

EDAC NEWS



320 Rokeby Rd. Subiaco, WA 6008 Tel: 9388 7455 Fax: 9388 7433 www.edac.org.au

Autumn 2005

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Welcome to EDAC News. Since our last newsletter, EDAC has had a successful AGM and also undertaken various activities in the individual, systemic advocacy and projects areas. We hope to bring you up to date with the work we do but firstly, I would like to congratulate all members who have been elected on EDAC's Board of Management. We welcome Duc Dao as a new board member and look forward to her contribution. Congratulations Tony Vardaro, our President, who is also recently elected President of the National Ethnic Disability Alliance.

Leah Ciancio has resigned from her position as systemic advocate but is appointed as part-time consultant with the Vicinity project, a partnership project between EDAC and DADAA. We thank her for her contributions and also wish her every success in her academic achievements.

I would also like to welcome Dr. Anne Atkinson who is working one day a week in the area of training/development work.

One of the unanticipated events of this year is the announcement by DSC that we are due for standards monitoring. After overcoming the initial surprise, we were glad to welcome Jackie Softly as our Services Standards Monitor. Jackie was particularly impressed by the many very positive comments received from consumers and the very high regard they had for the individual advocacy staff. She commended us on our quality service. EDAC appreciated her feedback and would like to thank board members, staff and especially our consumers for their assistance throughout this monitoring period.

I had the opportunity of meeting up with the Hon. Bob Kuchera again at a recent function organized by the Office of Multicultural Interests and extended our invitation to him to visit EDAC. We welcome his appointment as Minister for Disability Services and look forward to a long working relationship in the advancement of rights for people with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds.

The Subiaco Council extended an invitation to EDAC to promote our services and fund-raise at their recent concert held at the theatre gardens. More than 300 people attended and it gave EDAC an opportunity to showcase the work we do.

I recently attended an inspiring event organized by the Disability Collective of the Perth Social Forum which involved international and national guests in workshop presentations, films and a discussion on disability. It was unfortunate that there were very few people with disabilities present at the forum. One of the films presented called, *Crip Culture*, demonstrated the current (international) social perspectives and personal experiences of disability represented by a number of well known disabled activists from the United States. A surprising and rather concerning aspect of the film for me was hearing derogatory references like *crippled, downs, blind, deaf* by people with disabilities themselves, which in these days would be considered politically inappropriate.

There is an emerging disability culture movement which takes pride in the history and social identity of individuals with disabilities and refers to it as a celebration of differences. They claim it is about visibility and self value. This notion would have parallels with the indigenous, gay/lesbian and the multicultural movements. I must say, some aspects don't sit comfortable with me as it implies a return to past eras of segregation, separation and barriers but the notion of a disability culture offers a different but challenging perspective. I will be interested to hear your views. Perhaps a reader could enlighten us on the subject.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and take note of the various events that are coming up soon. Please ring us for any further information about the work we do in advocacy or any issues we need to focus on in the future.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM for 2004 was held on the 23 October in the Subiaco Community Centre. Again, attendance was gratifying with more than 100 members present for the meeting. Elections were held to fill several vacancies on the Board of Management which now comprises:

President: Tony Vardaro
Vice-President: Mrs T Abraham
Secretary: Pui San Whittaker
Treasurer: John Cooke
Members: Anna-Maria Ortega
Bernadette Wright
Nihal Iscel
Boris Turpin
Duc Dau
Anne Tong
Jan Bishop
Anne Atkinson (until March 2005)



The meeting was addressed by the Minister, Hon. Sheila McHale and Mrs Abraham, who is a member of the EDAC Board and a Carer's representative.



The theme for the activity held after lunch was 'Relaxation and respite for carers'. With a grant from the Carers Association, two forms of relaxation were demonstrated. Mr Lim from the Chinese Medical Foundation of WA showed various forms of Qi Gong exercises and two teachers from the Line Dancing Society taught members several Line Dances including some incorporating movements which allowed people in wheelchairs to participate.



