

June 2022 Newsletter



THE DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION HAS BEEN EXTENDED

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has welcomed the announcement by the Australian Government granting its request for an extension of time to deliver its Final Report.

The Government continues to fund free and independent counselling and advocacy support for people with disability

that have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as their families and carers, and anyone affected by the Royal Commission. The final report will now be delivered on 29 September 2023.

See page 4 of this newsletter for more information about how GdA can assist you with telling your story.



DRC Sessions

Recently held in
Stawell & Ararat

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Daylesford May 24
Bacchus Marsh May 26

(see Page 4 for details)

Hosted by GdA &
Your Story
Legal Services
(Pictured left)
GdA DRC Advocate
Sherree Unwin



CONGRATULATIONS TO GdA

GdA has received its Re Certification after another National Disability Advocacy Program audit.

GdA is very thankful to the people who participated in the consumer feedback meetings.

The GdA Board of Governance wishes to thank all the GdA staff for continually delivering excellent service to their clients over the last 20 months



NDIS NEWS
(extract from article
6/4/2022)

On 30 March 2022 the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Participant Service Guarantee and Other Measures) Bill 2021 was passed by the Australian Parliament. The Bill will amend the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act)*.

The main changes:

- Inserting timeframes into the NDIS Act and Rules
- Clarifying the language around the different types of 'reviews'.
- Requiring reasons to be provided for all 'reviewable decisions' (s 100(1)).
- Expanding the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)'s jurisdiction
- Improvements to the NDIS principles
- Annual reporting about the NDIS by the Commonwealth Ombudsman

For the full article go to the following link

<https://piac.asn.au/2022/04/06/explainer-new-changes-to-the-ndis-act/>

Complaints about Victorian Disability Services

Who to call about making a complaint about a disability service or worker - from 1 Jan 2022.

NDIS funded supports and services	NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission 1800 035 544 www.ndiscommission.gov.au contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au
Disability workers Victoria only	Victorian Disability Worker Commission 1800 497 132 vdwc.vic.gov.au complaints@vdwc.vic.gov.au
DFFH and TAC funded disability services Victoria only	Disability Services Commissioner 1800 677 342 www.odsc.vic.gov.au complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au

Created by the Disability Services Commissioner - www.odsc.vic.gov.au
The Commissioner acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

What does GdA do?

Help you write a letter or submission to represent your interests

Make a telephone call with/or for you or help get info to resolve a concern

Find info about another agency that may be able to assist

Provide information on disability issues.

Support people to advocate for themselves

Office Locations

- ❖ Ararat
- ❖ Horsham
- ❖ Daylesford
- ❖ Ballarat

Central Intake

1800 552 272

admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au
www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au

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DISAPPOINTMENT THAT BALLARAT RAILWAY STATION EXCLUDED AGAIN FROM 2022-23 STATE BUDGET



(from left): GdA EO Debbie Verdon, Bern Duane, Board member Mark Thompson, Sherree Unwin, Barry Devine, GdA Ballarat advocate Phil Cutts (Pic: Ballarat Courier)

Much-needed funding for accessibility upgrades at the Ballarat train station has been once again overlooked in the 2022-23 state budget. While it did state \$24 million would be allocated for "detailed works on infrastructure and service solutions to increase current rail network capacity on the Melton and Ballarat corridor", no funds were allocated for the 160-year-old heritage listed station. Every station on the line between Melbourne and Ballarat is accessible except Ballarat, and this is a question an issue that none of the government representatives have properly addressed. GdA EO Debbie Verdon outlined the primary issues surrounding the station's accessibility is the inability for those who have mobility issues or use a wheelchair to safely cross from platform one to platform two, as well as the lack of an accessible toilet on platform two. "For those who can't use the current stairway that crosses between the two platforms they have to go outside the station precinct to cross over at the railway gates on Lydiard Street which is a potentially dangerous situation for a person with a disability." Platform two doesn't have an accessible toilet and it's a platform that most trains are coming to and from at the moment. If you need to catch a connecting bus, say to get the bus from the station to Ararat, you can be caused to miss your bus connection, because you can't get to the other side of the crossing in time to catch the bus. The differing heights between platform one and two is another issue which needs to be addressed, especially for commuters with mobility issues. "If you use a wheelchair, for instance, the V/Line guard has to bring out a portable ramp so that you can get on the train or off the train, which doesn't allow people the opportunity to independently get on and off the train like everyone else does. (story: Ballarat Courier 3/5/2022)

