

Welcome to another Active Participation Register E-mailout

The Active Participation Register (APR) project aims to empower people with disabilities by providing information on disability rights & opportunities and events that enable people to have a say and have more influence in the community.

Interested individuals with any type of disability, carers, advocates and organisations who register their details with us are provided with news about conferences and consultations, opportunities to get involved in Boards, Committees and advisory bodies and relevant news & training opportunities that they may be interested in.

Apologies for any cross-postings or if you feel that any of this information is not particularly relevant to you. Please feel free to contact Southwest Advocacy if you no longer wish to receive information through the Active Participation Register.

Regards,

Robert Dick (Southwest Advocacy Association - Ph. 55 614 584)
Manager
Active Participation Register

People with hearing impairments or communication difficulties may contact us through - National Relay Service:
Ph. - 133 677

[Please note that material contained in APR E-mailouts does not necessarily reflect the policy of SWAA or the views of any staff members. Statements in APR E-mailouts do not comprise advice and readers should avail themselves of professional advice where appropriate.]

A Fair Go For All Campaign

26th October 2009, MP3 24.5MB

The Disability Shop radio host, Keith Horner, talks to Kerry Presser, State Manager for NDS Victoria, about funding disability support services in the lead up to the 2010 Victorian Budget. In this extensive interview (approx 26 mins talk time), Kerry and Keith talk about how adequate funding for services could make a difference to people living with disability who access service like shared supported accommodation, day services, therapy and respite.

The radio program covers:

- Current funding situation for non-government disability services
- Why the need for 'fair' funding
- Examples of how poor funding impacts people living with a disability
- The recent Australian report Shut Out which looks at the experience of people living with disabilities
- How disability service providers are working to help people pursue their own interests and participate in the community
- A Fair Go For All campaign and how you can support it
- National Disability Insurance Scheme

To download the radio program (which is a large file, 24.5MB) go to -

http://www.4shared.com/file/146544067/c6151d92/26_october_09_kerry_presser_ndson_the_disability_shop_Radio_Port_Phillip.html

The new North Melbourne Station

The new North Melbourne Station will open on Monday 16 November, signalling the completion of the \$38.6m upgrade project.

Thanks to a new concourse, with lifts and escalators, people will be able to move around the station at either end of the platforms. This has also delivered improved access for those with specific needs, and North Melbourne Station now fully complies with Disability Discrimination Act (1992) standards.

Other features of the station that may assist people with specific needs include:

- New lifts to the concourse to provide an interchange to platforms as an alternative to existing ramps at the heritage end of the station
- DDA compliant toilets at the new station building
- Hearing Loops on new concourse, platforms and new station building
- New tactiles on existing platforms
- Re-grading of existing platforms (with the exception of the heritage area)
- Braille signage to the lifts will also be installed in the near future

New canopies mean people are protected from the weather, and the station has been made safer, with resurfaced platforms and new digital CCTV.

New passenger information displays mean that as soon as you arrive at the station you can see where you need to be, and get there quicker. Improving passenger flows at the station also reduces dwell times for trains, which results in more punctual services for everyone.

From Monday 16 November, the Route 401 bus stop will move to the new North Melbourne Station concourse on Dryburgh Street so passengers can easily transfer between train and bus.

For more information contact Kate via phone 03 9610 6845 or email - kate.ryan@connexmelbourne.com.au

Disability Parking Permit Goes National

9th November 2009

People with disability will have access to a uniform parking permit after the Australian Transport Council endorsed the introduction of a new national disability parking permit, which is to be rolled out across the country by the end of 2010.

Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, Bill Shorten, said the Government had provided \$1.6 million to develop the new universal parking permit, as part of its work towards

harmonising existing parking schemes.

"With over 100 different types of parking permits and differing eligibility criteria spread across the country, it causes too much undue stress. The introduction of the new permit is a start towards ending this confusion and will make parking easier for the 900,000 existing and future permit holders" Mr Shorten said.

"The highly visible and recognisable design will also assist interstate authorities to recognise and enforce the permit. All permits will include several security features to help identify legitimate holders from forgeries, including hologram foil, micro text and solar flare transition printing.

Mr Shorten said that the Rudd Government had consulted widely with the community over the development of the proposed national scheme

State and Territory Transport Departments have worked with the Australian Government to progress the Scheme and will continue to work towards reaching a national eligibility criteria and minimum standards for concessions.

