

disAbility Update

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About disAbility Update

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Front page: Nada Pagan, a talented athlete and artist, with the mosaic art project she helped create at the William Langford Community House. See story page 9.



There's no doubt that strong systems are important to give people with disability the opportunity to have a good life in the community. But it's equally true that the success of those systems relies on real people.

It is people who provide the essential support on a daily basis to people with disability, and help bring to life their dreams and aspirations.

Those people were honoured at the 2015 Disability Support Awards, held

by National Disability Services WA on 28 March.

As a parent-carer, I am critically aware of the importance of working with committed and caring support workers wherever we live across our vast State.

I applaud and congratulate our leading performers and their workmates for their integrity, passion and friendship. This annual recognition reminds us all that no matter what reforms are being made across the disability sector – and there are plenty of them at the moment – people are at the heart of this system.

In Western Australia, we have long been recognised for our world-class disability system, and we will make sure any future changes maintain and improve on that high standard.

The sector is also expanding to provide the sorts of services and supports people want, and our support models continue to develop to better meet peoples' needs.

One thing that won't change, however, is the need for the disability sector to attract and retain quality staff.

Our disability service system has doubled in size over the past 10 years, and it is likely to double again within the next decade.

That means there will need to be a significant increase in the number of trained and committed staff who are willing to forge careers supporting people with disability.

Based on the outstanding support workers at the annual awards, it appears there will always be quality people who want to take on valuable roles to assist our people with disability to be included in their community – I commend and thank you all.

Bruce Langoulant

Chairperson

Disability Services Commission

LeadAbility sets course for trailblazers



Count Me In Ambassador Imran Ariff (left) and Alex McInnes were among the graduates of last year's LeadAbility course. Photo courtesy Leadership WA.

Creating positive change and gaining the confidence to be a reliable voice for people with disability are two of the skills focused on in a course being offered by Leadership Western Australia in partnership with the Disability Services Commission.

The five-day LeadAbility course is designed for people with disability, carers, support workers and disability advocates.

Leadership WA Chief Executive Dr Sue van Leeuwen said the course is for passionate people who want to learn to become influential, confident and effective leaders within their community.

"We are highly aware that people with disability in our State make significant contributions through ambassadorship and also have influence on policy-making," Dr van Leeuwen said.

"We would like more of these people, as well as disability advocates, to sign up for the course so they can hone their skills and acquire the strategies they need to better

develop effective leadership styles.

"Leadership WA is delighted that this year, the Commission has come on board as a partner of LeadAbility."

The Commission's Operations Executive Director Chris Yates is working closely with Leadership WA on the initiative.

"We recognise that Leadership WA offers quality programs. The LeadAbility course in particular aims to build people's skills so that they will be better placed to exercise choice and control regarding the supports and services they receive," Mr Yates said.

"We hope graduates from this course can use their knowledge and skills to actively promote citizenship, mutual support and a fair go within our communities, which is the State's Count Me In vision," he said.

2014 LeadAbility graduates include Count Me In Ambassador Imran Ariff and Bec Dewar, who was featured in this magazine's Spring 2014 edition.

Another graduate, Leanne Ferris, said: "I highly recommend the LeadAbility course for people who want to improve their leadership skills and see change in their community or field of work."

The course will be run twice this year – from June to August and from September to November. To apply for the course or for more information, phone 9369 6777 or email admin@leadershipwa.org.au.

Cockburn and Kwinana trial ready for launch

The Disability Services Commission is finalising preparations for the WA NDIS My Way Cockburn and Kwinana trial, which begins in less than two months on 1 July.

My Way Coordinators are engaging with people with disability, families and carers in the area and starting the planning process.

My Way Regional Director Russell Smith said: "We are looking forward to providing opportunities for innovative and flexible supports.

"We are now finalising the recruitment of

an Allied Health consultant and My Way Coordinator with mental health experience."

Mr Smith said construction of a new office in Kwinana is due for completion in June.

