

Active Participation South West



A Southwest Advocacy Association & Rural Access Project

The Active Participation Information Bulletin **February 2008**

The Active Participation Register provides information on opportunities for people with disabilities to get involved in consultations, events, forums and committees where decision making takes place. By providing such information we hope to get people with disabilities more involved in their community & to give them more of a voice on a broad range of issues.

Introduction

Welcome to another edition of the Active Participation Information Bulletin. This year we are planning on expanding the coverage of the Active Participation Register (APR) into the shires of Southern Grampians and Glenelg. We are currently in the process of seeking renewed funding for the 2008 - 09 financial year and, if we are successful, we will be inviting people with disabilities and organisations throughout the south west to get involved.

If you know of any individuals or organisations who may be interested in receiving information through the Active Participation Register please ask them to contact Southwest Advocacy on 55 614 584.

[Things that may interest you](#)

GP Assessments for People with Intellectual Disabilities

The Medicare health assessment items 718 and 719 have been introduced for people with an intellectual disability.

For the purpose of the health assessment, a person has an intellectual disability if they have significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning (two standard deviations below the average intelligence quotient (IQ)) and would benefit from assistance with daily living activities.

The health assessment provides a structured clinical framework for general practitioners (GPs) to comprehensively assess the physical, psychological and social function of patients with an

intellectual disability and to identify any medical intervention and preventative health care required.

For more information visit the Department of Health and Ageing website.

Supported Volunteers Pathways Project

The Supported Volunteers Pathways Project aims to provide opportunities for people with disabilities in volunteering. A pilot project, placing people into short term volunteer roles with necessary supports, is due to commence shortly.

The Project Reference Group is looking for people with a disability who are interested in becoming involved in the reference group to help direct the project.

Anyone who is interested or requires additional information should contact: Jill Warne, Community Projects Service Manager at the Archie Graham Community Centre.

Phone: 5559 4891. E-mail: jwarne@warrnambool.vic.gov.au

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Review - Closing Date: Monday 31 March 2008

The Draft Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, Review report is now available for public comment on the review website: <http://www.ddatransportreview.com.au>.

Written comments are being sought and can be sent to the review team up to 5.00 p.m. Monday 31 March 2008. Further details on this process are available from the review website.

If you have any queries in relation to the review, contact Ms Sharon Kennard on Ph. (02) 6204 6500.

Blind Citizens Australia Welcomes Extension of Inquiry into Media Access (Press Release)

As a keen proponent of better access to popular culture, Blind Citizens Australia welcomes the forthcoming investigation into the accessibility of electronic media through audio description.

Senator Helen Coonan, Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, today announced that audio description, which is vital to media accessibility for people who are blind or vision impaired, will be examined by the federal government. Audio description provides a verbal account of what is happening on

screen, allowing a person who is blind or vision impaired to follow jokes, key plot points and changes in scene more easily. The investigation into audio description will be part of an inquiry originally set up to look at the accessibility of electronic media for the hearing impaired or deaf, who use captions on screen to read what is being said aloud.

"This is a great step forward for people who are blind or vision impaired," declared Robyn McKenzie, Executive Officer of Blind Citizens Australia.

The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts expects to release an issues paper in the next few weeks. As the peak advocacy organisation for people who are blind or vision impaired, Blind Citizens Australia encourages those interested in this issue to step forward and express their views.

State Plan for People with Autism

As part of its "Addressing Disadvantage" 2006 pre-election commitment, the Victorian Government committed to develop an Autism State Plan in partnership with Autism Victoria. The aim of developing a State Plan is to improve the service response and outcomes for people with an autism Spectrum disorder of all ages.

A consultation was held in Warrnambool in November 2007 and was well attended by carers and service providers. A second round of consultations is scheduled for mid 2008 and is anticipated that a draft Plan will be ready in late 2008.

Further information, can be downloaded from the following website <http://autismstateplan.dhs.vic.gov.au>

The Next Bulletin

The next Active Participation Register Bulletin will be sent out in about two months, but, remember, if you want to contact us, you can do so by mail, telephone or e-mail.

Mail: Robert Dick
Southwest Advocacy Association
31 Princess Street Warrnambool 3280
Phone: 55 614 584
Email: swadvocacy@bigpond.com

People with hearing impairments or communication difficulties may contact us through -

National Relay Service: Ph. - 133 677