



# Share with Us

MDAA Inc. Newsletter

Sept 2019

## Commissioner visit 19 September 2019



On 19 September, MDAA had the pleasure of hosting the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, Robert Fitzgerald, who is currently conducting the NSW Disability Advocacy Review. MDAA would like to thank the Commissioner for being so open and liberal with his time, allowing our consumers, members and staff to really express their concerns and the challenges faced by people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We appreciate having the opportunity to provide feedback to the Commissioner particularly on something so central to our organisation, that is, the provision on disability advocacy funding in NSW.

We'd also like to thank our community members, consumers and staff who came along to the consultation, provided such valuable feedback, and shared their personal experiences with the Commissioner. MDAA will be preparing an additional written submission that will reiterate our concerns expressed on the day and further respond to the issues paper released in line with the Review. We look forward to seeing the recommendations made by the Commissioner and thank him once again for his time.

## Time to renew your MDAA membership

### MDAA Membership Renewal due 1 July 2019

Thank you for supporting MDAA through your membership. MDAA has been advocating for the rights of people from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD/Non-English Speaking (NES) background with disability for nearly 25 years. We are looking forward to continuing to promote, protect and advocate for the rights of people with disability from CALD/NES background, their families and carers over the next 12 months and into the future. Your support as a member is important to MDAA, so please renew your membership when you receive this reminder. A MDAA membership renewal form is enclosed.

**Please note:** Your membership should be renewed to be eligible to vote at MDAA's AGM or to nominate for the Governance Committee. Kindly return the membership renewal form with the applicable fee. Please contact MDAA on (02) 9891 6400 for a renewal form.

MDAA gratefully acknowledges funding provided by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services, Department of Family and Community Services

# MDAA News

## MDAA Peer Group Activity August/Sept 2019

The peer group activities for August included two workshops with Elanor Seeto on goalsetting. It was interesting to look back on goals that were set in the past and to see how far the participants had come with their goals. The participants also enjoyed a day out to Fagan Park, Galston. They enjoyed looking around the gardens and visiting the Museum. In September, the peer group members enjoyed participating in a session on creating healthy boundaries and building positive relationships. The participants also enjoyed a music session and learnt a Tongan dance. We would love for you to join us in these fun activities. If you are interested, please call MDAA on 02 9891 6400.



## MDAA Consumer Conference 21 August 2019

MDAA held its annual Consumer Conference on 21 August 2019 at The Holroyd Centre in Merrylands. The theme of this year's Consumer Conference was NDIS Appeals and was well attended by persons with disability, their family members and carers, interested in learning about the NDIS reviews and appeals process. The Conference was organised by Zaya Toma, MDAA's NDIS Appeals Manager. The keynote speaker was Nikola Cannon, a senior solicitor with NSW Legal Aid in the Administration Law section, which represents those appealing decisions by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) at the Administration Appeals Tribunal (AAT). Nikola spoke about the process of appealing decisions made by the NDIA at the AAT and answered questions from the participants. She was very well received and feedback from the day showed that all who attended gained a wealth of new information about the NDIS reviews and appeals process.



## Korean visit 13 September 2019

The delegation from Korea Disabled People's Development Institute (KODDI) visited MDAA to learn more about the disability service system in Australia. They also wanted to know about the NDIS experience.



## Penny Sharpe & Julia Finn 10 September 2019

MDAA was visited by two great leaders in the NSW Parliament, Hon Penny Sharpe the Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services and Disability Inclusion and Hon Julia Finn, MP for Granville. They both came to MDAA's Granville office specifically to discuss the issues that surround the disability sector and understand some of the concerns that affect CALD communities. Issues that were raised included concerns for advocacy funding. Whether advocacy services be funded to support people with disability especially those that don't have access to the NDIS; the difficulties with accessing the NDIS when a person has been diagnosed with Mental Health issues, and the many problems with the NDIS, including review times, lack of knowledge some Local Area Coordinators (LACs) and NDIS Planners have regarding certain disabilities. Hon Penny Sharpe and Hon Julia Finn ended the session by thanking everyone who was able to attend and provide their feedback. They both agreed that the feedback that was provided will be important to ensure that the systems that are in place can and will continue to be inclusive.



