

## PDCN Year In Review



By **Serena Ovens, Executive Officer**

2014/15 has been a year of transformation for PDCN, with a change of leadership mid-year, a number of funded programs coming to a close, and others just beginning. It has also been an exciting year, with continued successes enabling us to achieve important outcomes for people with physical disability.

The positive relationships we have built up with Government, other like minded organisations, our stakeholders and our members are core to achieving these outcomes, and reflect the importance of listening to our members, and giving them a voice in the NSW disability landscape. During the past year we produced an updated version of our 'Words Matter' publication, our reference guide for the media.

Words DO matter, they are powerful tools, and have the ability to damage and discourage, and mould the perceptions and attitudes of those whom hear and use them, but their power can also increase understanding, and appropriate language and the avoidance of stereotypes can assist us in fostering positive social change towards all those with disability.

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## PDCN have a brand new website!



The new PDCN website was launched on International Day of People with Disability.

The site provides new functionality including:

- The ability to buy and renew memberships,
- A new PayPal donation portal,
- A fresh new look,
- Full of up to date information, and
- Calendars to keep you in the loop with everything PDCN is running

See it for yourself at:  
[www.pdcnsw.org.au](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au)

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# PDCN Year In Review

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Our funded projects have kept us on our toes, and in 2015 we completed the delivery of a further 11 Disability and Dementia workshops in partnership with Alzheimer's Australia (NSW) to wrap up the funding requirements.

In addition an educational DVD was co-produced as a supplementary resource for this project, highlighting the needs and concerns of those with disability as they deal with dual diagnoses, and will be a great resource into the future.

The Getting Ready workshops also came to an end in the year, a total of 30 workshops delivered over the life of the project, and 16 in the 2015 period. Originally funded under the 'Living Life my Way' Framework, these workshops were designed to provide training and skills development to people with disability to build their own capacity in decision making, life choice and planning, assisting them in the transition to individualised funding.

Follow up evaluations were undertaken with participants 2-4 months post workshop, and more than 90% reported progression towards achieving goals they had set for themselves, 71% indicating they felt they had more control over their lives, and 75% feeling more knowledgeable about planning for their lives, a great outcome!

Whilst this project has now completed, PDCN has been offered the opportunity to build on this initiative with approval of re allocated funds from the Dept of Ageing Disability and Homecare, and have just begun delivering a 'ramped up' version of the workshops with an even greater emphasis on goal setting and planning in a two day program. We are calling the workshops 'NDIS Ready – Planning for my Future.'

We believe this will be a much sought after course with the imminent roll out of the NDIS for many people in NSW occurring from July 2016. Stay tuned for 2016 dates!

Our newer project initiatives begun in the 2015 year are now making some headway, with the NGO Support Planning project also seeing us offer one on one planning support to people with disability identified through the ADHC districts. We have recently had confirmation that the project will be extended to June 2016.

The other major funded project we are currently undertaking is that of the National Disability Insurance Agency's Disability Support Organisation Capacity Building Project, an incredibly long winded title for our 'peer groups'!

This project began earlier in this year, and with the expert management of the project lead, Wendy Banfield, and her team of community connectors and I'm pleased to say that we have exceeded our target of 6 peer groups for 2015.

As part of our core funded deliverables, we also made 13 submissions to State and Federal Government, held 2 community and 6 specific issue consultations, represented our members on 14 committees and advisory boards, and attended an additional 9 one off consultations throughout 2015.

We continue to provide information to anyone with a query through our website, phone and email services, and provide regular updates on relevant issues through our 'PDCN LIVE' newsletter and E bulletins.

As social media becomes a major interactive domain, PDCN has actively engaged in this platform, and grown our Twitter profile by more than 800% in 2013!

PDCN is proactively moving with funding landscape changes in order to remain a viable organisation into the future. To this end we are currently implementing some significant initiatives, such as an updated Strategic Plan, a new website, and customer relationship management database, ensuring we are well equipped to clearly show the outcomes we achieve in our work and for our membership.

A particular highlight for myself in 2015 was being offered a seat on Minister Dominello's newly established Social Innovation Council. This has PDCN and four other Non Government Organisations (NGO's) representatives working with the Minister and senior ministry staff across various portfolios to look at ways to enable NGO's to work with Government that are effective, innovative, and above all standardised and efficient for all.

The council is in its infancy, with benchmarking and outcomes frameworks currently being developed, but is a great opportunity for PDCN to have significant input into government relations and procedures for NGO's.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank PDCN's Board and staff for making me feel so welcome into the PDCN team, for answering my many questions as I 'got up to speed' and for their continued dedication, commitment and achievements throughout.

Finally, a big thank you to you - our members, supporters and others whom participated in our forums, consultations and events, and continue to inform the important work we do!

I wish you a very merry Christmas, and safe, happy and healthy 2016!

# Meet our two new board members



## David Jeffries

**Marketing Director**  
Invacare Australia and New Zealand.

Since joining Invacare Australia and New Zealand in 2012, David has been very busy in the Marketing team reviewing Invacare's Strategy, continuing to develop our research of our industry.

His true passion is Sport and Invacare is now an active part of sports development in Australia and New Zealand for people with disabilities, which truly lives up to Invacare's brand promise "Making Life's Experience's Possible".

David currently coaches wheelchair basketball and was a previous Board member of Queensland Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.



## Matthew Kayrooz

**Chief CTP Portfolio and Underwriting Manager**  
Suncorp Group

Over the last 10 years, Matthew has worked in Compulsory Third Party Insurance, the personal injury scheme, looking after people injured in motor vehicle accidents.

This work has involved developing a CTP product with affordable premiums for motorists that offers fair and adequate compensation to injured people, especially those with serious injuries.

