

Welcome to the July PDCN Live Newsletter!

As I spend most of June writing up yearly reports, checking on our finances in preparation for audit and generally looking back on yet another year, I'm still blown away by how much a small organisation such as ours is able to achieve - thanks to a dedicated, hard working team of staff and contractors. As you read through this newsletter, you'll get a glimpse of some of our achievements!

One thing we have yet to have any success on, unfortunately, is in getting the NSW government to commit to ensuring organisations such as ours remain funded after the next financial year; so now it's time to 'make some noise'!

PDCN and a number of other peak and advocacy organisations in this position have established an alliance and are currently developing a formal campaign to address this important issue.

However, we only exist to support you, our members and stakeholders, and to ensure that the NSW community continues to change and improve to bring about full inclusion for people with physical disability.

As we mount our campaign, we are going to need your support - to tell your Local Member, the NSW Disability Minister, or just about anyone who will listen why you need organisations like ours, what it is we do for you, and why it is SO important that we are funded into the future to keep offering those supports, and provide a strong voice for the disability community.

Stay tuned, and we'll keep you informed via email and our social media channels over the coming months!

Serena Ovens,
Executive Officer

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Contact Us



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St Helens Community Centre
3/184 Glebe Point Road,
Glebe NSW 2037

1800 688 831
Freecall

02 9552 1606
Sydney Metro

admin@pdcnsw.org.au

Save The Date!

Our Annual General Meeting is
on Wednesday October 18 at 6pm



Community Conversations

During the month of June, PDCN held Community Conversations in Ashfield, Rozelle and Newtown. The invitation was extended to anyone who was interested in the community well-being of that particular area. Thank you to all who contributed their time, experiences and ideas.

PDCN regularly communicates with people who have disabilities and their families. They share with us their community aspirations, concerns and ideas around what might make a difference. Our hope for these conversations was to provide an environment where a diverse range of community members could share their own community aspirations. We listened, learned and identified many common themes.

We are now in the process of summarising the notes and identifying common themes and hope to share these in our next newsletter.

We used the Harwood Community Engagement methodology to lead these conversations, which include a series of nine questions. In order to create an intimate and open conversation, we refer to these as a 'Kitchen Table' conversation, keeping each conversation to 15 people or less. If you are a community member or an organisation interested in bringing together additional people to facilitate more of these conversations, please contact us. A range of government and non-government services as well as community members are well placed to initiate these sessions.

PDCN membership renewals are due! Have you renewed yours?

You should have received an email with instructions on how to renew. If you haven't yet renewed, please use the enclosed form or call 1800 688 831.



Not a member yet? Join today at:
www.pdcnsw.org.au/get-involved/become-a-member



NDIS Ready Project: A Summary

PDCN is currently funded to deliver 25 NDIS Ready Workshops over two years. In just the first year of the project we delivered 23 of those 25 workshops! We held workshops across NSW, in all areas set to rollout on July 1st 2017. The workshops were a success with over 350 participants in total and 75 of those were people with disabilities. Post-workshop evaluations were conducted, revealing extremely high participant satisfaction with how the workshops prepared individuals for entry into the NDIS.

Feedback from the workshops has been incredibly positive. Evaluations showed that 218 participants now report greater confidence in developing a plan and 226 agreed they have a greater awareness of the NDIS as a result of attending the workshop. A 'hats off' to the fantastic facilitators who were reported as being knowledgeable and friendly, and were able to share valuable lived experiences with the participants.

During the evaluation process, we received the following comments from participants:

"I have a better idea of what the NDIS is and how to plan for my son's future to enable him to have a full and active life."

- Selina, Broken Hill Workshop

"Facilitators Meg and Michael were knowledgeable and very kind and caring and approachable. Loved hearing about their lived experiences. The best seminar I have attended on the NDIS. Very clear, accurate and helpful for me. They have given me confidence to self-manage. Thank you!" - Wagga Wagga Workshop participant

"Excellent presenters who have inspired and informed. I have gained a greater confidence in comprehending the NDIS, and I feel I have been given the foundations to begin my planning."

