
In this Disability Education and Employment News, we have information on the National Conference "Raising the Bar", the Review of the Disability Standards for Education, the new National Disability Strategy and PWD Daily Media Roundup.

Plus further information on other Resources, Conferences and Workshops, News articles and other information for the Disability Education, Training and Employment Sectors.

Please distribute the Newsletter to those that you think would be interested in it.

For information on subscribing, please go to the end of the newsletter.
Education News:
Private schools welcome disability review – Ninemsn
15/02/2011
A review of disabled students’ education entitlements is long overdue, private schools say.
School Education Minister Peter Garrett released a discussion paper on the disability standards for education on Tuesday, as they had already been in place for five years.
"It's time we looked at their effectiveness in giving those with disability every opportunity to succeed in the education system," he said.
"This discussion paper will help us determine how effective the (standards) are in practice and whether they need to be amended."
Independent Education Union of Australia (IEUA) federal secretary Chris Watt said the needs of disabled students were not being met and schools were struggling with resourcing.
"The IEUA hopes that the inadequacy of resources and funds for students with disabilities in the non-government school sector is addressed," he said.
Mr Watt added he was particularly concerned by the differing definitions of disability in each state and territory.
"The consequence of this is that in some states, students with learning disabilities do not fall within the eligibility criteria for funding," he said.
"Unfairly, students miss out on reasonable entitlements and teachers struggle to provide the best learning opportunities they can in very difficult circumstances."
For the rest of the article go to

Employment News:
More disabled joining workforce: minister – Ninemsn.com.au
18/02/2011
The number of people with disabilities moving off welfare and into work is on the rise.
More than 140,000 people accessed disability employment services in December 2010, a 30 per cent increase on the previous year, internal government figures show.
And the number of people who stayed in their job for at least three months almost doubled over the same period.
Employment Participation Minister Kate Ellis attributed the trend to changes to disability employment service funding.
"Funding to specialist disability employment services now matches the numbers of job seekers who want help to find a job," she told a forum in Adelaide.
"And the results show that more job seekers with disability are not just finding jobs but keeping them and that is fantastic to see."
Ms Ellis also emphasised the government's workforce participation agenda, which aims to encourage two million Australians back into full-time work.
For the rest of the article go to
Disability job services showing results – Adelaide Advertiser
18/02/2011
David Jean
DISABILITY groups want a public awareness campaign on the increase in disabled people in the workforce.
The disability groups are urging the Federal Government to launch the campaign.
Figures obtained by The Advertiser show nearly 40 per cent more Australians with a disability were supported by disability employment agencies in the year to December 2010.
Nationally the numbers rose from 103,000 to more than 140,000, while South Australia recorded a 37 per cent increase to 12,453 residents using the Federal Government's Disability Employment Services.
Minister for Employment Participation Kate Ellis said uncapping disability employment services and getting rid of waiting lists was making a "real difference".
"These figures represent a 36 per cent increase in the number of job seekers with a disability who are accessing Government services to try to find a job.

Werribee woman's life-changing opportunity – Wyndham Leader
17/02/2011
Fiona O'Doherty
EVERYONE needs a reason to get out of bed in the morning but for years Werribee’s Sue Edmonstone struggled to find one.
She was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1996 and had been unable to find work when she was put in contact with disability services provider Westgate Community Initiatives Group.
The group, in turn, put her in touch with Cleanable, a cleaning company that follows the social firms model of employment.
Social firms are organisations set up to provide employment to people with a disability or mental illness but are run as businesses.
From 25 to 50 per cent of the workforce are made up of people with a disability or mental illness; the rest are standard employees.
For the rest of the article go to

Disability expert backs cuts to pension roll – ABC News Online
15/02/2011
Lexi Metherell
The Australian Human Rights Commission's disability discrimination commissioner has backed calls to get people off the disability pension and back into work.
The Business Council caused a stir yesterday when it said the Government should consider introducing cuts to disability pension spending instead of bringing in a flood levy.
The proposal was condemned by Senior Australian of the Year and leading disability advocate Ron McCallum, who said: "The disability pension should not be arbitrarily cut simply because of the Queensland floods."
Disability discrimination commissioner Graeme Innes says he supports the Business Council's call but he wants to know what the group is doing about it.
"I know that there are people with disabilities who are keen to get back into the workforce rather than to sit on an unemployment or welfare benefit," he said.
"I would absolutely support the call of the Business Council of Australia to reduce the numbers of people on the disability support pension. "My retort however would be, 'OK, what are you - one of the major employers of Australia - contributing to that reduction?'"

