

Welcome to the March PDCN Live Newsletter!

Hello to all our members and stakeholders, and welcome to what is quickly becoming a very busy 2018!

As I write this introduction, I'm currently out and about in rural NSW, visiting Dubbo and Bathurst, running some of our NDIS Plans in Practice workshops, and talking with locals about disability needs in regional areas. As a state peak for people with physical disabilities, I greatly value the opportunity to link with locals, and find out about the positives and negatives of being out of city life (and yes, there are definitely both!)

PDCN represent all people with disability in NSW, and greatly appreciate being able to have input from all our constituents, so we can ensure we are doing our best to address issues that affect you all, no matter where you live.. though we acknowledge these issues can be significantly different because of your actual location.

One of the issues we are currently responding to is the Senate inquiry into the regulation of mobility devices, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the more than 100 people who responded to our survey. Your individual experiences and the impact the suggested changes would have on your lives assisted us greatly as we responded to the inquiry – and you'll have the opportunity to read more about this further in this newsletter.

This too, shows how important advocacy organisations still remain in the NSW landscape – as things aren't perfect – people with disability are still a long way from being fully included members of the community, and it's only with continued involvement in policy making at a systemic level, along with addressing the gaps, that we will ensure this ever comes to be. **(Continued on page 2)**

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Contact Us



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02 9552 1606
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admin@pdcnsw.org.au

To this end we are still working hard in the Stand By Me campaign, calling for the NSW government to ensure that vital independent disability advocacy, information and peak representational services don't become a casualty of the implementation of the NDIS.

We've had no official change to the NSW Liberal Government's decision to stop all funding as of June this year, however, there have been some more positive conversations with the powers that be, that suggest our voices are being heard.

That said, until the Premier announces that she will find the funds to ensure all people with disability in NSW have access to advocacy post June 2018 we will continue to ramp up our campaign. As always, if you haven't done so already – sign our online petition, email, write to or go and meet with your local MP – and tell them why you still need our services in an NDIS world. (After all, 90% of you won't get an NDIS funded package – and even those that do can't use it to purchase advocacy services, particularly if your issue isn't related to your goals!)

Serena Ovens,
Executive Officer

Stand By Me Campaign Update

Over the past quarter, we have had an overwhelming response to our Stand By Me campaign, particularly our online petition. At present, we have almost 32,000 signatures and the number is steadily growing. Show your support for disability advocacy, information and representative services in NSW by signing via this link: bit.ly/2ikAesZ



Here's an update of what we've achieved with the campaign recently:

- Labor Parliamentary Round table where the Leader of the Opposition committed to refunding advocacy organisations if re-elected.
- Collected over 2300 postcards from supporters (with over 30,000 distributed, we're expecting many more to come!)
- Had a motion raised by Local Government NSW at their recent NSW conference calling on the Government of NSW to continue to fund NSW advocacy, information and peak representative groups – which was passed with unanimous support by all local councils.

- Successfully held the Stand By Me Parliamentary Forum – attended by MP’s from all sides of the floor, and with fabulous support from Labor, the Greens and independents such as the Christian Democrats; Shooter, Fishers and Farmers Party; and even some Liberals and Nationals in attendance.

- Dawn Walker MP and the Greens recognised the need for independent advocacy, information and peak representative organisations by putting forth a motion in the Upper House of the NSW Parliament.

- Numerous rallies throughout NSW with local MPs.

- Significant media coverage in the The Guardian, SMH, Sky News, Daily Telegraph, ABC and many local papers/media.

- Our #StandByMe Social Media Day of Action was a resounding success! Our message was heard loud and clear and #StandByMe was trending on Twitter.

- We had a meeting with the Premier’s office where we had the chance to voice our concerns.

Despite all of this, Gladys Berejiklian is still refusing to meet with us in person. So now we’re calling upon those who live in the Willoughby electorate to request a meeting with the Premier as you are entitled to meet with her as your local representative.

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook or visit standbyme.org.au to keep up to date with the Stand By Me Campaign and find out how YOU can help.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/standbymensw>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StandByMeNSW/>

Website: <http://standbyme.org.au>



GIO Summer Down Under Series Oz Day 10K

We had a great day at this year's GIO Oz Day 10K, an annual road race through Sydney's The Rocks on January 26. Tomoki Suzuki from Japan took out the title in the open male category and PDCN member Madison de Rozario won in the women's category. The whole PDCN team was there on the day providing information to spectators about PDCN, collecting signatures for the Stand By Me campaign and signing up new PDCN members!



Wollongong Employment Workshop

PDCN is running an Employment Workshop this month for the Wollongong Essential Employment and Training group. The workshop will build attendees skills and capacity so that they feel confident finding employment and entering the workforce. Over the duration of three meetings, Essential Employment and Training staff will be guest speakers discussing topics such as resume and cover letter writing, searching and applying for jobs and the interview process.

