

STAR NEWSLETTER

Do you have a red spot on your Newsletter? If so, then you belong to a small group of individuals or organisations who have not yet renewed either their membership or newsletter subscription to STAR for 2009-10. **A renewal form is enclosed.**

Guardianship laws to be reviewed

The Victorian Attorney-General Rob Hulls has asked the Victorian Law Reform to review the laws and practices that protect Victorians with impaired decision-making capacity to ensure they reflect modern standards and a changing population.

Chair of the commission, Professor Neil Rees, said it was the first time a comprehensive review of Victoria's guardianship and administration laws had been undertaken in over twenty years. "It is important to recognise the diversity of those people covered by this review for there are many reasons why a person may not be able to make important decisions. The commission will be consulting widely to ensure the different needs of these people are met."

Professor Rees said the commission is required under the terms of reference to be guided by principles of respect for dignity and individual autonomy and to advance, promote and protect the rights of people with impaired decision making capacity. Both the current law and any changes proposed by the commission must be consistent with Australia's human rights obligations and the Victorian Charter of Human Rights

In particular the Commission is to have regard to:

- the role of guardians and administrators
- the need to balance the protection of a person with impaired capacity by a guardian or administrator with

- the person's exercise and enjoyment of their human rights
- the alignment of guardianship and administration law with other relevant laws
- the role of informal decision-making for an adult with impaired capacity
- the functions, powers and duties of the Public Advocate
- the role and powers of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and the appointment of guardians and administrators
- consideration of existing laws that deal with medical research, non-medical research, medical and other treatment of a represented person.

Professor Rees said the commission would begin initial extensive consultations ahead of publishing a Consultation Paper early next year. A Final Report is due to the Attorney-General by June 30 2011.

For more information visit:
www.lawreform.vic.gov.au

Note – Guest Speakers at the AGM will be speaking about the Review of the Guardianship legislation - see enclosed notice of AGM



Advocating for people with intellectual
Disability and their families
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In Memoriam – Doug Pentland – Self

Advocate *Amongst the many tributes that flowed following the death of Doug Pentland in July this year was this from Ethel Temby*

Doug Pentland has died after a life of great deprivation and much richness. When the ever – thoughtful Esther rang me with the sad news before I read it, I did not realise how deeply grieved I would be. Doug was one of those fine people who are always true to themselves. He was warm, friendly, totally honest, and passionate about human rights for everyone. Doug was an outstanding speaker who chose his words carefully, and who was never afraid of revealing his incapacities by asking for an understanding of what was being said, even on Ministerial Advisory Committees, (of which I was a fellow member). A man who was true to those qualities was true to everyone. Once I knew him I could not help loving Doug. I owe him a lot.

Shut Out : The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia

The National Disability Strategy Consultation report prepared by the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council was released recently. The report articulates the experiences of people with disabilities and their families – their wish to be treated with dignity and have the same opportunities as other members of the Australian community to live fulfilling and productive lives. It highlights the constant struggle to access the things most people take for granted and the fact that many Australians with disabilities, along with their families, carers and friends still experience systemic disadvantage. In partnership with state and territory governments, the Federal Government is developing a National

Disability Strategy, which will be informed by the views in this report. *For copies of the report in various formats i.e. Braille, Easy English, Phone 1800 050 009 Email: NDSMailbox@fahcsia.gov.au*

Networking – Out and About

STAR Board member, Cynthia Pilli recently attended the AGM of Winacomm Association Inc. which was established by parents to provide a pro-active response to the biggest single concern of parents of a child with a disability: What will happen to their son/daughter when they are no longer able to look after him/her? Some information presented at the meeting may be of interest to others.

- Several family members connected with Winacomm have received Individual Support Packages and are (thus far) delighted with the outcome. They would encourage others to register need with the Department of Human Services so they are aware of the level of interest and incorporate this into their future planning.
- The value of providing feedback to local government about services, good or bad – otherwise, how else do things change? If in doubt as to who to speak with contact the CEO and request the feedback be passed on to the appropriate person, for follow up.
- Inclusive Support Facilitators (ISF) are employed in most municipalities to support child care staff around inclusive practices to facilitate the active participation of all children

Contact STAR (96502730) or Winaccomm (98164815) for more information.

Transport News

Victorian Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky said has announced that people Disability Support pensions or receiving Carer payments can travel free on Sundays, along with Victorian senior card holders, from October 26.

Those wishing to take up the offer would need to obtain a Sunday Pass Metcard, which is valid on trains, trams and buses travelling in metropolitan Melbourne and also on town bus services in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. Sunday pass holders will automatically get a free concession myki in the mail. The concession myki will include your free Sunday Pass.

Disability Support Pensioners and Carer Payment recipients under 60 living in Victoria can apply for a Sunday Pass at any Metropolitan Premium Station, staffed V/Line station, or at the MetShop. Application forms are also available at stations, Metcard retail outlets e or by downloading a form via the link below.

<http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/>

Access Travel Pass –

The access travel pass has been developed for people with a significant permanent disability who travel independently on Victoria's public transport network and can demonstrate that due to their disability they cannot use ticketing systems.

Phone: 03 9619 1159 for more information

A new Legal Agency

AED Legal Centre has been established to give access to justice to people with a disability who experience difficulties or

discrimination at work because of their disability.

For inquiries contact Noni Lord on 9639 4333.

Gerard, Robert Don & Associates
Available for Functions, Parties and Festivals.

Acting, Short skits, clowning, wizards, magic and comedy skits.



Contact Gerard –

Phone: 03 9726 6442

Mobile: 0409 192 430

Email: gerard@taltec.com.au

I am the boss of my own life: Self Advocates tell their stories

Reinforce Inc which is a self advocacy organisation has produced a book of stories about the personal life experiences of people with an intellectual disability. For some it was their first time ever to share their story. The energy, passion and strength shown by people was really inspiring and you will be moved by the challenges and difficulties overcome by the writers. If you would like a copy of this book you can do so by contacting:

Mr Colin Hiscoe

Phone: (03) 96507855

Price: \$5-00 for self advocates & people with disability plus \$2-50 P&H

Price: \$20 for organisations, professionals & others plus \$2-50 P&H

DARU Advocacy Resource Map

Disability Advocacy Resource Unit has recently launched the DARU Advocacy Resource Map - an online tool that allows you to search for Disability Advocacy Organisations and Networks within Victoria.

You can visit the Advocacy Resource Map to search for the following information

- A specific organisation and network in the disability advocacy sector
- Organisations or networks with an office located in a specific region of Victoria (eg. Eastern region)
- Organisations or networks that provide a type of advocacy (eg. individual advocacy)

To go the DARU Advocacy Map, visit www.daru.org.au and click on the 'Advocacy Map' tab on the left hand side, or type <http://advocacyagencies.daru.org.au/> into your internet tool bar.

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Are you receiving your correct entitlements from Centrelink?

We have recently had several calls to the office around Centrelink issues for Carers. Some were on the wrong payment and others who were on the Carer payment had not been told to they may be eligible for the Carer allowance. You can contact your local Centrelink and ask if you are entitled to be on any other payments.

If you have any questions please call us on 9650 2730

Disclaimer

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