For the rest of the article go to http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/15/3139183.htm?section=justin

Keen to find a real job – Queensland Times
14/02/2011
Andrew Korner

AS A legally blind man, Peter Christensen would be within his rights to sit back and collect the pension for the rest of his life.

After applying for more than 30 jobs in the past two years – without success – few would blame the 49-year-old for downing the tools for a permanent smoko.

But giving up on finding a job is simply not an option for the father of three, who said he was looking for an employer to look past his disability and put some faith in him.

Before he suffered heart problems in 2008, Mr Christensen was a proud, hard-working man, holding down several long-term jobs over the years including furniture factory worker, meat worker, electrical earthing labourer and drilling rig labourer.

His heart problems triggered a lengthy stint off work, in which he took a caravanning trip around the country with his wife of 27 years, Tarina.

"I have applied for countless jobs since coming back from my heart problems," he said.

"I have been through an employment agency which is meant to be tailored for people with disabilities, but they have only been able to offer jobs that are completely unsuitable."

It's not that Mr Christensen is fussy, but his blindness, which has left him with only about 30 per cent vision since birth, means that he is unable to drive so he is looking for work close to public transport or close to his Purga home.

For the rest of the article go to http://www.qt.com.au/story/2011/02/14/keen-to-find-a-real-job-blind-peter-christensen/

Julia Gillard's 'tough choices' on work participation – Australian
03/02/2011
Sid Maher

A LEADING economist has warned that Julia Gillard faces tough and unpopular policy choices if she pushes ahead with her ambition to encourage two million Australians, including disability pensioners and part-time employees, to work more hours.

Melbourne Institute professor Mark Wooden said the government might have to consider reducing the payment of the disability support benefit if it wanted to provide an increased incentive to recipients to enter the workforce.

But this move would be politically unpopular.

Another option might be to revert to assessing different levels of disability among recipients that would have a bearing on their workforce obligations.

Professor Wooden said getting people back into the workforce was similar to trying to end indigenous disadvantage, in terms of insoluble problems facing public officials.

Welfare News:
Youth allowance review advanced Richard Willingham and Dan Harrison
February 22, 2011
Gillard backs down on student allowances
Independents force the Gillard government to restore payments to regional students.
UNIVERSITY students from country areas could get better access to the youth allowance as early as next year after the government retreated on controversial eligibility rules.
The government yesterday brought forward the review of a controversial scheme that makes distinctions between inner-regional and outer-regional students, after pressure from independent MPs. Its move prompted the opposition to accuse the government of "backflipping".
The review of the changes, secured by the Greens and independent senator Nick Xenophon in negotiations last March, was not due to begin until 2012.
For the rest of the article go to

Levy may fund '$11bn disability plan' – Australian
17/02/2011
Patricia Karvelas
THE federal government remains committed to establishing a national support scheme for disabled people, as the Coalition backs away from a potential fight on the issue, despite reports it could cost as much as $11 billion a year and be funded by a politically risky levy.
Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities Jan McLucas said although the government would not make any commitments about the model of support it would endorse, it looked forward to the Productivity Commission's findings.
Julia Gillard will face another politically difficult decision with the commission expected to recommend this month that the government investigate a levy to fund a universal disability insurance scheme.
One option to fill the $5bn funding gap through a levy would be to add 0.8 of a percentage point to taxpayers' existing 1.5 per cent Medicare levy.
For the rest of the article go to

