



### Victorian Government announces new providers

On the 28th August the Victorian Government announced the five organisations that have been selected to manage DHHS disability accommodation and respite services. The services are: House with No Steps, Life Without Barriers, Melba Support Services, Possability and Scope. VALID has provided extensive input into the transfer process and has provided the new agencies with a statement of recommendations developed by residents of group homes.

Recommendations included:

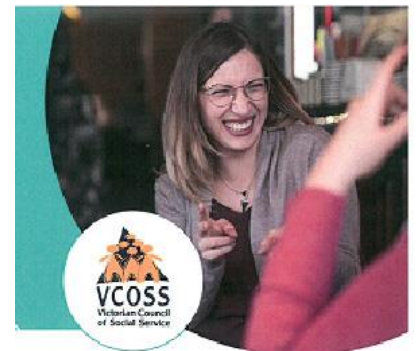
- Residents want information about the safeguarding arrangements under the new service provider, and they want clear information on how to make a complaint
- Residents want staff from the new provider to have high quality training
- Residents want to continue to have regular resident meetings to ensure they have a say in the running of their home

Jodie Noble, a member of VALID's Resident Representative Group, is pictured above explaining each of the recommendations to Minister Martin Foley.

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## Experts by Experience Steering Committee

Self-advocates, Luke Nelson and Terry Tobin, were asked by Future Social Service Institute (FSSI) to be part of a steering committee whose role is to give feedback about information that will be given to people who may be interested in working in the disability sector.

In partnership with RMIT and VCOSS the steering committee had input in the training of new staff and some of the topics discussed included:

- What type of person would be ideal to work in the disability sector
- Ethics of Care
- Human rights led practice
- Power and abuse
- The use of language
- Duty of care vs Dignity of risk
- Person centred approach
- Empowerment
- Relationships between worker and client

FSSI was grateful for Luke and Terry's invaluable contribution. It highlighted the importance of people with a disability leading the discussion regarding what type of support should be given in the disability field.



Luke



Terry

## Dinner with the NDIA Board Chair

On Wednesday 29th August, VALID was proud to host a dinner at our office with Dr Helen Nugent, NDIA Board Chair, together with family members of our Behaviours of Concern Peer Action Group. The opportunity arose at a meeting with Dr Nugent earlier this year, at which she pledged to deepen her understanding of the issues faced by people with intellectual disability and autism who display behaviours of concern.

On Wednesday evening she was true to her word, spending over three and half hours in deep conversation with four families who have been to Hell and back trying to find support for their loved ones with complex needs. Their experiences were listened to with great empathy and respect, and while everyone acknowledged the enormity of the challenges faced by the NDIS, there was an overwhelming confidence that, together, we will get there.





# Empowered Lives

## SECURING CHANGE FOR VICTORIANS WITH DISABILITY



### About the platform

***Empowered Lives: Securing Change for Victorians with Disability*** brings together people with disability, advocates, and organisations across the disability community.

Together, we have developed this platform for change – outlining the key issues that face Victorians with disability in their interactions with Victorian Government systems, and setting out achievable actions the Government can take to provide more opportunities for people with disability, more inclusive environments and communities, and stronger support when needed.

In *Empowered Lives*, we identify 10 key areas for change and 70 priority actions the Victorian Government can take across these areas.

This includes delivering inclusive service systems – whether it is health, education, justice or disability services, supporting Victorian families, creating jobs, and improving the accessibility of our transport and infrastructure.

Each of these areas is underpinned by a focus on the empowerment of people with disability and on strong safeguards to ensure safety and freedom from violence and abuse.

### Shortlist of priority actions

Using the priority actions identified in *Empowered Lives*, we have developed this shortlist, which shows the highest priority actions the Victorian Government can take to help achieve the rights of Victorians with disability.

