

# AMIDA NEWS

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December, 2017



AMIDA (Action for More Independence & Dignity in Accommodation) is a disability advocacy group that works on housing issues. This means we speak up for people with a disability or help them to speak up for themselves about problems they have with their housing.

## NDIS Appeals



**Are you unhappy with your **ndis** plan, or a decision made by the **ndia**?**

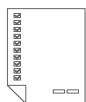
If so, the **NDIS Appeals** support service at AMIDA can help.



**What could you be unhappy about?**

The NDIA said you can't get support from them (you're **not eligible**)

Your plan isn't right (you need more or different **supports**)



**How does the service work?**

It's **free**!

It is for **anybody** who has received an NDIS decision that they are unhappy with. Helps you request a **review**, make an **appeal** and apply for legal aid (if needed).

**What can I do if I'm not happy with my **ndis** plan?**

Get in touch with Kathryn, Susan or Lisa.



email: [appeals@amida.org.au](mailto:appeals@amida.org.au) or phone: **03 9650 2722**

The NDIS Appeals Support service is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. For more information visit: <https://www.dss.gov.au/>

## National Disability Insurance Scheme

Melbourne City Mission has developed a planning tool to help prepare for your NDIS plan. People from trial sites report that it sometimes took a few goes and it's easy to forget things. There is a lot to consider and it is important you have time to talk to family and friends, to think and to plan. This tool is designed to help you do that.

**NDIS Planning Tool - <http://www.daru.org.au/resource/12097>**

For more information about this resource, contact ABI & Disability Intake Services at Melbourne City Mission: Tel: 1800 343 287

The AMIDA AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017

At the AGM the following Resolution was passed:

'that AMIDA appoints Collins & Co as the Financial Auditor from the 2017/18 financial year'

The AMIDA Committee for the 2017/18 year are:

Carmel Laragy	)
James Teeken	) continuing
Peter Waters	)
Amanda Millear	)
Luke Stone	) re-appointed
Norrie Blythman	)
Lincoln Humphreys	)

At the following meeting the following committee positions were decided:

Chairperson	-	Peter Waters
Treasurer	-	Carmel Laragy
Secretary	-	Norrie Blythman
Assistant Chairperson	-	Luke Stone

## WANTED - New Committee members

AMIDA is looking for people with a commitment to human rights and an interest in improving the lives of people with a disability to support us by joining our committee of management.

We are a disability advocacy group and support people with a disability to self advocate around problems they have with their housing. We also provide individual advocacy to stand beside people and speak with and for people when they need this. We have a commitment to systemic change too as the problems individuals face are often the result of wider systemic failings to respect people's rights.

Our committee has a majority of members who have a disability but we have a number of vacancies for anyone who shares our aims and can contribute to governance of our organisation. This involves helping with our policy and practice, monitoring finances and budgets, receiving worker reports and contributing to the planning of the group so that we work best to meet our aims.

Committee meetings are held at Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne once every month on Tuesdays from 10.00am to 1.00pm. You are welcome to attend a committee meeting or phone AMIDA on 9650 2722 to find out more. We also have a website [www.amida.org.au](http://www.amida.org.au).

If you receive a paper copy of the AMIDA NEWS, but would prefer to receive your AMIDA NEWS by email, please let us know:  
9650 2722 or [amida@amida.org.au](mailto:amida@amida.org.au).

Of course, we are very happy to continue to post you the AMIDA NEWS if that is your preference.



or



## Raising Our Voices Radio show on 3CR

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6.00 – 6.30pm

**Raising Our Voices is now podcast** - Go to: [www.3cr.org.au/raisingourvoices](http://www.3cr.org.au/raisingourvoices) and download Raising Our Voices to your computer.



*Copies of the radio shows are available from AMIDA on CD or audio tape, website [www.amida.org.au](http://www.amida.org.au)*



At the AMIDA AGM we celebrated 30 years of Raising Our Voices with the launch of a new CD. AMIDA and Reinforce have created hundreds of shows raising the issues that are barriers to equality and inclusion for all. The new CD highlights shows from the last 5 years since the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary compilation.

Amanda Millear with the ROV 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary CD.

Copies are available from the AMIDA office.

\*

In October, 2017 AMIDA made a submission in response to the Victorian Government's consultation paper on '**A registration and accreditation scheme for the Victorian disability workforce**'

Below are some of the points we made:

**Where are the greatest opportunities for a Victorian registration and accreditation scheme to provide value beyond the national quality and safeguarding system?**

AMIDA agrees that the aim should be to have a high quality service for people with disability by ensuring that workers have the necessary skills, experience and qualifications. If Victoria also has a registration and accreditation scheme, this will ensure that Victoria will have services of the highest quality and workers with the best experience.

A registration and accreditation scheme will provide consistency across a sector which has been fragmented, disjointed and inconsistent. When registration is linked to improved and standardized training such a registration scheme would enable planning for the future workforce. Any worker can be trained on top of the initial training (and experience) they already have, to suit each individual with disability that they work with.

In AMIDA's submission to the Family and Community Development Committee - for the inquiry into abuse in disability services in June 2015, we spoke about the fact that many people with disability are not able to speak up for themselves. With registration of all workers, and accreditation of courses, and with the expectation that all workers will receive standard (improved) training, this is a first step to ensuring that vulnerable people with disabilities who are unable to speak up for themselves will be in a less vulnerable position. Training for workers must emphasize human rights, disability standards, legal responsibilities and least restrictive practices. The workforce will be better trained with the accreditation of courses which will have a flow on effect to people with disabilities.

