

Melbourne East Disability Advocacy

M E D A

Newsletter

Disability Rights are Human Rights.

President's Update



I hope this finds you well, especially after lockdown 4.0 for Victoria. I think this time was particularly challenging for some as we thought we had seen the last of harsh restrictions.

My thoughts go out to you and your families at this time and hope you are looking after yourselves.

It has been disappointing to hear the reports of the lack of priority to vaccinate people with disability, their support workers and their primary carers.

We hope with the opening up of state-based vaccination hubs and COVID vaccination hubs set up to prioritise NDIS users, will see many more of our community vaccinated.

MEDA continues to advocate for the rights of our consumers and this demonstrates the need for our support.

In March we welcomed Sudili Peiris as our new Treasurer on the Committee of Management. Sudili is a qualified CPA and is a Finance Business Partner supporting the state's COVID-19 Response programs with the community service organisation, cohealth. Already Sudili has made a significant impact on our financial reporting and is working well with the MEDA team.

MEDA was fortunate to obtain a Bunnings BBQ opportunity in early May and we netted more than \$1500 on the day. Special thanks to all those that volunteered and to Bron, our COM member for her wonderful coordination.

In further good news, MEDA received an additional \$130,000 Disability Royal Commission funding for 2021-2022. These much-needed funds will expand on the great work the MEDA team has already achieved in advocating for people with disabilities who have experienced Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation.

Mary A
President



Executive Officer's Update

Welcome to MEDA's second newsletter for 2021. We continue to work remotely but seeing people face to face when relevant for their advocacy plan & work. It has been a busy few months. Our individual advocacy is providing support to 93 consumers and addressing 133 advocacy issues alongside 216 further enquiries and phone advocacy support. Our Citizen advocacy program is seeing the re-newing of the short term citizen advocacy program and continues to support existing partnerships. Our work in systemic advocacy has been busy responding to the NDIS reform. MEDA continues to support people to engage with the Disability Royal Commission and responding to some of the important issues papers with an extra boost of funding welcomed. The past few months has also seen the development of MEDAs 2021 - 2024 Strategic Plan giving further direction to MEDA. Jan M EO

Citizen Advocacy Program & Partnerships Update

On the 23rd February we held a forum on Disability and Ageing with a guest speaker, Judy H joining us with some valuable insights into navigating the Aged Care sector.

Despite MEDAs presence in a range of volunteer recruitment platforms it has been difficult to recruit with the impact of COVID. We are re-developing the short term Citizen Advocacy Program which has seen a keen interest from a range of prospective volunteers.

We celebrated our Volunteer Citizen Advocates during National Volunteer week with a social dinner and catch up.

MEDA also farewells two Volunteer Citizen Advocates, Danica M who provided 7 years service to MEDA and Caroline F 2 years. Thankyou for your support and dedication.





Disability Royal Commission Update

MEDA remains proactive in supporting people to be engaged with the Disability Royal Commission through sharing some complex and distressing stories.

MEDA has developed a Chinese DRC postcard to inform the community of the Disability Royal Commission. We thank Cindy for her support in translating the postcard.

With the disruption in 2020 of the DRC an extension to 2023 has been granted by Government alongside additional funding.

MEDA is well placed to expand on our DRC advocacy and to further engage with our CALD and First Nations Communities.

If there is anyone we can support and assist to tell their story please make contact with the MEDA.

NDIS & Advocacy Update

MEDA has joined a number of organisations and people with disability to respond to the concerning NDIA reforms.

We are pleased that there has been a pause placed on the development of the Independent Assessments but we remain vigilant to objecting to this being implemented with the impacts this will have on people with disability.

Individualised Living Options (ILO) supports let you work out how you want to live, where you live and who you live with. ILOs are funded in two parts. The first stage is all about exploring the supports you would like. The second stage is funding to put those supports in place.





Jason

Jim



Consumer Advisory Group Update

MEDA's Consumer Advisory Group continue to connect remotely. The group has discussed and shared items around the NDIS reform, MEDAs consumer feedback and the Disability Royal Commission issues papers.

We continue to thank our members - Eddie, Kathleen, Andrew, Jim and Jason. A special thanks to Jodie who is leaving the group after 3 years of contribution.

New members welcome contact ph. 98777 990

MEDA Projects & Members Update

Members

We welcome the following new members to MEDA

Individual Members

Ryan Pobke, Chris Dow & Tess Emmerson

Family Members

Jan Hanson, Melanie Brasher & James Brasher

Gold Members

No new members

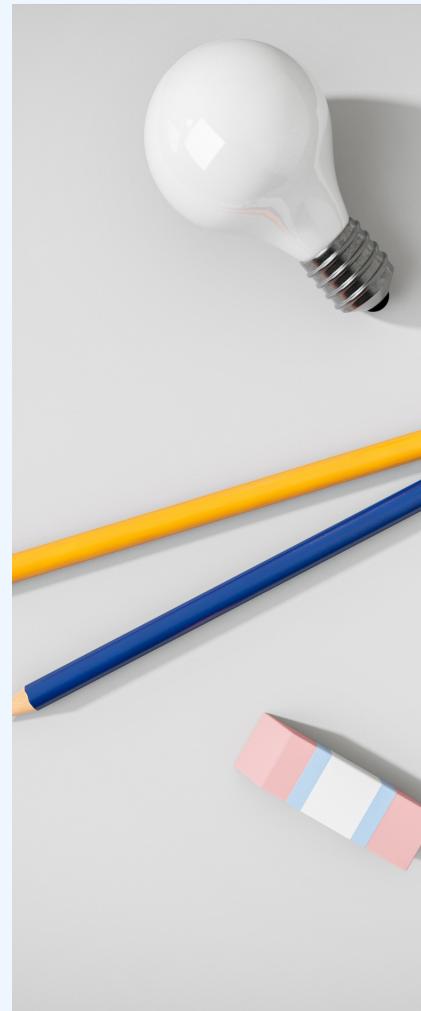
Platinum Members

No new members

Donations

Appleby and Emmerson family in assisting with MEDAs fundraising BBQ which \$1500 was raised

Thankyou everyone for your invaluable support.



Training, Learning, Other News etc



How to be disability inclusive DARU online Training

Knowing how to include people with disability to participate in an ordinary Australian life is something everyone can do to create positive change - whether this be in your workplace, at school, in your local community, or when developing policy and communications.

<https://www.daru.org.au/course/how-to-be-disability-inclusive>

Farewell to Pamel N

Since our last Newsletter we also said our goodbyes to Pamela who was supported in the past by MEDAs Citizen and Individual Advocates. It was a privilege to be a part of Pam's life. Rest In Peace Pam.



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 & Gateway - COVID-19

1800 643 787



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