We call on the Victorian Government to:

- 1 Ensure the voices of people with disability are heard**  
by increasing Victorian disability advocacy funding in line with the Productivity Commission's recommendation.
- 2 Guarantee and strengthen safeguards**  
to promote safety and protect people with disability against violence and abuse.
- 3 Better support parents with disability and parents and carers of children with disability.**
- 4 Improve transport access**  
by conducting an accessibility audit of the entire Victorian public transport system and funding a long-term program of accessibility improvements.

## Advocates on the move

The VALID Advocacy team has tripled in size over the past few months because a lot of people with intellectual disability need support with their NDIS Plans.

Our advocates are working with more than 250 people with intellectual disability who have no family support and live in DHHS Specialist Disability Accommodation.

Over the past couple of weeks, Advocates Sarah and Malcolm have been to Stawell, Ararat, Warrnambool, Portland and Ballarat and will be visiting other country towns over the next few months too.

The advocacy team are also very busy in Eastern Metropolitan Melbourne, Bayside Peninsula and soon in Southern Melbourne as the NDIS rolls out across Victoria.

It is especially important that people who don't have any family support have the opportunity to meet new people who might become friends. Getting involved in local community life is a great way to get started.

People tell us that they want to join up to local sports clubs, try an art class, see their friends more often, and to get a well-paid job. VALID Advocates make sure that people can speak up at their NDIS planning meetings and build their confidence to ask for what they want in future meetings and to get the support they need to reach their goals.

Do you or someone you know need support for your NDIS planning meeting? Get in touch with us!

## Dulcie Stone Writers Competition Award Ceremony

The 2nd annual Dulcie Stone Writers Competition Award ceremony was held at the Wheeler Centre located in the heart of Melbourne on Wednesday, 25th June 2018. All 61 people who entered this year's competition were recognised and acknowledged for their hard effort.

The 6 winners read their stories to the audience. Unfortunately there was not enough time to read out more of the stories. Some of the stories made us use our imaginations, bringing the audience into the character, while other stories opened our hearts and made us feel pretty raw feelings at times but at the same time made us appreciate and be proud of the writer's strength and courage.



Dulcie pictured with the winners





## Frankston Peer Action Group Members meet with Linda Birney MP

On September 1st, members of VALID's Frankston Peer Action Group and the Southern Self Advocacy Network were invited to meet with Linda Birney (Federal Shadow Minister for Family and Social Services) and Peta Murphy (ALP candidate for the local federal seat of Dunkley) to discuss issues that were of importance to them.

As residents living in, and contributing to, the local community, people with disabilities at this meeting were able to talk about the kinds of local barriers and disadvantages they are currently addressing together in Frankston and surrounding districts.

These include accessibility and the cost of transport, the need for more options for community participation and social connections on evenings and weekends, better support to find a job, limited housing choices and options for adults wanting to move out of their family home and choose who they live with and their desire to feel more welcome and included in their community.

Some of those who attended the meeting were able to speak about the positive benefits of having their first NDIS support package and how this is assisting them to achieve personal goals. However, there was also an opportunity to share some of the problems and challenges of the transition from current service models to how supports and services are funded under the NDIS. We were impressed by the interest and understanding shown by both Linda and Peta and the commitment they made to sit down and listen to the stories and aspirations of the group at this meeting.

Our thanks to Michael and Phil from Focus Life who supported people to attend this meeting and who have been valuable partners in our work with the Frankston Peer Action Group.



## Keys to Success - Self Advocacy Training

In July, Zoe ran the Keys to Success Self Advocacy Training Program to a group of self advocates from Mambourin, Werribee.

The self-advocacy training helps people to understand their rights and responsibilities and to be more confident in speaking up when making choices and decisions about their lives.

Part of the training also includes a discussion about 'Staying Safe' and information on different types of abuse.

After completing the course, the self advocates are presented with a certificate of participation.



Zoe & Jon

### Feedback from the self advocates



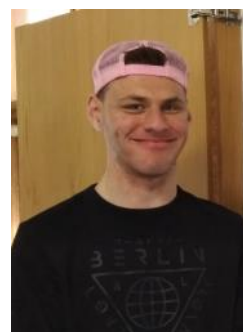
Kushboo: I feel good about the KSP course, it has changed me. I want to get my P's and catch public transport



Barbara: I feel happy after doing the KSP training, it was good.