NEW BOARD MEMBER – WRITTEN BY NIHAL ISCEL

I have been a member of EDAC's Management committee since July 2004. From my personal experience and through my professional and voluntary work in the community, I am particularly aware that people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds find it more difficult to access services due to the barriers of language, cultural issues, stereotypic beliefs, etc.

I currently work at the Edmund Rice Centre WA (Inc) as a Community Settlement Officer providing information, referral, advocacy and casework to migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants with their settlement related problems.

I am very pleased that EDAC has taken the responsibility to provide personal and systematic advocacy for people with disabilities and their families/carers who are from CALD backgrounds and to provide information and training to both clients, their families and service providers on disabilities and cross-cultural issues.

I have always been an advocate of people from CALD backgrounds and people with disabilities to have the equal rights of employment, education, accessing services as the rest of the community. I feel privileged to be a part of this excellent work being done by EDAC.

TRAINING OF CALD DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKERS

EDAC has facilitated the successful completion of training of 28 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) Disability support workers in the Metropolitan area. The project was supported by the Disability Services Commission and coordinated by Mrs Carmen Harrison. These students graduated from Central, Swan and West Coast TAFE after studying Certificate III Disability. They came from many different countries and speak many different languages. Some of these students are continuing to study Certificate IV Disability, while the rest have found employment or are looking for employment. If you have the need for a trained CaLD Disability support worker, please contact EDAC.



Preventing Family Disintegration in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities: A Partnership project with four agencies, in conjunction with the Muslim and Ethiopian communities.

The project commenced in March 2003 in response to increasing concerns expressed about the incidence of family disintegration and domestic violence in WA. The strategies and programs adopted by the Muslim and Ethiopian communities were highly successful in providing education and raising awareness of issues surrounding family disintegration caused by domestic violence.

The project has much to offer to other diverse communities and key service providers, including the mainstream community and services. The final report was launched by Minister McHale on the 3rd December 2004 and is available from the consortium or from EDAC's website.

The Department of Community Services has also provided additional funding of \$80,000 for the consortium to work with other ethnic groups. This project also won the National Crime and Violence Prevention award of \$3000 to be shared by the two participating communities – the Ethiopian and the Muslim communities.

Development of a training manual for Women with disabilities and family and domestic

Following the release of a DV and disability research report, *silent voices*, the Dept. of Community Services provided a further \$10,000 ear-marking training as an initial step in addressing some of the issues facing women with disabilities and domestic violence. *silent voices* showed how women with disabilities suffer double disadvantage in accessing services and that support was lacking in protecting and safeguarding them from harm and abuse.

These issues were illustrated in case studies provided by participants. Of the 709 women with disabilities reported to have experienced family and domestic violence, 20% were from culturally and diverse backgrounds.

Further funding from the Dept of DCD will go towards developing a training package to address these issues.

Dr. Judith Davis has been appointed consultant to this project and will be organizing forums with the disability and domestic violence sector.

This is a partnership project between PWD WA and EDAC.

For further information about this project please contact Jenny Au Yeong at EDAC on 9388 7455.

Looking for participants for a research study in the area of tourism and disability

Tegan Muir, a fourth year occupational therapy honours student at Curtin University, is seeking participants with disabilities to take part in research involving environmental and personal factors affecting travel. This study has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee.

If you are interested in assisting her with this study, please contact her by email at tegan.muir@student.curtin.edu.au or leave a message with Linda Whitby at the Centre for Research into Disability and Society on (08) 9266 3621.

EDAC Training Program for 2005

EDAC has recently compiled a program of training programs suitable for consumers, carers, ethnic communities and service providers. The program is to be run in three streams. The first stream targets ethnic communities and aims to provide information on

- Culture and disability in the Australian context
- Services and rights
- Advocacy

The program, which is funded by OMI, is due to start at the end of March with a workshop to train community members in facilitating community based workshops with the assistance of EDAC staff. Six ethnic communities have been selected to take part in the program for this year.

The second stream focuses on CaLD Perspectives of the Disability Service Standards. It will incorporate two workshops in the first half of the year and another two in the second half of the year. Two workshops will be held for consumers and two for service providers. The content of these workshops is based on the Disability Service Standards project, which has recently been completed.

