



EDAC NEWS

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Nihal Iscel

People with disabilities from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) background face barriers in terms of language deficiency, stigma from their own ethnic communities, and lack of information when accessing services. As indicated by the recent Productivity Commission Report (2009), they are continuously under-represented in disability services.

The Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC) has a group of very professional and capable staff and management committee members, who all contribute to getting positive outcomes in terms of individual and systemic advocacy. EDAC is the only agency in Western Australia that represents exclusively the rights and interests of CaLD people with a disability, their families and carers.

EDAC's meeting in February 2009 with the Hon. Simon O'Brien Minister for Disability Services was organised to bring to his attention those issues being faced by people from CaLD backgrounds with disability, their families and carers. Funding for the position of a Systemic Advocacy worker was requested as EDAC is continuously sought after for presentations; information and training to government and community service providers; reducing stigma in the community; empowering people with disability, their families and carers from CaLD backgrounds to access services and responding to submissions regarding disability and ethnicity issues. Following this meeting I am pleased to announce that the Disability Services Commission (DSC) has just approved funding for a systemic advocacy position. EDAC would like to thank DSC for funding this additional position.

EDAC's *EthnicAbility* program continues to go on air every Tuesday at 11.30am on 6EBA 95.3FM. It informs the WA community of disability and ethnicity issues. EDAC recently celebrated *EthnicAbility's* 100th program. You can always access past broadcasts on EDAC's website on www.edac.org.au.

EDAC's Board of Management and staff members would like to wish all our Muslim members a happy and prosperous Ramadan and Eidil-Fitri.

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Jenny Au Yeong (CEO), Nihal Iscel (President of EDAC), Melissa Del Borrello (Committee Member), Suresh Rajan (Treasurer) Arthur Tam (Committee Member) meeting the Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Simon O'Brien.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

(Jenny Au Yeong)

It is difficult to imagine that we have entered a new financial year. We look forward to reporting the year's activities at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) which will be held on the 17th October. Notices and invitations will be sent out shortly.

Staff members have been working hard on advocacy activities and projects. Recent submissions have included the National Disability Strategy, the National Human Rights Consultation, Enduring Power of Guardianship Review, Advance Health Directives forms and information kit, Dept of Immigration's Review on the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy and the Economic Audit WA. Please remember that all our written submissions can be downloaded from EDAC's website. The Disability Coalition WA met with the Parliamentary Secretary, Bill Shorten on the 6 August where we discussed a range of disability issues such as advocacy funding, unmet needs and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The Culture/Disability and standards workshops have come to an end and proven to be very successful. An evaluation is being undertaken to consider its effectiveness and improvements for future workshops. DSC has also provided grants of up to \$5000 for successful applicants in the delivery of service improvements to CaLD disability communities.

The mental health project *Double Jeopardy* of Mental Health has just been completed. Although it is primarily a Capacity Development Initiative of EDAC funded by the Mental Health Council of Australia and the Dept of Health and Ageing there is much that we can share with the multicultural and disability sector, especially organisations providing support to people who have a dual diagnosis. We presented aspects of the project at a WA Department of Health Mental Health Forum in August.

We are also collaborating with a number of non-government organizations (NGOs) to celebrate World Mental Health Week. An interactive event is planned for consumers and carers from CaLD backgrounds at the Herb Graham Centre in Mirrabooka focusing on *Transcultural Wellbeing*. All are welcome.

We congratulate and welcome new staff, Wil Nayar, Paran Kuppusamy, Asha Selathurai and Manjit Kaur.

Many thanks to staff, consumers and families who contributed to EDAC's Quality Assurance audit held on the 20 August by the Dept. of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) staff which we believed went well. It is through your feedback that we can improve our services, so keep those comments coming in.

NEW INQUIRY INTO TREATMENT OF MIGRANTS WITH A DISABILITY

The Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Migration has launched an inquiry into the migration treatment of disability. The Committee will examine whether visa decision-makers have the right to take into account the social and economic contribution, as well as the anticipated health care costs, of potential migrants with disabilities.

This matter has arisen following several cases in recent years of individuals and families who were refused visas on the basis of their own or a family member's disability.