**Are there any problems that a registration and accreditation scheme may create that the Victorian Government needs to be aware of?**

Some people may see registration as a lessening of their control and choice, but AMIDA believes that a registration process can be developed which not only recognizes training, but also values experience and on-the-job training and induction by employers on top of formal qualifications. In developing the consultation paper, the government has already considered this issue, and refers to formal qualifications, as well as experience and the flexibility to recognize worker's induction. If this recognition of experience and induction into specific jobs can be added to formal qualifications and standard education in the basics of what is needed to work in the industry, this will ensure a much more equitable access to trained staff, than if this registration is not mandatory.

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of a scheme with a broad scope?**

The advantage of a broad scope of registration and accreditation is that everyone will know what is expected of a support worker in terms of their training, experience and understanding of the job required. It encourages high standards across Victoria.

The disadvantage might be that some people may be reluctant to study due to affordability/or accessibility of training; they may also be experienced and reluctant to do foundation training. However continuous improvement training could allow for needed updates in systems and practice.

This reluctance would not appear if there was registration and standard training which acknowledged the need for not just foundation but continuous improvement.

In AMIDA's submission of June 2015 to the Family and Community Development Committee - for the inquiry into abuse in disability services, we referred to the entrenchment of practices that result in abuse and neglect of vulnerable people. For workers to be registered and trained in accredited courses would mean that it is less likely that vulnerable people will be abused and neglected as the accredited courses would make it clear what is expected of a worker, and what is not acceptable. Training courses must be modified to include rights and choice and recognition of abuse and how to respond.

### **Do you support a broad scope?**

AMIDA supports a broad scope, so people with disability can be confident that whoever they employ will have basic, standard knowledge, along with their experience, and the adaptability to incorporate specific directions and needs of each person with disability that they work with.

Both support workers and service providers should be registered, thereby ensuring all workers have the basic knowledge of working with disability, to which individual training can be added.

As well as a basic broad training qualification requirement registration will need to be updated by additional units of training as things change, eg Childcare workers had to upgrade training to maintain their level of qualification.

This registration, training and accreditation of courses will mean that workforce recruitment will be an easier task - workers can be employed from a well-trained, up to date and enthusiastic pool of people, who understand their responsibilities, and the potential of people with disability.

In AMIDA's Submission on the NDIS - Code of Conduct from June 2017 we commented on one of the scenarios presented that

*"It is clear that workers need to have quality training in the areas of assisting people with disabilities to participate and have input into their daily lives and to not have limited expectations of people with a disability."*

*If workers don't carry out support plans including active support this should be considered 'abuse and neglect' and the code of conduct must be clearly linked to the training and support of staff."*

*Again, this lack of strategic support to enable people to become as independent as possible is linked to the Victorian Government's Zero Tolerance Approach to Abuse*

*and Neglect. The neglect occurs when support staff do not work to enable people to become as independent as possible and do not incorporate individual needs, abilities and possibilities into their day to day support of people."*

Again, a direct link is made between training and appropriate support.

Registration, along with the current worker safety screening requirements, police checks, working with children checks (if relevant to the role), Worker Exclusion List, Disqualified Carer Check and employment history check is vital to ensure the safety of people with disability. Screening, induction and supervision by suitably qualified people will be mean a workforce that is moving with the times, is flexible, and will provide sensitive and appropriate support for people.

Any training associated with Registration would cover the many areas that it is obvious are lacking in the knowledge of both service providers and support workers, ie the necessity to include family members in the planning and support of a person with a disability and the confusion that obviously exists between Guardianship, parents, decision making and Administration. Training would clarify these issues which are all too often confused and badly handled. AMIDA speaks about this in its submission on the NDIS Code of Conduct - June 2017. There is often a complete lack of information provided to a new support worker on a new client. And most notably there are very few shadow shifts associated with learning about new client (or worker from the perspective of the person with a disability). This can be rectified in registration, associated with good, accredited training.

Another area that is often overlooked is privacy. Sometimes a person's complete file is available to someone who only needs some of the information. This needs to be covered in training, available to both support workers and service providers.

The complete submission can be found on the AMIDA website:  
[www.amida.org.au](http://www.amida.org.au)

### Melbourne Through the Eyes of a Friend

Reinforce created a film, song and photographic exhibition by powerful self advocates which was launched on 28<sup>th</sup> November. It was a wonderful showcase of Melbourne by this enthusiastic group. Everyone agreed it was a resounding success.

**We Have a Voice** - The film is about the everyday struggles faced by people with an Intellectual Disability (ID).

Reinforce (and friends) are the Self-Advocacy group featured in the film.

Reinforce works with other Self-Advocacy groups to inform policies and decision makers in government, community and business to go beyond tokenism to real consumer and civic participation.

Contact Reinforce [www.reinforce.org.au](http://www.reinforce.org.au) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPEGFgq0BqA>



December, 2017



The AMIDA office is usually open:

Monday - Thursday - 9.30 - 5.00  
Friday 9.30 - 3.00

Please phone AMIDA for an appointment: 9650 2722

Email: [amida@amida.org.au](mailto:amida@amida.org.au)

Web: [www.amida.org.au](http://www.amida.org.au)



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All information contained within is as accurate as possible and is provided in good faith – however it is not guaranteed.*

AMIDA receives funding from the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, and the Victorian Department of Health & Human Services

You can offer any comments you have on AMIDA Policy or Newsletter by phone, email or writing:

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