## Community Voices (CV)

CV members Anthony and Arnold attended an expo at the Ponds School, a school for children with disability on Friday 2 August 2019. They displayed MDAA information for the attendees and other organisations to spread the word about what we do, what we can help them with and access to the NDIS for their children. Expos are very helpful for people to provide information and advice from different services. Arnold and Anthony reported really enjoying meeting people and promote MDAA.



## MDAA Bega Update

MDAA Bega office held a Consumer consultation 9th September 2019. The consultation was well received and we appreciate the involvement and participation of those present. The participants were given a great opportunity to provide feedback and address issues that were relevant to them. The impact of limited Mental Health Services was a key topic raised, as was the challenges faced by non-NDIS Participants; as they are becoming disadvantaged from receiving appropriate services to improve daily living support after identifying that there are no other advocacy services in the Bega Valley. Consumers praised MDAA Advocacy Services they have received from Bega staff over the years noting that without the support, they would not have been able to achieve positive outcomes, which is of high importance.



## MDAA City & Inner West (CIW) update

MDAA's Capacity Building Support Officer (CBSO) Natalie supported an MDAA consumer with his second-year NDIS plan review. With Natalie's support, he successfully negotiated with his NDIS planner, and was approved an increase in his 'Social Civic and Community Participation' funding of over \$3,700.00 in his newly issued NDIS plan. We were also very happy to see the consumer's second-year NDIS funding was increased by a remarkable 40% compared to his first NDIS plan!

## MDAA Griffith Update

MDAA Griffith held a Consumer Consultation on 17 September 2019 at the Griffith Community Centre. Attendees included current consumers and their families. The Consultation was addressed by Dr. Anita Strezova – Capacity Building Manager. Attendees were given the opportunity to provide feedback on accessing supports and services in the Griffith Regional Area. They shared their experiences and key areas of concern were identified and discussed. The consumers conveyed which supports were most important to them and also expressed their concerns for themselves and their community.



The consumers are pleased with the support they have been receiving by MDAA Griffith and the consultation was concluded with everyone sharing lunch.

## MDAA Newcastle Update

MDAA Newcastle held a consumer consultation Monday 30th September 2019. This was attended by 25 consumers, community members, an NDIS representative and St Vincent De Paul CALD engagement Officer. The attendees were a majority of Syrian's, new refugees to Australia, who were eager to learn more about what support MDAA could offer them, and also from Philippines and Africa. Maria and Alicia from MDAA Head Office facilitated the consultation which Newcastle CBSO Joanne Chater organised. Maria expertly delivered the questions, with generous help of Syrian attendees to translate, whilst Alicia recorded the feedback from the group. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to voice their needs and were appreciative of the advocacy, information, advice and support they have received from MDAA Newcastle. CBSO Joanne received 5 new enquiries for advocacy support. This reflects the effectiveness of raising awareness of MDAA consultations, by reaching out to our consumers and community members.



## MDAA South East Sydney (SES) Update

The team at MDAA SES have been achieving some great milestones for their consumers. Good news finally came for one of our consumers facing a complex court hearing with the Department of Immigration and the Minister in relation to an ongoing decision from the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The consumer was terminally ill and undergoing treatment from the complications of chemotherapy. He requested for an adjournment of his matter to allow his recovery and treatment. MDAA SES advocates worked in collaboration with other support organisations; notable STARTTS and House of Welcome to achieve his request which was successfully granted from the Associate judge. MDAA SES can provide advocacy support to anyone with disability from the South East Sydney region in most matters such as the complex court matters to simple referrals and information of rights.

## MDAA Governance Committee Report



Good day everyone,

We are very pleased to inform you that our one of our funding bodies, the Department of Social Services (DSS), has granted MDAA additional funding through an 'ad-hoc closed non-competitive selection process'. The additional funding is provided to deliver advocacy support to people with disability who will have matters related to the Disability Royal Commission. According to the DSS' funding guidelines, "An ad-hoc closed non-competitive selection process is where an approach is made directly to an existing, high performing provider to expand their current service delivery activities or deliver new services".