The Committee welcomes community views on the issue and the closing date for submissions is Wednesday 28 October. EDAC will be providing a written submission to this inquiry. If you wish to present your views please contact EDAC on (08) 9388 7455.

NEDA's RESEARCH ON SOCIAL INCLUSION - "This is My Home - Belonging, Disability and Diversity"

(excerpt from the Executive Summary)

This second report follows the previous report titled *Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion? Literature Review on Social Inclusion, Cohesion and Culture*. It explores the meaning of belonging, home and social connection for NESB (non-English speaking background) people with disability.

The findings have important implications in relation to how we might understand social inclusion in Australia, and future directions for improving the sophistications of the national social inclusion agenda. They are:

1. Religion, faith and spirituality are an important component of social connectivity and belonging for many people from diverse backgrounds.
2. Discrimination has an impact upon opportunities and social inclusion outcomes. A social inclusion agenda must address systemic and individual discrimination, including racism.

3. Family and friends are important gateways to social participation and belonging. Friendship networks in particular are worthy of further investigation as an enabler of social inclusion.
4. The ability to have a voice and be heard is a key component of feeling included.
5. Creating more positive interactions between support agencies and customers can have the benefit of a stronger sense of belonging and connection for people who face social exclusion.

You will find the full report on NEDA's website: http://www.neda.org.au/page/cultural_inclusion.html

REPORT ON A JOINT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION IN CARNARVON by ECCWA and EDAC

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA (ECCWA) and EDAC organised a consultation forum with service providers and individuals with disability at the Carnarvon Lottery House in May this year.

Mr. Dudley Maslen, the Shire President of Carnarvon opened the forum and also inaugurated the establishment of EDAC'S Carnarvon based advocacy service. In his speech Mr. Maslen highlighted the social isolation of ethnic women who, unlike their menfolk, had no place to socialise.

Jenny Au Yeong CEO of EDAC and Ramdas Sankaran, President of ECCWA, jointly opened the discussion. Issues raised include:

- Disability access problems; uneven pathways, heritage listed buildings; the Broome Boulevard Shopping Centre barrier
- General Practitioners (GPs) whose lack of awareness of community services resulting in patients missing out on vital community services.
- Lack of or inappropriate use of interpreters in the hospital system.
- Domestic and family violence, as well as drug and alcohol addiction.
- Language difficulties resulting in occupational health and safety issues around unsafe use of agricultural chemicals.

There was a commitment to develop a resource directory of services for the Carnarvon region. The ECCWA will provide a report of all their regional consultations (including this one) to the Minister of Multicultural Services.



Jenny Au Yeong with some participants at the community consultation in Carnarvon

CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE DISABILITY SERVICE STANDARDS TRAINING

In 2003, the Western Australian Government embarked on a program of reform to ensure services are both accessible and responsive to the needs and aspirations of all Western Australians under the framework of Substantive Equality. It involves achieving equitable outcomes as well as equal opportunities by promoting sensitivity to the different needs of client groups and by eliminating systemic racial discrimination in policies, programs and services. A training manual using the Disability Service Standards framework was developed as a result.

EDAC delivered 14 workshops to DSC funded services.

This project had just been completed and our evaluation indicated that it was successful and well attended, 46 organisations participated with a total number of 133 participants.

DSC has provided EDAC with further funding to assist DSC funded Service Providers with Service Improvement Grants of up to \$5,000. Applications for this service improvement grant closes on 14 September 2009.



One of the Cultural Inclusive Disability Services Standards workshops held at the Subiaco Arts Centre.

DOUBLE JEOPARDY OF MENTAL HEALTH: Dual Diagnosis

EDAC received a small grant from the Mental Health Council of Australia and the Australia Government Department of Health and Ageing for their Capacity Development Program. The project mainly focussed on the capacity of EDAC as an organisation to manage the increasing number of Mental Health clients from a quality assurance perspective.

EDAC has a consistently high proportion of mental health clients. Over a five-year period, between 15% to 25% of our clients have had mental health issues as primary disability. In addition, a significant number of our clients have dual diagnosis, i.e. mental health issues accompanying another type of disability as primary.

Many studies had also shown that people with intellectual disability were over represented in the criminal justice system and yet there was no effective whole of government intervention. The challenging behaviour of some people with intellectual disability is a prominent issue confronting many disability service providers.

