

Issue 2, 2018

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Melbourne East Disability Advocacy promotes and protects the rights and interests of people who have an intellectual disability.

Greetings friends of MEDA...

As we shiver through the winter months I extend a very warm welcome to MEDA's mid-year newsletter. The Committee of Management (COM) welcomed consumer representative Eddie Clark to the management committee. Eddie is no stranger to MEDA as he is one of our well respected members of the Consumer Group. The committee are thrilled to have Eddie on board and have no doubt he will be a great asset to the committee. Eddie is supported by Garry who is also one of our Volunteer Citizen Advocates. In June we said farewell to Rita Lam one of our long term and valued members of staff, we wish Rita health and happiness in her retirement. We also extend a warm welcome to new staff member Libby Hetherington. Libby is also known to MEDA through her work as a volunteer citizen advocate.

It has been a busy few months for staff trying to meet the additional demand for services in particular as the NDIS is implemented across the Eastern Region.

Other activities since the last edition included celebrating our wonderful volunteers during National Volunteer week, sharing stories, experiences, and celebrating partnerships over dinner. How fortunate we are to have such amazing volunteers. We are also grateful and delighted to be the recipient of a grant from Microsoft Azure made available to us through Infoxchange, the grant will replace our current hard drive back up system to storage in the Cloud.

The consumer group continue working to evaluate the service through the consumer focused questionnaires.

Socially, we have planned a Trivia Night and hope consumers and volunteers are able to join in the fun filled night, arrangements are still to be finalised so keep the evening of Friday the 26th October open in your diaries.



I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of our supporters, volunteers, consumer group, staff and committee members.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart". – Elizabeth Andrew

Citizen Advocacy Partnership Updates

We welcome new Volunteer Citizen Advocate partnership Tyler & Derek. We farewell Citizen Advocate partner Maria and look forward to matching Volunteer Citizen Advocate Rachael with another participant.

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MEDA Program Manager's Update

MEDA ended the 2017-2018 financial year providing advocacy support alongside 95 consumers and addressing 150 individual advocacy issues. MEDA supported an extra 16 consumers from last year. Top 5 advocacy issues were NDIS, Independent living, abuse & finances. MEDA has also supported the matching of another 4 volunteer citizen advocate partnerships



NDIS preparation and response:

MEDA individual advocates and our long and short term citizen advocates are heavily involved in NDIS plan preparation, first plans, plan reviews and other NDIS advocacy issues. We continue to monitor NDIS roll out and lobby for the best outcomes for participants

MEDA's Volunteer Week Dinner

MEDA celebrated National volunteer week in May by hosting a dinner for our volunteers to express our thanks and gratitude. We can't be without our volunteers



National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP)

The Department of Social Services announced that our funding is to be extended until June 2020. There are some changes to the funding arrangements including involvement in systemic advocacy & advocacy for individuals which captures all other advocacy models. MEDA is considering how best to support these changes.

Quality

Consumer focused feedback question March to June 2018 "Are you satisfied with your advocates work & knowledge". 90% of responses were satisfied. 3% unsure as they had only just met the advocate.

Comments included "I felt reassured", I feel heard"



We have also farewelled long serving staff member Rita Lam and welcomed our new Business Support Officer Libby Hetherington.

Jan M Program Manager

Farewell to Rita

After 10 years of service to MEDA our Administration Assistant Rita Lam has resigned. We thank Rita for her commitment and support to MEDA over this time and wish her well in retirement and travels.



MEDA is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services

MEDA's Citizen Advocacy Partnership Event and National Volunteer Week Celebration



We had a lovely evening on 27th March to gather together our Volunteer Citizen advocacy partnerships. We had a good turn out with 18 people in attendance where we were able to sit around over a meal and share stories and experiences .



Meda also celebrated National Volunteer week by hosting a dinner for volunteers. For MEDA this includes our Volunteer Citizen Advocates, Consumer Group members, MEDA's Committee of Management members and on occasions other skilled volunteers that support the work of MEDA..

We are truly grateful for the dedication of all of MEDA's volunteers.



Volunteer photographer

We thank volunteer photographer, Jenna Tang who is spending time with our Volunteer Citizen Advocate partners and capturing their stories through images . This is an exciting project that captures the power of human relationships.



National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Support Co-ordinator

A Support coordinator is a paid person who helps a participant implement their NDIS plan.

A support coordinator will work with the participant to utilise their NDIS plan budget to achieve their goals.



Some of the things that a support coordinator may assist with might include

Choosing a provider for your daily and community supports.



Negotiating service prices, developing service agreements and creating bookings with your provider.

If quotes are required they may negotiate service and price for these services.

Link participant to mainstream and community services.



Resolve problems or issues that arise, change and end service agreements as required. A Support Co-ordinator may assist with plan reviews and assess whether goals have been achieved.

There are a lot of Support Co-ordination agencies to choose from

You don't have to choose an agency you have already worked with.

Meet with a few agencies to see if you like them and what they will offer you. Is there a good connection between yourself and the person who will be working alongside, and do you think they will work well for you?

An advocate can support you in choosing a Support Co-ordinator

MEDA's Trivia Night

Come and join us at MEDA's Annual Trivia Night Fundraiser

When: Friday October 26th

Where: East Kew Uniting Church—142 Normanby Rd Kew East

Cost: \$25 per person

To book tickets: Phone MEDA 98777 990 or email office@meda.org.au

BYO: Drinks and a plate to share

RSVP: Wednesday October 24th



Consumer Group Update

Consumer Group

Members:

Jim, Jodie, Kathleen,
Eddie & Andrew



MEDA's Consumer Group members meet every 2 months. At the last meeting, held in February, the group discussed our next consumer survey, NDIS and advocacy supports, self-advocacy and MEDA's strategic plan. If anyone is interested in joining the Consumer Group please contact MEDA on 9877 7990.

Jim — consumer group member



- What do you like about being a member of our consumer group?

Jim loves talking with staff and other group members. Jim says he looks forward to meeting with other people .

What do you do during the day with your time.?

Jim is waiting for his NDIS plan to be approved to allow funding for extra activities. Jim attends painting 1 day weekly which is his talent, but is limited with other outings due to his decreased health recently.

What are your Interests?

Jims interests include drawing and painting. →

Jim enjoys using technology to increase his learning.

Jim loves to support the Richmond tigers in the AFL and Melbourne City in soccer.



What is one thing you would like the consumer group to do or achieve?

Jim would like to learn more about the NDIS process and how he and other group members will benefit from the roll out. Jim would like to live independently in the future with some support.

MEDA's New Business Support Officer

MEDA Committee and staff welcome Libby Hetherington as our new Business Support Officer.

Libby will be working 7hrs a week over 2 days.

Libby comes to MEDA with an extensive background in law from community based organisations.

Please join us in welcoming Libby to MEDA



Be a part of MEDA

Become a Member

Do you know you can be a member of MEDA?

Membership enables individuals to vote, to receive updates and support MEDA's purpose.

Membership is \$30 individual, \$5 concession and \$50 for an organization.

Follow MEDA on Facebook or our Web site

Follow MEDA on Facebook. Like our MEDA Facebook page. Join in on the conversation that we are starting to build. Go to MEDA web site www.meda.org.au

MEDA's Newsletter

If at any stage you are wanting to receive this newsletter by email or you are no longer wanting to receive this newsletter please let us know.

Thankyou.

Contact Details:

Please don't hesitate to call or email us if you have any questions or comments about this newsletter. We welcome your contributions. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please contact us.

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