"The WA NDIS My Way team will inform stakeholders about the opening date and the address once the information is finalised," he said.

For more information about WA NDIS My Way phone 1800 996 214, email MyWay@dsc.wa.gov.au or visit www.disability.wa.gov.au > WA NDIS My Way.

My Way improves quality of life



Life has improved for Ben White.

Margaret River man Ben White is enjoying a healthier, more rewarding life thanks to the personal plan he developed as part of the WA NDIS My Way trial.

Before being found eligible for WA NDIS My Way supports and services, Mr White, who has schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder and an acquired brain injury, had ongoing weight and dental issues.

Due to difficulty managing his psychosocial

disability, he was under constant threat of eviction from his Homeswest unit.

"Ben was operating only at survival level and was dependent on me coming to the rescue every few months," said his mother Veronica Ninham, who lives in Canberra.

"I worried that if I could no longer visit regularly, Ben would lose his accommodation and become homeless."

Although Mr White's psychiatric diagnosis remains the same, his support worker helps him to remember his psychiatric appointments each month and to collect his medication.

With the support of his My Way Coordinator, he developed an individualised plan to meet his needs and aspirations.

With a more planned approach, Mr White has a better quality of life.

With improved exercise, cooking and dietary habits, and help from his support worker, Mr White lost about 10kg and renewed his passion for painting.

"The highlight of his WA NDIS My Way journey has been his first solo art exhibition, where he sold most of the paintings," Mrs Ninham said.

"This success has given Ben a huge boost of confidence and a belief that he can have a worthwhile life."

Grants boost for inclusive events

Organisations will again be able to apply for Disability Services Commission grants to hold events during Disability Awareness Week in December.

In 2014, Count Me In grants were available to help them run inclusive events during Disability Awareness Week.

Commission Director General Ron Chalmers said that in response to feedback, the Commission trialled a grants program in 2014 instead of holding one central awards program itself.

“The trial was very successful, with people across the State participating in events which promoted and encouraged inclusion,” Dr Chalmers said.

This year, organisations will be able to apply for \$250 grants for smaller events and \$500 grants for larger events.

Disability Awareness Week this year is from 29 November to 5 December and includes the



Disability service provider Valued Independent People (VIP) was one of the groups to receive a Disability Awareness Week grant in 2014.

International Day of People with Disability on 3 December.

More information and application forms will be available from the Commission’s website (www.disability.wa.gov.au) in the coming months.

Review prompts fresh approach to advocacy services

The Disability Services Commission has reviewed the way it funds advocacy services for people with disability and as a result, is making changes to improve the system.

The review found that independent advocacy services had played an essential role in supporting people with disability over many years and will continue to be required, Strategy Executive Director Wendy Murray said.

“However, the review also identified a need to improve efficiency and equity of access,” Ms Murray said.

“As a result, while the Commission will continue funding advocacy services it will also restructure its approach to buying services.”

An open tender process for independent individual advocacy services will be advertised in May and is expected to be finalised in September 2015.

Recurrent funding of \$2 million will be available to organisations to provide services for people with disability who are Aboriginal, live in regional and remote areas, are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse or who would like general independent individual advocacy.

For more information visit www.disability.wa.gov.au > Individuals, carers and families > Your rights or phone 9426 9308.

Grants program supports community infrastructure

Community organisations and local governments that would like to create more accessible community equipment, facilities and spaces can now apply for a Disability Services Commission community infrastructure grant.

Interested parties can apply for up to \$50,000 for small-scale projects under the program.

“Successful grant recipients must demonstrate how they will achieve Count Me In strategy objectives to create well-planned communities with better accessibility,” the Commission’s Strategy Executive Director Wendy Murray said.

“We are investing in projects to increase opportunities for social inclusion so people with disability are welcomed to participate fully in community life.”

Applicants must clearly state why their proposed project is a priority and needed within the community. Applicants must also explain how the project can achieve a sustainable approach for accessibility, inclusion and participation for people with disability.



