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***Physical Disability Australia - Bulletin September 2011***

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Welcome to the September edition of PDA's e-bulletin.

This month saw the Prime Minister agree to the need for a National Disability Insurance Scheme, which will be rolled out within 7 years. It has been taken to and approved by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)

There have been budget changes to the Disability Support Pension, with more to come with the introduction of the carbon tax. You can view what these changes are through the Centrelink website.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the bulletin.

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***National News***

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**[COAG delivers key step for National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)**

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Source: Every Australian Counts website, August 19, 2011

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The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) today agreed on the need for major reform of disability services in Australia through a National Disability Insurance Scheme. This follows the release of the Productivity Commission's final report into Disability Care and Support last week.

To read more:

[http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/%ef%bb%bf%ef%bb%bfprime\\_minister\\_joint\\_media\\_release/](http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/%ef%bb%bf%ef%bb%bfprime_minister_joint_media_release/)

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### **New DSP Impairment tables released**

Source: Fahcsia website, July 2011

The Tables assess whether a person, whose qualification or otherwise for disability support pension is being considered, meets an empirically agreed threshold in relation to the effect of their impairments, if any, on their ability to work.

[http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/payments/Pages/dsp\\_impairment\\_tables.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/payments/Pages/dsp_impairment_tables.aspx)

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### **Budget Changes to DSP**

Source: Centrelink's Pulse newsletter

Some measures were announced in the 2011-12 Federal Budget that affect DSP customers. Some of the topics covered are: Changes to new claims for DSP, New participation requirements, more flexible working arrangements, and Greater access to print material for people with print disability

You can read more about the changes at: <http://pulse.centrelink.gov.au/budget-changes/>

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### **Caring for Older Australians**

Warringah Disability newsletter

The final report was released 6<sup>th</sup> August 2011. The Commission developed options for further structural reform of the aged care system so it can meet the challenges facing it in coming decades.

It can be viewed online at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care/report>

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## **Productivity Commission's final report into disability care and support**

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The Hon Jenny Macklin media release, August 10, 2011

The Gillard Labor Government today announced that it will start work immediately with states and territories on measures that will build the foundations for a National Disability Insurance Scheme, following the release of the Productivity Commission's final report into the matter.

To read more:

[http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/productivity\\_commission\\_final\\_rpt\\_10082011.aspx](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/productivity_commission_final_rpt_10082011.aspx)

## **Refreshable Braille and the Web**

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Source: ACCAN webnews #97

By Roger on May 15, 2009

Many people have not had the opportunity to see someone use a refreshable Braille device to access the web. Roger Hudson, of Web Usability, recently videoed Bruce Maguire describing how he uses the internet with a refreshable Braille display. He also demonstrates finding a book on the Amazon site. A transcript of the video is at the end of this document.

<http://www.dingoaccess.com/accessibility/refreshable-braille-and-the-web/>

## **PM and Premiers agree on national disability scheme**

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Source: The Age, August 20, 2011

By: Katharine Murphy

A Landmark national disability scheme is a step closer, with the Prime Minister and premiers agreeing to develop by the end of this year a framework to eventually deliver it.

To read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/pm-and-premiers-agree-on-national-disability-scheme-20110819-1j2ee.html#ixzz1Vnq9U9fd>

## **Women swell 'disability' ranks: Families Department analysis**

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Source: The Australian, August 1, 2011

By: Siobhain Ryan

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Women are driving the growth in the Disability Support Pension, switching to a different form of welfare as the government shuts down widows' and wife pensions, tightens parenting payments and raises the aged pension age.

The revelation comes as the government embarks on the biggest-ever crackdown on disability support pensioners, dramatically tightening the eligibility criteria for new applicants from January.

To read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/women-swell-disability-ranks/story-fn59niix-1226105576125>

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#### **After Hours GP Helpline – Free call 1800 022 222**

Source: Warringah disability newsletter

Since 1 July 2011, the Australian Government introduced this for people who cannot access their usual GP and are not sure what to do. Calls are answered by registered nurses trained to provide medical advice over the phone. If the call is answered during the after hours period, the nurse can transfer the call to a GP if necessary. The service is also able to refer people to appropriate after hours health services in their area. Accessible from 6pm to 8am Monday to Friday, 6pm Friday to 8am Saturday, from 12 noon Saturday to 8am Monday, and all day on public holidays.

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#### **Tax levy 'the best way to fund any disability scheme', says think tank Per Capita**

Source: The Australian, August 29, 2011

By: Stephen Lunn

AUSTRALIANS should pay the \$6.5 billion a year needed for a national disability insurance scheme through a 1.3 per cent disability levy on top of their Medicare levy, rather than the federal government funding it from general revenue, a study recommends.