We are pleased the Department recognises MDAA's expertise in advocacy particularly for people from a CALD background and that we are considered a "high performing provider". We will make sure that we continue to deliver services that meet these standards.

We are also very happy with the Ageing and Disability Commissioner for visiting MDAA and who consulted us about the Advocacy Review he is currently conducting. We have given him our views about the importance of continuing the funding for people from CALD background with disability to ensure equity, inclusion and participation.

Finally, we are eager to finalise and introduce our new Strategic Plan (2019-2021), which identifies our directions and key priorities for and with CALD people with disability. We hope to launch this document and a statement of our values in our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 10 December 2019, a fitting day as we celebrate the 25th year of MDAA's establishment.

Vivi Germanos-Koutsandis  
MDAA Chairperson

## Contribution by a MDAA member



### **Nidhi's Accessible adventures in Young.**

The town of Young has a vibrant feel and is almost 400 kilometres from Sydney. I have a friend who lives there who also has a disability therefore I had my very own personal tour guide. I visited the Lambing Flat Museum. Young is famous for cherry farming and is the first country town to enact the Riot act. It is home to the Wurrjiri tribe and a large Chinese population due to the gold rush. I went there by train to Cootamundra which has an accessibility carriage and toilet. The seat also has a buzzer /help point for assistance, offering ramp assistance guidance and also provide assistance with luggage. I travelled around the city, sampled different restaurants, and the Visitor Information Centre. I also researched NDIS disability services and employment opportunities. I plan to visit Carrington Park, the Chinese garden, wineries and a dam next time. Young is also famous for its steel industry and also has an abattoir. The steel for the Olympic stadium came from Young.

## MDAA Executive Director's Report



The last 2 months just went by like a bullet train and now we are coming to October! So what kept us busy these past months? Here is a short summary I would like to share with you:

I attended the Better Boards Conference with Robina of our Governance Committee (GC) in August and the Strengthening Disability Advocacy and Sector in Crisis Conference in Melbourne early September organized by Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU) and Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA). It was good to hear from other states about their challenges, the strategies they have adopted, and to know we are not alone in our struggle for funding.

Returning back home, we have been honoured to welcome several visitors to MDAA House over the past 2 months.

MDAA welcomed Mr Armoogum Parsuramen, former Minister of Education from Mauritius, and Granville Rotarian, Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan. Mr Parsuramen has set up a foundation called Global Rainbow for people with disability (PWD) in his country. We spoke about the system of support for PWD in Australia and have no doubt that Mr Parsuramen will provide a very valuable service PWD in Mauritius.

We have been very fortunate in the relationships we have built with our local and state representatives. Robina (GC) and I attended the Stakeholders Morning tea hosted by Penny Sharpe MLC, Jo Haylen MP and Julia Finn MP, at the NSW Parliament. Following this, the two new Shadow Ministers responsible for the Ageing and Disability Sectors, Penny Sharpe MLC and Julia Finn MP, came to visit MDAA on 10 September. They met with our GC members, consumers, staff and management who shared information about our services, issues and challenges.

Dominic Golding, the Policy Officer of our mother organisation, the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) paid MDAA a visit on 12 September to discuss joint project with the National Mental Health Commission. We are excited to be able assist in organising a consultation with people from CALD backgrounds with disability in February 2020.



MDAA also hosted the Korean delegation composed of individuals from an NGO called Korean Disabled People's Development Institute (KODDI) and some Korean government officials who wanted to know more about our NDIS experience.

It was followed by a visit on 19 September by the newly appointed Ageing and Disability Commissioner, the veteran Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald, to whom we spoke about the review of advocacy funding by the NSW Government and whose report due is on 31 December 2019. We hope the NSW government changes its mind and continues funding advocacy permanently.

## MDAA Staff updates SDN August

MDAA Staff, volunteers and members of the GC participated in our Staff Development and Training on 26 & 27 August 2019.

