

Melbourne East Disability Advocacy

M E D A

Newsletter

Disability Rights are Human Rights.

President's Update



Dear MEDA Community

Happy (belated) New Year! I hope this year has started well for you all.

It is a great honour to write to you for the first time as the new President of MEDA. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Will for the tireless efforts he has provided MEDA in his many roles including President, Vice President, Committee Member and his continuing role as a Volunteer Citizen Advocate over the last 10 years. On behalf of the MEDA community, we wish Will all the best as he looks to spend more time with his growing family and work commitments.

MEDA met recently for our annual planning day where we discussed our alignment with the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan as we near the midpoint of this journey. In moving on to a Covid-changed world we are looking to reengage with some of our traditional events and as such are looking forward to holding an in-person Trivia Fundraising event later in the year and hope to see many of you there.

Edward Elder
President

Executive Officer's Update



Welcome to MEDA's first newsletter for 2023. I hope everyone had an enjoyable and safe festive season. The year has kicked off with many requests for advocacy and a planning day for Committee. The planning day served as an opportunity to reflect on our progress around our 2021-2024 strategic plan and our financial commitments and future investments. Demand for individual advocacy continues with our wait list continuing to grow.

MEDA was selected to be a part of the Worksafe, Workwell Essentials Pilot program where we are exploring and strengthening workplace mental health & wellbeing.

Despite the Disability Royal Commission submissions closing we remain committed to implementing strategies to raise the profile around zero tolerance to abuse. Our Systemic Advocacy work continues to be busy and has included further feedback around the Disability Services Act, the Disability Workers Registration scheme and a paper around the importance of investing in the future of disability advocacy.

MEDA has also welcomed our new Business Support Officer Mel, who brings enthusiasm and energy to the role.

Jan M EO

Citizen Advocacy Program & Partnerships Update

Since our last newsletter, we welcome Tracey and Robyn as Citizen Advocate partners.

We also sadly farewelled the following Citizen Advocates and thank them for their service and dedication.

Robbie S & Jaslyn F - 1 year

Matthew L - 8 years

Helen B - 22 years



Disability Royal Commission Update



The Disability Royal Commission received more than 1,700 submissions in December; 357 on the very last day (31st December 2022). The DRC reported that most submissions in December were sent by email or via webform, 32 submissions contained artwork and 19 submissions were in Auslan. In January the Royal Commission published a research report - Diversity, dignity, equity and best practice: a framework for supported decision-making. It describes why it is important to ensure people with cognitive disability are supported to make their own decisions. It also details how this can be achieved. 'Cognitive disability' includes intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, mental health conditions or dementia. Researchers interviewed 77 people, including people with cognitive disability, advocates, family members and service providers. The report suggests a framework to make sure supported decision-making is available to all people with cognitive disability.

This framework lists nine universal principles, including:

- Everyone should get the support they need to make decisions.
- Effective safeguards are needed for people who may require support. This includes measures to prevent abuse.
- The right to take risks and to try new things is acknowledged and supported.

The link to the full report can be found on the DRC website and within the January 2023 Connect Newsletter (last page).

To stay updated with the latest news from the DRC you can access the DRC Connect newsletter at:

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/news-and-media/connect-newsletter>

NDIS & Advocacy Update

Have your say on how public transport accessibility can be improved.

The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Transport Standards) seek to remove discrimination for people with disability accessing public transport services, to provide equality and independence.

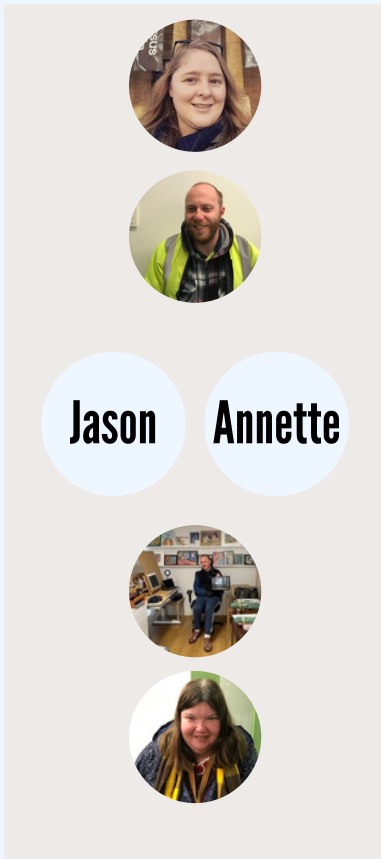
Have your say as part of the government's 2022 Review of the Transport Standards.

