



PWdWA Newsletter June 2023

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Message from our Chair – Yhana Lucus

Welcome to People With disabilities WA's June Newsletter.

In this newsletter, you will find information on PWdWA's upcoming visit to the Pilbara, an opportunity to work as a PWdWA workshop facilitator and a summary of our findings from the WA Disability Legislation Review survey.

First, though, I am excited to introduce our inaugural Advisory Board.

Earlier this year, we went in search of skilled and experienced professionals who would be interested in volunteering their time to provide specialised advice and additional support for our Board and management.

We were absolutely blown away by the response, and 15 very impressive individuals have now formed PWdWA's inaugural Advisory Board - six of these individuals have a disability themselves, four have immediate family with a disability, and the remaining five have professional experience in a target area (such as finance), as well as a track record of working of helping others.

The Advisory Board does not have any voting rights or director responsibilities, retaining our 100% member-led core. Instead, members will bolster Board sub-committees, support Board members wishing to build on particular skills, share their subject matter expertise with management, and make recommendations to the Board for consideration.

Members have already contributed significant value to discussions and planning, and I am excited to continue working with them.

I would like to thank all of our new Advisory Board members, as well as all others who expressed their interest.

In particular, I extend my deepest gratitude to our Advisory Board chair, Jim Preketes.

You check out biographies for Jim and other members now online at https://www.pwdwa.org/about_us/our_committee.html.

PWdWA in Action

Pilbara Regional Visit

We are excited to announce that PWdWA will visit the Karratha and Port Hedland at the end of June to discuss our 1800 193 331 free call number and run our Disability Support Pension and NDIS Appeals and Reviews information sessions.

We are committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are able to live their lives to the fullest, and we believe that access to high-quality advocacy services is a crucial part of achieving this goal. Therefore, in addition to our workshops, we will discuss how people without phone or computer access can access our advocacy services.

The Pilbara region is a beautiful and unique part of Western Australia, and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to visit and connect with the local community. We look forward to meeting and working together to create a more inclusive and accessible community.

Community Building Facilitators

We're looking for facilitators with lived experience who are enthusiastic about empowering and connecting individuals with disabilities. PWdWA will train facilitators to share relevant information with their peers and community members. No prior experience is required, and successful candidates will be paid for their work as PWdWA facilitators. If you're interested, please contact Grace at grace@pwdwa.org.

Current Issues

A Summary of Our Disability Legislation Review Survey

In creating our submission to the Western Australian Disability Legislation, we asked our members to have their voices heard. We found that members believed it's crucial to prioritise the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities and fully commit to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). In addition, the legislation should incorporate dynamic recommendations and reforms that align with current disability services and the State Disability Strategy 2020-2030.

The current definition of 'disability' in the Disability Service Act 1993 covers all diagnostic understandings of disability but leans towards the medical model. As a result, it fails to represent the range of disabilities individuals can experience and neglects the social aspect of disabilities. It's essential to establish a proper definition of disability that provides necessary support and doesn't impede the legislation's purpose. The aim should be to provide individuals with disabilities a comfortable life and ensure their happiness and health.

Our members felt the UNCRPD's definition would be the best choice to adopt as it aligns with the WA State Strategy 2020-2030 and the four pillars guiding change. It offers a more contemporary and less restrictive perspective, allowing a broader understanding of disability. In addition, it acknowledges society's role and responsibility in structuring services and support from a social model.

The reform legislation must cater to a diverse population of individuals with disabilities, their family members, carers, advocates, service providers, peak bodies,

and disability-lead organisations. In addition, it must establish a foundation for providing support and services to individuals with disabilities who are ineligible to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

PWdWA will make the submission available to read on our website once it has been submitted.

PWdWA in Focus

Grace Rosales

Acting Individual Capacity Building Project Officer

Grace began her professional career as a marketing officer after completing a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Marketing. To further improve her skills to connect with people, she completed Post Grad studies in Public Relations.

However, her passion for social justice saw her utilising her skills to deliver projects in the Not for Profit sector. Grace would like to continue running projects to help individuals live their best lives.

Grace is married and has two adult children and a canine grandchild that bosses her around.

Shaun Warnock

Assistant Business Accessibility Empowerment Project Officer

Shaun is a student currently working on completing his social work degree at Curtin University and has transitioned to social services after a long career in resources. He has experience in support work and NDIS and now comes to work for PWdWA after learning the ropes of individual advocacy as a placement student.

He is passionate about human rights, equity and social justice. Shaun and his partner have two cats and love a good coffee date.

Upcoming

Annual General Meeting Save the Date

PWdWA's Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 8 November 2023, in the City West Lotteries House Conference Room. We will provide you with further information closer to the date.

PWdWA

PWdWA is funded by the Western Australian Department of Communities and the Australian Department of Social Services.

PWdWA is run BY and FOR people with disabilities and aims to be the voice for all people with disabilities in Western Australia.