Today's endorsement by the Australian Transport Council follows the endorsement by the Community and Disability Services Ministers Conference in September and reiterates the Government's commitment to improving and delivering services for people with disability.

The permit design can be viewed at -

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/people/disability_parking_scheme/Pages/default.aspx

Disabled, Unfit To Plead, But Still Jailed

The Age, 10th November 2009 - By Steve Butcher

A judge has described as immoral and "inhuman" advice by a State Government department that an intellectually disabled man remain in 23-hour prison lock-up - subjected to "instruments of restraint".

County Court Judge Mark Taft said the circumstances of Michael Rendina, who has been held at the Melbourne Assessment Prison since January, were intolerable and unacceptable.

Judge Taft said that prison cannot be used to "warehouse" the intellectually disabled.

He ordered that the secretary of the Department of Human Services appear before him in two weeks to advise of an appropriate facility in the community for Rendina, whose mental capacity has been likened to that of a five-year-old.

The comments were made after Judge Taft read a report from DHS he called for earlier that said a vacancy for Rendina in a shared supported accommodation was "anticipated in the next three months".

To read this article in full visit website -

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/disabled-unfit-to-plead-but-still-jailed-20091109-i5d4.html>

Failing To Address Indigenous Hearing Health Damages Lives

Media Release – Australian Human Rights Commission, 11th November 2009

As part of the Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia, the Australian Race and Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Graeme Innes, today urged the Australian Government to increase action against the disproportionately high incidence of hearing impairment and deafness among Indigenous peoples.

In making the Australian Human Rights Commission's submission to the inquiry, Commissioner Innes said, "The disproportionate incidence of hearing impairment and deafness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, compared to the general community, is both symptomatic of the disadvantage they face and has grave repercussions, in terms of health and socio-economic experience, throughout their lives".

To read this media release in full visit the website -

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/109_09.html

Launch of the audio CD '10 Things You Should Know About Credit'

When: Wednesday 18th November 2009, 12.30pm

When: Watsonia Community Room, Watsonia Library, 4 Ibbottson St, Watsonia.

Register: To RSVP contact Robyn Hageman by 17 November 2009 via email <mailto:robyn.hageman@justice.vic.gov.au> or phone 03 8684 6029. Light lunch and refreshments provided

The Hon Tony Robinson MP, Minister for Consumer Affairs Victoria, invites you to the launch of the audio CD *"10 things you should know about credit"*.

This audio recording was developed to enable fair access and education to vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians. This audio CD will educate and assist Victorians in making more informed decisions about credit. CDs will be available at the launch.

Support

Accessibility assistance, including reserved parking, Auslan interpreters and attendant carers can be made available at this event. When confirming your attendance, please tell us if you require these or other supports. To help us ensure that your needs can be met, please tell us of any requirements by 17th November 2009.

Wheelchair access to the Library is available from main entrance and carpark entrance. Free parking is available at the rear of the Library.

"Picture This" - Transport Accident Trauma Expressed Through Art

When: 20th – 29th November 2009

Where: 15 William Street Melbourne

The Transport Accident Commission is holding the exhibition *"Picture This"*, giving clients the opportunity to share their experiences of road trauma through art.

The exhibition is for people who were artists before their accident, have taken up art since or have included art therapy in their rehabilitation.

Several of the artists have significant injuries from road trauma, including quadriplegia and acquired brain injuries (ABI).

Artists have a chance to win the People's Choice Award as voted by exhibition visitors. The prizes are Art Supply vouchers worth \$500, \$250 or \$100. Interviews and photographs of the artists are available.

For more information contact Emily via phone 5225 6450 or mobile 0429 416 778.

Feedback requested - Easy English version of "Shut Out" Report

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) published the report *Shut out: the Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia* in August 2009.

The Information Access Group worked with FaHCSIA on the Easy English conversion of this report.

The Information Access Group want to make sure their publications are meeting the needs of people with a disability. They are seeking feedback on the Easy English version of the *Shut Out* report. In particular they are interested in -

- The design and layout of the document
- The use of images
- The language level used

The Information Access Group wants to talk to people with a range of communication needs and their families, friends and carers. They plan to carry out the testing in early 2010.

To register your interest in providing feedback visit the website - www.informationaccessgroup.com - or phone (03) 9587 3930.

Act Now: A Human Rights Act for Australia

On 8 October 2009, the National Human Rights Consultation Committee released its report and recommended that Australia adopt a Human Rights Act.

