166.html

International News

Delta Fined \$2 Million Over Treatment of Flyers with Disabilities

By Shaun Heasley

February 17, 2011

Delta Air Lines is facing a \$2 million federal fine for violating rules on serving passengers with disabilities, officials at the U.S. Department of Transportation said Thursday.

For the full story: <http://www.disabilitycoop.com/author/shaun-heasley/>

Japan Taking the Lead in "Inclusion by Design" in Air Travel

By [Scott Rains](#) on February 24, 2011 9:17 AM

With leadership, foresight, and a sense of justice like this in other countries would air travel improve for people with disabilities worldwide?

To read the full story: <http://www.rollingrains.com/2011/02/japan-taking-the-lead-in-inclusion-by-design.html>

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World Cup in International Sign

World Federation of the Deaf is pleased that the World Cup will be accessible to Deaf people. Fifa will broadcast the football games in International Sign.

For more information, visit Fifa's official website:

<http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/organisation/media/newsid=1223699>

State News

Western Australia

Hundreds attend disability funding rally

Source: ABC News 15 Feb 2011

Over 300 people have called for increased Federal Government funding for people with disabilities during a rally in Perth.

Click here for the [Full Story...](#)

Victoria

Victorian Campaign news – Geelong swaps blue and white for red

By James O'Brien

Source: NDIS website <http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/>

In a town more accustomed to the blue and white of their beloved Cats, Geelong's waterfront yesterday was transformed to a sea of red as a big crowd rallied to demand the Australian Government introduce an NDIS.

To read more follow the link:

http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/victorian_campaign_news_geelong_swaps_blue_and_white_for_red/

New South Wales

Norton Road Disability Housing

Source: Life Matters, ABC 17/02/11

A new residential housing development at Macquarie Hospital in Sydney aims to provide home-like conditions for residents with intellectual and physical disabilities, while at the same time being able to house those with very high medical needs.

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Listen to this story at: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/lifematters/stories/2011/3140599.htm>

For more information:

http://www.govarch.commerce.nsw.gov.au/files/PS_Public_10_Norton_Road_SSL_Group_Homes.pdf

iVote now available in NSW for people with a disability

Source: Warringah Disability Newsletter No. 249, February 18, 2011

The NSW Electoral Commission has introduced a new online and telephone voting system called iVote, which is available to people with a disability.

Registrations for iVote will be accepted from 17 February to 23 March 2011 and iVote opens for voting on 14 March and is available until 25 March 2011. A demonstration version will be available for practice from late February at <http://ivote.nsw.gov.au> or by phoning the iVote call centre on 1300 022 011. Applications can be made through an online application or by calling the iVote call centre. See information at www.elections.nsw.gov.au/voting/ivote and www.votensw.info/early_voting/ivote. For further information, contact the Electoral Commission on 1300 135 736.

Tasmania

Wheelchair Fund Revamped

Source: ABC News

First posted Mon Feb 21, 2011 12:25pm AEDT

The Tasmanian Government claims to have cleared its most urgent waiting list for people with disabilities seeking equipment.

Read the full story at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/21/3144304.htm>

Wheelchair Fund Revamped

Source: ABC News

Updated Wed Feb 23, 2011 10:38am AEDT

The Tasmanian Liberals have released figures showing nearly 300 people with disabilities are waiting for suitable public housing - 160 of those are in "exceptional" need.

Read the full story at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/23/3146406.htm>

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Conferences, forums, programs and grants

More time to apply for Accessible Communities grant – Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

The Australian Government has extended the application period for grants of up to \$100,000 to local councils to make their communities more accessible for people with disability.

http://www.janmclucas.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/jmc_access_comms_21february2011.a
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Equal Rights for People with a Disability Conference – Monday April 18

Source: Australian Human Rights Commission website

Creating equal rights for people with a disability – a push for an Equality Bill encompassing Anti-Vilification protection for people with a disability. Speakers include: [Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Graeme Innes AM](#), Dr Mark Sherry (Ohio, USA), and more.

Location: UTS, Sydney

Further information: www.ddlcnsw.org.au/newsandevents/equal-rights-for-people-with-a-disability/

National Disability and Carers Congress: make Every Australian Count

Source: National Disability Services Website, <http://www.nds.org.au/>

The National Disability and Carer Congress 2011 will be held on 2-3 May 2011 at Etihad Stadium, Melbourne.

This represents a not to be missed opportunity to examine, analyse, debate and discuss the proposal for a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

For more information on the conference: <http://www.nds.org.au/events/1298003755>

For registration enquiries, contact Miriam Sosin on 02 9256 3115 or miriam.sosin@nds.org.au

NDIS information forum: Geelong March 9

Source: NDIS website <http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/>

WHEN: Wednesday 9 March 2011, 7pm

WHERE: City of Greater Geelong, Gheringhap Street, Geelong

For further information please contact Jacqui Pierce, Karingal on 03 5258 4205 or email:

j_pierce@bigpond.net.au

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NDIS information forum: Moorabin March 23

Source: NDIS website <http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/>

Moir Disability and Youth Services and the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre present an NDIS public information forum.