In 2013, Kalamunda Water Park installed a pool hoist, which allows users with disability to use the swimming pool with ease. Photo courtesy Shire of Kalamunda.

More information about the grants, how to apply and closing dates will be available on the Commission’s website from early May 2015 www.disability.wa.gov.au > About us > Count Me In or email cmi@dsc.wa.gov.au .

Ambassador prompts arena access

Count Me In Ambassador Melissa Northcott’s efforts to make the Perth Arena safer for people with disability and mobility issues have paid off.

Ms Northcott said that last year she raised concerns about safety at the arena with the WA Premier and other parliamentarians, including former Sports Minister Terry Waldron and Disability Services Minister Helen Morton. She asked that safety railings, wheelchair guards and/or wheelchair locks be installed in the arena’s wheelchair accessible areas.

Ms Northcott, a City of Armadale Councillor and Disability Services Commission Board member, also asked that wheelchair patrons

have priority use of the lifts immediately before and after events at the arena.

“I’m delighted to say my concerns were heard – Perth Arena has installed railings in the wheelchair areas and safeguards preventing non-wheelchair users from misusing seats in those areas,” Ms Northcott said.

“There are also signs by the lifts saying: ‘The lifts are strictly for use by mobility impaired patrons 10 minutes prior and after the conclusion of events’.”

For more about accessible information at Perth Arena, phone 6365 0700 or visit www.pertharena.com.au .

People and Communities



Support from his family and his LAC is assisting Coen Walmsley to live life the way he wants.

High achiever realises job and independence dreams

Waroonna teenager Coen Walmsley has achieved more in his 18 years than many of us could dream of realising in a lifetime.

Mr Walmsley, who has autism, has flown an aeroplane, worked as a volunteer in Fiji, sailed on the Leeuwin tall ship, secured employment with a Canning Vale business and found his own shared accommodation.

Commission Local Area Coordinator Marie Finch said Mr Walmsley always had well-defined ideas of what his future could look like.

“There was clearly some nervousness around this young man and his capacity to chase his dreams, independently of the family and without formal support,” Mrs Finch said.

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She helped him build confidence and encouraged him to try new environments and challenges, which resulted in him achieving independence.

Mr Walmsley's parents Mike and Donna are proud of their son's achievements and thankful for Mrs Finch's support and expertise.

"Marie has been the most supportive and influential LAC we have had," Mrs Walmsley said.

"She suggested Coen join the Air Force Cadet Program in Mandurah in 2012 and assisted with funding for him to obtain his student's pilot's licence through the Air Force Cadets in 2013."

After completing Year 12 in 2014, Mr Walmsley opted to volunteer in Fiji with the Rustic Pathways leavers' volunteer program.

"He lived and worked with a family, had to sleep on the floor, eat different food, use a

drop toilet and bathe in a river. He adapted easily," Mrs Walmsley said.

The overseas trip, sailing on the Leeuwin and gaining his student's pilot's licence boosted her son's self-esteem and confidence, and led to him gaining independence away from the family farm in Waroona.

"Coen applied online for a job, through a recruitment agency, and secured the position himself, and then found accommodation sharing with two others," Mrs Walmsley said.

Mrs Walmsley said Mrs Finch's knowledge about programs and available funding has allowed her son to enjoy and achieve wonderful dreams that would otherwise be out of reach.

"Without Marie's help and support in the last few years, we would not have known of other opportunities and options available to a young man of Coen's age."

Recyclers turn waste into wares



Joshua Flintoff (left) and Courtney Smith with some of their paper products.

Two young men, building an environmentally-friendly business, have sold their wares at the Men's Shed Craft Market in Mosman Park.

Joshua Flintoff, 18, and Courtney Smith, 18, make fire-lighters and paper art products from

newspapers they collect each week from their local communities.

Their business benefits not only them but the community and the environment.

The two men have autism and Mr Flintoff's mother Deb Flintoff said by engaging their specific interests and skills set, they are taking the adage 'reduce, reuse and recycle' to the next level.