Matthew is married with 3 children and has keen interests in sport and music.

Matthew also currently sits on the on the Board of Technical Aid for the Disabled.

**We welcome David and Matthew to the PDCN Board, and look forward to the contributions their wealth of experience in the corporate sector will bring to our organisation!**

To read David and Matthew's full bios and the bios of all PDCN Board Members head to [www.pdcnsw.org.au/about-us/board-of-management/](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au/about-us/board-of-management/)

# Changes to the PDCN Constitution

Following a members vote at PDCN's AGM in October, changes to our constitution were ratified, and are now in place.

## Membership

There is no longer a requirement for 75% of our membership to be made up of people with physical disabilities or a representative of, as the voting membership is made up of full members or representatives. As such, there are two (2) new membership categories. Membership categories are as follows:

**Full Member** – person with a physical disability, or a representative of a child under 16 with a physical disability

**Associate Member** – a person whom does not have a disability - associate members do not hold voting rights

**Organisational Member** – an organisation that wishes to be a member of PDCN

**Life Member** – this is an honorary membership, and is bestowed by the Board in recognition of long standing membership, or for service above and beyond.

## Board structure

The PDCN board is no longer restricted to ONLY persons with a physical disability.

The PDCN Board is now made up of up to 8 members (formerly 7 members) the majority of which must be persons with a physical disability or a representative. The rest of the Board places may be filled by anyone whom has the skills and experience that PDCN requires to ensure good, effective governance.

In addition, The President of PDCN **MUST** be a person with a physical disability.

**There were also a few small changes to address the way in which meetings could be held and grammar & numbering conventions.**

**Should you wish to view a full copy of the new constitution you can do so on the PDCN website.**

# NDIS Ready Workshops

A new initiative for PDCN, the NDIS Ready Workshops are two day workshops for people with disability, or their parents/ carers - free of charge, thanks to ADHC funding!

The workshops focus on explaining the NDIS, how you can engage and begin getting ready for the transition to the NDIS or register for the NDIS.

In addition, the workshops help you begin to think about what your aspirations and goal for your life may be and our expert planners will work with you to help you develop your ideas into a plan and identify the services and supports you may need to achieve your goals.

The workshops are a fun, friendly environment where you can ask any questions you have, experiment with resources and tools to help you plan, and meet people who have already been through the planning process.



**We are running workshops in eight areas in the first half of 2016:**

## **February 2016**

Wagga Wagga  
Central Coast

## **March 2016**

Taree  
Katoomba  
Mittagong

## **April 2016**

Tamworth

## **May 2016**

Nowra  
Northern Sydney  
Region

You can view additional dates, venues, timetables and further details  
*plus* book into a workshop from our new website at:  
[www.pdcnsw.org.au/workshops-and-training/ndis-ready/](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au/workshops-and-training/ndis-ready/)

## Changes To The PDCN Team

There have been a few changes to staffing in the 2015 year, with Lachlan Hazelton leaving us after nearly 10 years with PDCN, and Hayley Brooks finishing up at the end of the year, to go on and pursue a career in social work, having just completed her Masters in this field.

We wish them both the very best with their new careers, and the PDCN Board wish to take this opportunity to thank them both for their dedication to PDCN's vision and values, and the support they've provided our members during their time at here.

We welcome two new staff members to the PDCN team – Kieren Sainsbury and Ryan Saunderson, and look forward to the contributions they will make to PDCN's work into 2016!

### **Ryan Saunderson**

**Project Officer,  
NDIS Ready**



### **Kieren Sainsbury**

**Online and Social Media  
Coordinator**



To see all the staff behind PDCN head to [www.pdcnsw.org.au/about-us/staff/](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au/about-us/staff/)

# Peer Support Group Project Update

PDCN peer groups are a positive and relaxed way to meet like-minded people. The groups meeting monthly and are facilitated by a person with disability with topics and themes all decided on by the people in the group. The group can be a great starting point to get out and meet new people in a safe environment, they provide a relaxed and fun environment to chat, can be a place to think about what other things you may want to be doing with your life as well an opportunity to find out more about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

PDCN currently has 8 peer groups established in regional areas and two Sydney groups. A parent group will be starting in Nowra in 2016. We are keen to establish three additional groups in 2016.

The current group locations are:

- Bathurst
- Charlestown
- Erina
- Lithgow
- Liverpool
- Marrickville
- Nowra Community Gateway
- Shoalhaven Self Advocacy Group (*Nowra - Intellectual Disability*)
- Orange
- Wollongong

If you would like to join an existing group or have ideas for a location for a new group, please contact Wendy Banfield at PDCN on 02 9552 1606 or [wendy.banfield@pdcnsw.org.au](mailto:wendy.banfield@pdcnsw.org.au)

**For more information on the Peer Support Groups and monthly meeting dates head to**

**[www.pdcnsw.org.au/projects/dso-peer-support/](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au/projects/dso-peer-support/)**



## The purpose of peer support groups

- A chance to meet people and build peer networks with people with disability
- An opportunity to build individual capacity and the capacity of the groups by learning from each other and by bringing in guest speakers
- A place to start thinking about what you want from your lives and how you could participate in a full and meaningful life
- A space to understand and engage with the NDIS through the provision of information and resources
- A collaborative approach to engaging with and educating the broader local community to enhance community inclusion

**To view the Peer Support Calendar head to:**

**[www.pdcnsw.org.au/events/category/peersupport/](http://www.pdcnsw.org.au/events/category/peersupport/)**

***From all of us at PDCN,  
We wish you all a  
Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!***



**Please remember the PDCN offices will be closed from December 24 and will reopen on January 4, 2016.**



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I'm Okay

[www.pdcnsw-emergencyready.com](http://www.pdcnsw-emergencyready.com)



Website

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