Come along to learn about employment, gain support from peers and meet others. For more information call Sarah Humphery from PDCN on 9552 1606.

Bookings are essential as space is limited. Please register for the second meeting by the 25th of March at Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/2lIVlyb>

When?

Wednesday 28th of March, 10:30 to 12:30

Where?

Essential Employment and Training, Level 5/304 Crown Street, Wollongong

Who?

Anyone with a disability



Top Ryde Peer Support Group



Kyogle Peer Support Group

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

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

Donate to PDCN!

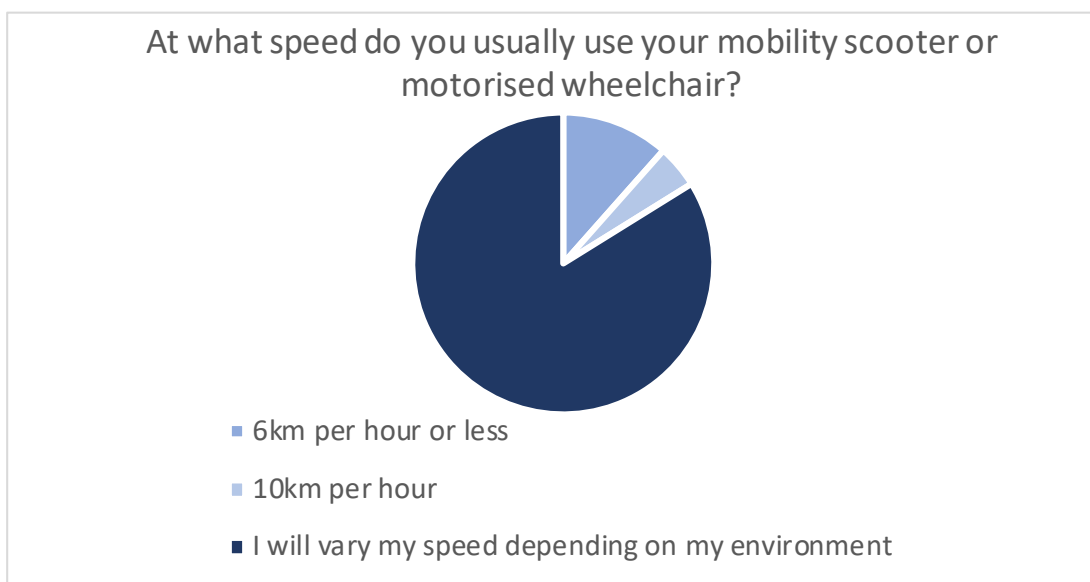
Submission on the Regulation of Mobility Scooters

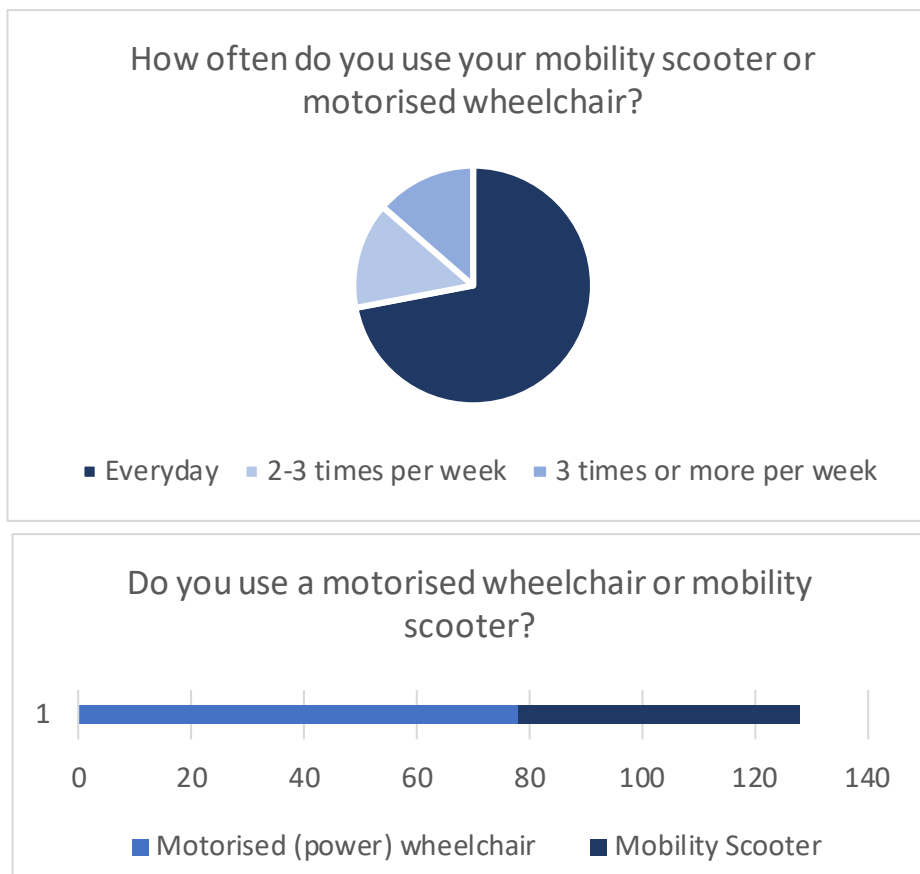
Following a campaign by NSW Senator John Williams and the National Party, the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport undertook an Inquiry into the need for regulation of mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs. As part of PDCN's submission to this inquiry we conducted a survey of mobility scooter and motorised wheelchair users, for which we received 133 responses. We would like to thank everyone who completed our online survey or contributed through an in-depth case study. PDCN was able to highlight the experiences of mobility device users and your feedback has been invaluable in assisting us in responding to this inquiry.

