



Introduction: Hello readers! Welcome to our newsletter. We are regularly asked to promote different events throughout the year and attend many as a matter of course. Some work really well and others - not so well. Strangely, the ones that work the best are the ones that actually go to great lengths to make sure the event is accessible and enjoyable for **everyone**. This month's newsletter will promote an upcoming event in Ballarat – which is open to visitors from further away of course and also give you **'10 top tips for creating an accessible event'**.

Any feedback or contributions for future events are most welcome, this newsletter is distributed across the Country.

Soap box:

As some of you may be aware, writing a Disability Action Plan (DAP) can be a complicated and time consuming process and needs someone with disability expertise to ensure that it mitigates your risk from litigation in the case of a disability discrimination complaint (unlikely as that may seem).

Unlike a normal organisational strategy, there are aspects of writing a DAP that, unless disability is your core business, some items that need attention may be unintentionally omitted. To be fully comfortable with the level of protection available by having a current DAP in place, the effectiveness is dependent on identifying the existing issues and articulating the actions to remedy those issues – this happens only after a thorough consultation process. If disability is not your core business, 'you don't know, what you don't know' and the DAP won't achieve the outcomes necessary under the current legislation! Please ask for help – we would be happy to send a check list to you (for free) of the types of things you will need to consider when writing your own Plan.

Our news:

We are happy to announce that we will be working with three large hospitals in Western Victoria to help them create their inaugural Disability Action Plans (DAP) as well as a couple of Rural Councils. Don't forget that we can offer a "How to write you own Disability Action Plan workshop" if you do not have funding for a consultant to do it for you. Options can include a one to one session for 3 hrs or a 5 hour workshop that can have an assortment of participants who can share the cost. Call us to discuss further if you're interested.

Other services:

Centacare Ballarat is hosting a FREE Health and Wellbeing Expo!

When: Wednesday 16th June, 10am – 3pm

Where: Coinda Centre, 10 Learmonth Rd Wendouree

What: The Expo will showcase a range of information to assist people to continue to remain independent and enhance their wellbeing. Lots of free health and hearing checks, activities, entertainment and refreshments available.

How: Just turn up on the day or for more information call HACC worker, Benita on 5336 7900

As promised before, here are our '10 top tips for creating an accessible event'

1. **Venue selection** – choose a venue with a level entry, automatic opening doors and an accessible toilet (we do not refer to it a 'disabled' toilet, a toilet that is 'disabled' would surely need a plumber!!!) ☺

2. **Promoting the event** – create flyers or invites that have more than a phone number to RSVP (e.g. if someone is deaf, how would they RSVP?) – adding email, fax or SMS mobile numbers would cater for everyone.
3. **Offering supports** - ask if any guests would need extra supports e.g. interpreters (sign or multicultural), hearing augmentation, special diets, carers or reserved seating up the front (where appropriate) for people with a vision or hearing impairment.
4. **Transport** – choosing a venue that has a covered drop-off area for taxis or an ‘accessible’ car park near the entrance is preferred.
5. **Signage** – in the entrance, ensure your signage is clear, large text, good contrast and avoid fancy fonts (we recommend using Arial – as big as you can print it).
6. **Considering people with a hearing impairment** – if requested, provide a ‘hearing augmentation’ and or sign interpreters. Ensure you have a handout of the information (or electronic versions) available in case people with a hearing impairment miss something. If you have interpreters, ensure there is plenty of lighting on them.
7. **Considering people with a mobility impairment** – ensure there is a clear path of travel into and around the venue, provide extra space for manoeuvring and provide empty spaces for wheelchairs, scooters or walking frames.
8. **Considering people with a vision impairment** – ensure the lighting is bright enough for people to negotiate their way and for the presenters to be seen clearly. Also, make presentations or handouts available in a large text or offer electronic versions.
9. **Catering** – if finger food is offered, ensure there are chairs, plates and cutlery for people who may need to use them. Make available some mugs instead of cups and saucers and have straws on hand. Catering for different dietary needs is good practice.
10. **Technology** – if there is a podium, make sure it is accessible in case you have a presenter who has a disability. Provide alternatives to a lectern in case there is someone of short stature or in a seated position and provide roving or lapel microphones. Be prepared to have someone on hand to help with laptops and projectors (we could probably all do with that help!)

If you follow these guidelines, your event will provide ACCESS for ALL.

If you would like more information on ‘Creating an accessible event’ please contact us.

Archived newsletters are available from our website: www.disabilityconsultants.com.au/news/

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