

Issue 3, 2019

November 2019

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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...

We have had a busy few months at MEDA, in particular October where we held our 35<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and our Annual Trivia night.

At our AGM the following nominations were carried;

President: Mary Appleby

Vice President: Will Elder

Treasurer: Ainsley Corteling

Secretary: Vacant

Ordinary members: Eddie Clarke and Sohila Malakooti

We are actively recruiting for new Committee of Management members with a particular focus on consumer participation as we work towards our goal of over 50% of members to be consumers from our community who have lived experience.

We held our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Trivia Night on 25<sup>th</sup> October and we successfully raised over \$3000. This amount was the largest raised in the three years and we plan to build on it for 2020. Special thanks to all who donated time and auction items and for all those attended. It was a fun filled evening, with many belly laughs thanks to our amazing Trivia Master, Chris Howell.

In sector news, we are starting to hear more of the submissions to the Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability. Our staff are starting to develop outreach plans for our community and provide individual advocacy to consumers. Early next week the Royal Commission will hold a public hearing in Melbourne focused on homes and living for people with disability in Victoria. This is particularly relevant for our consumer base and one where we will watch with interest as we see the Royal Commission explore the rights of people with disability, the causes of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of residents in group homes and the effectiveness of laws, policies and government agencies.



As the year starts to head into the holiday season we start to reflect on all the wonderful work our MEDA community has accomplished and start to think about how we are going to approach the year ahead.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful holiday season and I look forward to another great year in 2020.

Mary Appleby  
President

## Citizen Advocacy Partnership Updates & New Friends & Supporters of MEDA

We farewell Citizen Advocate Reihaneh who has made a bold move to the USA. Reihaneh for the past 3 years supported Peter. Thanks Rei for your support of Peter.

We welcome new friends and supporters Ellis, Olwyn and Blake.

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## MEDA Program Manager's Update

Since the last newsletter we have been busy responding to individual advocacy request and enquiries, supporting our volunteer citizen advocate partnerships, engaging in our systemic advocacy priorities and preparing for our work in supporting people to engage in the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability.

From July to October alone we have had 78 enquiries where we have supported people over the phone with advocacy.

The National Disability Advocacy Program has provided funding to advocacy organisations to support people with disability to be engaged in the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability. This will be essential work over the next 3 years.

Our Systemic Advocacy program work now also includes a partnership project on increasing the engagement and access to disability advocacy organisations amongst the LGBTIQ+ community.

In October we held our Annual General Meeting and elected our new Committee for the 2019-2020 term. Mary A, Will E, Ainsley C, Eddie C and Sohila M. We bid farewell to Kate H and Merrilyn S and thank them for their many years of dedication. We also inducted a new MEDA Life Member, Brian Leeming. Congratulations, Brian.

September and October continued to be busy months with hosting a volunteer citizen advocate dinner & discussion with topics around the Royal Commission, NDIS Quality & Safeguards and code of conduct and our annual Trivia Night Fundraiser. Our Trivia night raised over \$3,000 to support the work of MEDA.

Time has also been spent in updating MEDAs web site, including an important profile of our Consumer Advisory Group members.

As we progress towards the end of another year we reflect on the important voices of people with disability who have stood up to issues of discrimination and who have been heard through the presence of advocates. Thankyou everyone for your continued support and commitment to MEDA.



Jan M Executive Officer

MEDA is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS)

## Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation: Group Homes Hearing

During the 2nd to the 6th December in Melbourne the Royal Commission will be holding a hearing on the theme of "homes and living". This will be an important hearing where there is an opportunity to hear about the experiences of people with disability who have lived or currently live in a group home. For more information [www.royalcommission.org.au](http://www.royalcommission.org.au)

## MEDA's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Meda's Annual general meeting was held on Wed 16th October at 7.00pm..

At the meeting we farewelled 2 long term Committee members Merrilyn Shepherd and Kate Hollins.

We also had the honour to present Volunteer Citizen Advocate Brian Leeming a Life Member Award.

For MEDA Committee of Management 2019 - 2020 Term we welcome

President—Mary A

Vice President—Will E

Treasurer—Ainsley C

COM members—Eddie C, Sohila M

Thanks also to MEDA's Patron Pete Smith for being present for the evening.