Pension cuts to pay for floods 'not an option' – ABC Radio Online
14/02/2011
Tim Leslie
Senior Australian of the Year and leading disability advocate Ron McCallum has vehemently rejected the Business Council of Australia's calls for disability pensions to be cut to help meet the nation's floods recovery bill.
In its pre-budget submission, the Business Council says cuts to disability services and foreign aid should be considered as an alternative to the Federal Government's proposed $1.8 billion flood levy.
Council president Graham Bradley said disability pensions may not be the best use of government money and may be going to people who are able to work.
"It is one of the large budget items," he told ABC Radio's AM.
"And if you look at what countries overseas are doing in this regard ... for example in the UK, they are taking a really hard look to make sure there aren't people currently incentivised to be on disability pensions who really would be much better off going back to work, even if it is only part-time or less rigorous work."
Cut disabled pensions to help pay for floods: big business – ABC News Online
14/02/2011
Peter Ryan
The Business Council says cuts to disability services and foreign aid should be considered as
alternatives to the flood levy.
The Federal Government says the $1.8 billion tax is needed to help pay for flood and cyclone
reconstruction in Queensland and Victoria.
But in its pre-budget submission, the Business Council, which represents Australia's top 100 companies,
says the government should instead press ahead with returning the budget to surplus through short-term
spending discipline.
Council president Graham Bradley says all current spending should be reviewed and disability pensions
may not be the best use of government money.
"It is one of the large budget items," he told ABC Radio's AM.
"And if you look at what countries overseas are doing in this regard ... for example in the United
Kingdom, they are taking a really hard look to make sure that there aren't people currently incentivised to
be on disability pensions who really would be much better off going back to work, even if it is only part-
time or less rigorous work."
Mr Bradley says it is in people's best interests to get back to work.
"Being a long-term unemployed person is not good for people's psychology - it is not good for their
health, it is not good for their recovery," he said.
"We need to be doing everything we can to reduce the incentives, including the tax disincentives for
people to go back to work."
For the rest of the article go to

Disabled face record poverty trap – Australian
08/02/2011
Patricia Karvelas
RECORD numbers of disabled people and single mothers are stuck on unemployment benefits after
being forced to look for work under the Howard government's 2006 welfare changes.
Figures revealed in Senate estimates hearings show that last August there were 112,030 recipients of
income support with a "partial capacity to work" -- a new category for people forced off higher welfare
payments into looking for part-time work.
These job-seekers are assessed as being able to work for more than 15 hours a week, but not capable
of full-time work. Many of them previously qualified for the disability support pension or single mother’s
payment.
National Welfare Rights Network president Maree O’Halloran said the fact many of these people were
now on lower welfare payments proved that the changes had not done the job of shifting people into
work, and showed that the Gillard government should refrain from further changes now being debated by
the cabinet.
For the rest of the article go to
1226001784614
Abbott backs welfare reform – Sydney Morning Herald
02/02/2011
AAP
Federal Opposition Leader Tony Abbott says he’ll support a government move to get people off welfare and into work.
Prime Minister Julia Gillard on Tuesday flagged new measures in the May budget, such as incentive payments and training programs, to get people currently on pensions and the dole into jobs. This would ensure, she said, that "every Australian who can work, does work".
She said about 800,000 people who work part-time want to work more and many thousands of disability pensioners had some capacity to work.
Mr Abbott said he agreed with the sentiment.

Opinion:
Neoliberalism degrades disabled
Senior Australian of the Year and leading disability advocate Ron McCallum has denounced calls by the Business Council of Australia to cut disability pensions to help meet the nation’s floods recovery bill.
Anglicare Australia’s executive director, Kasy Chambers, has announced her beliefs this way:
For many people living with disability, long-term unemployment is not a choice but a circumstance imposed by systemic failure to respond to their specific requirements.
The action proposed by the Business Council is yet another instance of policies based on the agenda of the neoliberal ideology. Political movements which advocate reforms that allegedly simplify the process of benefit distribution freely appeal to a need to reduce services, cut costs and for this the privatisation of public pension systems is all part of the plan.
For the rest of the article go to http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=11647