Useful Contact Numbers

AMAZE
(Autism Connect)

1300 308699

Assoc for Children
with a Disability

1800 654 013

Office of the Public

Advocate

1300 309 337

Victorian Mental
Illness Awareness

Council

9380 3900

VALID

1800 655 570

Villamanta Disability
Rights Legal Service

1800 014 111

Women with
Disabilities Victoria

9286 7800

Elder Rights Victoria

9602 3066

Senior Rights
Victoria

1300 368 821

National Aged Care
& Advocacy Rights

1800 700 600

Disability Services

Commissioner

1800 677 342

Victorian Equal
Opportunity &

Human Rights

Commissioner

1300 292 153

Carer Gateway

1800 422 737

Youth Disability
Advocacy Service

0438 638 734

Safe Steps

1800 015 188

Extended till 31/12/2022



Royal Commission
into Violence, Abuse,
Neglect and Exploitation
of People with Disability

**You can contact the DRC
directly on
1800 517 199**

If you would like an advocate to support you to engage with the Royal Commission, contact GdA on 1800 552 272

To speak to the
Indigenous Advocate
call 1800 978 544

This free service can help you understand how the Disability Royal Commission works and to tell your story.

GdA can help you access free legal services & counselling

**Confidentiality
Guaranteed**



**YOUR
STORY**
DISABILITY LEGAL SUPPORT



**Independent Pathways and Living Skills Program
I-PALS**

The I-PALS Program is designed to bring people with a disability together to build skills, confidence and independence.

A fun and supportive environment encourages participants to share, learn, grow, connect and make new friendships. All people over 18 with a disability are welcome, with or without an NDIS plan.

By participating in this program, participants will:

Be encouraged and supported to speak up for themselves.
Be given an opportunity to grow their confidence and build their self-esteem.

Be provided with access to information and resources to help with decision making and problem solving.

To find out more call GdA on 1800 552 272



Program Content Includes:

- Interpersonal and social skills for better communication
- Building healthy social and personal relationships
- Staying safe in my community
- Understanding my human rights
- Legal rights and tenants rights
- Contributing to my community through work and volunteering
- Managing my money through budgeting and goal setting
- Cooking on a budget
- Looking after my physical and mental health
- Special guests including police & CFA

Details:

When: one day a week, 10am to 2pm, over six months

Where: Local Neighbourhood House or Community Centre in the Wimmera, Central Highlands, Goldfields-Grampians and Pyrenees regions

To book your FREE place call 1800 552 272

www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au



Funded by DSS

Programs are held in Local Neighbourhood Houses or Community Centres in the Wimmera, Central Highlands, Goldfields, Grampians and Pyrenees regions

Disability Royal Commission Information Sessions to be held in Daylesford and Bacchus Marsh

Grampians disAbility Advocacy is your local advocacy organization. We are inviting you to an information session.

We have noticed that a lot of people, particularly in rural Victoria, are not aware of the Disability Royal Commission or are not sure what its role is. We have decided to run these sessions in the hope that people will come along and hear what it is all about.

We have arranged speakers from each of the support agencies, GdA, Your Story Legal Support, Blue Knot Counselling and a representative from the Disability Royal Commission. We invite you to come along, hear what the speakers have to say, ask any questions, and enjoy a free afternoon tea. There will be a door prize as well.

We will be there afterwards to chat and connect. Please register on the numbers below or by email

1800 552 272

admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au

DAYLESFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

24 CAMP ST MAY 24TH 2-4PM

BACCHUS MARSH PUBLIC HALL

207 MAIN ST MAY 26TH 2-4PM