The project has:

- Assisted EDAC in understanding the gaps and barriers in service delivery in the Mental Health field and advocate for improvements.
- Ascertained what EDAC can and cannot do, given that EDAC staff members are advocates and not clinicians.
- Led EDAC to modify its data collection to capture the mental health and wellbeing situations of clients.
- Encouraged EDAC to continue monitoring, promoting and raising awareness of the unmet needs of clients who have a dual diagnosis and of people with disabilities who may have potential mental health issues.

INTRODUCING NEW STAFF



Wilfred NAYAR (Senior Advocacy Officer, Carnarvon) is originally from Burma and has been in Australia since the mid 60's. He has worked at Skillshare, Kuwinyardu Aboriginal Resource Unit, Workbase and Bridging The Gap. Prior to this, he

worked in the motor vehicle industry, owned a seafood business, served as an elected councillor of the Shire of Carnarvon and been a Ministerial appointee to the inaugural Gascoyne Health Service Board.



Paranthaman KUPPUSAMY (Advocacy Officer) has recently migrated to Australia from Malaysia. He holds a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from University of London and while in Malaysia was working in the area of civil litigation and criminal cases.



Asha SELATHURAI (Computer Consultant). Asha is also a recent migrant. She has a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and a Masters in Information Technology and a member of the Australian Computer Society. Her work experience in Malaysia involved providing technical support to clients across Europe and Asia.



Manjit KAUR (Project Officer)

Manjit is back at EDAC. Manjit served several years in the EDAC Management Committee. She had been busy teaching swimming, was a swim school coordinator for two businesses in the swimming industry. She also has experience in working

with people with disabilities and ethnic women's programs. Prior to this she worked in the public service and mental health area.

WHO CARES...?

Report on the inquiry into better support for carers

EDAC provided a written submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth in July 2008 on behalf of CaLD carers and people with disabilities. This submission is available on EDAC's website. We indicated the need to recognise the role of CaLD carers, outlined current barriers and provided strategic priorities and practical measures of working and supporting CaLD carers, families and ethnic communities on disability and caring issues.

We are pleased that the full report was presented to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia in April 2009.

The report has 50 recommendations. Below are some of the topics of the recommendations to improve the plight of carers:

- Carer recognition and policy improvements

- Financial assistance
- Access to support and services for carers
- Employment and Education
- Health and wellbeing

The report is available on the following link:
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fchy/carers

NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY “Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia”

EDAC provided a written submission to this important enquiry last year (see EDAC’s website).

The National Disability Strategy report, ‘Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia’ was launched on 5 August 2009. The report details key barriers and issues facing people with disability in their everyday living and highlights solutions and best practice examples to increase their participation.

Section 2.8 is solely dedicated to the further disadvantaged groups within disability, namely people from a multicultural background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and women. With regard to those from multicultural backgrounds, the exclusion from the cultural community was highlighted as well as the difficulties posed by language barriers.

Furthermore, in section 2.2 the exclusion of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) from the Migration Act of 1958 is used as an example of people with disabilities being excluded and ignored.

To find out more information on the report or to obtain a copy, please visit:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/govtint/Pages/nds.aspx>

ARE YOU CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY?

If so, we’d like to hear from you to help us plan respite options.

In one of its election commitments the State Government has provided \$11.75 million to build five respite facilities for adults with disabilities in Western Australia.

The Disability Services Commission (DSC) is seeking your ideas to help inform and design the best respite model(s) for people with disabilities with a range of

different support needs and their families and carers. Community forums are being held to explore respite needs, service models, community capacity and local issues to help inform the development of the new facilities.

Forums will be held:

South

Morning: 9.30-11.00am Friday 18 September 2009
 Secret Harbour Community Centre,
 Oasis Drive Secret Harbour

North

Evening: 7.00 – 8.30pm,
 Tuesday 22 September 2009

Morning: 9.30 – 11.00am,
 Thursday 24 September 2009

Both forums in the northern suburbs will be held in the Conference Room at the Joondalup DSC Office, 8 Davidson Tce, Joondalup.:

If you would like to attend one of the forums please contact Teressa Andrews on 9426 9623 or by email to Teressa.Andrews@dsc.wa.gov.au by Friday 4 September. However, if you don’t reply and are able to come on the day – please do.