Luke: The best part of the training was learning about what others think I'm good at, this made me feel happy.



Chris: The best part was learning new things and learning how to get a job. I feel proud because I want to get a job.



Stephan: The videos were the best part of the training, I wouldn't change the rest though. The training made me interested in how I feel about things.



## Keys to Success - Staying Safe Project

Jon and Zoe have been working with a group of self-advocates and video production company Silverpod, to develop a series of new Community Awareness videos.

The videos aim to inform the community about the need to respect people with disability and to prevent abuse and neglect. VALID will be releasing the videos through social media and will hopefully get coverage in some form of mainstream media.



The filming of the videos was conducted at a studio in Brunswick. The day of the filming was draining for all involved as people talked about their painful experiences. There was lots of support for each other and at the end everyone was excited to have been involved in the project.

Watch out for the release of the videos soon.



Terry: It's good to have these stories filmed to show others how people with ID are treated. It's hard to speak up, but it's good to be brave and help others to be brave to speak up.



Barry: I'm glad I was part of filming, I'd like to do it again. I've been looking forward to viewing the videos



Anthony: I hope people will understand what we go through. We want the message to go world wide. We want people to understand and know what happens to people with intellectual disability.



Dwayne: I think we need to get the message out there



Jane: It's telling people out there what we had to put up with. It was good to come together to share our stories.



Presents the

## **20th Anniversary of the Having a Say Conference**

**4th – 6th February, 2019**

**Come along and join the VALID team  
in celebrating the 20th Anniversary**

### **Features Include:**

**Special Guests and Presenters**

**Open mic sessions to talk about Having a Say  
through the years and how it has changed your life**

**Red Faces Talent Show**

**Dinner Disco**

**Registration is now open**

**Go to the VALID website [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au) for  
more information, email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)  
or call the office on 03 9416 4003**



# Want to come to the Having a Say Conference?



Do you need support to attend the Having a Say Conference (HaS)?

It is a good idea to talk to your service or family about what support you need to attend.



You may need funding in your NDIS Plan to pay staff to support you to travel and participate at HaS.



You can ask your NDIS Planner to fund the support you need to attend HaS. (e.g. transport, personal care, registration, assistance to participate, present or perform.)



Planners can fund support to attend Having a Say under 'camps' in NDIS Support Category 9: Innovative Social & Community Participation

Or



You may decide to use money from the Core Supports part of your NDIS Plan to pay for support to attend HaS.



Funding in your NDIS plan is possible because Having a Say supports you to:

- Build skills and self-confidence through participating, volunteering, presenting, performing and learning heaps!
- Be inspired by peers
- Learn about rights and responsibilities
- Gain information on what support is available in both the community and disability services

If you are not sure what to ask for, give this flyer to your NDIS planner or LAC (Local Area Coordinator). More info on HaS [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

## VALID Self Advocacy Forum & Self Advocacy Working Group

At the last meeting of the VALID Self Advocacy Forum and Working Group, Kerry from Legal Aid did a presentation about “Myki fines - What to do if you get a fine and how to avoid getting one”.

Kerry said it’s important to remember, if you get a letter (fine) posted to your address...

- Don’t worry or panic
- Don’t throw the letter in the bin
- Don’t hide the letter and hope it will go away
- Don’t just pay the fine, unless you are sure you did something wrong
- Talk to a person you trust

Call Victoria Legal Aid and they can help you. Phone: 1300 792 387

Other important things that Kerry talked about are:

The ticket inspectors should always be polite and talk to you nicely.

It is important to talk to Ticket Inspectors nicely and not get upset. They are just doing their job.

Protective Service Officers (PSO) have powers a bit like policemen, but just on public transport.



