

Launching the new: Physical Disability Australia Ltd.

Greetings All

While launching our new Newsletter, Physical Disability Australia PDA formerly Physical Disability Council of Australia is recognizing the significant changes the organisation has gone through in the last few years. These changes are not only about a new name and a different look.



New logo for Physical Disability Australia to represent the changes within the Organization

We have a new board and a different board structure. We now have one board member for each state or territory. Each board member has a physical disability, represents their state and is actively working within their state to represent Physical Disability Australia. We will have a profile of a board member each newsletter so readers can get to know them. Our first profile is on Geoff Trappett on page 4.

We have recently developed a new professional styled website which will be updated regularly, and will give us a more professional presentation to the public while being a repository of the important work PDA is doing.

Our new name, logo and newsletter, are representations of the important changes Physical Disability Australia has made in the last few years.

We will be providing a monthly bulletin which will assist in keeping members and interested parties up to date and will be regularly updating our website.

www.pda.org.au

Email pda@pda.org.au (if you would like to receive our monthly bulletin)

Regards

Lois Gilmour (Communications Officer}

Special points of interest:

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Letter from the Editor

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone all the very best for the New Year.

I was going to write something to reflect what we have done over the past year, and we certainly have made some changes, our name, our look, our logo and increasing our communication with you the members.

Instead I want to focus on the future, because in thinking about what to write for this article, I realised that with all the changes going on, I have not been particularly 'out there' or visible to the members, in fact a colleague commented on our new website after giving good feedback said "...but where are you?" meaning there is no mention of me on the website! She is right! So my resolution for 2009 (or at least one of them!) is to be more visible and to help drive Physical Disability Australia into being more pro-active rather than reactive. For instance, what exactly is physical disability? What types of disability fit into this category? I know many people are against separating out the various types of disability believing this to be hanging on to the medical model and our funding contract guides who we represent anyway. But we do not follow a medical model, in fact our website clearly demonstrates that we observe a Social Model of disability a model that clearly believes society prevents us from being included in our communities.

Here at Physical Disability Australia we all believe that it is often assumed that people with physical disability are okay whilst many of the other disability types seem to get more attention! That is simply not true, we are not okay and we are not happy about it either!

People with physical disability are the largest sector of disability in Australia, we are underrepresented in education and employment as well as essential personal support and more. We are overrepresented in homelessness and the numbers of people inappropriately housed in nursing homes because there are few options to live in the community. The equipment provision services (our feet and our arms and legs) are underfunded, disorganised and offer the minimum in up to date equipment provision. We have large numbers of people who continue to be discriminated against on a day to day basis, in access to premises, employment, education and much more.

So how do we become more pro-active and why is there a perception of apathy in the sector? My belief is that it is not apathy, it is exhaustion! It is not complacency, it is finding the strength to get up again after continually being put down by a society that calls itself inclusive! We are exhausted from living the daily life of a person with a disability, who carries their pain and discomfort with them every day, mostly uncomplaining, and when we do complain we are seen to be whinging! I know this to be true from myself, I too have a disability and live with and experience my own levels of discomfort brought about by a disability and therefore so must others.

So how are we going to address our issues, be heard and be seen as individuals and as a collective, that has the legitimate right to be part of the community, a community that cannot see it discriminates against its citizens by using cost as a reason not to provide full access, a community that provides piecemeal public transport systems that cannot guarantee a 100% accessible journey both ways, a community that will not employ us because we are perceived to be different, and a community that expects many of us to find the money to cover the additional cost of a disability out of a small pension each fortnight?

These are some of the things we will be working on in 2009, and we need your help to do that. We need to hear your thoughts, your ideas and we need your belief that things can change and will change if we work together.

Write to us, email us, ring us to let us know what you are prepared to do to make these changes, and what you want to see us, your organisation, do for you in 2009!

On that note, I wish you all peace and comfort in 2009, and the right to go outside your door as a valued person in our country.