Conferences and Workshops:
NDS National Disability and Carer Congress 2011
National Disability and Carer Congress 2011 will be held on 2-3 May 2011 at Etihad Stadium, Melbourne.
National Disability and Carer Congress: Make Every Australian Count represents a not to be missed opportunity to examine, analyse, debate and discuss the proposal for a National Disability Insurance Scheme. The conference will examine the interim report on Disability Care and Support released by the Productivity Commission, hear from international experts regarding developments in disability policy around the world, and, most importantly, feature the hopes for reform of people with a disability, their families and carers. Attendees will also have the chance to hear what our elected representatives believe needs to be done to better support people with a disability, their families and carers in the community. The time has come for transformational change - come along and hear what the future holds for people with a disability their families and carers and the organisations that support them in this country.
Registration is due to open in February 2011.
For sponsorship, exhibition or advertising opportunities, please contact Julie Walton on 02 9256 3115 or julie.walton@nds.org.au.
National Conference "Raising the Bar"
AND will be holding a two day National Conference on 10th and 11th May 2011, at Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf, Sydney.
http://www.and.org.au/content/view/418/1/

Round Table Call for Papers Extended
If you are considering submitting an extract for the Round Table conference could you please contact John Simpson, Conference Convenor, by this Friday the 18th of February.
Email john.simpson@visionaustralia.org
telephone 03 9864 9604
Theme
Bridging the Information Access Gap
Past Successes & Future Challenges
Date and Venue
Saturday 21st May - Tuesday 24 May 2011
Bayview on the Park Hotel; Melbourne
Full information on the Call for Papers is available on the Round Table web page http://www.ability.com/roundtable/

NSW Events:
Inclusive Practice Forum – Assisting Students with a Hearing Impairment
Learn about the latest developments in both technologies and teaching methods to assist students with a hearing impairment.
This forum, sponsored by Macquarie University Accessibility Services, a unit of the Learning and Teaching Centre is a professional development opportunity for both teaching and support staff across the sector. Delegates from universities from around the world, IBM and Nuance will be presenting on the latest initiatives in their institutions and speech to text technologies.
The forum will coincide with the AGM of the Liberated Learning Consortium http://www.liberatedlearning.com

Time and Place
Date: Friday 25th March, 10am-4pm
Venue: Macquarie University, Ryde, U@MQ Building Level 3 (see map)
Registration cost: (to be paid on the day by cash/creditcard): $50.00 (NB no charge to MQ staff)
Lunch and refreshments will be provided
For more information and to register go to http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/mqas/forum11.htm

DEAN Professional Development Days 2011
The DEAN Council is pleased to provide you with the dates for the DEAN Professional Development (PD) says in 2011. Please mark the following dates in your diaries:
Tuesday, 5th April
Tuesday, 16th August
Thursday, 13th October
Friday, 18th November
Further details (including the days’ themes, venue, guest speakers, program and how to register) will be available closer to each date.
DEAN Membership
We would also like to remind you all that you will need to renew your DEAN membership for the 2011 calendar year.*

Membership of DEAN is open to anyone employed in a NSW/ACT TAFE or University, whose role is wholly or partly concerned with the provision of disability support and services. Non-DEAN members and other interested professionals outside the tertiary education sector are, however, still very welcome to attend PD Days. You can now join DEAN for $30 per year, to receive the discounted registration rate for PD days, access to the member’s only area of the DEAN website and many other benefits. For more info, go to: www.deaninc.org.au/content/view/42/86/

Calls for Expressions of Interest and Input:
Review of the Disability Standards for Education
www.deewr.gov.au/DSEReview

Terms of reference
In reviewing the effectiveness of the Standards, the Review will consider whether the Standards:
1. have provided clarity and specificity for education and training providers and for students with disability and their families in relation to their rights and requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992
2. have assisted people with disability to access and participate in education and training opportunities on the same basis as those without disability
3. have assisted in eliminating discrimination (including harassment and victimisation) of people with disability in education and training
4. have promoted recognition and acceptance in the community of the principle that people with disability have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community
5. are compatible with Australia’s current education and training system.