Mrs Flintoff said what started as a recycling activity at school and home has turned into an innovative and eco-friendly business.

"Joshua, who lives in Karrinyup, and Courtney, who lives in Success, collect used and unsold newspapers from their respective local communities," she said.

"With guidance from their families, a dedicated support network, their schools and various wonderful members of the community, the business called The Really Useful Recyclers has evolved into an important and empowering part of both Joshua and Courtney's routine and identity."

Nada strives to score life goals

Twenty-year-old Nada Pagan, who has intellectual disability, dreams of playing soccer for Australia and her Local Area Coordinator Trent Langer believes she has the determination to make it happen.

For now, Ms Pagan hopes to join a local soccer team to get one step closer to realising her aspirations of playing in the Paralympics.

As a child in Sudan, the Langford woman spent a lot of time kicking balls around so it is no surprise she is a natural athlete.

“We couldn’t be in a soccer club because you needed a lot of money,” Ms Pagan said.

At 13, after arriving in Australia, she played club soccer for about a year.

Mr Langer is now supporting her in re-joining a women’s team in a local soccer club.

“Football West identified Nada as someone with exceptional talent at a one-off training session in Cockburn in 2014,” he said.

Football West Inclusive Participation Officer Gordon Duus said Ms Pagan had been identified as one of the stand-out talented players in the State. “She could make the State Special Olympics A side,” he said.

Ms Pagan and her siblings left Sudan for Egypt in 2003. They arrived in Melbourne in 2005 and have lived in Perth since 2007.

She completed Year 12 at Melville Senior High School, which provided classes for students who spoke English as a second language.

Ms Pagan attends English and art classes at the William Langford Community House each week and has contributed to a group mosaic art piece (see page 1 photo). She also volunteers at English classes at the centre.

“Here it is really good, because it is helping,” she said. “They are very nice people.”

Mr Langer is understandably proud of Ms Pagan.

“When I first met Nada, a year ago, she was very shy,” he said.

“She has shown such a willingness to try things out. She has been doing such a great job here at the William Langford Community



Nada Pagan hopes to realise her dream of representing Australia in soccer.

House and she is well liked.

“With her determination and willingness to give things a go, I’m confident things will happen for her.”

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Accolade recognises passionate coordinator

Compassion, dedication and integrity are core characteristics that make an exceptional Local Area Coordinator (LAC), and it was no surprise that Kim Proctor was recognised for his work.

The South Central LAC was presented with a framed certificate and named inaugural recipient of the Family Award for Quality Practice in the Disability Sector at his regular bi-monthly fathers' group meeting in December.

Some families in Mr Proctor's area wanted to nominate him for the 2015 Disability Support Awards but found out that LACs could not be nominated.

Not to be deterred, the families initiated the family award where nominees could include people working in human services and disability services, particularly in Local Area Coordination and WA NDIS My Way.

Community organisation Human Chain Foundation will now host the annual tribute.

Human Chain Foundation Chair Jane Browne Eacott said the families who nominated



Lughan Doran (left) and Aaron Facott presented the award to Kim Proctor (centre).

Mr Proctor were grateful for his consistent, sensitive support.

"The difference he makes to society in the work he does and through influencing others, with his steadfast values, makes our world a better place," she said.

My Way Coordinator boosts teen's spirits

For many of us, the early teen years are tough – full of uncertainty, confusion and even anger.

For 15-year-old Lochlan Wilson, life was further complicated by an intellectual disability and anxiety disorder.

However, his mother Rhonda Mariot said her son's life has turned around thanks to the perseverance and support of WA NDIS My Way Coordinator Joel Colley.

As part of his role, Mr Colley supports Lochlan to reach the goals outlined in his My Way plan.

"Before Lochlan had his My Way plan developed, he had behavioural issues," Ms Mariot said.

"He was sort of angry and would lash out and we would have to guess why he was acting out, but he has come along so much.

