



"MEDIA RELEASE"

31.03.2010

"Time for the Disability Sector to Unite!"

The Disability Speaks E-Blast of 22nd March 2010 has caused some angst in the disability sector.

Some feel that successful candidate, Kelly Vincent, was slighted by some of the comments.

This was certainly not the intent and David Holst, Chair of the Disability Speaks Steering Committee, said,

"No one more than me know how tough the fight is when you take it to the very high political level as I have found over the last 7 years. That was the message we were trying to get across and the need for the sector to unite behind Kelly and D4D. I would like to apologise to Kelly and any one else who felt any comments in the media release were inappropriate. As the original founder of Dignity4Disability I am genuinely delighted that D4D has won a seat and Kelly will be our representative. Whilst I resigned as a director of D4D some time ago, I continued to proudly support D4D financially, with access and advice and with many other substantial contributions and am really proud to have done so. I am genuinely ecstatic that D4D and Kelly have won a seat. It is one of my proudest personal moments that I have had involvement from day one as the founder of D4D and continues to do so .

Disability Speaks media releases are the work of many people but I have the final OK before distribution. The ideas distributed on DS are not the beliefs of all committee members and are often specifically designed to generate support and/or widespread community debate. Our most recent release was meant to be a call to arms for the whole disability community to step up, unite, and support Kelly and D4D. Some however read it differently. Disability Speaks remains committed to pushing the disability debate to the wider community!

With Kelly's affirmation and confirmation of success expected on Tuesday, I personally and DS have already offered our total support to D4D and Kelly. Disability Speaks and I personally have great resources and networks that we will utilize for D4D and Kelly 's advantage. We call on everyone in the disability community to do the same. No doubt in coming weeks D4D will be looking for new members, financial support and volunteers to do a plethora of tasks.

Disability Speaks was formed to deliberately take a very different approach to the hard political agenda. We have plans for DS to continue for the long term and look forward to standing shoulder to shoulder with Kelly and D4D and fighting the good fight. It is essential that many other sector groups as possible do so to maximise the moment.

Kelly's confirmation will be symbolic for the disability sector and I will applaud her loudly!"

With the possibilities offered by a Federal National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), it will be critical that pressure is again exerted on the major political parties to clearly state their views and policies on NDIS and other key disability issues in the run up to the federal election. Disability Speaks is planning to make some exciting operational and strategic changes for the long term. Suggestions include:

- Planning meetings and "E" blasts on a more regular schedule
- Hosting more public events including conferences and public meetings
- Inviting more subscribers to contribute their views and opinions for the "E" blast circulars
- Appointing an editor for "Disability Speaks Online" to oversee the preparation and distribution of the "E" blast circulars
- Appointing a Social Networking coordinator e.g. face book, twitter and website content
- Exploring—how subscriber comments can be placed on the website and the development of blogs
- A calendar of forthcoming events and activities be established and maintained
- Setting up an NDIS subcommittee to explore public awareness options around this program

These proposed suggestions and any others you would care to table will be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting to be held on

Thursday April 15th at 1.00 pm

At Disability Information & Resource Centre (DIRC), 195 Gilles Street.

If you would like to discuss these and any other issues, please come and share your ideas.

Peter Cookson
Acting Online Editor
Disability Speaks Steering Committee

www.disabilityspeaks.com.au

"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 Govt, 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.

Email: disabilityspeaks@internode.on.net

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