The National Party have proposed new regulations that could see the speed of mobility devices, including power wheelchairs limited to 6km per hour and 150kg in weight. PDCN does not support the adoption of restrictions on motorised mobility devices (MMDs). In our submission PDCN has discussed our significant concerns about how these regulations would negatively impact on the lives of individuals who rely on the use of mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs for their freedom of movement and independence. This would be through limiting choice and availability of models, higher costs and making it impossible for individuals with complex needs or above average height or weight to purchase a legally compliant device that meets their needs.

The research conducted by PDCN highlighted how essential MMDs are for individuals with disability to access the community for a variety of purposes including shopping, attending doctors' appointments, social activities, education and employment. PDCN members reported that not having access to mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs would significantly impact their independence, with many individuals stating they would no longer be able to leave home independently and would be reliant on friends, family or support workers. Many individuals expressed concern that that they would be confined to their home and this would have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental health.

PDCN believes that most people who use a MMD do so in a safe manner and pose no risk to the community. Survey respondents overwhelmingly reported that they will vary their speed depending on their environment, for example slowing down in a pedestrian zone.





The survey response also indicated that pedestrian behavior frequently played a role in accidents and injuries involving mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs. In addition, accidents and injuries were attributed to infrastructure issues in the urban environment, such as a lack of footpaths or steep curb transitions.

In our submission to this inquiry PDCN has made recommendations for government, including the introduction of public awareness campaigns focusing on safe shared road and footpath use and the needs of mobility scooter and motorised wheelchair users, and greater investment in infrastructure to improve the accessibility of the built environment including footpaths, ramps, curb cut outs and design of pedestrian crossings to maximise visibility and safety.

Once again, PDCN would like to thank everyone who has assisted us by providing their experiences and perspectives. Your feedback has informed our submission and will ensure the voice of people with disabilities is being heard on this important issue. To read PDCN's full submission to the inquiry please see our website.

PDCN Submissions - Quarterly Update

- Review of the NSW iVote Internet and Telephone Voting System (December 2017)
- icare Lifetime Care: Lifetime Care and Support Guidelines (January 2018)
- Australian Human Rights Council: Transport for NSW application for DDA exemption at Birchgrove ferry wharf (February 2018)
- NSW Law Reform Commission: Review of the Guardianship Act 1987 draft proposals (February 2018)

pdcnsw.org.au/publications/submission-and-responses

Take part in our PIAC Survey

The Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) conducts a regular survey to understand the struggles Australians have with their energy and water bills, and they've asked the Physical Disability Council of NSW to help. We'd like to invite you to participate in the survey.

PIAC works for justice for disadvantaged, marginalised and vulnerable people. They are an independent, non-profit legal centre with over three decades of experience. This survey looks at how people cope with their energy and water bills and the circumstances that may lead to people being disconnected, either now or in the future.

The survey is being run by UMR, an independent market research company. It will take most people around 15 minutes to complete, and the easiest way of doing it is online.

The survey is run completely independently from PDCN. PIAC and UMR will not reveal your individual responses to anyone in a way that means you can be identified, including by PDCN.

The first 250 people who do the survey properly will receive a gift voucher of \$20 as a thank you for helping. You'll need to provide an email address at the end of the survey so you can receive your incentive. Your email address won't be passed on to anyone else.

To complete the survey, please use the following link: bit.ly/PIAC-PDC

Alternatively, If you would like to complete the survey over the phone or you require any assistance to complete the survey please contact PDCN on 1800 688 831.



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facebook.com/PDCNSW



I'm Okay
www.pdcnsw-emergencyready.com



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