### Training included:

- MDAA Values and Code of Conduct and NDIS Code of Conduct
- Managing Consumer Challenges and Self Care
- Record Management, Progress Notes and Case Studies Writing
- Organisational Roles

It is very valuable for MDAA staff to receive this training and generate opportunities to directly engage with our Regional staff members.



# Upcoming Events at MDAA

## MDAA Fund-raising event 11 October 2019

### “Diversity – Food For Thought”

This event will be held on the 11th October 2019 from 4pm-8pm at St Marks Church Granville.

All proceeds of the day will go to NSW Network of Women with Disability.

There is a \$25 admission fee which includes dinner. Come along to enjoy performances, games, a silent auction, visit our op-shop and enjoy delicious multicultural food.

All donations and sponsorships are welcome.

Please contact MDAA on 02 9891 6400 for more information.

## Peer Group Activities 2019

MDAA's Peer Support Group is a great opportunity to come and have some fun while being around like-minded people. Everyone is welcome.

### Tuesdays

#### 1 October 2019

Tongan Dance, Ukulele & Music Part 1

#### 8 October 2019

Tongan Dance, Ukulele & Music Part 2

#### 15 October 2019

African Drumming (See Intercultural Sounds and Movements below)

#### 22 October 2019

To be advised

#### 29 October 2019

Papercraft with Laura



## Intercultural Sounds and Movements-Arabic Drumming

MDAA has received funding from Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) to run a new project called Intercultural Sounds and Movements (ISM). No previous music or dance experience is necessary. Our first session: **Arabic Drumming**

**When:** Tuesday 15 October 2019 - 10am-12pm

**Where:** MDAA Office 10-12 Hutchinson St. Granville

For more information or to book your spot please call MDAA Project Coordinator Rhiannon on (02) 9891 6400 or email [mdaa@mdaa.org.au](mailto:mdaa@mdaa.org.au) We would love to hear from you.



## MDAA SES Stall

MDAA SES is holding a stall at the annual St George Migrant Information Day 6 November 2019 at Marana Auditorium, 16 MacMahon St, Hurstville. There will be multiple community services organisations representing the St George region. As MDAA is the only disability advocacy service in the South East Sydney region, the team plays an important role in ensuring people with disability from all cultural backgrounds are supported. The MDAA team will have information brochures in multiple languages for attendees. This event is free and includes cultural performances, stalls, free food and refreshments. We hope to see you there!

## Future Leaders Project 26 October 2019

The Future Leaders Project is an ILC funded initiative. We will provide free and accessible workshops and training sessions with professional facilitators/trainers for people with disability from CALD and NES backgrounds to develop leadership skills. From this project, MDAA hopes to see confident and informed leaders with abilities to develop strategies, make decisions and organise the affairs of disability organisations.

Our first session will be: **Roles and Responsibilities of Directors**

**Date:** Saturday 26 October 2019 **Time:** 10:30am to 12:30pm

**Where:** MDAA 10 12 Hutchinson St Granville. If you are interested, please call 02 9891 6400.

# Information

## Have Your Say Cumberland Council

Cumberland Council needs your help. They have produced a series of videos in English and community languages to encourage community members to help shape the future of the Cumberland area and have their say on the Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement.

English: <https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/cumberland-2030>

Arabic: <https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/Cumberland-2030-arabic>

Chinese: <https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/Cumberland-2030-chinese>

Farsi: <https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/Cumberland-2030-farsi>

Tamil: <https://haveyoursay.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/Cumberland-2030-tamil>

## Sydney Light Rail Testing

Ding ding! Sydney Light Rail is testing trams between Circular Quay and Randwick. With cyclists, pedestrians, drivers and trams interacting together, it's important we all play our part to stay safe around light rail. If you're walking or riding your bike, avoid distractions and cross the tram tracks safely. Drivers, don't queue across intersections and be aware road conditions have changed. So heads up! Play it safe around light rail.

For more information - <https://sydneylightrail.transport.nsw.gov.au/safety>



## Migrant Employment Service

The Inner City Legal Centre, Kingsford Legal Centre, Marrickville Legal Centre and Redfern Legal Centre have established a new statewide service to give migrant workers employment law advice. The Migrant Employment Service seeks to address the employment exploitation of migrant workers by providing legal advice, legal representation and engaging with communities to provide information and education. The Migrant Employment Service (MES) is now accepting clients for legal advice!