"He is more positive and even talks to us about things. He has more energy and is more responsible."

Ms Mariot said Lochlan was able to relate easily to Mr Colley.

"Thanks to Joel's work and that of the WA NDIS My Way team, a weight has been lifted from my shoulders," she said.

The Munster teenager has progressed so much that he has secured a position working two and a half days a week at a Spearwood vehicle repairs business.

"Lochlan is taking control of his life and makes his own phone calls, while in the past he would ask me to do it. He is a different person and his communication skills have improved," Ms Mariot said.

Commission offers more inclusion and participation grants

A second round of Community Inclusion and Participation grants is now available to organisations and local governments.

VisAbility will again partner with the Disability Services Commission to manage the grants program.

The Commission's Strategy Executive Director Wendy Murray said grant applicants must demonstrate how their initiatives will achieve the State Government's Count Me In strategy.

"Successful projects will improve opportunities for people to be actively involved and included in community life as well as raise awareness about access, inclusion and participation for people with disability," Ms Murray said.

"For example, the MTI Golf Academy at The Vines was one of the first grant recipients announced in January, for its First Swing Golf Program for children with disability to help them learn golfing skills."



Sarah and Charlotte Dethloff are among those involved in the First Swing Golf program.

Applications for the grants opened on 4 May and will close on 10 July.

For more information about the current or previous Community Inclusion and Participation grants programs, phone the Commission's Senior Policy and Program Officer Melané White on 6104 9510 or visit www.disability.wa.gov.au > About us > Count Me In.

Project targets healthier lifestyles

The Disability Services Commission has provided grants to Nulsen Disability Services and Brightwater Care Group to develop healthier lifestyle strategies for people with disability who live in supported accommodation.

"In June, we are starting the Health and Wellbeing project in partnership with Nulsen and Brightwater, to identify wellbeing strategies that can be duplicated or adopted across the disability sector," the Commission's Statewide Consultancy Services Manager Sharleen Chilvers said.

Ms Chilvers said the strategies developed

in the Health and Wellbeing project will also complement the work of the Disability Health Network.

A reference group of Commission staff, disability service providers, people with disability, families and carers will provide guidance on the project.

For more information about the project, contact the Commission's Principal Disability Health Coordinator Tricia Dewar on 6104 9509 or Tricia.Dewar@dsc.wa.gov.au.

Trust supports trial of children's mobility program



Georgia Farnan has made significant improvements using the Pilates reformer.

A Trust established to honour brothers who had neurological disability has awarded \$28,000 to a program that aims to improve children's mobility.

Ailsa and Bert Brealey set up and named the Jon and Barry Brealey Trust after their sons, who lived with Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome.

The not-for-profit White Zebra Foundation recently received funding from the Trust to trial a clinical Pilates pilot program for children with physical disability.

Senior physiotherapist Jodie Kariyawasam for Wize Therapy, an organisation for young

people which runs White Zebra, said the trial would enable staff to gather evidence related to the clinical trial.

"Over the last two years we've been observing unusual gains in motor function in children participating in our functional clinical Pilates program," she said.

A Pilates reformer will be used in the trial. It enables users to complete assistive or resistive exercise sequences, in a variety of positions and in many directions.

"While there is no known published research in Australia about the benefits for children with disability using the reformer, we have observed a significant improvement in their physical progress after using the machine," Ms Kariyawasam said.

Five-year-old Georgia Farnan, who has spastic diplegia cerebral palsy, has made significant improvements using the device.

"The confidence in her movements through increased coordination, strength and flexibility has allowed her to participate in more playground activities" Georgia's mother Claire Gardiner said.

"Her teacher stopped the class to watch Georgia climb the stairs and go down the slide on her own for the first time."

The White Zebra Foundation provides financial assistance for people who could not otherwise afford Wize Therapy's services. For information phone 9317 7932 or email carol.philippe@wizetherapy.com.au.