To read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/tax-levy-the-best-way-to-fund-any-disability-scheme/story-fn59niix-1226124008334>

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#### **Youth Disability Advocacy National (YDAN) Network**

YDAN is a collective of young people with disabilities between the ages of 12-25 from across Australia. The purpose of the network is to advocate for youth with disabilities on a national level.

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YDAN is a new initiative supported by the Youth Disability Advocacy Service which is part of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition which is funded by the Federal Government.

We need young people with disabilities from all over the country to join the discussion group on Facebook. It may be a great opportunity to make new friends!

Visit <http://www.facebook.com/groups/125416387554300/> or [www.ydas.org.au](http://www.ydas.org.au)

For more information contact Madeleine Sobb (YDAN Coordinator) at [ydasmaddie@yacvic.org.au](mailto:ydasmaddie@yacvic.org.au)

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### **“Speaking for Myself” and Planning Ahead Project**

Source: Warringah disability newsletter

Many people are unprepared if they have a sudden stroke or illness that affects their ability to make decisions, leaving no one with legal authority to manage their affairs, access their money to pay their bills, or make decisions on their behalf. The Benevolent Society and Legal Aid NSW are offering a free step-by-step guide to help Australians plan for later life before they become unable to make their own decisions. ‘Speaking for Myself’ is a plain English guide to the steps people can take to make their wishes legally binding, such as preparing a will, appointing a trusted and responsible Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardian and preparing an Advance Care Directive. You can download it at [www.bensoc.org.au/uploads/documents/Speaking-for-myself-20111.pdf](http://www.bensoc.org.au/uploads/documents/Speaking-for-myself-20111.pdf) or get a printed copy from Legal Aid on 9219 5028.

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### **Pensioners feeling the pinch set to get a boost**

Source: Media release from Hon Jenny Macklin

Australia's 3.4 million pensioners will soon receive an increase in their payments to help them meet increases in their cost of living.

To read more:

[http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/pensioners\\_feeling\\_price\\_set\\_to\\_01092011.aspx](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/pensioners_feeling_price_set_to_01092011.aspx)

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## Smart Systems SA – Entrance Solutions

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**Smart Systems SA** are Entrance Solutions experts. Based in Adelaide we have been installing door and gate automation for over 16 years.

We offer a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week call out service and aim to be on site within 2 hours for emergency calls. Our experienced technicians can service and maintain doors and gates installed by other companies as well as our own.

Easy and Secure Entrance Solutions for Home and Office.

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## *International News*

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### **Ofcom plans to upgrade telecoms services for people with disabilities**

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Source: ACCAN webnews #97

July 28, 2011

Phone users with hearing and/or speech impairments stand to benefit from new measures being proposed last week by UK regulator, Ofcom.

To read more: <http://media.ofcom.org.uk/2011/07/28/ofcom-plans-to-upgrade-telecoms-services-for-disabled-people/>

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## How Polio has returned to haunt its victims in old age

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Source: Daily Mail online, August 9, 2011

By: Lois Rogers

Post-polio syndrome --- a condition where the virus, which lies dormant in the bodies of polio sufferers for many years, becomes active and starts triggering symptoms.

To read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2023884/How-polio-returned-haunt-victims-old-age.html>

## New App: Map of Wheelchair Access Around the World

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Source: accesstourismnz website, August 15, 2011

By: Snadra Rhodda

An app has been developed to find an accessible local business or service worldwide. Developed by Raul Krauthausen of Germany, a wheelchair user himself, the free iPhone is called [Wheelmap](#), and shows wheelchair access places around the world and rates them on their accessibility. A red tag shows there is no wheelchair access, yellow has partial wheelchair access and green is totally accessible for wheelchair use. Gray locations mean that place has yet to be rated. And users can have input to the app association.

To find out more: <http://www.accesstourismnz.org.nz/2011/08/new-app-map-of-wheelchair-access-around-the-world/>

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### State News

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### New South Wales

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#### Accessing Cityrail booklet

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Accessing CityRail is a 76-page guide to CityRail stations for the elderly, customers with disabilities and people travelling with young children and luggage.

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The latest edition is now available and includes updated information about the accessible facilities of our stations and trains, interchanging with other modes of transport, using wheelchairs and scooters and accessible station entrances. It also contains useful information about using the boarding assistance zone and travelling with assistance animals.

The information in Accessing CityRail is also available in PDF, large print, Braille and audio formats.