The self advocates from the forum and working group did some role playing, and gave Kerry feedback on her presentation including:

- Use photos rather than drawings
- The two role plays were good and showed what to do if asked a question by a PSO or ticket inspector
- Legal Aid could make a poster in easy English on what to do if you get a fine
- Make a poster about your rights and responsibilities or what to do if a PSO or Ticket inspector ask you questions



# VALID

## Annual General Meeting

10th October, 2018

10.30am - 12.30pm

Aboriginal Advancement League  
2 Watt Street, Thornbury

## Guest Speaker

**Arthur Rogers**

Disability Services Commissioner

RSVP by 5th October

To Brenda on 9416 4003



## Australian Electoral Commission Helping people with disability to vote

VALID was recently approached by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to provide a representative who could assist them in producing a staff training video on inclusiveness, accessibility and better practice around the support provided to people with disabilities who want to vote.

The video was being developed to help the AEC staff who work at polling booths during elections to learn about how to support people with disability when they attend a polling place.

Jon from the VALID Keys to Success Program team took on the task of providing advice on the development of the script. He also attended two days of filming where he provided guidance on the production of the video, ensuring that both the process of filming the video and the video produced were in accordance with accessibility requirements, better practice and were respectful of people with disability. The AEC seemed very happy with the finished video and will be using it to train their polling station staff before the next Federal election.

Pictured below is a mock polling centre set up for filming.



## Democracy Ambassador

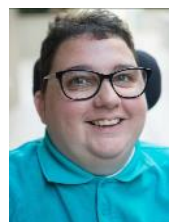
In May I was approached by the Disability Services Commissioner to apply for a position with the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC).

I went for an interview in June, which was called a group interview, and in early July I attended the four-day group session, which I got a lot out of.

As a democracy ambassador my job is to educate people with intellectual disabilities as well as staff or their families / guardians that they can vote with assistance. The VEC has developed a fun and interactive app for people to learn the skills they need to remember how to vote.

Voters Voice is a free app, developed by the VEC. It is designed to help people with disability participate in the 2018 Victorian State election. The VEC will also be going to the four Self Advocacy Network Meetings in October so self-advocates can practice voting in a mock election.

You can find out more about the app on the VEC website.  
[www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)



*Simone Stevens*

VALID is currently working on a self-advocacy project for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people with a disability.



If you or someone you know would like more information please email:

## Resident Steering Committee

Over the last few months VALID has been providing information and talking to lots of residents about the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) group homes transferring to non-government services.

VALID asked 6 people who live in DHHS houses to join a Resident Steering Committee to:

- Tell the government what they think about things that are happening. This includes issues or positives they are seeing with the change of service
- Represent the views of other people who live in DHHS group homes
- Give feedback to the government around particular resources that are being developed (posters, fact sheets, forms, rules etc) before the government sends them out.
- Give information to new providers about self-advocacy, to make sure residents can have a say.
- Work with DHHS to make the Transfer of services to non - government services better for everyone

Members of the resident steering committee will meet once a month until June 2019 when all the DHHS group homes have transferred to the new services.



## Eastern Network Meeting

Today I was felt privileged and honoured as I was asked to attend the Eastern Network Meeting in the Eastern Suburb of Ringwood. A lot of self – advocates turned up for the meeting at Maroondah Federation Estate.

Everyone was keen to talk about the 20th Having a Say Conference and maybe doing a presentation at the conference. Sara and Anthony offered their support if people were interested. Information was given out to people wanting to attend the conference on how to put it into their NDIS Plan.

The Guest Speaker was from the Financial Ombudsman Service who talked about different situations that people may find themselves in and how they can ask for assistance. Participants were encouraged to participate in discussions surrounding what the ombudsman does and what services they can offer at no cost.

Self-advocates shared some news including Adam who is going to Hawaii for a holiday. There were also a few excited football fans with football clubs like Melbourne making the finals, as well as a few upcoming birthdays to share.



*Simone Stevens*



## Gambling Research Program

Deakin University is doing a research project on “People with lifelong disability: exploring their use of clubs and hotels”. They have talked to members of the VALID Self Advocacy Forum and VALID Self Advocacy Working Group to ask if anyone is interested in helping with the project.