Accessible units offer more choice

Rocky Bay has broadened its accommodation choices to include independent living units, which were opened in March.

The new units located in Mosman Park, will have onsite medical and daily living support available to residents.

Disability Services Minister Helen Morton and Rocky Bay Chairman Graham McHarrie helped resident Danny Tuckey cut a ribbon to officially open the complex.

“The units are next door to Rocky Bay’s Lucy Creeth residence, so the new residents will also have the valuable opportunity to participate in the vibrant Rocky Bay community while enjoying their independence,” the Minister said.

The units have large automated doors, wide passages, universally accessible living spaces and adjustable height kitchen benches and tables.

The Minister said that for seven of the 16 residents, the move into independent living was a huge achievement, with some having lived in Lucy Creeth for more than 30 years.



Rocky Bay Chairman Graham McHarrie and Disability Services Minister Helen Morton assisted resident Danny Tuckey (left) in officially opening the units. Photo courtesy Rocky Bay.

Companion Card honour for Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo’s long-term commitment to access and inclusion for people with disability has been recognised with the Companion Card Affiliate of the Year Award.

Disability Services Minister Helen Morton presented Perth Zoo with the award in February on behalf of National Disability Services, which operates the Companion Card program in Western Australia.

The Disability Services Commission funded program gives people with disability the opportunity to attend cultural, entertainment, sport and recreation events and services with a carer, at no cost to the carer.

For more information, visit www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au > Visit > Accessibility.

News briefs

University recognises placements support

Curtin University has acknowledged the Disability Services Commission's role in supporting occupational therapy students' work experience in accommodation facilities.

In February, the university's School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work presented the Commission with the Organisational Excellence in Occupational Therapy Student Fieldwork Supervision award to recognise its ongoing support.

More than 1,000 Curtin University students have gained valuable experience at the Commission's accommodation facilities, working with the Commission's Supported Community Living and Emergency and Transitional Services (formerly Accommodation Services) staff.

EPIC changes in the Pilbara

Pilbara people with disability will have easier access to services from 1 July when Empowering People In Communities Inc (EPIC) and Pilbara Joblink will merge.

Currently, EPIC offers services in Karratha and Joblink in Port Hedland, Newman and Tom Price.

Once merged, the organisation will be known as EPIC and will offer all EPIC and Joblink's existing services in all four communities.

From 1 July, EPIC's current Executive Director Kathy Hough will take on a strategic development and consulting role and Stephanie Soter will become the Executive Director of the merged EPIC service.

For more information phone 9185 1488 or visit www.empoweringpeople.org.au.

Expo answers questions on disability services

People with an interest in disability supports and services converged at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre in March for the Disability Services Commission's first Disability Services Expo.

Eighty organisations from across the disability sector exhibited at the expo, which was attended by more than 700 visitors and sector representatives, and included a visit from the Disability Services Minister Helen Morton.

Commission Director General Ron Chalmers said that two panel discussions each drew strong crowds who were keen to hear from industry

leaders about current sector reforms.

"The panels discussed choice and control, self-directed services, individual planning and WA NDIS My Way, and answered questions from people with disability, their friends and family members about how they can get the right supports," Dr Chalmers said.

"The expo responded to the call from people with disability for a one-stop shop for information about supports and services. It was such a success we hope to hold another similar event in the future."



More than 700 people visited the Commission's first Disability Services Expo.

Director General's column

Long-term care systems – let's proceed with caution



In the field of disability services, when John O'Brien speaks, most people listen. For the past 30 years, Mr O'Brien's views have informed, instructed, challenged and critiqued the development of disability service systems across the Western world.

Mr O'Brien is Fellow at the Centre for Welfare Reform in the United Kingdom, and is affiliated with the Center on Human Policy, Law and Disability at Syracuse University in the United States and the Marsha Forest Centre in Canada.

He released a paper in February that asks questions about the fundamentals of lifetime care systems for people with disability – and we need to pay attention.

