



"MEDIA RELEASE"

09.07.2010

Now is the best chance you may ever have to change disability service provision?

So act now before it is too late!

More than 250 people attended a great Public Meeting on June 30 at the Adelaide Town Hall. They heard Mr. Bruce Bonyhady (Advisor to the Australian Productivity Commission), Hon Bill Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disability, (ALP)), Hon Mitch Fiefield (Federal Shadow Minister for Disability, (Liberal)) and Hon Kelly Vincent, MLC (Dignity4Disability) speak.

These great speakers all acknowledged that Government provision of disability services was *'failing', 'broken',* and simply *'a lottery'*. Indeed Bill Shorten described current disability services as a *'major human rights issue'* with people with disabilities forced to live *'a second class existence'*.

The proposed National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) looks the best possible way of providing a realistic and equitable solution to this problem. An NDIS recognises that all of us are at risk of sustaining a disabling condition from a variety of causes. An NDIS would provide a no-fault provision of necessary services and supports to people with disabilities. And these services would be provided equally to all based on their needs and not on the causes of their disability.

The Government has commissioned a feasibility study of the many possible variations and methods of operating such a scheme. But it is up to all of us – people with disabilities, their families, workers and organisations in the field and all fair minded citizens – to make sure that the Productivity Commission *"hears it like it really is."*

For too long, the disability community has been heavily divided. If we want to solve the problem, we have to unite the disability sector or we will fail. We have to make sure that everyone, and that includes all people in the disability community and the wider community, understand what we are proposing, why we are proposing it and how it may work.

But most importantly firstly we must all tell the Productivity Commission what we think! The Commission have extended the due date for submissions to Monday 16 August 2010. The Commission website at <http://www.pc.gov.au> has clear links to the 'Disability Care and Support Review'. The Submission Cover Sheet and The Key Questions paper are also attached to this email.

If we do not take this opportunity to have our say about disability issues, we may not have the chance again. If we don't, we may only have ourselves to blame if the Commission's final Report does not address the changes so desperately needed. We must all send a Submission, whether it's one page or ten. Never before have we seen such a growth in momentum and much more is happening like

- Physical Disability Council of South Australia in partnership with Physical Disability Australia presents a joint forum on Sunday in Adelaide to discuss the current Productivity

Commission Inquiry and to hear your views into Services and systems for people with disability in Australia.

Come along and share your views on this important event in disability history in Australia to be held at - Julia Farr Association rooms, 104 Greenhill Road, Unley on this Sunday, 11th July, 2pm - 4.30pm. Register your interest by phone PDCSA on 81520966 (leave a message) or email admin@pdcsa.org.au to RSVP to this event. Map for location can be found at: http://www.juliafarr.org.au/contact_us.asphttp .Afternoon tea provided

- Disability Groups unite for a National Disability Insurance Scheme A number of organisations providing services to people with a disability and their families have already contributed to the fund. The coalition is asking all groups who work with people with disabilities and their families to make a contribution to ensure the awareness campaign continues. The peak organisation representing disability service providers, National Disability Services, has joined the coalition. Chief Executive Dr Ken Baker said today NDS recognised that the National Disability Insurance Scheme represents "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for transformational change." "I am therefore delighted that so many of our members have responded so quickly and so generously by contributing funds from their scarce reserves to this campaign. A number have commented to me that they can think of no more important issue to which they can contribute their resources and they look forward to working alongside people with a disability, their families and carers. "All of the members of the coalition are committed to working together cooperatively to present a strong united voice to achieve this transformational reform. All look forward to more organizations adding their voices to the campaign. The coalition has established an initial national steering committee: The coalition will soon appoint a National Campaign Director to oversee the awareness campaign.

Do your bit and do it now!!!!

The next meeting of the Disability Speaks steering committee will be held on Thursday 15th July at 1.00pm at *DIRC, 195 Gilles St Adelaide*. Anyone with an interest is welcome as always.

David Holst
Chair
Disability Speaks Steering Committee
0418555683

www.disabilityspeaks.com.au
disabilityspeaks@internode.on.net

Disability Speaks will distribute on behalf of any organization that meets suitable criteria online information that is of wide disability community interest via our database that now numbers nearly 4,000 recipients for Government, advocacy groups and other major disability organizations. We hope in the lead up to elections, state or federal, we can distribute policy and support information from political groups. Such distribution is not in any way endorsement by Disability Speaks. From time to time Disability Speaks will also distribute media releases commenting on developments in the disability sector. We strongly encourage you to forward all releases to your friends, clients and disability supporters and encourage them to subscribe direct. To do so simply send an email subject "subscribe" to the address below.