



PWdWA Newsletter May 2023

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Message from our Chair – Yhana Lucas

Welcome to our May newsletter. This month's newsletter contains information on PWdWA's projects and systemic advocacy. We are also introducing a new staff member that we anticipate will streamline our Individual Advocacy intake process.

Our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Brendan Cullinan, is now on extended personal leave. The board and I wish to thank Acting CEO Andrea Surman, our Operations Manager, as she steps forward in Brendan's absence. We also welcome a new staff member, Matthew Gee, who is joining us as Intake and Assessment Officer. We hope this role will help to increase our individual advocacy capabilities once fully part of our processes

The next few months are busy for PWdWA's systemic advocacy as we work on three submissions. As part of our submission for the Western Australian Disability Legislation review, we will host an online session with the Department of Communities. You can find details about the session and information about participating in our survey in this newsletter.

We would also like to thank all our members who participated in the NDIS Review and the Accessible Public Transport surveys. We are currently finalising our submissions, and your feedback is vital in ensuring your voices are heard.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. Next month, I will introduce you to our new Advisory Board, which will be providing skilled professional assistance to the organisation.

If there is anything you wish to see in these newsletters or on our social media, please do not hesitate to contact us.

PWdWA in Action

Disability Legislation Review

Western Australia's disability legislation is being reformed to address issues of importance, enabling the provision of disability services and modernising WA legislation.

Department of Communities is committed to ensuring WA disability legislation comprises contemporary, achievable policy objectives supported by statutory provisions.

The consultation and engagement process focuses on identifying concerns, solutions and ideas from the WA community, including the principles applicable to and safeguarding people with disability, access and inclusion. The Department of Communities wants your feedback on how WA disability legislation can address and support these areas.

To ensure people with disability have their voices heard, PWdWA is hosting a consultation session with the department. This session will be held online through Teams. However, PWdWA members can attend this session at the Training Room in City West Lotteries House

WHEN: Monday, 22 May 2023 **TIME:** 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm

You can register for the [consultation session](#).

If you would like to [complete the survey](#), you can go to or contact Vanessa on 9420 7279 for assistance.

Business Accessibility Empowerment Program

The Business Accessibility Empowerment Program is back up and running. We are on the hunt for superstar Youth Consultants wanting to expand their knowledge and experience within the employment sector and develop soft skills, confidence, and potential links to employment opportunities (see attached Youth Consultant flyer). Our partners in the South, Advocacy WA, had 9 participants employed by the relevant businesses at the completion of the program. We have 11 Youth Consultants able to recommence the program. Still, we need at least 39 more, so we are reaching out to educational institutions and community services to provide an opportunity for interested and suitable participants. The Youth Consultant training plans to recommence in late May/June 2023 once our Project Officer Isabella joins PWdWA on 29 May.

We are also putting a shout-out to small to medium-sized businesses that want to become more welcoming and accessible to people with disability. We have a number of businesses involved in the program, from libraries to cafes, gyms to offices, but there is room for more as we aim for each Youth Consultant to have an individual employment experience. Meetings and presentations have been set up with local governments to consider networking opportunities to target suitable businesses that would benefit from the program. So, if you are a business that wants to be inclusive and disability confident/ friendly, we are offering a free service that can improve customer service and client accessibility, retain and support staff and expand your talent pool.

For more information, please get in touch with Natasha at natasha@pwdwa.org.

Current Issues

Self Advocacy WA

Self Advocacy WA (SAWA) is a Self Advocacy Peer Support Group supported by PWdWA, run by and for people with disabilities. We're seeking expressions of

interest from people with disability to become SAWA members and join the SAWA Advisory Committee.

This project intends to provide the opportunity for SAWA Members to further develop skills in co-designing and co-facilitating meetings and forums, connecting with SAWA members, using social media and attending forums. Review and provide information on self-advocacy in relation to individual and group issues and connect and network with other organisations that do peer support.

For further information or to complete an expression of interest, please go to [Self Advocacy WA | PWdWA](#)

PWdWA In focus

Matthew Gee – Intake and Assessment Officer

Matt has taken up the role of Intake and Assessment Officer. Matt will be the first point of contact for people calling PWdWA as we continue to provide a client-centred, disability-informed approach to advocacy. Matt has recently moved to Western Australia from Melbourne and is passionate about human rights issues and empowering people to have their voices heard.

Matt has experience working in the community services sector as a Therapeutic Carer and Therapeutic Case Manager in Melbourne, supporting young people who live in out-of-home care and supporting families to achieve safe reunifications. Matt's most recent position was case managing a home in a transitional program for young people transitioning into independent living.

Outside of work, Matt loves swimming, photography, live music, and football.

End of newsletter