Discussion paper
A discussion paper has been prepared which sets out some key questions for the Review.
Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 Discussion Paper

Alternative formats of the Terms of Reference and Discussion Paper can be requested by emailing: standardsreview@deewr.gov.au or by calling 1300 363 079

Submissions
Submissions are welcomed from all members of the community including people with disability, their families and carers, educational institutions, and organisations representing people with disability.
For more information go to http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/Pages/reviewdisabilitystandardsforeducation.asp

National Disability Strategy
Disability and New Media
Katie Ellis, Murdoch University & Mike Kent, Curtin University

Disability and New Media explores the contemporary new media environment and its impact on people with disabilities. Bringing together the fields of Internet Studies and Critical Disability Studies the book explores how the early promise of the world wide web of access for all people regardless of disability has been hijacked my more recent developments in an increasingly complex web 2.0 environment. Along with these setbacks the book also explores a number of successes in obtaining access for people with disabilities to previously unavailable digital platforms, and how these outcomes were achieved.

While many studies into disability and digital technology have focused on the early Internet and world wide web, this book takes in the scope of the more recent developments in the online environment exploring online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Second Life, and their sometimes strained relationship with accessibility and universal design. Decisions made that impact on the accessibility of digital platforms are often portrayed as being merely technical in nature. This book exposes these as decisions as being highly political, with great impacts on the ability of people with disabilities to fully participate in the societies in which they live.

Contents
Part 1 At the Crossroads
1: Universal Design In A Digital World
2: iAccessibility from iTunes 1.0 to iPad
3: Building Digital Stairways: Nice View, But What About My Wheelchair?

Part 2 How Did We Get Here?
4: We Want You in Our Network: Universal Design V Retrofitting The Web
5: (Physical) Disability Is A Form Of Social Oppression?
6: Does That Face-'Book' Come In Braille? Social Networking Sites And Disability

Part 3 Where To Next?
7: Avatars With Wheelchairs, But No Virtual Guide Dogs: Disability And Second Life
8: Challenges And Opportunities: The Road Ahead For Disability In A Digital World
9: Conclusion

Routledge is offering a 20% discount off the price and free shipping of Disability and New Media. For online orders visit http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415871358/ and use code ERJ90

Scholarships:
Adam Scott Foundation

"In 2010, the Adam Scott Foundation wishes to provide opportunity to improve the lives of young people living with Autism, through improved communication and education.

It is with this in mind that The Adam Scott Foundation Autism Grants Program has been designed to provide young people living with autism, the access to Apple iPads and their innovative Autism specialised applications. In these early stages, Apple iPads are already proving to be useful tools for children with Autism to improve communication skills. The Adam Scott Foundation Autism Grants Program is available to young people, aged 6-16 as of 16 November 2010, with an Autism Diagnosis across Australia. To be eligible you must be a permanent Australian resident.

The iPad Autism specialized applications use images, sounds and words to assist the young person with Autism to develop their communication skills.

The Adam Scott Foundation Autism Grants Program provides underprivileged and disadvantaged families with the opportunity to secure an iPad, accessories, the Autism specialised applications downloaded and 12 months of prepaid Internet access ($30 limit per month per unit).
The iPads will be ready for operation when delivered. This is a national program administered by Autism Queensland on behalf of the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders to improve the lives of the recipients. It is anticipated that the Foundation will provide for two rounds of these grants annually. The next round aims to be in March 2011.
For more information contact Autism Queensland or go to their web address http://www.autismqld.com.au/index.php?page_id=310

Studies and Research:
Australian vocational education and training statistics: young people in education and training 2009
This publication provides a summary of statistics relating to young people aged 15 to 19 years who participated in an education and training activity during 2009. Information on participation is presented for school students, VET in Schools students, apprentices and trainees, other VET students and higher education students.

New Resources:
PWD Daily Media Roundup
PWD compiles and releases a Daily Media Roundup each weekday. This Roundup comprises of news stories that come online over a 24 hour period that discuss disability-related issues, as well as broader issues such as homelessness, discrimination and human rights.
The Daily Media Roundup is a simple means to stay on top of issues being discussed in the media which might be relevant to disability activists and people with disability in general.