Migrants and temporary visa holders (including international students) from across NSW can contact the MES on 02 8002 1203, Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 5pm, to make a free and confidential appointment with a solicitor. If you require more information, please contact co-ordinator Thina Balakisnan on [thina@iclc.org.au](mailto:thina@iclc.org.au).

## Toongabbie Legal Centre

Toongabbie Legal Centre are having 10 free Saturday Legal Seminars from 28 September to 14 December 2019 Time: 2-4pm at various venues in the area.

Early registration is essential.

For more information and registration for each seminar is through the website: [www.tlc.asn.au](http://www.tlc.asn.au) or phone 1300 373 353.

## Contributions to the MDAA 'Share with Us' Newsletter

**Attention MDAA Members - This is your newsletter-** your stories, your ideas and your experiences are important to MDAA and its membership. Would you like to try writing something for the next Newsletter? The 'Share with Us' Newsletter is produced every two months.

**'Share with Us' Newsletter deadlines for 2019:**

**Articles due in by:** Fri 22 Nov 2019 for sending out on Wed 27 Nov 2019



## Multicultural Food - Greece

Greece is a country in southeastern Europe with thousands of islands throughout the Aegean and Ionian seas. It is often called the cradle of Western civilization. Greece is a republic with a president. Greece is known for its production of marble, olives and olive oil, feta cheese, honey, and red saffron. The population is around 11 million and two thirds of the Greek population live in urban areas. Close to 98 percent of the people are Orthodox Christians, just over 1 percent are Muslims, and there are small numbers of Jews, Seventh Day Adventists and Roman Catholics.

### Spanakopita (spinach and cheese pie)

#### INGREDIENTS

1 kg spinach		500 gr. fyllo pastry dough
3 -4 tablespoons chopped fresh fennel		4 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely sliced		salt and pepper
300 gr. white feta cheese		110 gr. melted butter
3 eggs, slightly beaten		5 tablespoons finely chopped parsley



#### DIRECTIONS

Clean and rinse the spinach, drain well. Sauté the onion in the olive oil. Shred the spinach roughly and add it to the onion. Stir over medium heat to get it all coated in the olive oil. Do not cover and cook gently for 5-6 minutes. Add salt, pepper, parsley and fennel and keep aside to cool down. Crumble the feta cheese into the beaten eggs. Drain the spinach mixture before adding to the cheese and egg mixture. Season and mix well. Unfold the roll of pastry onto a flat surface, place the container (it should be a metal oven dish with approximate size 39x28x8 cm) you are going to use on top of this and measure it roughly. Oil the base and the side of the container with melted butter. Coat the uppermost sheet of pastry and spread it carefully on the bottom of the container. Oil the next sheet of pastry and spread it on the top of the previous. Place in the same fashion 8 layers fyllo on the bottom of the container and spread on the filling. Cover the filling with 8 layers of oiled fyllo. Oil the top layer well. Cook in a preheated oven at 190C for 40 minutes until the pastry puffs up and the top becomes golden and crisp and stand for 10 minutes and cut into diamond shape pieces to serve.

## National Standards for Disability Services

### Standard 1: Rights

The intent of this standard is to promote ethical, respectful and safe service delivery which meets, if not exceeds, legislative requirements and achieves positive outcomes for people with disability. The Human Rights principles are relevant across all the standards and each standard supports the achievement of basic rights. This standard has a focus on particular rights such as self-determination, choice, privacy and freedom from discrimination.

The standard emphasises the importance of:

- dignity and respect;
- freedom of expression;
- self-determination;
- choice and control;
- confidentiality and privacy;
- freedom from discrimination, exploitation, abuse, harm, neglect and violence;
- the role of families, friends, carers and advocates in the safeguarding of rights; and
- comprehensive systems to prevent or promptly respond to any breaches of rights.

**Disclaimer: The views expressed in some articles of this newsletter are the authors' and may not reflect the views of MDAA.**

#### Contact us:

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