

Disability Employment Service Consultation

Over the past 8 months the NDCO program has assisted the coordination of the National Disability Services (NDS) WA open employment committee and Association for Competitive Employment WA (ACE WA) to conduct five focus groups with stakeholders about the future of disability employment services (DES) beyond 2018.

The specific requirements of the consultation were:

- Conduct five focus group meetings with stakeholder groups - clients, schools, employers, consumer groups and government/community organisations;
- Analyse feedback and themes emerging from the focus groups;
- Prepare and submit a written report on each focus group meeting;
- Prepare up to five case studies reflecting the feedback.

An independent contractor E-QUAL facilitated the Focus groups and the subsequent report was used to inform DES providers response to the national DES consultation when they gathered for a forum facilitated by Kerrie Langford Senior Policy Officer NDS on May the 7th.

Kerrie Langford opens the DES provider forum and sets the scene for providing input to the Disability Employment Taskforce (DET) established by the Department of Social Services to review the current support system and develop a new National Disability Employment Framework.

Some of the feedback from the stakeholders that DES providers considered when they broke out into small groups to workshop feedback to the Disability Employment Taskforce:

- Choice and control is limited by the system DES has to operate in.
- Administration aspects of the current contract are a burden.
- On the job support is important but limited by too many rules.
- High staff turnover affects service quality.
- Needing better school to work transition.
- Better work preparation.
- Stronger support for volunteer work.
- Better marketing to employers.
- More flexibility in "system" to meet individual needs.
- Less focus on KPIs and more focus on people.
- More job creation.
- More support for people with higher support needs/intellectual disability.

To obtain a copy of the "Disability Employment Service Future – Consultation Report of Stakeholder Feedback" please email alex.murphy@edge.org.au



Kerrie Langford opens the DES provider forum



DES providers workshop their input to the Disability Employment Taskforce consultation.

Abilities Careers EXPO

Will be held on Tuesday 15th September 2015 at the Crown Perth Great Eastern Highway Burswood

The Abilities Careers Expo provides an opportunity for families, schools and students with disability to explore further education, employment and post school options information from over 35 exhibitors.

For an exhibitor registration form please email: abilities.expo@education.wa.edu.au

This year the EXPO has expanded to include Schools/Trade Training Centers & institutions demonstrating a variety of trades, enterprise projects and vocations. This is an innovation that the committee hopes will attract more parents/guardians to visit the EXPO.

Schools/Trade Training Centers & Institutes interested in showcasing an area of expertise are invited to provide an EOI via email: paul.jones2@education.wa.edu.au



Are You Aware Of?

Community Living and Participation Grants

The Community Living and Participation Grants assist West Australian individuals with a permanent disability.

Grants of between \$500 and \$10,000 are available for equipment, resources, projects and activities that:

- Enable people with disabilities to participate in recreational and social activities; and
- Improve the quality of life for people with disability and their families.

Some of the types of proposals supported are: computer, learning activity, assistance to attend seminars, conferences in WA.

For further information: <http://www.clp.org.au>

ILC Disability Equipment Grants (DEG)

The DEG program assists West Australian individuals with permanent disabilities with equipment grants and subsidies.

Grants are available for a range of assistive technology / equipment.

For Further information: <http://ilc.com.au/funding/disability-equipment-grants/>

Geraldton Men's Health Initiative

The NDCO region 28, Mark Bateman, recently supported a men's health initiative focused on supporting the fathers of children with a disability. Called "Dads of Kids with Disability" the project aims to provide direct support and advice to the fathers, who are struggling to cope with the pressures associated with raising a child or children with a disability. It also acts as a conduit to share information regarding education and employment for the children.

The project is the brainchild of Clara Harris, a local farmers wife who has dealt first hand with the problems associated with raising children with disability and Glen Fleeton from Geraldton based Goldfields – Midwest Medicare Local. Glen works extensively in the Midwest region and plans to take this project region wide, as he travels on his regular men's health visits to the town centres throughout his region.

The project Launch took place on June the 18th at the Geraldton Bowling Club. It was attended by local agencies involved with supporting and advocating for people with a disability, as well as parents of children with a disability. Clara Harris was the Keynote speaker and her presentation resonated with many of the people in attendance at the launch. We wish Glen and Clara all the best going forward and will continue to support this project in any way we can.



NDCO Region 28 Mark Bateman with Kerry Jenkins and Naiana Nopera.