Best wishes to all for 2009

Sue Egan

Profile- Director, Geoff Trappett OAM

Geoff Trappett OAM

State: Queensland

Email: geofftrappett@westnet.com.au

Education: High School Certificate

Disability Background:

Originally a Paralympic athlete, I became involved in the disability sector through performing spokesperson and keynote speaking roles for many disability service organisations. As somewhat of a role model for people with a disability as an athlete I always took it upon myself to promote an active and healthy lifestyle for people with a disability. This is something I continue to do now as a respected disability consultant.

Volunteer work undertaken in the past or at present:

The majority of my volunteer work has been through disability sporting organisations such as Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Assoc here in Qld. I currently sit on their Junior Development Committee and also their Awards Judging panel. I have also held roles with the Unmet Needs campaign as spokesperson and am currently the spokesperson for the Disability Alliance that was somewhat successful in helping bring disability issues to the forefront in the latest Federal Election.

Paid work:

I have held positions mostly in the areas of disability access/advocacy and disability workforce development with organisations such as National Disability Services, Spinal Injuries Association and the Queensland Regional Bus Stop Project who's charter it was to ensure that Qld's regional bus stops were up to the Accessible Public Transport Standards by the required timeframe.

Recently I have started working for myself as a consultant on Disability Awareness and correct language when referring and dealing with people with a disability. This allows me to continue something I have always held close to my heart back from my Paralympics days as a role model for people with a disability in educating people that we are all human beings some of us just get through life differently.



“as an athlete I always took it upon myself to promote an active and healthy lifestyle for people with a disability.”

International News

Cambodia faces a long journey ahead as many misconceptions about

disability are challenged. One project underway is the Child Advocacy group "see the we can do image" where they are enjoying showing others their capacity, and confounding the usual image in Cambodia that they can't. Another huge challenge is getting donor's and authorities to see the importance of making community buildings accessible. Check out the new community council building where in the rainy season you need a rope and a single plank to enter the building.

Stay tuned for more on Cambodia in our April Newsletter.

Ethiopia imposes aid agency curbs

Ethiopia's parliament has passed a controversial bill imposing tight restrictions on aid agencies. Foreign agencies are prohibited from a number of areas including human rights, equality, conflict resolution and the rights of children. Local groups that receive more than 10% of their funding from abroad are also banned from working in these areas. Under discussion for months, the bill has already been considerably modified amid objections from aid organisations.

Parliament approved the legislation on Tuesday - Orthodox Christmas Eve - by 327 votes to 79, according to the AFP news agency, before members headed home for the holiday. The BBC's Elizabeth Blunt in Addis Ababa says at the heart of the bill and causing the most fuss is a clause aimed at preventing foreign interference in issues which the government believes should be a purely Ethiopian affair. She says some of the organisations affected, like the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, could be seen as political and have long been a thorn in the government's flesh. But, she adds, if the law is rigorously applied it could also catch much less controversial groups which are doing valuable work but would never be able to fund their activities from purely local sources. five sorts of activity:

- . The advancement of human and democratic rights
- . The promotion of equality between peoples, sexes or religions
- . Campaigning for children's rights *_or the rights of the disabled_*
- . Conflict resolution and reconciliation
- . Work on criminal justice issues.

The bill's provisions imposing the same restrictions on Ethiopian NGOs which receive more than 10% of their funding from foreign sources will affect many agencies, according to our correspondent. She says this is because a number of foreign donors prefer to channel their aid through the voluntary sector rather than giving it to the government. A defence of the bill published by the ruling party described this attitude as a neo-liberalist concept which sees African governments as obstacles to development.