Updated Education to Employment Resource
Education to Employment package: for graduates with disability, employers and employment and career service providers
Graduates with disability make great qualified staff. Find here facts, tips and advice to support a successful move from tertiary education to graduate employment.
- Graduates: Turning your new qualification into qualified employment takes early planning, research, and smart moves.
- Employers: Employing graduates with disability is good for business. Find out more about how to recruit graduates with disability.
- Employment and career services: Supporting graduates with disability to make a successful move into graduate employment is your business. Find advice on how to get better outcomes for graduates with disability.
http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/employment/

New Aboriginal resource from NDCO

Media Releases:
Education Disability Standards Review Underway
MEDIA RELEASE
15 February, 2011
The Gillard Labor Government is taking action to help remove barriers to educational achievement, with
Ministry for School Education Peter Garrett said recent figures show the numbers of funded school students with disability increased by more than 20 per cent in the four years from 2005 to 2009.

"Today I'm releasing a discussion paper inviting submissions to the Review, in a move to help ensure a more inclusive Australian society which enables people with disability to achieve their full potential," Mr Garrett said.

"The Disability Standards for Education have been in place for five years and it's time we looked at their effectiveness in giving those with disability every opportunity to succeed in the education system.

"School students with disability have steadily increased as a percentage of the total school population. In 2009 there were over 164,000 students with disabilities in Australian schools that received support by education authorities.

"It is central to Federal Labor's belief that all students, regardless of their personal or social situations, have access to the very best education we can provide so that they can pursue their life's aspirations to the fullest.

"This discussion paper will help us determine how effective the Disability Standards for Education are in practice and whether they need to be amended.

"I encourage people with an interest in improving the education and training experience for people with disability to make a submission to the Review."

Senator McLachlan welcomed the review of the standards.

"People with disability deserve the same opportunities as other Australians in their local community," Ms McLachlan said.

"The Disability Standards for Education help to ensure that people with disability enjoy the benefits of education and training."

The Standards are designed to assist people with disability to access and participate in education and training opportunities and help eliminate discrimination in education and training.

The Standards also clarify the rights of students and the obligations of education providers, pre-school, school and tertiary, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The Australian Government is also conducting a broader Review of Funding for Schooling, which is examining all funding to all schools including funding allocations to ensure students with disability can access a quality education.


As part of the review process, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations will conduct face-to-face consultations with stakeholders in each capital city.

In addition, the department will engage in a series of broader consultations with schools-focused disability organisations on education issues affecting school students with disability.

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**Statement from BCA President Graham Bradley – Media Release**

14/02/2011

Business Council of Australia – Graham Bradley


The Disability Support Pension forms a vital function in Australia’s welfare system for those who do not have, or have limited capacity, to participate in the paid workforce.

The BCA has not recommended that disability support pensions be cut or reduced to fund the flood reconstruction effort or as an alternative to the flood levy, as was reported this morning.

The approach to the reconstruction effort recommended in the BCA’s 2011-12 budget submission is that the federal government should first focus on reducing or re-sequencing BCA Not Calling for Disability Support Pensions to be Cut.
spending on programs that give least value for money.
Longer term, the BCA submission recommends that steps be taken to place the nation’s finances on a more secure footing for the future, including policies that provide opportunities for people who want to work and are capable of working to enter the paid workforce.

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We hope that this edition of Disability Education and Employment News has been of interest.
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If you wish to unsubscribe send an e-mail to thart@med.usyd.edu.au with “Unsubscribe Disability Education and Employment News” in the subject line.

To Contribute:
If you have any comments, suggestions or articles, resources, scholarships, workshops, conferences, Events or any other information that is Disability Education, Training or Employment related and you wish to promote it send an e-mail to thart@med.usyd.edu.au
Funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) under the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme.

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The NDCOs for Region 1 and 3 are Hosted at the Centre for Disability Studies

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