Other ways you can tell us about your ideas are:

- Call 1800 996 214 between 8am – 6pm Monday 14 September to Friday 18 September.
- Send an email to respiteconsultations@dsc.wa.gov.au

(EDAC encourages all CaLD members to attend these forums as this is an opportunity to raise your needs and respite options. If you are unable to attend but would like us to represent your views please ring Jenny on (08) 93887455).

TAKING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OUT OF THE TOO HARD BASKET

The following is a joint press release from Senator Mitch Fifield, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities, Carers and the Voluntary Sector, The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Leader of the Opposition and The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Shadow Minister for Education following a major stakeholder forum held yesterday in Melbourne.

Today, the Opposition held a major stakeholder forum in Melbourne to discuss the significant challenges faced by students with disabilities and their families.

This issue has been languishing in the too hard basket for too long and the Coalition wants to work with

parents, educators and the providers to find a solution to ensure every child has the opportunity to reach their potential. The Opposition heard that governments at all levels have failed to provide adequately for the hundreds of thousands of young people living with a disability across Australia.

Parents of students with disabilities shared their very personal stories of a system that has failed them and their children. We also heard from principals, teachers and representatives of the education and disability sectors about the need for national leadership and reform in this area.

Overwhelmingly, participants agreed that the education system is failing to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

Every sector at the forum indicated their strong support for action.

Parents talked about some of the considerable challenges that they face every day. We heard difficult stories of how these families have been discriminated against and denied real choice when it comes to the education of their children.

Some of the key deficiencies that were identified included but are not limited to:

- Equity and portability of funding – the difference between funding in a government school and non-government school is unfair and unsustainable. Fundamentally, the funding should follow the child.
- More training for teachers and teacher's aides must be undertaken so that these educators can better support these children.
- Parents are exhausted and need more support across the board with less red tape.
- There are substantial problems with different definitions of disabilities and too many children are falling through the gaps.

The views expressed today will provide critical input to our policy development in this important area.

The Coalition will continue to consult stakeholder groups across Australia with a clear focus on parent driven solutions.

We encourage anyone who would like to share their experiences or offer policy solutions to go to www.educationforaustralia.com

The investment we fail to make today in these young Australians will cost the nation more in the long run.

Press Release dated 25 August 2009.

<http://www.mitchfield.com>

(EDAC agrees with the sentiments but believes it has not gone far enough to include students with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds who are constantly placed in the too hard basket due to cultural and languages issues. We will be providing feedback from our advocacy experience. If you would like to present your views please contact us on (08) 9388 7455 as we value your input).

ENGLISH CLASSES

Swan TAFE is offering places in existing English classes. This is available for those holding a Visa Subclass 457, Temporary Business Long Stay, and Standard Business Sponsorship Subclass 457. The cost is \$8.20/hour for Primary 457 Visa holders.

For more information, contact Michael Levissianos (Head of Programs, Carlisle) on (08) 9267 7370,

Monday-Thursday, between 12:30-4:00pm.

or Carlisle Campus Customer Service Centre on (08) 9267 7304, between 8:00am-3:30pm, Monday-Friday.

TRANSCULTURAL WELL-BEING EVENT TO CELEBRATE WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

When: Thursday 8th Oct 2009

Where: Herb Graham Function Centre,
27 Chesterfield Road, Mirrabooka

What: Listen to speakers on health and wellbeing
Try activities that promote wellbeing
Join in the fun and meet new people

This is a collaborative project between the Community, Culture and Mental Health Unit (UWA), EDAC, ISHAR, MAITRI, North Metro Child and Adult Mental Health and WA Transcultural Mental Health Centre.

NOTICE OF EDAC'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

When: 17 October 2009, Saturday at 10.30 am

Where: The Palms Community Centre, Corner Nicholson and Rokeby Road Subiaco.

All members will be notified by mail with agenda and associated reports.

The public lecture delivered by the Hon Bill Shorten Parliamentary Secretary for Disability Services on 6th August in Perth can be accessed from this website: http://www.billshorten.com.au/more/index.cfm?Fuseaction=August_6th_Spee§ion=more_46555