The report is available at website -

<http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au/www/nhrcc/nhrcc.nsf/Page/Report>

The Government has announced that it will respond to the report in the coming weeks. For people concerned with improved protection of human rights in Australia, the time to act is now!

For more information contact Emily Howie on (03) 8636 4432 or emily.howie@hrlrc.org.au.

STAR – AGM & Forum on the Guardianship Legislation Review

When: Wednesday 2nd December 2009, 4pm – 6.30pm.

When: Hayden Raysmith Room, 4th Floor Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane

Register: Light refreshments will be served at the meeting. To register by 27th November, phone 9650 2730, fax 9650 6972 or email info@starvictoria.org.au

STAR is holding an information/forum on the Guardianship Legislation review currently underway.

Guest Speakers include;

- Ian Parsons (Policy & Research Officer)
- Victorian Law Reform Commission
- John Chesterman (Manager Policy & Education)
- Office of the Public Advocate

This is an opportunity to hear about progress to date, what is planned regarding the consultation processes and how you might contribute your views from your own experiences.

Everyone is welcome to stay on after guest speaker presentations for the AGM.

For more information go to

[http://www.daru.org.au/events/list.shtml?folder=Upcoming Events in the Sector](http://www.daru.org.au/events/list.shtml?folder=Upcoming+Events+in+the+Sector)

International Day of People with Disability

December 3 is International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD). This is a United Nations sanctioned day that aims to promote an understanding of people with disability, encourage support for their dignity, rights and well-being and increase awareness of the benefits of the integration of people with disability in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

IDPwD brings together people with disability, community organisations, businesses, individuals and all levels of government. IDPwD unites people around the world in celebrating and acknowledging the contributions, skills and achievements of people with disability.

The 2009 theme is "Making the Millennium Development Goals Inclusive: Empowerment of persons with disabilities and their communities around the world".

There are a number of events around Victoria celebrating this special day. Local Councils and Shires can provide information on events in your area.



PRIME MINISTER

**MINISTER FOR FAMILIES, AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

ASSISTANT TREASURER

**PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
FOR DISABILITIES AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER NEW
APPROACHES TO DISABILITY**

The Productivity Commission will investigate the feasibility of new approaches for funding and delivering long-term disability care and support.

The Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, announced the inquiry at the National Disability Awards ceremony in Parliament House.

The inquiry forms part of the Australian Government's ten year National Disability Strategy being developed with State and Territory Governments and in consultation with the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council.

The Productivity Commission inquiry will examine the feasibility, costs and benefits of replacing the current system of disability services with a new approach which provides long-term essential care and support for people with severe or profound disabilities however acquired.

The inquiry will examine a range of options for long-term care and support including consideration of whether a no-fault social insurance approach to disability is appropriate in Australia. It will also examine if a scheme would fit with Australia's health, aged care, income support and injury insurance systems.

These are complex issues that require rigorous analysis, design and costing. The feasibility study will assess whether a long-term care and support scheme would be appropriate, practical and economically responsible in the Australian context.

The Productivity Commission will consult widely and will be assisted by an associate commissioner with specialist disability expertise. An independent panel of experts will also be established to advise the Productivity Commission and Government during the Inquiry. The Australian Government will appoint the associate commissioner and the independent panel of experts shortly.

The Productivity Commission will report to Government in July 2011.

Figures released last week by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare showed that around 2.3 million Australians will have a high level of disability by 2030.

This inquiry is an opportunity to rethink how we support people with disabilities so that they can engage with their community, get a job where possible, and live a happy and meaningful life.

The Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments have adopted a bold vision for the National Disability Strategy - an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.

We need to harness support across all levels of government to make a difference.

That's why the Commonwealth is also proposing that the strategy be developed through the Council of Australian Governments.

This long-term agenda comes on top of an historic increase to Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment recipients of \$70.83 per fortnight for single pensioners on the maximum rate and \$29.93 per fortnight for couple pensioners combined on the maximum rate.

The Government has also allocated substantial new funding under the new National Disability Agreement, with more than \$5 billion in funding over five years to the states for specialist disability services, including supported accommodation, respite and in-home care.

This includes the highest ever level of indexation and means that in 2013 the Australian Government's contribution will exceed \$1.2 billion, compared to \$620 million in 2007 under the previous government.

CANBERRA
23 NOVEMBER 2009

PRESS OFFICE (02) 6277 7744