The third stream concentrates on self-advocacy for CaLD consumers and also uses the information obtained through an EDAC project, which is nearing completion. It is planned to hold six workshops throughout the year: two consumers; two for carers and two for service providers.

Anne Atkinson, who has recently been appointed to work one day a week in systemic advocacy, is currently planning the program. Please contact Anne or Veronica at EDAC (08) 9388 7455 for further information.

Some Interesting Statistics from Centrelink

<i>Top Ten Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Background Countries of Birth in WA</i>		<i>Top Ten Refugee Groups by Country of Birth in WA</i>	
Italy	13923	Sudan	779
India	5752	Iraq	598
Malaysia	5290	Bosnia and Herzegovina	593
Vietnam	5091	Croatia	452
Serbia and Montenegro	5056	Afghanistan, Islamic State	390
Netherlands	5054	Iran	331
Germany	4138	Serbia and Montenegro	312
Poland	3521	Ethiopia	201
Singapore	2510	Somalia	156
China	2503	Burma	135
<i>Top Ten Emerging Groups by Country of Birth in WA</i>		<i>Multicultural Australia</i>	
Sudan	779	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 4 Australians are born overseas • 1 in 5 Australians were born in a NESG (non-English speaking country) • 4 in 10 Australians are children of Migrants • Over 6 million Migrants and Refugees (600,000) have settled in Australia since World War II • They have come from 232 countries and speak over 200 languages • 3.9 million people speak a language other than English at home (2001 Census Data) 	
Iraq	533		
Afghanistan, Islamic State	360		
Iran	248		
Zimbabwe	148		
Ethiopia	104		
Sierra Leone	76		
Somalia	76		
Liberia	74		

All Disability Employment Organisations are now Certified.

The Quality Assurance (QA) System, which was introduced on 1 July 2002, allowed for a transition period of 18 months for organizations to become certified under the new system.

All disability employment organizations have now been certified against the 2002 Disability Service Standards by independent certification bodies, and all met the 31 December 2004 deadline. This is a significant achievement for all concerned: the consumers, staff and management of disability employment services, the certification bodies, the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) and FaCs staff. All stakeholders have contributed to this important result which gives people with disabilities and departments confidence in the quality of disability employment services.

Now the transition period has finished, all organizations will continue to have regular surveillance audits and triennial certification audits to ensure that the Disability Services Standards are maintained. For more information on certification of disability employment organisations, please contact National Disability Operations on (07) 3005 6094 or toll-free on 1300 653 227.

(From *disability e-news*, the on-line newsletter of Family and Community Services. Issue 35, 25 Feb. 2005)

News from the National Ethnic Disability Alliance ----- Welfare Reform

The Federal Cabinet discussed broad directions for 'welfare reform' on 30 March, including changes to the Disability Support Pension, but has not made any formal announcement. An interdepartmental committee, lead by the Prime Minister and including the Employment and Family and Community Services Ministers, has been developing detailed proposals.

Media reports and speeches by relevant Ministers continue to indicate that the Government intends to restrict eligibility for disability pensions and encourage people with disabilities to seek labour market assistance.

A number of roundtables were organised by DEWR in capital cities and NEDA representatives attended the ones held in Sydney and Perth. Some of the issues raised by NEDA were:

- The greatest barrier to workforce participation is discrimination, lack of social infrastructure and appropriate support.
- The focus of the reform should be on creating more incentives and support structures that enable participation rather than labelling people with disability as either 'incapacitated' or 'roting the system'. The current approach of the Government is divisive and it re-enforces the myth and stigma associated with people with hidden and episodic disabilities, particularly those from certain cultural backgrounds.
- The participation rate of people from NESB with disability in employment services has been extremely low due to inaccessible information and service provision.
- Tightening the work capacity test for the DSP would leave people worse off financially and have unintended disincentive effects.

Currently, NEDA is working with its membership agencies (including EDAC) to conduct consumer consultations in every state and compile a collaborative response to the government.

