

# AMIDA NEWS

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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.

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## **AMIDA's Submission Australian Building Codes Board Accessible Housing - Options Paper in Part November, 2018**

This can be found in full on the AMIDA website <http://www.amida.org.au/newsreport>

AMIDA's vision extends to accessible housing for every person in Australia and agrees with statements made in the draft response to ABCB Accessible Housing Options Paper by ANUHD to become mandated in the National Construction Code (NCC).

AMIDA is in agreement with the statement ANUHD "Given the decade of delay, the four levels of impact on society, and the ageing of Australia, the ABCB must go beyond the expected minimal approach that the housing industry might expect. It must adopt COAG's commitment to social inclusion and contemporary world-class urban design and architecture and implement option 3 (Gold level)."

AMIDA is in support of the agreed Universal Design Standard now known as the Livable Housing Design (LHD) at Gold Level (option 3) to create:

- A step-free entrance to the home
- Wider internal corridor and doors
- An accessible toilet or bathroom on the ground floor or entrance level
- A bathroom and shower that is easier to access
- Grabrails installed in bathroom and toilet (or capacity to do so)
- A ramp of safe pathway to the front door or other entrance
- Safer internal stairways and paths
- More space in and around the kitchen, capable of being adapted
- Ground (or entry) level bedroom
- Easy to reach light switches
- Doors that are easier to open and close

A meaningful level of accessibility is required as it will meet current needs and greatly reduce the need for further modification, and avoid the greater cost that modification brings. Gold level will better meet current and future demand. Current demand for

accessible housing from people with a disability is significant. If the level mandated in the code is too low it will not meet this current demand let alone future needs.

### **AMIDA NDIS Appeals Report -**

AMIDA NDIS Appeals currently has 55 files and two part time workers. Our cases are divided between unscheduled plan reviews, scheduled plan reviews and internal reviews. We have a couple of AAT cases, one regarding access and another on SDA. Every day we get 1 or 2 new requests for advocacy. We are at capacity, like so many of the other advocacy agencies, and unfortunately have to tell these people we are unable to assist. Although we often provide some on the spot advice, PWD are clearly in need of much more assistance than the government funding allows.

One problem we face are the inexcusably long NDIA delays for meetings. It no longer matters whether the issue is a plan review or an internal review, the time to get a date for a meeting is many months. And then it can be months before a new plan is issued.

Another problem is the increasing in complexity of reviews as the NDIA is becoming more evidence based. The stricter NDIA approach to evidence means that without reports, funding levels are reduced or not provided for at all in subsequent plans. The focus of the evidence must be the need for the support and the benefit which has been obtained from the support so far. We have a Medical Report Writing tip sheet for doctors and allied health workers, which is helpful.

Autism and psychosocial issues are increasingly complex issues for the NDIS. The NDIA has been making an effort to hold meetings for children with autism more quickly than older participants. With sufficient evidence we have been helping parents obtain some good funding levels for children with autism. But participants with psychosocial or SDA housing issues are still not being heard or resolved quickly, and to their detriment.

One aspect we have noticed is the apparent difference between regions. This may reflect the roll-out order and the fact that some areas are onto their second or third plan cycles. But time and experience is not necessarily resolving many of the issues.

### **SARU report**

The Self Advocacy Resource Unit has been very busy in the last month in with various groups. The Voice at the Table (VATT) has been involved with Professional Development Training for 'inclusive meetings' at Ross House with more sessions booked for Melbourne Uni, South Gippsland and Footscray Community Arts Centre.

The NDIS Transition Project has been involved supporting self-advocacy support workers including regular telephone and face-to-face support and advice.

The Australian Self Advocacy Project (ASAP) has been filming self advocates, government people and project workers. All videos will go on the National Self Advocacy Website which will have 80 videos. Stay tuned the website will up in February of next year.

### **Rainbow Rights and Advocacy**

Rainbow Rights and Advocacy is a self advocacy group run by and for people with an intellectual disability who identify as LGBTIQ+. Rainbow Rights is a unique group as they are the first self advocacy group for people with an intellectual disability in the LGBTIQ+ community in Victoria, and possibly Australia. Rainbow Rights were formed several years ago out of an idea from Pride Vic, an organisation that works with people with disabilities from the LGBTIQ+ community and with support from the Self Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU).

Rainbow Rights meet fortnightly to discuss issues, plan events and activities and think of ways to take their message out to the community. On 3 December 2018 Cameron Bloomfield, a member of Rainbow Rights, was interviewed by Myf Warhurst on ABC radio. Cameron spoke about the group and the discrimination that people with an intellectual disability who identify as LGBTIQ+ experience.

Myf's program goes Australia wide and here is a link to the podcast <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/myf-warhurst/rainbow-rights/10577954>

If you are interested in joining Rainbow Rights or want more information contact them at [rainbowrightsandadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowrightsandadvocacy@gmail.com)

The AMIDA AGM was held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018

The AMIDA Committee for the 2018/19 year are:

At the following meeting the following committee positions were decided:

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

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

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

I apologise if you have asked to receive this by email and it hasn't been activated yet. We have had some problems with our database. So please email me on [project@amida.org.au](mailto:project@amida.org.au) if you wish to receive your newsletter by email. Thank you for your patience.



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.



AMIDA

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

Since our last newsletter in Sep 18 AMIDA have been continuing to offer interesting topics of discussion for the monthly Raising Our Voices show.

Sep – What do you know about the United Nations? With Lisa Brumtis from BIM Advocate and Bronwyn Trickett AMIDA Advocate

Oct – Impacts of the SkyRail. With Lachlan Jones Advocate, John McPherson Transport Activist and Bronwyn Trickett AMIDA Advocate

Nov – Rainbow Rights. With Cameron and Bronwyn Trickett AMIDA Advocate

Dec – National Awards for Disability Leadership. With Jane Rosengrave Reinforce Advocate, Janice Slattery Reinforce Advocate and Bronwyn Trickett AMIDA Advocate

Special Aired on 3 Dec – International Day for People with Disability – Choices and Rights in the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community. With Vivianna from Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities (ADEC), Lisa Brumtis BIM Advocate and Bronwyn Trickett AMIDA Advocate.

AMIDA will be meeting with committee members and self - advocates to discuss upcoming topics for shows in 2019. Stay tuned.



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

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

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