

Lighthouse

Family News

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Information Session

Another family information session has been organized for **Tuesday 22nd August from 1:00 - 2:30pm** at 101 Park Terrace, Salisbury. A brief update will be provided about how we are preparing for the NDIS and there will be a lot of time for questions and discussion. There is no such thing as a 'silly question' because no one has all the answers yet – including the NDIA. Please RSVP to Pat@lighthousedisability.org.au by Friday 18th August.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Lighthouse Disability staff are working hard to understand the detail that is required for the NDIA planning meeting when evidence of client needs and goals will be identified, and on the basis of this, a funding package allocated for the next year. It is very important to provide information and evidence to the NDIA planner about:

- The day to day services that are provided (or needed)
- The knowledge of front line staff about the client
- Current medical and allied health assessments
- Any requirements for assistive technology.

Families/guardians will be asked to be involved in the development of the information package and contribute to discussion about the goals of your family member.

Our NDIS Liaison Officer, Sharon Williams, has made contact with many families who have given authority for Lighthouse Disability to collect the information (as outlined above). Sharon will guide families through this process with the aim that clients and families are well prepared for the assessment meeting with NDIA.

When the NDIA planner undertakes the planning process, every aspect of the life of a client will need to be considered – such as day programs. We are aware that many businesses that run day programs have prepared plans for the clients who currently participate in them.

The funding package aims to promote ‘choice and control’ for clients and their families. This means that people can choose their service provider (we hope that you will choose us, but you have the right to seek other service providers) and choose the day program that you and your family member prefer.

As a new and huge program, there is much to consider and learn about the NDIS. Please don’t hesitate to raise questions with our staff (Sharon Williams will be very happy to assist – 8256 9800).

‘Essential briefing’

On 24th July, Lighthouse Disability staff attended an information session that was run by the senior leadership team of the National Disability Services (NDS). A lot of information was presented. Some of the key ‘big picture’ comments included the following:

- There is now data to support anecdotal views that those who are articulate and informed attract good funding packages, and those who are not, are not allocated according to need (because it isn’t expressed as such).
- There are tensions about governance; The Commonwealth wants more control because it wears the risk of NDIS while States and Territories sometimes put their own interests before those of the Scheme (e.g. in kind entitlements). However, the system won’t work without ‘buy in’ from the States and Territories.
- Concern that decision making is too centralised.
- 25% of registered providers are receiving 80-90% of the business. It is suggested that 54% of providers are inactive because of price and 39% are sole traders. Groups identified as vulnerable are those with high and complex needs, and who live in rural and remote areas. There is a risk of market failure and workforce shortages.
- Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) is welcome but the complexities of the Scheme could impede housing development.
- There are concerns about how quality and safeguarding will be managed. There is a strong push for a separate entity to manage this. There are also concerns about people who ‘self-manage’ because they can use unregistered providers. This is a high risk.
- Pricing is not based on real costs.
- There is a need for an emergency response.
- Need to improve communication; a co-design approach is sought.
- Current data indicates that 41% of the disability workforce is permanent part-time, while 43% is casual. There was no breakdown of the data according to home based support compared with supported accommodation.

Business Systems

There are a range of finance and other IT systems required to support the introduction and management of NDIS processes. One of these is a Case Management System. We are delighted that we were successful in an application to Grants SA for \$50k to assist with the purchase of a Case Management System.

We are currently evaluating which system will best suit our requirements. When the Case Management System is set up;

- All information concerning clients will be recorded electronically
- This will serve as an accountability process in relation to the services provided for billing purposes
- There will be training for all staff so that we are confident about using the system, and
- It should promote improved communication between staff and families

Family Advisory Committee

This is a committee of the Board which meets each month with a consistent membership of 11 people. Minutes of the meetings are forwarded to the Board. Corey Martin is a Board member with lived experience of disability and is part of the Family Advisory Committee. He can be contacted (corey.martin@live.com.au) with any comments, concerns or questions.

The committee has expressed concern about the NDIS approach to transport, and is preparing to write to senior politicians and bureaucrats about this.

Worker Wellbeing and Resilience Scoping Project

Staff of Lighthouse Disability have participated in a scoping project with the aim of providing information about how disability workplaces can be improved. Preliminary findings have been presented and a report is being prepared which will give more information about them. The data is consistent with many of the findings of a survey which our staff completed late last year.

Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF)

Further to the above, a team of 6 people who are part of the GLF training program are working with Lighthouse Disability to explore with a range of staff, Board members and the Family Advisory Committee how we can continue to improve our organisational culture. There is considerable emphasis on this because we know that organisational culture shapes the quality of services.

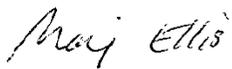
Some staff have acknowledged the improvements that have been made thus far.

Membership of Lighthouse Disability

Thank you to the many families who have forwarded Membership forms. We welcome others.

BOOM BOX Disco

Unfortunately, due to a local power outage, BOOM BOX had to be cancelled at very late notice on Friday night after some people had already arrived. SA Power Networks estimated that power would not be restored until 9:30 pm so the decision was made to cancel. We are very apologetic about this as many people look forward to this outing, and would have been very disappointed that it couldn't proceed. We thank everyone for their understanding under the circumstances.



Marj Ellis
CEO