Employment Inquiry

A roundtable was held by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission on 31 March as part of the recently announced Employment Inquiry. It was an agenda setting exercise to set the scope and direction of the Inquiry. The Inquiry is solution focused and it is hoping to generate processes of change and partnerships that will continue beyond the life of the Inquiry.

NEDA has provided an initial submission on 15 April outlining some broad access and equity issues. Further consultation will be conducted with consumers in partnerships with three member organisations over the next four weeks and then a further submission will be prepared by the end of May.

Consumer Forum on Employment

WHEN: Tuesday 24th May

TIME: 10.30 am – 1.30pm (lunch provided)

WHERE: EDAC office – 320 Rokeby Road, Subiaco

GUEST: Diana Qian, EO of National Ethnic Disability Alliance

Please phone Veronica on 9388 7455 to let us know if you are coming and if you require transport or has special dietary requirements

TWO DAY WORKSHOP AT FAIRBRIDGE

EDAC has just received a grant from ACROD and the Office of Women's Policy to hold a two day workshop at Fairbridge Village. The workshop will focus on self-advocacy in general with an application to employment and health issues. There will also be lots of fun activities.

WHERE: Fairbridge Village (near Pinjarra)

When: Sunday afternoon 15th May to Tuesday 17th May

Transport (with wheelchair access) will leave from and return to the EDAC office – 320 Rokeby Road, Subiaco.

Transport, accommodation and meals are supplied at no cost to the participants. If you are interested please call Veronica on 9388 7455 to reserve a place.

Disability First-Stop

EDAC joins PWD, Kalparrin, Headwest, Advocacy South West and Carers WA in an exciting new initiative **DISABILITY FIRST STOP**, launched by the Minister for Disability Services Sheila McHale late last year.

Disability **First Stop** provides information, advocacy, supported referrals, and assistance with access to counselling for individuals and their families in the first two years of diagnosis of a disability. It makes no difference whether the disability is a result of an accident or illness, the combined efforts and expertise of the above agencies will aim to help people negotiate the often confusing maze of services in this critical time.

Luba McMaugh is the Advocacy Officer at EDAC involved in Disability **FIRST STOP** and she would be very happy to talk to you about the project. Luba can be contacted on 9388 7455 or by email: lmcmaugh@edac.org.au

Access Home Loan Scheme

The Department of Housing and Works has introduced a new Keystart program specifically for people with disabilities. This program, known as the Access Home Loan Scheme, helps people with disabilities to buy, build or modify a home to meet their special needs or keep their home if they lose income and can no longer afford their home loan repayments.

The scheme works by allowing the potential homebuyer to pay 70% or more of a property's price and then the Department of Housing and Works makes up the difference.

The Department then owns up to 30% of the home, which the homebuyer can then buy when they can afford it. Buyers need a minimum deposit of \$2,000 or 2% of the value of the property (whichever is greater).

The scheme also helps people to make their home more accessible by providing loans (from \$5,000 to \$50,000) for home improvements. These might include bathroom modifications, removing walls, adding a granny flat and other structural alterations.

The Access Home Loan Scheme can also assist people by helping to refinance a housing loan when the household income is suddenly reduced through disability.

For more information on Access Home Loans, please contact **1800 093 325**.

International Women's Day 2005

International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March by the Women's Sub-Committee of the Ethnic Communities Council (ECC) with the welcoming address given by Jenny Au Yeong, EDAC's Executive Officer.

Jenny provided an overview of the particular barriers which both women and people with disabilities face in the struggle for 'equality, justice, peace and development'. In particular, she used her own life story as an example of the effort it has taken, as a migrant, woman and a person with a disability, to demand equal rights and to participate in decision making, especially in matters which concerned herself.

Jenny gave an overview of the development of a self-help group formed by a small group of people with disabilities, which later grew to the current organization known as People with Disabilities (PWD). In recognising that there was an under-utilisation of disability services by people of CaLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) backgrounds, EDAC (Ethnic Disability Advisory Centre) was established as an independent advocacy centre for migrants with disabilities in 1995.