WHEN: Wednesday 23 March 2011, 10am-12.15pm

WHERE: Hemisphere Conference Centre, 488 South Road, Moorabbin, Victoria

RSVP: Please phone 03 9076 1611 by 16 March 2011

Leaders for Tomorrow

February 8, 2011

Leaders for Tomorrow is a new national program which aims to develop the leadership capacity of people with disability through mentoring and leadership development. The \$3 million program will provide up to 12 months leadership support for up to 200 people with disability over the next four years.

For the full story and media release:

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/govtint/ndsi/Pages/leaders_for_tomorrow.aspx

Eligibility criteria and application forms are available at www.fahcsia.gov.au, by calling 1800 668 689 or sending an email to leadersfortomorrow@fahcsia.gov.au

Applications close on 11 March 2011.

The team Building Adventure Workshop – Siblings Day by Cerebral Palsy Alliance

Source: Warringah Disability Newsletter No. 249, February 18, 2011

- What? Teens aged 12-16 years who have a brother / sister with a disability are invited to enjoy The Wilderness Challenge and the Giant Swing. Places are limited so siblings of someone with cerebral palsy are given priority.
- When? Tuesday 12 April, from 1pm. Pickup from Allambie Heights and/or Ryde at 11.45am – location of pickup depends on demand.
- Where? Vision Valley, Arcadia – see www.visionvalley.org.au. Between Hornsby and Berowra.
- Cost? \$12 per person. Participants to bring a packed lunch; minimal food sold at the venue.
- RSVP? Registration is essential so phone Kristy Morse, Family and Individual Support Worker, Cerebral Palsy Alliance (formerly The Spastic Centre), on 9975 8440 or email kmorse@cerebralpalsy.org.au

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Letters from members:

Member Sally Jamieson writes in response to comments from the Business Council of Australia stating that the flood levy should come from Disability payments...

I have 30 years of work experience in my profession of social work, but since becoming disabled 4 years ago from a virus which attacked my spinal cord, I have been unable to secure a job even though I have applied for positions well within my experience. As you say, most workplace environments are not set up for wheelchairs or even wheelie frames which I am able to use over short distances. I am fortunate enough to drive, but that does not mean being able to safely disembark at one's destination.

Moreover, the online application forms for the jobs for which I have applied ask questions about mental and physical health and whether these would prevent you from doing the job. I have always indicated that I could do the job, but have put in my cover letter that I walk with a stick. I have not even secured an interview, the first time this has ever happened to me.

I returned to my former workplace six months after the onset of my paraplegia in a wheelchair. It was in a Secondary College that I had worked in for 8 Years, so the staff were very obliging. However, I could no longer work full-time and the job sharing that was set up was not possible for the following year, so I had to resign and try to find something part - time. As this has not happened, I have been forced to spend \$6500 retraining in an area where I should be able to secure part time employment for another 10 years. However there is no certainty. Centrelink are giving me \$1042 towards the cost of my course and I had to wait 3 months for the training organisation to register with them once I had set this up for them to do so. At least any other potential disabled students will be able to apply without any hassles.

The attitude of the Business Council is outrageous. As you and I are saying, most disabled people would love to work, at least part time, if only to restore some dignity to one's life and disabled children should be given every opportunity to reach their potential. Since becoming unemployed I have been existing on a part disability pension which is dependent on my husband's income, supporting 2 children and paying half of all household bills and my own expenses such as car, clothes and my treatments. Just going to hydro and the community gym twice a week costs \$17 and this week I am receiving \$157 for the 2 weeks. I was always the higher income earner and I was lucky to have some savings to see me through. However, now that my daughters have reached an age where they can live independently and my marriage has ended we now have to sell the house and move into 3 smaller places. Provided I can get some work, once I am single I will be able to hopefully live independently on my earnings and the pension, but only just. After 30 years of paying my taxes and service to the community I do not see \$300 per week as an amount that needs to be justified and certainly should not be cut. Cancel the leave of the CEO's and politicians - they are the one's getting the unjustified payments, not the sick and the disabled. What sort of society have we become?

Perhaps there should be a campaign of voicing complaints to the Business Council on a regular basis and finding out what they are doing to find work for disabled people that they can actually access in the 1st place.

Any Ideas? Don't give up with your job hunting and try to ignore those rude and uncaring recruiters in the business world.

Sally Jamieson

Have you got something to say? Let us know at pda@pda.org.au and we can print it in our bulletin or our newsletter with your permission.

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Subscribe - We also encourage any interested parties who would like to receive future bulletins to send an email with subscribe in the subject heading to communications@pda.org.au and the email they wish to subscribe and they will be added to future bulletins.

Thank you and Regards
Joanne Hutchins
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