If your organisation would like to receive copies of Accessing CityRail, please contact Eliz Esteban on phone: 8922 4439 or email: [eliz.esteban@railcorp.nsw.gov.au](mailto:eliz.esteban@railcorp.nsw.gov.au)

## Victoria

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### Writers for DiVine wanted

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The Office for Disability is again inviting Victorians with a disability to apply to join the DiVine team. DiVine is Australia's first online community for and by people with a disability.

DiVine aims to inform, engage and entertain people with a disability. It is a vibrant community that encourages participation and a sense of belonging. The website can be found at [www.divine.vic.gov.au](http://www.divine.vic.gov.au)

Successful applicants for the contracted writing positions will receive training and be paid for their work.

Jason Hill | Online Editor, DiVine  
T: 03 9208 3052 | F: 03 9208 3633 | E: [Jason.Hill@dpcd.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jason.Hill@dpcd.vic.gov.au)

### New Chair for Disability Advisory Committee

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Source: Media release The Hone Mary Wooldridge, August 24, 2011

Mary Wooldridge today announced that Tony Staley AO has been appointed as the Chair of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council (VDAC).

To read more: <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/1779-new-chair-for-disability-advisory-council-.html>

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## South Australia

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### 24 new apartments for vulnerable South Australians

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Source: Media release Senator Hon Mark Arbib

Vulnerable people, including older Australians, living in Campbelltown are set to benefit from the opening of a housing project delivered by the Gillard Government.

Senator for South Australia, Anne McEwen, welcomed the opening of the project delivered under the Government's national commitment to housing affordability and homelessness.

To read more:

[http://www.markarbib.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/24\\_new\\_apartments\\_sa\\_30082011.aspx](http://www.markarbib.fahcsia.gov.au/mediareleases/2011/pages/24_new_apartments_sa_30082011.aspx)

## Conferences and activities

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### Keeping the Lights On: Impact of increasing electricity costs for people with physical disability

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When: October 16, 2011

Time: 6pm (with refreshments from 5.30pm)

Where: Meeting Room at 184 Glebe Point Road (St Helen's Community Centre) Glebe

RSVP: (02) 9552 1606 or email: [lachlan.hazelton@pdcnsw.org.au](mailto:lachlan.hazelton@pdcnsw.org.au)

A panel presentation with:

**Ann-Mason Furmage** (Physical Disability Council of NSW)

**Carolyn Hodge** (Public Interest Centre)

**Jim Connolly** (Financial Counsellors' Association of NSW)

**Christine Regan** (NSW Council for Social Service)

Panel presentations will be followed by the Annual General Meeting which will commence at 7pm. You are welcome to remain for the AGM if you wish

### Annual General Meeting of Physical Disability Australia Ltd

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When: Saturday 26th November, 2011

Time: 5pm start at **Novotel Hotel**.

Where: 5 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra, ACT, 2601

RSVP: Tel 61 2 6245 5000 or [pda@pda.org.au](mailto:pda@pda.org.au)

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## Queensland Disability Conference 2011

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When: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2011

Where: Sheridan St, Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns, Qld

Facilitator Jan Archer will lead conference delegates through an engaging program of keynote addresses and workshops planned around the theme 'Absolutely every: enabling Queenslanders'.

A highlight will be a keynote address on emerging technology from the scientist Bernie Hobbs. Bernie will host a Q&A style discussion on the NDIS.

Other keynote speakers include leaders in the area of social inclusion, such as Disability Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innes, and people with a disability, including Joshua Man and Carol O'Reilly.

Register for the conference now online or by calling the conference organizer on (07) 3255 1002. For more information visit: <http://www.nican.com.au/event/queensland-disability-conference-2011>

## Disability Expo 2011

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When: Friday-Saturday 16-17 September

Time: 9am – 5pm

Where: Comfort Inn Hunts Liverpool, Corner of York Street and Hume Highway, Liverpool (next to the M5 and close to the M7).

Autism Advisory and Support Service are hosting this expo of 30+ service providers for all disabilities. Information stands by Centrelink, FaHSCIA, employment, standard and alternative services, respite etc - a one stop shop for families affected by disability starting from diagnosis, early intervention, standard and alternative treatments, education, post school options and employment services. Opened by Senator the Hon Jan Lucas.

For more information: Phone 9601 5088 or email: [info@aass.org.au](mailto:info@aass.org.au).

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### **FREE Membership!!!**

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Want to become a member of PDA? Does your organisation want to become an associate member?

Then contact PDA at [pda@pda.org.au](mailto:pda@pda.org.au) or go to our website: [www.pda.org.au](http://www.pda.org.au) and complete the form and return to us. It's free if you have a disability and \$27.50 if an organisation.

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Thank you and Regards  
Joanne Hutchins  
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