Although many barriers confronting people with disabilities are being addressed, one area of concern is that of women with disabilities, particularly migrant women with disabilities.

To quote from Jenny's address:

The social status of disabled women varies according to individual circumstances and to the country in which they live. Disabled women in poorer countries usually experience a particular disadvantaged. Here, it is not just difficult but often impossible for a woman with a disability to get an education or find a job. She often becomes marginalised; has no place in society. According to common belief, she does not meet the requirements society places on women: she cannot be a "good wife", nor a "good mother". She cannot earn a living because of the barriers of access and attitude. Some societies go so far as to assign fault to a mother who gives birth to a disabled child, especially so if the mother herself has a disability.

In Australia, the social status of women with disabilities has improved in the years, although the disabled women's movement in Australia has its ebbs and flows. The national group (WWD) has been operating for over a decade and there have been some achievements in the areas of disability and women's rights, such as education, employment and reproductive rights – especially with regards to illegal sterilisation of young girls with disability.



Jenny concluded her address by calling for more measures to be taken so that migrant women and disabled women are involved with the struggle for social change at every level. She suggested that one method in achieving this is the collection and compilation of relevant statistical datum on their progress and the development and implementation of a satisfactory and consistent definition of *ethnicity*.

Congratulations to Jenny Au Yeong for receiving an award from the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia for commitment and contribution to Australian Multiculturalism. A Special Medallion and Certificate was presented by the Minister for Multiculturalism, Mr. Peter McGauran at an award ceremony on April 18 at the Ethnic Communities Council.

MEDIA RELEASE – VICINITY FILMMAKING PROGRAM

Innovative Filmmaking Course targets People with Disabilities.

An exciting and innovative introductory filmmaking course for new and emerging filmmakers-with-disabilities is soon to be launched as a pilot program. The project is designed to nurture and extend the filmmaking interests of people with disabilities, particularly those that are young, from an ethnic background or with an intellectual disability.

The Vicinity Filmmaking Program will run over a 4-month period and will be held on Fridays in Fremantle or at Murdoch University. Participants will be introduced to the basics of video production through flexible, practical and interactive workshops. A mentoring scheme and an Emerging Filmmakers Forum will fast-track the filmmaking aspirations of more experienced Vicinity participants. Extra-curricular workshops including Making Video-clips, Set Design, Stop-animation and Developing a Music Score will also be available through the program.

Leah Ciancio, Project Manager for the Vicinity Film Project, says that “the course is an Inclusive Recreation model based on the idea that ‘free-time’ interests can positively inform other life choices, such as social and work decisions. Vicinity’s focus on enjoyable and new experiences through filmmaking, will open up many opportunities for individuals; from a short-term meaningful past-time to long term friendships, filmmaking partnerships and improved quality of life”.

Potential participants are invited to attend a Student Orientation and Registration Day to meet project staff and hear more about the Filmmaking Program. The event will be held in Fremantle from 2.30pm on Saturday 21st of May 2005 at the Freight Gallery, 21 Beach Street. Carers and family-members are also welcome. Course Outlines and Expression of Interest Forms are available for potential participants from the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC) on 9388 7455.

The Vicinity Filmmaking Program is part of the larger “Vicinity Film Project”, funded by Lotterywest and managed by EDAC & Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (WA). Please contact Leah Ciancio at EDAC on 9388 7455, or email leah@upnaway.com to find out more about the project and the Student Orientation Day.

For more information, or to arrange an interview please contact Linda Rawlings on 9370 1389 (Mon, Tues & Thurs 9am-2pm) or email lojik@tpg.com.au.

Club for Film Lovers

The Vicinity Film Club organizes monthly events in and around Subiaco, combining cinema – going with social gathering at local cafes and restaurants.

The club environment aims to facilitate lively discussion and informal film critique-ing. The Vicinity Film Club is supported by ACE Cinemas Subiaco. To find out more about the Club contact Renee on 9388 7455.

(This film club is sponsored by EDAC and DADAA with funding from Lotterywest).