The Government denies the bill is intended to restrict aid work. "Civil organisations will be able to function without hindrances. They won't face restrictions as long as they respect the country's laws," government whip Hailemariam Desalegn said. 'Very difficult' But opposition MP Temesgen Zewdie was quoted by AFP as telling MPs before the vote: "As far as we're concerned, it's an attempt by the ruling party to banish all those it sees as a threat to its tight grip on power." Madhere Paulos director of the Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association told the BBC that 99% of its funding to provide legal aid to women currently comes from abroad. She said her members would continue to give up their time for free. "But when we think about the premises, when we think about the court fees that we pay for our clients, the transportation, the medical fees for those who are victims of rape and sexual violence, it's very difficult to think of only using voluntary contributions." The US government in particular has protested loudly to the Horn of Africa nation about the proposals, but to very little effect, says our correspondent. Ethiopia is among the world's top aid recipients.

Story from BBC NEWS: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/7814145.stm> Published: 2009/01/06 17:28:17 GMT



The We Can do Dancers



Inaccessible Community Council Hall

“The bill bans international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from ; Campaigning for children's rights or the rights of the disabled”

Disability Employment

In December last year, the Federal Government launched its paper outlining its strategy for improving employment opportunities for people with disability and mental illness.

Copies of the paper, including alternate formats, can be ordered by calling 1300363079 (TTY 1800554609), or emailing employmentstrategy@deewr.gov.au

Electronic formats of the paper and more information on the Strategy is available at www.deewr.gov.au/employmentstrategy

Six priority areas for action identified in the paper include:

- **Improving disability employment services:** the Government has released a discussion paper outlining major reforms to the Disability Employment Network and Vocational Rehabilitation Services from March 1 2010 including removing all service caps and making services demand driven.
- **Supporting and encouraging employers:** the Government will work with employers to promote the business case for employing people with disability, as well as improve and promote information about available assistance, such as disability employment services, workplace modifications and support to employers.
- **Engaging people with disability:** a number of barriers such as adapting work and study to accommodate episodic conditions and meeting non-discretionary costs associated with employment for people with disability such as transport and equipment need to be addressed.
- **Innovation:** new approaches by employers and governments will increase the employment and retention of people with disability in employment.
- **Direct government employment of people with disability:** the Government is putting in place better practices to promote the employment of people with disability including the creation of a Public Employee's Disability Network and training for managers.
- **Better access to education and training:** As with the broader community people with disability should be provided with education, training and skills needed to secure and maintain employment.

Some of the many barriers people with a physical disability face are, difficulty getting considerations for job share, and other flexible work arrangements, challenges getting to work either by taxi, public or private transport due to accessibility and extra costs. Challenges getting employers to see past the disability to the potential and capacity to do the job, extra costs associated with employment, problems with physical workplace accessibility and challenging difficult attitudes and beliefs in the work environment which is reflective of the community.

Statistics show that people with disability actually have less sick leave are more reliable within the workforce and more determined to maintain their position.

This paper reminds me of the axiom 'if you build it they will come' If you build a system that supports the independence of people with disability, encourages learning and growth, and supports the employer to adequately provide for the needs of a person with a physical disability then people with disability will welcome the opportunity to contribute further in the workforce.

This is very different to the previous attitude which was much more on the lines of "if there is no other option people will have to work" The times for punitive strategies which pressure people to find work are more than over. It has been more than proven that they do not work. It is time to provide real choices and real opportunities for people with disability to be included further in today's society and workplace.

The government is currently working on a number of major initiatives and strategies. These steps are much needed and essential to the well-being of people with a physical disability, It still remains to be seen how these areas will be addressed and whether the government will provide the financial backing to really make a significant change. The largest challenge however will be in changing the attitudes and culture of discrimination with employers and the workforce.

Migration and Disability

The recent case of Dr Bernard Moeller and the denial of his residency based on his son's disability, highlights the discrimination and lack of respect within Australia's immigration system. Denying any family or individual citizenship based solely on someone's disability is both discriminatory and goes against the federal government's ratification of the human rights of people with disabilities.