Pete, Brian & Mary



Mary, Merrilyn & Pete

## MEDA's TRIVIA NIGHT



On October 25th MEDA held another successful Trivia Night with many friends and supporters of MEDA in attendance. Many thanks again to Trivia Quiz Master, Chris Howell who kept the audience on their toes with questions and fun activities, like paper plane flying. A special thanks to our Silent Auction donors who helped MEDA to raise over \$3,000.



## Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect & exploitation of people with disability



### MEDA Advocates can assist you:

- In understanding the Royal Commission
- In deciding if you want to participate in the Royal Commission
- To tell your story and to communicate with the Royal Commission

### An Advocate

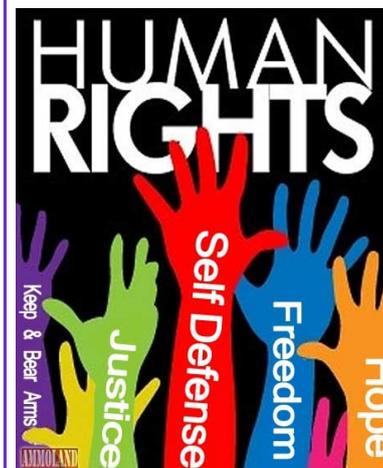
- Should be independent
- Should be someone you trust
- Is someone you choose
- Is someone who helps you understand & exercise your rights
- Is someone who promotes and protects your rights

Melbourne East Disability Advocacy provides individual and volunteer citizen advocacy.

To stand with people with intellectual disability in the areas of Boorondara, Monash, Manningham, Maroondah and Whitehorse council areas.

Advocacy assists and empowers people with intellectual disability to feel heard and to participate in decisions.

MEDA Advocates will be by your side.



### Contact Us

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## Consumer Advisory Group Update

Consumer Group

Members:

Jim, Jodie, Kathleen,

Eddie & Andrew



MEDA's Consumer Group members meet every 2 months. At the Consumer Advisory Group meetings in October a number of topics were discussed including topics around the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, training requests, Royal Commission into the violence, abuse, neglect & exploitation of people with disability and MEDA's response and the end of year MEDA event. If anyone is interested in joining the Consumer Group please contact MEDA on 9877 7990.

## MEDA Life Member Profile: Jane Sullivan

MEDA is privileged to have a number of volunteers who for their outstanding years of commitment and work with MEDA are awarded Life Membership. Over the next few newsletters we will introduce some of our Life Members.

### Why do you volunteer for MEDA?

There are a number of interconnected reasons. However, essentially, I believe in the value of advocacy and power and happiness of relationships, especially in the area of intellectual disability. MEDA is such a worthwhile programme. It may sound cliched but MEDA makes a positive difference in the lives of both the person with the disability and their advocate/friend. The outcomes may be big and obvious or small and subtle and hard to articulate yet they are there!

### What have been your volunteer roles with MEDA?

When I first joined the Programme as an advocate, it was known as Citizen Advocacy. Over time, I have been a member of the committee of management and was for a time the secretary of the committee. My main role for the past 36 years (goodness) has been as a citizen advocate.

### What is one memorable time as a volunteer with MEDA?

Just one? That's a challenge. It's hard to do justice to the range of experiences, from spending time with my MEDA friend, or being involved in preparing submissions for government, to wine bottling fundraising events, conferences and carrying the CA banner in rallies against government funding cuts. Apart from the personal significance of the relationship that has been built over many years, it is the longevity of MEDA, how it has developed and the role it has in the community that stand out.



## **NDIS participant service guarantee & Review of the NDIS Act**

The Australian Government will develop and legislate an NDIS Participant Service Guarantee to improve participant experiences with the NDIS. The new Guarantee will be in place from 1 July 2020

The Guarantee will set new standards for the time it takes for key steps in the NDIS process.

The Government has also commissioned a review of the NDIS Act. The review will focus on opportunities to make the NDIS process simpler and more straight forward and remove barriers to positive participant and provider experiences with the NDIS.

Have your say!

## **Be a part of MEDA**

### **Become a Member or a Friend / Supporter**

Do you know you can be a member or a friend or Supporter 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.

Friends and Supporters of MEDA are engaged with MEDA's fundraising and social activities

### **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](http://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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