NDCO – NDIA - PEEDAC Link-up

For the past two months the NDCO has worked with the NDIA trial group in the Midland area of Perth, to assist in developing an NDIA Indigenous engagement model. After initial consultation the NDCO Set up a meeting between NDIA and Perth based Indigenous organisation PEEDAC Pty Ltd.

NDIA are looking to take customised approach to engaging with the local Indigenous community in order to maximise the effectiveness of the program they are trialling. As PEEDAC have an office based in Midland and are also a registered Disability Employment Services provider, they are an ideal fit to meet the NDIA needs.

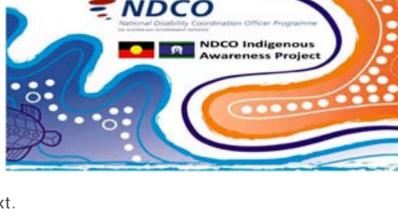
It is envisioned that the two organisations will work together to develop a benefits and culturally appropriate information package, explaining the benefits of being a part of the NDIA trial. PEEDAC will assist in the delivery of this information into the Indigenous community, given their existing close ties, contacts within and knowledge of the community.

This continues to be a work in progress with an official launch date to be announced in the future.

NDCO Strategic Projects

During 2014-15 the NDCO program nationally funded a number of strategic projects. These projects have resulted in new resources being released.

Indigenous Awareness Project
(A new website developed by the National Disability Coordination Program NDCO region 22 (North Qld) Region 25 (SA) and region 31 (NT) in partnership with the First Peoples Disability Network. The website aims to assist services and staff to better understand the culture and customs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, particularly around the subject of disability, how that is seen within an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context.



For further information: <http://www.ndcoaware.net/>

How to Transition to Tertiary Study: Helpful Hints for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This freely available new NDCO resource aims to help students with ASD navigate the new learning environment. It includes useful information on the learning context, managing studies, identifying and using strengths, communication tips, and managing stress and anxiety. The resource aims to increase self-determination by assisting students better understand their context, identify when and what supports could be helpful, and encouraging students to seek additional support when necessary.

<http://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability/autism-transition>

Employing People With Disability Is Good For Business

Throughout the largely rural NDCO Region 26 there persists considerable lack of knowledge in regards to disability and its prevalence in the community. There is a continuing need to 'de-mythologise' the rightful place of people with disability in the employment sector. Disability Employment Service providers and other related agencies have to continually fight against this basic ignorance in their quest to bring purpose to the lives of those with disability through meaningful employment.



The local transition pathway group in Northam, called 'Avon Employment Development Group', made up of various stakeholders, collaborated to develop a localised booklet resource to address this issue.

The booklet developed contains relevant information, research and local success stories relating to the process of achieving successful outcomes in the placement of persons with disability into meaningful open employment. Material from the Chamber of Commerce and local current success stories were collated and written by various members of the committee. Graphics and photos included were also sourced within the committee in order to add to the local flavour and localised content. The booklets were then produced, printed and launched at an employer event. Some 500 copies were produced for the Avon region.

As a consequence, this activity provided an excellent forum for networking, collaboration and information sharing between those stakeholders directly related to the transition of young people into work and or further study.



Presenters attending the Northam Employer Booklet Launch. Left to right: Northam Shire CEO, President of the local Chamber of Commerce, Disability Employer, Essential Personnel Area Manager, Local MP, Region 26 NDCO and Max Employment Representative.

'Open Workforce' Pilot Project

Recently Forrest Personnel of Busselton and My Place have partnered in a project attempting to demonstrate the viability and purpose of seeking to place those with a benchmark under 8 hours into open employment.

The pilot project, known as "OPEN Workforce", aims to identify, secure and maintain employment opportunities for a minimum of 14 individuals with disability who want paid work but are not able to access existing employment services.

OPEN Workforce aims to enhance the lives of those immediately participating (employees, employers) and aims to demonstrate to a wider audience that open employment is achievable for people with disability that have been labelled 'unable to work'. This pilot aims to showcase a successful model that creates pathways to open employment for a cohort that currently do not have supported access to mainstream careers. The project aims to demonstrate that employment agencies, Disability Service Organisations and My Way can work collaboratively and harness their unique skills to help individuals with disability secure meaningful work.

Recently Region 26 NDCO and OPEN Workforce reference group member, Dale Arthur, made a presentation to My Place coordinators about the value and viability of employing those with disability relating this directly to his own experience as a disabled person in the workplace.

Visit our website

Visit our NDCO website at www.ndcowa.net.au