Deakin University want to hear what people with a disability have to say and to learn more about what people do in clubs and hotels, including gambling. They hope to use this research to learn more about how to help make sure people understand about gambling and that it can make life difficult for some people.

The information participants give Deakin University is anonymous. This research is not a secret and participants can tell people about it if they like. Participants can also bring along a support person or someone they trust to the interview.

Once the research is finished, all publications will be sent to VALID, a Plain English summary will also be given to VALID to be given to participants. Deakin University will present the findings from the research at a free workshop which participants and members of VALID can attend.

If you feel like you need to talk to someone about gambling you can contact:

### Gambler's Help

Call: 1800 858 858

[www.gamblinghelponline.org.au](http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au)

### Lifeline

Call 13 11 14

## A Team Effort

Greg, a member of the Southern Self Advocacy Network, presented his individual story at the July network meeting.

Greg brought in a 2,000 piece mechanical Lego truck that he, Rom, Michael and Frank from The Bridge built. The mechanical Lego truck is wooden, uses over 17 elastic bands instead of an electric motor and is remote controlled.

Greg talked about some of the challenges the team faced while they were building the truck, and the fun that they had. It was a team effort!



## All abilities soccer team mentor nominated for top coaching award

VALID staff member Anthony Risoli was nominated for Coach of the Year at the Victorian Disability Sport and Recreation Awards.

Anthony has been the coach of the Northcote Falcons Football Club for seven years. The Access all Abilities team gives people with intellectual and physical disability the chance to play soccer. Anthony said, "It is always great to see people having fun at training. It's the little things that make coaching worth while"

The league is growing every year and the competition is set to soar.

Anthony didn't win the award but was honoured to be nominated.

## Victorian Disability Sport and Recreation Awards Finalist

Rosanna is a member of the Western Network meeting and was a finalist in the Victorian Disability Sport and Recreation Awards.

Rosanna was one of the Scope participates that works on a program called 'Get active.'

Rosanna is pictured below with the certificate that was presented to the group.



## New NDIS Information Booklets

The NDIS recently released some information booklets for participants and their supporters. They are also available in Easy English.

- Booklet 1. Understanding the NDIS
- Booklet 2. Planning
- Booklet 3. Using your NDIS Plan

They are available from:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/fact-sheets-and-publications>



# Shepparton NDIS Expo

## McIntosh Centre

Thompson Street, Shepparton

**Tuesday 25th September, 2018**

**10.00 am - 3.00 pm**



**Are you ready for the NDIS?**

**Do you want to do more things in the community?**

**Come and look at over 40 exhibits with a range of services for all ages, equipment, community and disability supports.**

**Information Sessions on NDIS related topics.**

**Free to the public**

## Having a Say Conference

is proud to bring the

## Our Choice Expo

back to Geelong to inform and empower  
people with disabilities and their families & supporters.

Deakin University, Waterfront Campus, Geelong



### HaS Expo

Main Foyer Costa Hall  
Running over the whole three  
days of the conference with  
20 places.

It will be open to delegates  
and free to the public on  
**Monday 4th - Wednesday 6th  
February, 2019**

### Our Choice Disability Expo - Gallery

With 60 exhibitors the Our Choice  
community & disability expo will be  
held in the Gallery on the same level  
as the main conference & the Foyer.

It will be open to conference  
delegates and free to the public on  
**Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th  
February, 2019**

## Victorian Disability Advocacy Futures Plan 2018 – 2020

### Making disability advocacy better in the future.

The book asks you questions about how to make disability advocacy better for people with disability.

Disability advocacy is about helping people with disability to get their rights.

Your answers will help to make advocacy better.

This will help DHHS to write a plan.

This is called the disability advocacy futures plan.

The Office for Disability need your answers by the 30th September 2018.

To receive a copy of this publication in an accessible format phone 1300 880 043, or email: [disabilityadvocacy@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:disabilityadvocacy@dhhs.vic.gov.au)



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(Training/workshops)

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