The Australian community has accepted the need for a comprehensive, insurance-based, long-term care scheme, and we need the O'Briens of this world to be devil's advocates and critique this new approach.

Mr O'Brien's paper is a wake-up call for those who believe that people with disability, especially those with development disability, can be well served by a transactional, regulated funding system that is heavily focused on rules and processes.

His paper, 'Surviving Cogworld? Supporting People with Developmental Disabilities in a Mechanistic System', was commissioned by the Wisconsin Developmental Disabilities Network. His term 'cogworld' is used to describe disability support systems that, intentionally or inadvertently, start to look and operate like machines.

He refers to experiences in Wisconsin as examples of how 'cogworld' can emerge despite admirable original objectives.

The State of Wisconsin set out to build a long-term care scheme that offered five things: an entitlement to long-term care, a tailor-made package of services, funding that follows a person across service settings and county lines, a simpler system that offers greater choice and system affordability.

Mr O'Brien says that over the past 10 years people with disability have become vulnerable as system-wide changes have tipped the balance in favour of managing transactions and have also reduced the space for relationships.

In summary, he claims that the "whole system is stressed and anxious and vulnerable to grabbing easy answers".

To safeguard against the dangers of cogworld, Mr O'Brien calls for a strong focus on relationships, saying strong and enduring relationships should be a fundamental component of a contemporary disability support system.

"People with developmental disabilities and their families know from history and experience the profound limitations of living under the regime that the cogworld story imposes on them," Mr O'Brien said.

"They know that these bureaucratic simplifications are not the way to a good life as a contributing citizen.

"They know that commitment and relationships are fundamental to good support for a life a person has good reason to value."

We need to make sure we get the intended consequences of reform – not the unintended.

Strong and positive relationships have been and will continue to be at the core of our approach to the provision of services and supports.

Ron Chalmers

Director General

Disability Services Commission

Count Me In at the football

The Disability Services Commission's Count Me In will again be celebrated at a WA Football League round this year.

Round 20 on Saturday 8 August will be the 2015 Count Me In Round, continuing the success of the partnership between the Commission and the WA Football Commission in the first WAFL Count Me In Round last year.

The Count Me In round aims to raise awareness about the importance of inclusion and accessibility for everyone and to encourage people with disability, their families and carers to attend sporting events.

For more information phone 9426 9308.

Call out for netballers

Netball WA is calling for players aged 11 years and older to play in the disability division at the 2015 Smarter Than Smoking Association Championships on 31 May.

Players will need to attend two after-school training sessions at the Mike Barnett Sports Complex, Rockingham, before the competition.

Organisers will provide lunch and free transport from the Mike Barnett complex to the State Netball Centre in Jolimont for the competition, which will run from 10am to 2pm.

Participants and a carer/family member will receive free tickets to a West Coast Fever match on 30 May and free public transport.

For more information contact blayne.wilson@netballwa.com.au or 9380 3731.

Activ artists show work

An exhibition of artwork by people with disability will be held at Activ in Wembley from 9 to 17 May.

The Activ Artspace event will include an auction piece produced by West Australian artist Roslyn Burns, who paints with her left foot.

For more information visit www.activ.asn.au > Resources > Events.

Survey checks surveys

West Australians with disability are invited to take part in a project to measure the effectiveness of surveys.

Victorian disability service organisation Scope is researching how surveys can be made more meaningful and effective for people with disability.

To complete an online survey visit www.scopevic.org.au/scopesurveys by June 2015. For more information contact (03) 9843 3000 or ccuzzillo@scopevic.org.au.

Dates for your diary

- Macular Degeneration Awareness Week, 24–30 May – www.mdfoundation.com.au
- Run for a Reason, 24 May – www.cysticfibrosis.org.au/wa
- Spinal Health Week, 25–31 May – www.chiropractors.asn.au
- World MS Day, 27 May – www.worldmsday.org/
- MND Global Day, 21 June – www.mndaust.asn.au
- World Continence Week, 22–28 June – www.continence.org.au.