

Lighthouse News

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER *from* LIGHTHOUSE DISABILITY
Empowering people with disabilities



Welcome to our sixth edition of Lighthouse News, a quarterly update about us and our work.

AGM

Our AGM will be held on Friday 10th November at Sfera's Convention Centre, 191 Reservoir Road, Modbury, commencing at 7 pm. In addition to the formalities, Maurice Corcoran, Principal Community Visitor is our guest speaker, and the Dance Down Performance Team will engage our clients in music and dancing. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to rsvp@lighthousedisability.org.au for catering purposes by 1st November.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The roll out of the NDIS commenced for adults in South Australia from 1st July this year. As it relates to our services, clients living in the local government areas of Playford, Salisbury and Port Adelaide Enfield – East are due to be assessed in relation to the allocation of funding packages soon. That means that information for about 50 people with complex and diverse disabilities is being prepared to provide 'evidence' of the need for funding packages. This, along with the goals of each person, will be considered by a Planner from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) on the basis of what is considered to be 'reasonable and necessary'.

There is considerable public commentary about the outcomes of some funding allocations. This huge change process is being rolled out very quickly and the NDIA, families, clients and service providers alike, are learning as we go. Many families are not confident or knowledgeable about the assessment process. We are entering this process in good faith, believing that we know what is required.

One of the challenges for service providers is that for the first time, we will bill families for services, on a fee for service basis. This is a radical shift because up to now, the SA Government has provided funding for 24/7 supported accommodation, and families have not been aware of the (considerable) cost.

Notwithstanding the challenges of introducing this new system, it is important to remember that the principles of choice and control mean a radical shift from a 'welfare head set' to one where people with a disability can provide direction to, and take responsibility for their lives in a way that has not been possible until now.

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Strategic Positioning in a Competitive Market

The Board continues to review how we are positioned in an increasingly competitive market. There are very mixed views about, on the one hand, the need for back of house efficiencies to reduce costs and the need to expand, while on the other hand, some commentators highlight the importance of ‘niche markets’ where providers stay with what they do well and build a reputation for a particular set of expertise. (It is also important to note that some aspects of these two paradigms are not necessarily contradictory). In the final analysis, people who have funding packages will decide what is important to them and this will ultimately shape the nature of services.

Quality

Lighthouse Disability is accredited through the Quality Improvement Program and reassessment is due in September of next year.

One of many ways in which we review quality is the well-established practice of a Board member visiting two of our houses each month with the CEO. These visits are unannounced on the premise that most of us have people drop in on us at our homes (ie a focus on what is considered ‘normal’). It is a great opportunity for Board members to meet clients, and discuss with staff how we can improve our organisation for clients and as an employer.

The Community Visitors Program also visits our houses regularly with the aim of offering commendations/suggestions/recommendations about our services. We welcome these commentaries.

Volunteer Program

We welcome Diane Ashford to the role of Volunteer Coordinator. The contributions of volunteers are highly valued because they provide another link for our clients with communities. An example of how volunteers add value to our services is their engagement with clients in activities that give them great enjoyment. A picture tells a thousand words!!



A group of clients visit the Fairview Lodge Animal Shelter. Outings like this have a very positive impact on the lives of our clients.

Cerebral Palsy

Friday 6th October was World Cerebral Palsy Day to raise awareness of people living with CP.

We work with 19 people who have this condition with the aim of assisting them to live safe, happy and fulfilled lives.

Cerebral Palsy is a permanent disability that affects movement and posture. Its impact can range from a weakness in one hand, to almost a complete lack of voluntary movement. It is a complex disability: 1 in 4 cannot talk, 1 in 3 cannot walk, 1 in 2 have an intellectual disability, 1 in 4 have epilepsy. 34,000 people in Australia live with CP and 17million worldwide. 1 in 500 babies in Australia are born with CP for which there is no known cure.

Other Community Engagement

The Tree Gully Lions Club has provided consistent and much appreciated support over many years by donating funds which support some activities for clients which are not funded in other ways. They also assist with catering and cooking at events such as our Christmas Breakfast and Annual Picnic.

Agri-Bits have generously sponsored professionally designed soccer uniforms for each of our 'Lighthouse Lions' team members who compete in the annual soccer tournament for people living with disability.

The interest and financial support of both organisations is very much appreciated.

Facebook

Please follow us and 'like' us on Facebook to learn more of our day to day highlights.

<https://www.facebook.com/Lighthouse-Disability-1017036594982139/>



Marj Ellis
CEO