- Cronulla Workshop participant

As part of the NDIS Ready project, PDCN has also assisted over 220 individuals to prepare for their NDIS transition with pre-planning. Many participants have noted that attendance at the NDIS workshop, combined with the option of post workshop pre-planning increased their confidence to engage with and understand the NDIS. Pre-planning has offered participants one on one support where they can ask any questions and receive advice on the goals they wish to achieve, and the supports they may need to attain them through their NDIS plan.

As we move into the second year of the project, PDCN will continue to deliver NDIS Ready workshops in selected areas. In addition, we will be moving forward with new workshops that will build participants' capacity in better implementing their NDIS plans.

Another Year of Funding For Our Peer Support Groups

PDCN has received another year of funding from the NDIA for the Disability Support Organisation Capacity Building Project, allowing us to continue to run Peer Support Groups across NSW. Currently, we have 13 groups in NSW meeting each month for two hours to share stories and challenges, learn about their rights, prepare for the NDIS and meet new people. In addition, we have also established a facebook peer support group to allow anyone to link with peers across the country, and share knowledge and experiences when they need it.

“Today I felt really supported and got the push I need to fight more for myself in terms of funding! It was good to see the progress some have made and it’s always good to find creative ways to get around things... thanks for the set up. I love how we band together and tackle issues. It’s also nice to be part of a community.”

- A member of our Blacktown peer support group

This month our youngest community connector, 17-year-old Siobhan Daley, facilitated a new AAC youth group at The Place in Charlestown. The group meets the first Sunday of every month and offers support, information and a meeting place for young people with disability who use augmentative and alternative communication devices. We are so pleased to have Siobhan on board and we’re excited to be able to offer a youth peer support group in Newcastle.

We have also been working closely with facilitator Melanie Schlaeger to organise a group meeting focusing on relationships and dating. Guest speaker, Liz Dore, joined the Erina group last Tuesday and discussed topics such as online dating, forming new relationships, relationship communication skills and building confidence for dating. With over 25 years’ experience counselling and offering advice on dating to people with disability, Liz presented an informative and interesting workshop, answering difficult questions and building our members’ knowledge and confidence to form positive relationships and friendships. Thanks to Melanie, we had a fantastic turnout for the meeting and welcomed nine new members to the group.

Upcoming Peer Support Groups

Essential Employment Peer Support Group

Date: 26/07/2017 (last Wednesday of the month)

Time: 10:30am-12:30pm

Location: Essential Employment and Training, Wollongong

Noah's Parent Room Support Group

Date: 20/07/2017 (last Thursday of every month)

Time: 10:30am-12:30pm (day session) & 6:00pm-8:00pm (evening session)

Location: Noah's Shoalhaven

Blacktown Peer Support Group

Date: 28/07/2017 (last Friday of every month)

Time: 11am- 1pm

Location: Assistive Technology Australia, Westpoint Shopping Centre, Sydney

Erina Peer Support Group

Date: 01/08/2017 (first Tuesday of every month)

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: The Hive, Erina, Central Coast

Nowra Peer Support Group

Date: 14/08/2017 (second Monday of every month)

Time: 11:30-1:30pm

Location: Disability Trust, Nowra

Shoalhaven Self Advocacy Group

Date: 05/08/2017 (first Saturday of every month)

Time: 11:30am-1:30 pm

Location: West Street Community Centre, Nowra

ACC Youth Group

Date: 06/08/2017 (first Sunday of every month)

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: The Place, Charlestown, Newcastle

Liverpool Peer Support Group

Date: 07/08/2017 (first Monday of every month)

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: Liverpool Library, Sydney

Wollongong Women's Peer Support Group

Date: 30/08/2017

Time: 2pm-4pm

Location: Illawarra Women's Health Centre, Wollongong

Top Ryde Peer Support Group

Date: 18/08/2017 (third Friday of every month)

Time: 1pm-3pm

Location: Top Ryde City Library, Sydney

For further information on peer support groups, or to register, go to <https://www.pdcnsw.org.au/projects/peer-support-groups/> or call Sarah Humphery on 9552 1606.

Donate to PDCN!

Remember, donations above \$2 are fully tax deductible.

You can make donations online at: <https://www.pdcnsw.org.au/get-involved/donation/>

Farewell and thank you!

