

DWE NEWSLETTER

December 2011



Introduction: Hello readers! **Merry Christmas to everyone!** Welcome to our newsletter. Theme today is more news about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The national campaign (or online petition) for support has almost reached its target of 100,000 registered supporters, so congratulations need to go to John Della Bosca and the 'Every Australian Counts' campaign team and all of you who have registered. If you haven't done so already – get in there quick and nudge us over the line!

Recent statistics ranks Australia in 23rd of 29 OECD countries of people with an impairment living in poverty! Surely not in this great country? Yes – unfortunately it's true! The implementation of the NDIS will hopefully remedy this to a degree. Recently at the National Press Club in Canberra, Dr Rhonda Galbally had an opportunity to advocate for the NDIS, so I have included a brief snippet of her speech for your perusal.

As Christmas Day is almost upon us, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our clients, colleagues, followers and friends in the industry for being part of our journey this past year. Thanks also to all those people who have contributed or regularly send positive responses to our newsletters – we value your input – keep them coming! We have enjoyed every one of our contracts and our interaction with you all. **We hope that you have a safe, fun, loving and healthy festive season.** We look forward to more interaction with you into the New Year.

Our news: DWE will be operating over the festive period and into January so if you have any disability specific training needs, help with policy preparation or action plans please don't hesitate to book us in for 2012.

News article: 'Australia ranks among worst in OECD on needs of disabled'

by: *Stephen Lunn, Social Affairs Writer* From: The Australian, November 30, 2011

THE disabled are more likely to be living in poverty in Australia than any other developed country, and the nation ranks in the bottom third of OECD nations in employing those with a disability.

The findings are contained in a PricewaterhouseCoopers report published today, which says the proposed no-fault National Disability Insurance Scheme, important as it is, should not be seen as the panacea to redress the imbalance. Broader social and cultural changes are needed, including a greater acceptance of the disabled in workplaces, says Disability Expectations: Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia.

PwC government sector leader Chris Bennett said: "It's clear the current system is broken big time. When you see Australia sitting last in OECD rankings on poverty for people with disabilities, it's just wrong. If we were sitting that low in the rankings in cricket or rugby Australians wouldn't countenance it."

Another PwC partner, John Walsh, who worked with the Productivity Commission to deliver an influential report into the NDIS, said the no-fault insurance scheme could help drive greater workforce and community participation for those with disabilities, but only if it was accompanied by a broader cultural shift.

"Without other things happening, an NDIS won't deliver its full potential," Mr Walsh said.

"If kids with disability can't get into education or access transport to get to a job, we'll continue to fall further behind even with an NDIS." The new report finds people with a disability in Australia are half as likely to be employed as people without a disability, when the OECD average is 60 per cent, ranking Australia 21st out of 29 nations. It also finds that 45 per cent of people with a disability in Australia live in or near poverty, the worst in the OECD, where the average is 22 per cent.

Implementation of an NDIS could support an additional 370,000 people with disabilities into the workforce by 2050, it says. An additional 80,000 carers could also enter the workforce as they are freed up from their responsibilities.

Opposition disabilities spokesman Mitch Fifield yesterday questioned the Gillard government's commitment to an NDIS in the wake of yesterday's mid-year economic and fiscal outlook.

"Australians with disability and their families are entitled to be cynical about the government's commitment to an NDIS in the absence of any money in the mini-budget," Senator Fifield said.

"The government has raised expectations about a better deal for people with disability. It would be cruel if these were dashed. Without funding in the mini-budget, the government's commitment to an NDIS remains in-principle only."

John Della Bosca, national campaign director of the Every Australian Counts campaign and a former NSW Labor cabinet minister, said future labour market shortages were front of mind for many employers, and with the right infrastructure and culture people with disability were a huge resource ready to be tapped.

Dr Galbally reinforced the existence of the current problems and of the need for complete reform - **not just more funding to compound the existing problems.**

At the National Press Club in Canberra, Dr Galbally said:

The national disability insurance scheme will mean that people with a disability will become fully citizens of Australia rather than objects of charity. They will be able to participate in the community; becoming neighbours, colleagues and friends.

In the process they will become people seen as worthy of investment; as Australians with potential; as valuable contributing citizens of this country.

The national disability insurance scheme means that Australians with disabilities in their families will move from begging to dignity. They will move from charity to human rights. Australia will leapfrog from being one of the worst OECD performers on disability into a leadership position.

The national disability insurance scheme is this generation's greatest reform, benefiting every Australian. Every Australian is a stakeholder in the development of the national disability insurance scheme.

http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/act_now/

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