While the family was eventually given residency the residency was given based on the high need for the father's career, instead of the inherit worth of his son Luke who has Down Syndrome.

This is not an isolated case. This year a distraught father attempted to set himself alight in protest over the rejection of his families residency claim because a member of the family has a disability. The policy of denying people residency based on their disability not only denies the potential of the person with a disability, but discriminates against the whole family of those individuals.

Commonwealth medical officer assessed that his son's medical condition would result in a significant and ongoing cost to Australian taxpayers.. The focus on his disability instead of his potential to benefit Australian society is not only offensive to many people with a disability in general but inaccurate.

- Many people with a disability are able to contribute via employment and improving the access and attitude of workplaces will increase the capacity for people who have significant disability to find and keep employment.
- People with a disability often play an important role within a family taking on tasks that enable other family members to work more and contribute further to society than was otherwise possible.
- People with a disability contribute significantly to the cultural and social diversity of this nation.
- People with a disability also improve the lives of many others through creating and providing employment to many caring and skilled individuals.
- People with a disability contribute financially to Australian society through paying GST and other taxes like everyone else.
- This case is especially relevant for people with Physical Disability because our capacity to work and contribute to Australian society is so dependant on the accessibility of the built environment. If the government was to act seriously to deal with the accessibility of workplaces and educational facilities, then there is much less reason for denying someone's residency based on their Physical Disability.

By looking for the potential and value of people with disability, looking at how people with disability from other areas of the world can aid and support the prosperity, cultural diversity and social inclusion of Australian Society, The Immigration department can make major leaps forward in combating discriminating and autocratic attitudes within the Department.

The Federal Government has recently announced that more foreign aid will be going to people with disability throughout the world. But it seems that the attitude is *'not in our back yard'*. The recent ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a commitment to challenge this type of discrimination within government. It is time that the government took a much more balanced approach to viewing the potential and capacity of people with disability instead of just crossing off a whole family on the basis of one individual's label.

New Websites/ Online Articles



People with a disability and their families need a secure future. The struggle for essential services and support is never ending – from early intervention to equipment, respite, accommodation, employment and family support.

This campaign was for inclusion into consultations in the National Disability Strategy, It is a successful campaign for a much needed Insurance scheme for everyone which will improve the lives of people with disability who become injured or disabled for any reason. Please add your voice to this campaign to keep yourself updated please check

www.natdis.com.au

Resilience - relaxation and helpful thinking

Psychologist, Jenny Griffiths, continues her series on building resilience in young children with a disability...

Your child with a disability may face many challenges in their life that mean the development of coping skills and the ability to handle stress are particularly critical to their...

http://www.cpblogs.org.au/thescene/index.php?option=com_myblog&show=Resilience---relaxation-and-helpful-thinking.html&Itemid=3

Videos for people with disability

<http://www.webbytalents.com/>

Get up Action for Australia— Your Rights, Your Say

This government consultation is a once in a lifetime chance to call for a Human Rights Act to permanently protect human rights in Australia.

<http://www.getup.org.au/campaign/rights/407>

KUPU-KUPU GALLERY IN UBUD (BALI)



Photo of artist with a disability
in Bali

***The shop has been open
since 2004 and is
selling handicrafts
made by people with
disabilities***

Kupu Kupu Gallery is one of the most important projects of the Kupu-Kupu Foundation. The shop has been open since 2004 and is selling handicrafts made by people with disabilities.

‘Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach him how to fish and he will eat for life’.

The shop gives as well work to people with disabilities, so far has been five people with disabilities working at the shop.

The Kupu-Kupu shop is located in Jalan Raya Ubud at the corner of Jalan Hanoman, in front of the BPD Bank.

We sell a variety of handicrafts, paintings, woodcarvings, coconut lamps, coconut carvings, kites, handicrafts made of bamboo.

We open everyday from 10 to 6 pm. This project means a lot for our disabled artists because they can have an income and support themselves and their families and that at the same time give them a lot of self esteem and confidence.

