



Lifetime Care and Support Authority

Prepared for the Legislative Council

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Prepared by the Physical Disability Council of NSW

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Who is the Physical Disability Council of NSW?

The Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) is the peak body representing people with physical disabilities across New South Wales. This includes people with a range of physical disability issues, from young children and their representatives to aged people, who are from a wide range of socio-economic circumstances and live in metropolitan, rural and regional areas of NSW

The objectives of PDCN are:

- To educate, inform and assist people with physical disabilities in NSW about the range of services, structure and programs available that enable their full participation, equality of opportunity and equality of citizenship
- To develop the capacity of people with physical disability in NSW to identify their own goals, and the confidence to develop a pathway to achieving their goals (ie self advocate).
- To educate and inform stakeholders (ie about the needs of people with a physical disability) so they are able to achieve and maintain full participation, equality of opportunity and equality of citizenship.

The Physical Disability Council appreciates the opportunity to consider, and make comment to the Legislative Council for the Fifth Review of the exercise of the Functions of the Lifetime Care and Support Authority.

Discussion

Participant representative on the Lifetime Care and Support (LTCAS) Advisory Board

As part of the review of the LTCAS conducted in 2012, Recommendation 2 identified the need for participant representatives with catastrophic injuries on to the LTCAS Advisory Board. Commonly people with recent injuries are nervous and lack the confidence to initially stand on advisory committees but with time, participants eagerly express their thoughts and opinions. To assist with this process the Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) would like to suggest any of the following indicatives:

- **Group work-** That the LTCAS provide a self- development program aimed at providing information about funding and goal setting. PDCN conducts a “Getting Ready” workshop run over 2 days (3 hours each day) for people with physical disability. The emphasis of the workshop is goal setting and planning. The aim of the workshop is to develop skills so people with disability are able to become confident in planning for their supports and services as well as individualised funding arrangements. Information is also provided during the workshop relating to useful contacts and resources.
- **Mentor-** Identify a mentor to act as a leader to facilitate skill acquisition
- **Peer support-** Provide the two nominees with opportunities to learn and share from each other.

Review of the LTCAS Advisory Board

Due to current changes in the availability and delivery of community services, and the pending adoption of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, PDCN supports Recommendation 1 of the 2012 review of the LTCAS to continue reviewing the LTCAS. PDCN believes that with these significant changes that this service should be reviewed formally by a government body. Subsequently PDCN agrees with designating the Standing Committee on Law and Justice with responsibility for supervising the LTCAS at least once every two years until 2020.

Person centred services

PDCN believes that many of the resources on the LTCAS website are geared towards the professional rather than participants and believes that more resources need to be available to participants in electronic and printed formats, such as a number of resources already available on the Victorian Department of Human Services, Disability Services website;

- Individual Support Package: general information
- Planning for my supports
- Individual Support Package funding administration arrangements
- Individual Support Package Handbook
- Individual Support Package Guidelines

Supported Accommodation

The decline in admissions nationally and within NSW to aged care residential facilities for people less than 65 years has only been minimal. Nationally the number of admissions from 2008 to 2010 has declined from 6594 to 6456, and within NSW from 2372 to 2363. ¹

PDCN believes that the LTCAS should actively avoid any future admissions to aged care residential facilities for younger people with disability, and adopt this as a key performance indicator. For younger people with brain injury they may have had good physical return, but are psychologically and socially debilitated with unique and individual care needs that are not met appropriately by aged care residential facilities. Challenging behaviours such as disinhibition, verbal or physical aggression are often evident following a brain injury and staff at aged care facilities are often untrained in management of these.

Accessible Accommodation

To ensure that service users accessing LTCAS are informed about their options regarding accommodation, PDCN would recommend the preparation of an additional Information sheet on accommodation to be downloaded on to the LTCAS website. This Information Sheet needs to contain information on the following;

¹ Younger People in Nursing Homes- National Alliance, Statistics- Estimated number of young people in nursing homes <http://www.ypinh.org.au/statistics>

- Social and public housing,
- Affordable housing
- Transitional and supported accommodation,
- Accessible accommodation
- Home modifications
- Liveable Housing Australia

The relevance of information on accessible accommodation has been highlighted in previous reviews of the LTCAS, and PDCN would like to suggest a disability information service provider, such as Information on Disability, Education and Attitudes (IDEAS) is approached to prepare and regularly update information on accessible accommodation.

Employment

PDCN would like to commend the LTCAS in regards to the vocational program available to service users with a recent spinal cord injury. A preliminary report indicates that 47.8 per cent of participants had returned to work 12 months post-injury, and an additional 13 per cent were engaged in study 12 months post injury. The LTCAS 2012/13 Annual Report quotes this as being a much higher return to work rate than the predicted international rate for people 12 months after an SCI. Before the commencement of the program, the return to work rate of people in the Scheme with an SCI was 20.1 per cent. ²

Unfortunately these successes are not universal across other target groups such as for people with acquired brain injury.

² Lifetime Care and Support Authority 2012/13 Annual Report