



# ***"MEDIA RELEASE"***

*2.11.2009*

## **"EMOTION STIFLES PROGRESS?" Let's turn the goose into a Swan!**

**As Chair of the Disability Speaks steering group and the Intellectual Disability Association of SA (IDASA) I have watched the sector rumblings of the last week with some bemusement.**

**Ideological zealots are dangerous, be they Islamic extremists, Korean dictators or sometimes even disability advocates .....as there is risk that emotion can stifle progress.**

**Numerous examples exist in the disability sector, be they disputed accommodation strategies, day option models, representation issues or philosophical divides where sector disharmony has hindered or delayed progress.**

**The sector must increasingly focus on innovative and consumer driven cost effective service delivery models to maximize benefits for every disability dollar and not waste countless hours and much energy just debating philosophy**

**Self Managed Funding (SMF) is one such significant program opportunity.**

**The at times dysfunctional disability sector can not escape contributory blame for the mess that disability services are in SA today. The SMF rhetoric of the last week has debate potentially threatening progress?**

**The SA model, based on the Victorian program is a long way from the SMF model we would all like to see!**

**It needs refinement, development and change to be flexible and effective.**

**The dark shadows of the funding control boffins within treasury appears evident attempting to mitigate risk and insist on probity that time and experience will confirm are unnecessary as SA recipients treasuring their autonomy manage their services wisely as is proven overseas.**

**IDASA believes the program announced is well overdue, a very positive step and should be embraced.**

**The Minister told Parliament that Disability SA is seeking 50 people to trial funding arrangements so**

- **"The government can prepare for full roll out"**
- **"The opportunity should be available to everyone"**
- **"With input the government will be able to shape the system"**
- **"It is important to get a model that works"**

**Clearly this new program is work in progress!**

**IDASA accepts this opportunity as a significant one and will offer to participate in the ongoing development of this pilot SMF program.**

**The 62% of Disability SA consumers with intellectual disabilities are entitled to equitable representation in this process which IDASA expects will remain work in progress for some time**

**It is essential that the new SMF service accommodates innovatively people with an intellectual disability, many of whom are unable to speak for themselves and their natural supporters and carers who elect to participate.**

**Two weeks ago SA had no SMF option and sceptics within the disability community were convinced that no such plan would ever eventuate.**

**Now a SMF plan is on the table. The challenge of the disability sector is to develop this gosling into a swan.**

**IDASA will do its part to ensure this new program is not still born and ultimately becomes a success. We strongly encourage other groups within the sector to do the same.**

**Generational changes in service model opportunity like SMF do not come along very often. It is essential that this program grows, develops and succeeds.**

**It is also essential that we note that no additional funding has been contributed to SMF, leaving no option for the program to deliver "needs assessment" additional support.**

**This means SMF joins another of a long list of DSA services including accommodation, respite, in home care and equipment where without a significant funding injection they will remain stressed bordering on dysfunctional**

**Let's hope in the lead up to the next state election both sides of politics get serious about improving disability funding support!**

**P.S. If Kevin Foley is feeling lonely next weekend maybe he could host 3-4 disabled children for the weekend. The story in Saturdays Advertiser of his lonely life was amusing?**

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**For more information on the new program go to**

**<http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Community+Support/Disability/Corporate+and+business+information/Disability+information+and+publications/Disability+SA+news+and+events/Disability+SA+self-managed+funding>**

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