



Individual Placement and Support update

The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model is an employment model that assists people with severe and persistent mental illness to seek and obtain meaningful work. The NDCOWA program has been working collaboratively with the West Australian Association of Mental Health (WAAMH) to encourage implementation of the IPS in WA.

WAAMHs IPS project officer, Philleen Dickson, has worked tirelessly over the past 12 months to establish IPS sites around WA. The Armadale Mental Health Service and disability employment service (DES), ORS, have recently joined Kimberley Mental Health Services and Kimberley Personnel in Broome as the second fully operational IPS site.



Dr Geoff Waghorn

Two other South Metropolitan Mental Health Services are in negotiation with DES providers regarding IPS implementation on their sites. There is no doubt that having Area Manager, Mark Pestell, as an IPS champion has made a big difference to progressing IPS implementation in the south metropolitan region. Interest is now being shown in the North Metropolitan Mental Health Service and also in the South West.

The NDCO program and WAAMH are jointly supporting Geoff Waghorn to return to WA on May 14th and 15th to share his knowledge and expertise with services implementing or considering implementation of the IPS model. Dr Waghorn heads the Social Inclusion and Recovery Research team at Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research. A program for the May event is currently being organised and will be advertised in the near future.

Pathways 12 conference, December 2014

The Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND) Pathways 12 Conference is a biennial conference that brings together a range of professional and academic staff to identify and remove barriers for people with disability participating in higher education and training.

This year the Pathways 12 conference is being held in Perth at the Esplanade Hotel from December 3rd to 5th with a number of distinguished speakers exploring the theme 'Navigating New Frontiers.'

The WA NDCOs and the Tertiary Education Disability Access Network Inc. (TEDAN), which is a WA based association of university and TAFE based Disability Advisors, are responsible for organising this year's conference.

The organisers have been fortunate in attracting a renowned international academic, Dr. Sheryl Burgstahler, as the opening keynote speaker exploring 'Universal Design.' UD has been applied to many educational products (computers, websites, software, textbooks, and lab equipment) and environments (dormitories, classrooms, student union buildings, libraries, and distance learning courses).

For further information about the conference, visit <http://www.pathways12.org.au/>



Future Possibilities for Employers

March 20th saw the inaugural Future Possibilities Conference for Employers take place at the Sanctuary Golf Resort, Bunbury. This new conference was built on the Future Possibilities Youth and Future Possibilities Parent conferences, which have operated successfully for a number of years.

More than 80 people, including 30 employers, attended the event. The purpose of the conference was to provide information on the economic benefits of employing people with disability and process and/or avenues through which they can be employed.



Left to right: Brett Carter, Marilyn Novak and Dale Arthur.

The Conference began with breakfast and then continued through to a light lunch. The venue was generously provided by Sanctuary Golf Resort, with most of the ancillary costs being met through the Department of Employment's Regional Education Skills and Jobs programs and South West VetLink. Thanks to Lee Miles and Donna Wroth for their ongoing support.

The NDCO program funded the opening keynote speaker, Brett Carter, an HR generalist from IKEA in Perth, which employs almost 500 people. Brett presented a compelling case for diversity in the workplace as a healthy work environment that not only reflects society, but also provides increased productivity. He also made the economic case for employing people with disability.

From his own experience he found them generally to be more dedicated workers with greater length of tenure than other employees. On average they stayed more than half as long again as employees without disability. This ensures a considerable saving of employment and training costs over time.

A number of other speakers gave presentations covering the various aspects of disability employment. DSC Regional Manager, Marilyn Novak, outlined on the pivotal role of DSC Local Area Co-ordinators linking individuals to the right services in the context of job preparation and later job placement and support.

Region 26 NDCO, Dale Arthur, spoke of his own experiences of being an employee with multiple disabilities. His personal motto is that, 'A disability is the opportunity to do what you want to do in a different way!' The challenge for employers and providers is to match the job with those abilities and turn them into an opportunity for the potential employee and an economic benefit for the employer.

The Department of Social Services Contract Manager, Brian Matthews provided an overview of each of the local Disability Employment Services providers. Bunbury Farmers Market provided an excellent example of effective disability employment in the local setting. They currently employ some 15 people with disability.



Standing left to right, Dr Greg Lewis, Donna Wroth, Cath Parker, Philleen Dickson, Di Pugh, Rangli Pouwhare, Dale Arthur. Sitting left to right Jennifer Kitchin, Stephanie Soter, Jackie Weinman and Alex Murphy.

Introducing the NDCOWA Advisory Committee

The WA NDCO program is pleased and proud to introduce its newly formed NDCOWA Advisory Committee. The purpose of the Advisory Committee over the three-year contract is to advise and support the NDCO program in WA as it seeks to address barriers to participation in tertiary education and employment by improving the co-ordination and collaboration among service providers and building their capability to support people with disability.

Committee members are:

- Dr Greg Lewis, Executive Director, EDGE Employment Solutions (the auspicing organisation) and NDCO Program Manager;
- Dale Arthur, NDCO Southern WA;
- Alex Murphy, NDCO Metropolitan Perth;
- Rangli Pouwhare, NDCO Northern WA;
- Cath Parker, Disability Services Coordinator, Polytechnic West;
- Donna Wroth, Executive Officer, South West VETlink;
- Philleen Dickson, IPS State Project Lead, WA Association of Mental Health;
- Jennifer Kitchin, former rural DES CEO, NDCO and National VET Equity Advisory Council member;
- Stephanie Soter, CEO Pilbara, Joblink;
- Jackie Weinman, (Disability Advisor, Counselling and Disability Services, Curtin University); and
- Di Pugh, former Consultant, Students with Disability Team, Catholic Education.

The Advisory Committee held the first meeting on Tuesday 25th February 2014.

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