

People With disabilities WA March 2024 Newsletter

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Message from our CEO – Brendan Cullinan

On 19 February 2024, a Town Hall Briefing on the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was held at the Perth Convention Centre. The Review report was released by Hon. Bill Shorten, MP, Minister for the NDIS, on 7 December 2023 and included 26 recommendations and 139 supporting outcomes. The purpose of the review was to restore trust and confidence in the NDIS, enhance its effectiveness, and prioritise the needs of people with disabilities while focusing on putting them back at the centre of the scheme. The review examined the design, operations, and sustainability of the NDIS and explored ways to create a more responsive, supportive, and sustainable market and workforce.

The Town Hall briefing provided an opportunity for the Review Panel members to present key recommendations, including changes to access, planning and budgeting processes, a broader support system including individual support for people with disabilities in and outside of the NDIS, changes to the registration of providers, and the need for the disability sector and people with disabilities to be consulted before implementing the changes. Hon. Bill Shorten attended the meeting to answer queries from people in attendance. PWdWA Chair Nihal Iscel was invited to participate in the briefing and took the opportunity to highlight to Minister Shorten the need for greater systemic funding to the sector to address issues that lead to people seeking individual advocacy support.

Later in the day, the Hon. Don Punch MLA, Minister for Disabilities, met with disability sector leaders from Western Australia to discuss the NDIS Review.

Attendees included NDIS Review Co-Chair Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM and NDIS Review Panel Member Kirsten Deane OAM. The Office of Disability has convened a meeting for sector representatives on Thursday, 14 March, to discuss key aspects of the NDIS Review and implementation considerations in Western Australia.

PWdWA in Action

SAWA at the Our Voice SA Conference

In February, Self Advocacy WA (SAWA) Chairperson Georgie George and PWdWA Communications Officer Vanessa attended the Our Voice, Our Stories Conference in South Australia.

Our Voice SA, a self-advocacy group in South Australia, aims to amplify the voice of adults with intellectual disabilities, discuss issues that matter to them, and foster a sense of community. The Our Voice, Our Stories Conference provided a platform for individuals to come together and engage in meaningful conversations. Sessions included information on Microenterprise, the PACE Computer System, Planning a Good Life and What Makes a Good Friend?

PWdWA in Albany

On 20 to the 22nd of February, Grace, our Empowered and Connected Project Officer, Vanessa, our Communications Officer, and Emily from ConnectGroups paid a visit to Albany. During their visit, Grace and Vanessa hosted a morning tea to listen to people with disabilities, their support systems, and service providers about essential issues in Albany. Following the morning tea, they provided free information sessions on applying for an NDIS Review and Appeal and making a strong Disability Support Pension application. In addition, Emily conducted workshops for those considering applying for funding for a Peer Support Group and those thinking of starting a Support Group. Continued on page 3

Building Tenancy Skills Project – Finalists in the 2024 Consumer Protection Awards.

We are pleased to share that the Building Tenancy Skills Project, a collaborative effort by Shelter WA and PWdWA, has been selected as a finalist for the 2024 Consumer Protection Awards. The project has been nominated for the prestigious Dick Fletcher Award, which recognises the efforts of organisations that have contributed to the advancement of consumer protection.

The primary objective of the Building Tenancy Skills Project is to educate renters about their rights. The project was developed through the participation of various stakeholders, including Lived Experience participants, Circle Green, the Financial Counsellors Association of WA, Consumer Protection, and Developmental Disability WA. The collaboration resulted in creating easy-to-understand information in accessible formats, such as plain-language fact sheets, videos, and a workshop called Renting With Confidence, which has been conducted over 30 times across different parts of WA.

All resources related to Renting With Confidence are available to download from the [website](#).

Current Issues

Speak Up for Advocacy

PWdWA is joining other disability advocacy organisations to promote the Speak up for Independent Advocacy campaign. The campaign urges the Federal Government to significantly increase funding for independent advocacy organisations directly supporting people with disabilities in Australia. PWdWA joins 80 other organisations to play a crucial role in defending the human rights of marginalised and vulnerable individuals with disabilities. By advocating for justice and positive change, we make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

To join the campaign and advocate for increased funding, you can visit the campaign [website](#). Continued on page 4.

Have Your Say on Authorisation of Restrictive Practices in Funded Disability Services Resources

A second opportunity to complete the survey!

The Behaviour Support Consultancy Team (BSC Team) at the Department of Communities is seeking your input to understand what people with disability in Western Australia want to know about the authorisation of restrictive practices. Your answers will help design resources and education sessions.

Restrictive practices are any practice or intervention restricting the rights or freedom of movement of a person with disability.

The survey is written in [easy read](#) and [non-easy read](#).

Please note that the previous link to the non-easy-read survey, published in the November 2023 newsletter, was incorrect. The Department apologises to anyone who completed it and could not submit it.

If you would like the survey in a different format for your accessibility or prefer to have the questions read out to you and scribed, you can contact Vanessa, our Communications Officer, at vanessa@pwdwa.org or phone 9420 7279 Ext 717

PWdWA in Focus

What is Systemic Advocacy, and why is it so important?

Systemic advocacy aims for long-term social change by ensuring that legislation, policies, and practices support the rights and interests of all people with disabilities. Rather than focusing solely on individual cases, systemic advocacy addresses broader issues affecting many individuals.

Participating in PWdWA surveys and providing insight into your lived experience allows us to create a robust, strong position to inform decisions that impact the lives and well-being of people with disability, their supports and their families. Cont. page 5.

In 2023, PWdWA provided submissions on the Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, the Western Australian Disability Legislation, the NDIS Review and Disability Service Act Review.

Upcoming

PWdWA in Geraldton

Grace, our Empowered and Connected Project Officer, and Vanessa, our Communications Officer, will be in Geraldton on Monday, March 18, and Tuesday, March 19.

Vanessa would love the opportunity to have coffee and catch up with any of our members in the Geraldton area. If interested, please email Vanessa at vanessa@pwdwa.org or call 1800 193 331.

During their visit, they will provide free information sessions on applying for an NDIS Review or Appeal and making a strong Disability Support Pension application. If you would like to register for one of these, you can do so through the links below.

For the NDIS Reviews and Appeals Session, register through <https://bit.ly/42SnJXQ>.
For the DSP Session, register at <https://bit.ly/49MecUA>.

PWdWA in Pinjarra and Warrona

PWdWA's Individual Advocate, Lisa, now works out of Murray House Community Centre in Pinjarra and the Waroona Community Resource Centre on alternative Thursdays. Lisa's roster for the next few weeks are as follows:

- Thursday, 7 and 21 March – Pinjarra
- Thursday 14 and 28 March – Waroona

Would you like your newsletters emailed rather than posted? Just let Vanessa know at vanessa@pwdwa.org.

- **Head Office:** 23/2 Dehli Street West Perth
- **Mandurah Office:** 22 Ormsby Terrace Mandurah – By Appointment Only.

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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.

End of March Newsletter.