Whether you are a person with disability, a family member, carer, or friend, we encourage you to share your experiences using public transport. Let the government know if you have equal access to public transport and what needs to be changed.

- Have your say: by uploading a response to the 2022 Review discussion paper
- in writing, by video or by sending an audio recording to DisabilityTransport@infrastructure.gov.au
- by calling 1800 621 372
- or by participating in an online public consultation event in early 2023.



Consumer Advisory Group Update



We have all had a good break over the December and January period and recommenced our monthly meetings in February 2023. Sadly MEDA advocate, Miranda resigned from her position with MEDA, and finished in her role just at the end of last year. We are very excited to have Bron, also a MEDA advocate now working with the CAG group alongside Honi. Bron comes with over 20 years of working and lived experience in the disability sector.

In our February meeting we had a great discussion about Welcome to Country acknowledgement. Everyone was in agreement that this will now be added to the beginning of our CAG meetings along with our 'Disability Rights are Human Rights' acknowledgement. We are meeting face to face at the office for our March 2023 meeting on March 8th at 4 pm. We are hoping to add some new faces to the group this year, so if you are interested in joining the Consumer Advisory Group, or know anyone that might be interested, please let us know.

This group is an opportunity for volunteers with intellectual disability and acquired brain injury to give feedback and suggestions for making MEDA better, as well as helping us speak up for important issues about disability rights in our systemic work. We meet monthly on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Phone: 98777990
 Email: office@meda.org.au

Updates

In this month's Newsletter we are highlighting MEDAs Privacy, Dignity & Confidentiality Policy.

All information that MEDA collects in the provision of Advocacy Services in regards to consumers and volunteer citizen advocates is stored securely by staff and all your personal information is not disclosed to others without your consent. You have the right to access your personal information held by us.

All staff, Committee of Management and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that confidential and personal information remains confidential and private.

Exceptions to confidentiality may occur when staff or volunteers may be required by legislation to disclose relevant information if someone is at risk of harm.



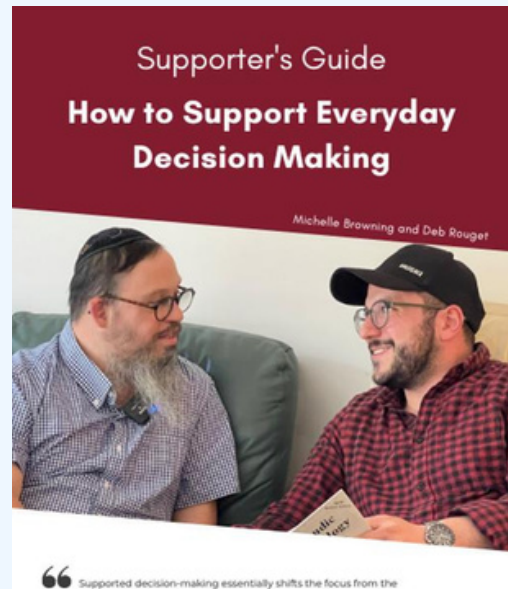
Other News etc

A Great Resource

Recently, Belonging Matters published a guide called “How to Support Everyday Decision Making: A Guide for Supporters”.

The guide was written by Dr Michelle Browning and Deb Rouget. The guide is based on many years of research and experience in regard to supporting people who have developmental disabilities to make decisions. The guide is very practical in nature and provides a framework for understanding the principles, role and process of being a decision making supporter and assisting people to make authentic, everyday decisions.

Supported Decision Making Guide and Workbook Digital Edition | belongingmatters



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/>