

Pave the Way Newsletter

August 2015

Participant Readiness activities

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Participant Readiness activities
- 2 NDIS: What does social and economic participation mean?
- 3 Legal Workshops Update
- 4 Contact Us
- 4 Upcoming Events

It has been a very rewarding few months for us, talking with families and individuals about what the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) might involve for them when it begins to roll-out in Queensland from July 2016. Our role has largely been to share with people what is currently known about the scheme and how people might best prepare for it, through careful consideration and sound planning beforehand.

Pave the Way is responsible for the Department of Communities (Disability Services), Participant Readiness Initiative in the North Coast (North Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Gympie) and North and Far North Queensland (Mackay and above) regions. This work has taken us to some great communities such as Normanton, Cooktown, Weipa and Mossman with many more locations still to visit before this part of our contract finishes in June 2016. Wherever we have gone, we have been warmly welcomed by those we've met, all of whom want to see good outcomes for themselves or their family member into the future.

Towards the end of April the COAG Disability Reform Council met and it was confirmed that all participating states and territories will transition to the NDIS. The Hon. Coralee O'Rourke MP, our new Minister for Disability Services, continues to negotiate the Bilateral Agreement between the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments that will include details about the transition to the NDIS across Queensland. She has said that she hopes negotiations will be finalised by the end of August 2015. Once the Agreement has been settled we can expect to have a much clearer understanding of how the roll-out of the scheme will occur i.e. possible locations etc. The NDIS website - www.ndis.gov.au - provides some really helpful information, as well as updates for your reference.

We continue to deliver a variety of presentations and workshops around Queensland: "Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future" (free to attend) and "Using the Law to Safeguard Plans" (a small fee is charged) state-wide and, in our 3-regions: "Documenting Personal Information", "Paving the Way to an NDIS" and our new workshop, "Planning for a Good Life". See page two for more information about this workshop.

In addition to this work we would really encourage you to ring our 1300 number, 1300 554 402 and speak to one of our Development Workers with any questions you might have around planning or the NDIS. We would also be happy to meet with you in person when next in your area.

NDIS: What does social and economic participation mean?

As referred to in an earlier newsletter, an important aspect of the NDIS is that it is a social and economic reform which is seeking to redress the disadvantage that many Australians living with disability experience, and ensure they will have the necessary support to participate more fully in social and economic life.

The Productivity Commission concluded that the current disability system is “*unfair, fragmented, underfunded and inefficient*”. It has been a lottery who received funding and who did not. People have had very little flexibility, choice and control over the support they received. Bruce Bonyhady, NDIA Chairman, noted that in the current system, many people with disabilities have been “*passive recipients of a mass market, one size fits all welfare approach*”(1). This welfare model discouraged many people from participating in social and economic life; many parents who wanted or needed to work couldn't because they were required to provide full-time care for a family member. Many people with disabilities couldn't work because they didn't have adequate support to pursue work or other meaningful participation in their communities. However, with the introduction of the NDIS this is set to change.

“Essentially, the social and economic reform component is about INVESTING in people with disabilities by encouraging their social and economic participation as well as that of their families and carers.”

The NDIS represents a fundamental shift about the purpose of funding from a welfare and respite model, to one of entitlement and rights. In this model the question is not only related to “what support do you need to manage your disability or to ensure carers are given a break?”, but “what support do you also need to achieve your hopes and aspirations?”. Essentially, the social and economic reform component is about INVESTING in people with disabilities by encouraging their social and economic participation as well as that of their families and carers.

At Pave the Way, we believe that all people with disabilities have gifts and strengths which can be translated into social and economic roles, or what is often referred to as valued roles. Where we carry out our work, studies and other valued roles are usually places where we spend a lot of our time. In these places, we have opportunities to meet new people who may become lifelong friends or partners. These are places where we also build our skills and confidence through having a valued role. Economic participation brings structure and meaning to our days and sometimes the opportunity to earn a part or full income. In the context of a good life, valued roles can be seen as one of the most important ways to develop ourselves personally, professionally and financially. But valued roles are never only work related. Joining a club or group, working as a volunteer and being a good friend, son, daughter or neighbour are also extremely valuable roles. These roles enhance a person's inclusion and recognition as a valued member of their community and this benefits all.