One of the most important things in their lives is to be as independent as possible, both physically and economically. For many the gallery has become a way of supporting themselves

All the profits at the shop are used to support all the programs at the Foundation.

Please if you come on holiday to Bali come to see our shop and help us to help them, make solidarity presents to your friends, you will know who make them (the shop has profiles and photos of the disabled artists) and you will know you are helping already someone who is having a tougher life than others!!!

By purchasing our handicrafts you can help support Kupu-Kupu’s artists.

Conferences and Events

Shared Visions disability conference 2009

2-3 April, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

The conference is an opportunity for people throughout the sector to share information and ideas, create new connections and encourage innovation to make a difference to people with a disability.

People with an interest in disability issues are invited to submit an abstract <<http://www.disability.qld.gov.au/community/shared-visions/conference-2009/submit-abstract.html>>

or register an interest

<<http://www.disability.qld.gov.au/community/shared-visions/conference-2009/register.asp>>

in attending the conference.

Towards A National Disability Studies Agenda, Disability Studies Conference, UNSW Sydney June 26-27 2009

Call for abstracts application forms must be received by 30 January 2009.

The overarching aim of the conference will be to bring together, for the first time, people from the disability studies academia, students and members of the disability community to discuss in the context of the new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities developments towards a national disability studies agenda. The possibilities, realities and practical challenges of this will be discussed by two keynote speakers and taken up in contributed papers.

Submissions are particularly welcome from students and first time presenters. We seek to provide a supportive environment for people making presentations and to be as accessible as possible to all delegates.

Abstracts should be 300 words in length and preferably submitted via the conference website:

http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au/conferences/conferences/disability_studies by January 23, 2009.

'The Good Life' Conference

What is meant by The Good Life? Does it mean the same to all Australians? Did 'the good old days' really exist?

As Australian governments implement a social inclusion agenda to achieve this ideal, some of Australia's leading thinkers explore the evidence, consider how social inclusion aspirations can contribute, and the role our governments and social institutions can play in achieving the good life for all Australians.

This conference will explore The Good Life in three linked sessions:

Thinking about the Good Life: a philosophical segment focusing on the Good Life and community wellbeing;

Are we there yet? A session drawing on historical analyses and data on trends in Australia since World War Two; and

Achieving the Good Life: focusing on the effectiveness of policies, programs and interventions to improve wellbeing, and particularly to address poverty and social exclusion.

When: Thursday 12 February 2009, 9am to 5pm.

Where: The Ian Hanger Recital Hall, Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, Grey Street, South Bank, Brisbane.

Cost: \$125 for students, non-government organisations and unwaged, \$150 for all others.

For any queries, please contact Susan Lockwood-Lee.

Contact Name: Susan Lockwood-Lee

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Website: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/special-research-initiatives/strategic-research-program-social-change-wellbeing/news-and-events/social-change-and-wellbeing-conference>

National Disability Strategy PDA Consultations

Sue Egan, the Executive Officer of Physical Disability Australia (PDA) and Board member of Australian Federation of Disability Organizations (AFDO), has recently been conducting consultations throughout regional NSW, for the National Disability Strategy.

This consultation process has proved to be highly informative and highlighted a number of key areas and issues which impact on the lives of people with disability their carers family and workers within rural NSW. The consultations were held in Orange, Coffs Harbor, Grafton, and Lismore and attracted individuals from a diverse target group.

The outcome of these Consultations was a wide range of recommendations covering key topics such as.

- Access to premises
- Accommodation and housing options
- Accommodation Support
- Airlines in rural areas
- Awareness Raising.
- Centrelink
- Cost of Disability
- Disability Support Pension
- Discrimination
- Education
- Employment
- Equipment
- Individual Funding
- Informal networks for Parents and those who care for people with disability
- Medical and Health
- Parking for people with disability
- Peer Support
- Recreation, The Arts and Sport
- Respite
- Taxation
- Training for people with disability and parents in computers.
- Transport

This process has highlighted a significant lack of service and resources for people with disability living in rural areas, and these consultations were conducted in key regional centers where services and access are better than more remote areas.

