



"MEDIA RELEASE"

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" 2010 an Election Year "

At both a State and Federal Level?

Welcome to a new year, may some of our dreams be answered?

With just over 60 days to the SA State Government Election the next meeting of the Disability Speaks steering group will be held on Thursday Jan 21st at 1.00pm at the Disability Information Resource Centre (DIRC) 195 Gilles Street, Adelaide to discuss the role of Disability Speaks in the pre election period.

This meeting is open to all supporters of the disability sector, including those with a disability, carers, family members and sector employees.

Disability Speaks is already as part of our charter committed to distributing information on behalf of all political groups and commenting on initiatives offered.

Two months out the published position of the two major parties offers little for people with disability. The story in today's Adelaide Advertiser of people with a Disability waiting months in hospital for appropriate care reminds us again how dysfunctional SA is.

The ALP (The current SA government) Supports a pilot self managed funding plan (50 places initially) with a possibility of future expansion/access and has promised \$7.5 million per annum extra for the next 4 years (\$30 million in total) to support additional disability services and has launched the Cappo/ Social inclusion inquiry into disability services, to report back in 18 months (2011)

The Liberal Party (The SA "Opposition") has only yet announced support of the concept of self managed funding being available to all qualified applicants

The aforementioned ALP pre Christmas SA disability announcements received a luke warm reception and were seen by many as inadequate in urgency and substantial financial action after 8 years of rapidly expanding unmet need waiting lists (more announcements are promised?) while generating another questionable SA report given there have been over 40 voluminous National and various state reports (including 7 major disability SA reports) in the term of the current SA government (The Dec 2009 Victorian accommodation report is over 430 pages long!) SA reports include:

- 2003 The Need to Know: A Report on Disability and the Aboriginal Communities of South Australia
<http://www.publications.health.sa.gov.au/atsi/7/>
- 2006 Report on the Development of New SRF Legislation
<http://www.sa.gov.au/upload/franchise/Community%20Support/Accommodation%20docs/Development%20of%20new%20legislation%20SRFs.pdf>
- 2006 Supported Accommodation Task Force
<http://www.sa.gov.au/upload/franchise/Community%20Support/Accommodation%20docs/Disability%20SA%20Supported%20Accommodation%20Strategy.pdf>
- 2008 Disability Advisory Council Inquiry into Self Managed Funding
<http://www.premier.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=2820>
- 2008 Post-School Pathways – How 'it is' and how 'it works' for young people with disabilities

http://www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/files/Post-School%20Pathways_August%202008.pdf

2008 Report on The Disability & Arts Sector Consultation
http://www.arts.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Disability_arts_sector_consultation.pdf

2008 Service Coordination Review
http://www.familiesandcommunities.sa.gov.au/DesktopModules/SAHT_DNN2_Documents/Download/633989028340991250/Final%20Consumer%20Consultation%20Report%20200812.pdf

It is hard to understand the need for more data as the SA government already publishes on an annual basis the audited unmet need SA data which includes only clients who have been evaluated and accessed by Disability SA and classified as qualified and eligible for services yet receive no services. In addition the Australian Productivity commission will publish on Jan 31st its 2010 Annual report which will again reflect that SA spends less per client on disability funding (even after the aforementioned \$7.5 million per annum promise) than any other state in Australia, a position formally confirmed by the SA Public Advocates office in Dec 2009.

The major concern of many is that Premier Rann appears to be playing an opportunistic game, generating a further delay in any real disability action post the 2010 election and trying to lock SA into the Federal Productivity Commission report cycle on a possible National Disability Insurance scheme (NDIS) commissioned in by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (due 2011) This confirms in the eyes of many that SA Premier Mike Rann has no intention of supporting people with a disability adequately or as a priority. By hoping the Federal government via the proposed National Disability Insurance scheme will remove the problem from SA this continues the current position that SA has no plan for disability action and with no guarantee that NDIS will ever eventuate this approach by SA is possibly reckless and could have tragic consequences for people already living in severe stress. It also breaches many promises made by the Premier that date back to 2001.

As such it is little wonder the ALP announcements so far have not been more warmly received. They may yet however be better than the Liberal alternative whose traditional support for people with a disability has been sparse (The Howard era!!!! Yuk!)
Time will tell?

Disability Speaks looks forward to playing a contributory role in SA during the pre election period and ensuring a balanced and considered debate on the future of Disability services in SA post the March Election. Disability Speaks has no affiliation with any political group

Please forward this information on to your supporters and databases

We look forward to seeing you next Thursday at the meeting

David Holst
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"Disability Speaks will distribute on behalf of any organization that meets suitable criteria online information that is of wide disability community interest via our database that now numbers nearly 4,000 recipients for Govt, advocacy groups and other major disability organizations. We hope in the lead up to elections, state or federal we can distribute policy and support information from political groups. Such distribution is not in any way endorsement by Disability Speaks. From time to time Disability Speaks will also distribute media releases commenting on developments in the disability sector. We strongly encourage you to forward all releases to your friends, clients and disability supporters and encourage them to subscribe direct. To do so simply send an email subject "subscribe" to the address below.

Email: disabilityspeaks@internode.on.net

If you would like to be removed from the database please advise by return email. Disability Speaks has no affiliation with any political party or service provider, is self funded and run by volunteers.