We are pleased to announce a new Pave the Way workshop *Planning for a Good Life*, which will explore these themes and more. If you would like to be notified when this workshop will be in your area and you are not on our mailing list then please contact us or you can keep an eye on our website.

(1). *The Weekend Australian*,
26 April 2014

Legal workshops update

Workshops update

Pave the Way has now facilitated five *Using the Law to Safeguard Plans* workshops. This workshop demonstrates how a vision driven plan could be incorporated in will and trust documents and examines how the needs of different children are balanced. It also seeks to demonstrate that some things cannot be safeguarded using legal tools and that ultimately people keep people safe.

Recently we asked families to express their interest in attending a *Using the Law to Safeguard Plans* workshop. We received over 120 responses from throughout the state and as a result, we have decided to hold workshops in Tully, the Sunshine Coast, West Brisbane region, and Newmarket (Brisbane) before the end of this year. The dates for the workshops and our other legal workshop *Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future* are on the last page of this newsletter.

If you would like to register your interest in a *Using the Law to Safeguard Plans* workshop being held in your region, and you haven't already done so, please contact Elaine Henderson on 3291 5888.

A question recently discussed at our *Using the Law to Safeguard Plans* workshop

At a recent workshop, we discussed the impact of a person's own savings on their eligibility for the Disability Support Pension (the Pension) and/or public housing.

It's important to remember that a person's savings will impact their entitlement to public housing and the Pension where their savings exceed the relevant asset test. An estate planning tool regularly used by families who have family members with disability relying on the pension or public housing, is to put money into a Special Disability Trust. Money up to \$636,750 held in a Special Disability Trust will not affect a person's entitlement to the Pension or housing.

Unfortunately, a person with disability cannot transfer their own money into a Special Disability Trust during their lifetime, unless it is part of a bequest or superannuation death benefit and that bequest or superannuation death benefit was received not more than three years before the transfer (see section 1209R of the *Social Security Act 1991*).

There are other estate planning tools, including using superannuation, gifting or spending the money, which may assist families facing this issue. However, to avoid it altogether, another option is not to save money in the name of the person who might eventually need to benefit from a Special Disability Trust.

"This workshop demonstrates how a vision driven plan could be incorporated in will and trust documents and examines how the needs of different children within the family are balanced"

Pave the Way

Pave the Way is funded by the Department of Communities' (Disability Service) to deliver Participant Readiness activities. This new aspect of Pave the Way's work will assist Queenslanders with disabilities, their families and carers in the North Coast, North Queensland and Far North Queensland regions to prepare for the roll out in July 2016 of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We will continue to assist families throughout Queensland to clarify their vision for their family member with a disability and to plan to implement that vision. We encourage planning which is vision driven, 'whole of life', developmental, outside service planning and which safeguards family members in the long-term.

Contact Us

Please contact us if you would like to be on our mailing list, or if you would like information about planning for the future and preparing for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Street address:

Level 1

1428 Logan Road

MT GRAVATT QLD 4122

Ph: (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402

www.pavetheway.org.au

Postal Address:

Pave the Way

PO Box 949

MT GRAVATT QLD 4122

Upcoming Events

Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future

Newmarket	8 August
Bundaberg	29 August
Mt Gravatt	12 September
Toowoomba	10 October
Townsville	24 October
Cairns	31 October
Caboolture	21 November

Using the Law to Safeguard Plans

Tully	7 December
Sunshine Coast	7 November
Newmarket	5 December
West Brisbane/Ipswich	28 November

Paving the Way to the NDIS

Mt Isa	10 August
Yarrabah	10 August
Mossman Gorge	14 August
Mornington	25 August
Doomadgee	27 August
Weipa region	September

Planning the Good Life

Cairns	11 August
Atherton	12 August
Mareeba	13 August
Mossman	14 August
Nambour	18 August
Kawana	19 August
Noosaville	20 August
Gympie	21 August
Normanton	28 August
Townsville	15 September
Ayr	16 September
Airlie Beach	17 September
Mackay	18 September

Please note that sometimes the dates of events may change, due to unexpected circumstances. For an up-to-date events calendar, please see our website or contact the office. Event flyers are sent to those on our mailing list closer to time.