The consultations also highlighted key areas where the federal government needs to take a stand to address an unfair and unreasonable situation in rural areas. The Australian government has committed to basic standards and quality of life for people with disability, and the National Disability Strategy is a tool to meet those standards set out in the recent ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

*To access the full report you can go to www.pda.org.au / www.adfo.org.au or for those without access to the internet you can request a copy mailed out to you by calling **02 6567 1500**.*

Books Journals and Publications

No Barriers, No Borders -

advocacy and peer support for disabled asylum seekers and refugees report:

Tells the story of how the group No Barriers, No Borders was set up.

- It contains accounts of the experiences of a number of disabled asylum seekers and refugees in Sheffield and elsewhere, who are trying to access public services and survive the immigration process.

- The report includes good practice recommendations for supporting and working with disabled asylum seekers and refugees. This report should be read by those people who make decisions about the way people's claims for asylum are processed, those who implement these policies, public service providers, Disability Activists, academics, community organisations and by voluntary sector groups which support asylum seekers and refugees in the UK.

No Barriers No Borders, c/o Burngreave Ashram

84-86 Spital Hill, Sheffield S4 7LG.

Book—Young Disabled People: Aspirations, Choices and Constraints

Sonali Shah, University of Leeds, UK

Imprint: Ashgate **Published:** December 2008 **Format:** 234 x 156 mm **Extent:** 132 pages **Binding:** Hardback **ISBN:** 978-0-7546-7422-1

Recent policies and government initiatives in many Western countries have strengthened the expectation that young disabled people have the right to be involved in decisions affecting their futures. Many of the choices that are currently taken out of young disabled people's hands, including those relating to education and future employment, are now being viewed as an opportunity to encourage participation in the decision making process. Sonali Shah uses a comparative study of young disabled students within mainstream and special education to determine the influence these recent policies will have on the realization of their long term goals. *Young Disabled People: Aspirations, Choices and Constraints* will be essential reading for academics in the fields of education, disability studies and employment policy. It will also be valuable to policy makers and teaching and careers professionals.

'Sonali Shah Carefully engages with the accounts of disabled young people, as they negotiate their lives and plan for the future, at a crucial time in UK and European disability policy on education and employment. Shah provides a crafted disability studies analysis, drawing on resources from social policy, sociology, education and social psychology, providing invaluable insights for theory, policy and practice.' - Dan Goodley, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK



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VISIT OUR NEW
WEBSITE AT
WWW.PDA.ORG.AU

Physical Disability Australia (PDA)

is the national peak disability organisation for people with a Physical Disability in Australia .We represents the interests and views of people with physical disability across Australia. PDA represents the largest sector of disability in Australia.

About the Newsletter

This Newsletter is for by and about people with disability. Our aim with this newsletter is to, share experiences and information and support those out in the community working for their rights and/ or the rights of people with Physical Disability throughout Australia.

We welcome input from members and readers, If you have a topic you would like covered in the next edition please contact us and let us know.

Physical Disability Australia Ltd

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: (type or print) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

1. Individual Membership (free) YES / NO

Are you a person with a disability? _____ If so, specify disability

2. Associate Membership (free also)

Are you a family member/support person/service ?

3. Corporate Membership/organisation - \$50 membership fee)

Name of organisation?

Do you wish to join our on line-discussion Group (email) to talk about important issues? This will result in receiving group emails from members on subjects of interest to people with physical disability? YES NO

Do you wish to receive PDCA newsletter? YES NO

Mail to: PO Box 38, Willawarrin. NSW 2440 or email: pda@pda.org.au or fax: 02 6567 1500