

Melbourne East Disability Advocacy

MEDA

Newsletter

Disability Rights are Human Rights.



President's Update

Hello MEDA community, I realise it is almost six months since the pandemic interrupted our lives and whilst it has been incredibly challenging for our staff, volunteers and Committee of Management members, we always have our consumers at the forefront of our activities.

Fundraising has been challenging during the stage restrictions and the Committee of Management are developing a triennial Fundraising Plan which will include different ways for us to receive much needed funds for MEDA. We anticipate a reduction in fundraising as we are unable to conduct many of the events we have done in the past. Our plan will include online and virtual marketing campaigns as alternatives to face-to-face events. We are excited to hear of the launch of Australia's "Donation Dollar" that aims to encourage more Australians to make a difference by donating to those in need when they discover the coins in their change. At the very least it will remind people to give and we hope many will give to MEDA.

We welcome any feedback or suggestions from our community on how we take carriage over the next few months. Stay safe and take care.



Executive Officer's Update

MEDA like everyone has been caught up in the effects of COVID-19. But demand for advocacy has never been higher. In the 2019-2020 year we provided individual advocacy support alongside 114 people taking action around 148 issues, we also provided phone advocacy for 181 people and supported 21 Volunteer Citizen Advocacy partnerships.

Our work within the Disability Royal Commission has meant that 24 people have been engaged with over half having had their stories heard by the Royal Commission. We have also celebrated a 10 year milestone of our Senior Advocate Honi B, congratulations.

Citizen Advocacy Program & Partnerships Update

MEDA's Citizen Advocacy Program is made up of a team of people. The volunteer Citizen Advocate and the partner with lived experience. Each are strengthened by the relationship and the advocacy support provided.

MEDA supports our volunteer Citizen Advocates to respond to emerging advocacy issues & to foster supported decision making approaches.

We would like to farewell short term Citizen Advocate Julie Tang. For almost 2 years Julie provided short term Citizen Advocacy support for people engaging around short term advocacy issues. Thankyou Julie for your dedication and committment.





Disability Royal Commission Update

Despite lockdown and remote working we continue to engage people to share their story with the Disability Royal Commission. MEDA has contributed with the voice of people with disability to 2 more issues papers.

People's stories of abuse and neglect in group homes, families and the community have been told with courage and conviction. We celebrate the partnerships we are developing with our local Aboriginal community. Our Royal Commission Postcard includes the images of a local artist, Simone and her reflections of community and having a voice.

NDIS & Advocacy Update

To get an NDIS plan is one thing to have a process that values someone's contribution & involvement is another. As advocates although the outcome is important where people's plans reflect their needs and supports the process is equally as important. We want to ensure that people's "choice and control" are available throughout. We advocate for people to feel heard, to be a part of decisions and to be visible. These goals should be reflected in all NDIS plans. As part of NDIS plans we are also supporting people to feel heard around their communication goals and needs and their informal circles of support goals and needs.





Jason

Jim



Consumer Advisory Group Update

MEDA's Consumer Advisory Group like everyone are working to connect remotely.

This group have provided invaluable feedback to Royal Commission Issue papers and they continue to discuss issues that are impacting people with disability during the pandemic. We continue to thank our members - Eddie, Kathleen, Andrew, Jodie, Jim and Jason.

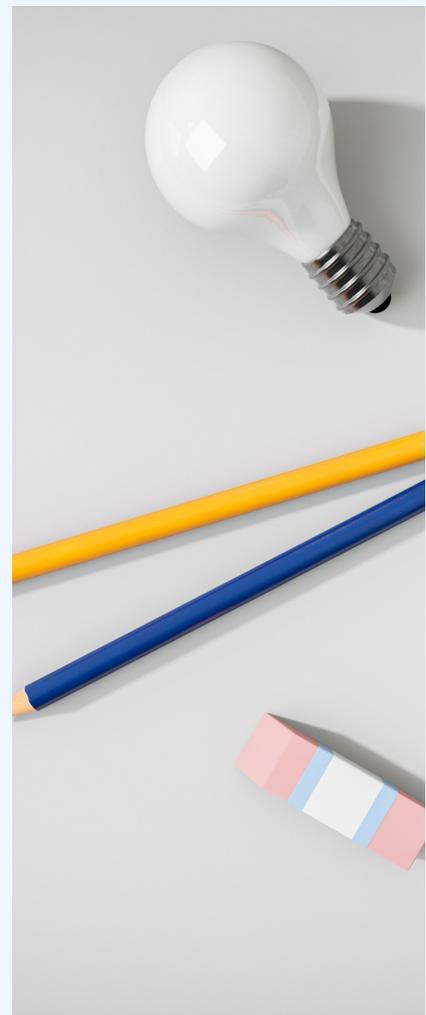
MEDA Projects & Submissions Update

MEDA's February to June consumer feedback question "Is our advocacy support helpful?" had 56 responses. 100% of the responses indicated yes our advocacy support is helpful. Some comments included:

"You are always there when I need you", "You are the only 1 who listens and believes me"
A small measure of the confidence in MEDA's advocacy.

ZERO TOLERANCE TO ABUSE

MEDA continues to promote and support a Zero tolerance to abuse. MEDA's Volunteer Citizen Advocates are also independent advocates who observe and take action around presentations or issues of abuse identified.





Training, Learning etc

Best Practice Disability Advocacy on-line Training

This course is a foundation in how to provide best practice individual advocacy. You will learn how a person with disability works through advocacy issues with the assistance of advocacy. You will work through a series of real life scenarios you will get practical experience in applying the principles and skills of disability advocacy.

<https://www.daru.org.au/course/best-practice-in-disability-advocacy>

Working alongside LGBTIQ+ people with disability on-line course

In this course you will learn how to be inclusive for the LGBTIQ+ community and look at how to advocate for LGBTIQ+ people with a disability. This is a free online course available to anyone through the DARU website.

<http://www.daru.org.au/course/advocacy-at-the-intersections>



MEDA acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live and we pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Disability Information Helpline - COVID-19

1800 643 787



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<https://meda.org.au/>