PDCN would like to farewell Alice Dixon-Wilmshurst, who has recently gone on maternity leave. In the role of NDIS Ready project officer, Alice has made an invaluable contribution to the organisation and will be missed by the whole team here at PDCN. During her six months with us, Alice was responsible for the administration and implementation of 10 successful NDIS Ready workshops for people with disabilities and carers across NSW. Alice developed our NDIS Ready workshops program for service providers, including developing new training materials to assist service providers to better support their clients and navigate their changing role in the post NDIS disability sector. On top of managing her own project, Alice has always been willing to assist other team members and was a pleasure to work with. We wish Alice the best of luck in the upcoming months and hope to see her soon.

And, welcome...

We are thrilled to welcome Sarah Humphery, who has stepped in to fill the role of DSO Peer Support Project Officer. Sarah has previously worked at Arts Project Australia, a Melbourne based not-for-profit organisation providing contemporary art programs for artists with intellectual disabilities. Most recently, she worked as a facilitator at Studio Artes in Hornsby which offers creative programs for adults living with a disability. She also sits on the board of Roomies Art. Inc which is an independent organisation with the vision of fostering professional development and artistic expression for artists with disability. Sarah has already lead the PDCN peer group project in an innovative direction and we look forward to seeing these groups grow and thrive.



We are also excited to have Sarah Gunasinghe on board as our new NDIS Ready Project Officer. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Social Work from The University of Sydney. She spent three years as a Disability Support Worker at Creativity Inc. supporting children and young people in their daily living and recreational activities. During this time, she also worked as a Teachers' Aid at South Coogee Public School assisting students with various needs to achieve their academic goals and participate in mainstream classrooms. Sarah's last role was as a Family Programs Support Worker at the Junction Neighbourhood Centre in Maroubra, where she provided practical and emotional support to families experiencing challenging circumstances. Sarah also

runs a small weekend flower business as a creative outlet! We're so pleased to have Sarah as our newest member of the team and we're sure she will apply this wealth of experience and knowledge to her new role with PDCN.

Vale Wendy Potter

21.4.1944 - 3.7.2017

PDCN is saddened by the loss of yet another of our amazing and long standing members, Ms Wendy Potter.

Wendy was a former board member of PDCN from 2008 – 2011, and an individual member for the last 18 years.

In addition, Wendy undertook work for PDCN delivering training programs such as Words Matter and the Mentors Matter workshops.

Wendy was a tireless advocate for people with disability, ensuring their voice was heard in the NSW community, and was also heavily involved with People With Disabilities Australia and Paraquad throughout her years as an advocate.

She will be greatly missed and our deepest sympathies go out to her family and friends.



Catch the GIO Wheelchair Rugby National Championships in Sydney



When: August 2 – August 5.

Finals Sat August 5.

Bronze medal match at 1pm

Gold medal match at 4:30pm

Where: Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre, Olympic Boulevard

Entry: gold coin donation

To view all the match times, visit wheelchairrugby.com.au



Handy Tips For Members

Preparing for your planning meeting

- Consider the different options for managing your NDIS plan. Thinking in advance about the service providers you would like to use, whether you want to self-manage, use a plan manager or have your funds NDIA managed will help you decide the best fit for your situation and support needs. The three options each have their own advantages. Remember, if you decide to use a plan manager, you can switch to a different management option later.
- Will you require support coordination? NDIS participants can have both support coordination and plan management in their NDIS plan. However, you must clearly state the reasons why you need support coordination as not everyone requires this level of support. Support coordination may be necessary if you require support to negotiate with service providers, arrange assessments or to link to mainstream or community services (i.e. housing, education, transport, health). Support coordinators may also assist participants in resolving problems or issues as they arise such as equipment breakdown.
- Think about any equipment or aids that you currently use and if they should be included in your plan. Don't forget about servicing, spare parts and how often each item needs replacing. It may be helpful to create a list to ensure you remember everything at your planning meeting.
- Remember, some planning meetings are being held over the phone, however you have the right to ask for a face to face meeting, so don't feel you can't ask for one if this is your preference.

Find resources about pre-planning and preparing for your meeting at

<https://www.pdcnsw.org.au/ndis/>



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