Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

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Chairperson Report

The Year in Review

I am pleased to provide the Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (ADAI) Annual Report for 2018/2019.

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (ADAI) provides independent advocacy across all of South Australia to all residents with a disability, irrespective of age. This in itself presents challenges in logistics and resource allocation. Therefore, our service delivery is flexible and innovative to ensure we assist all clients in the most effective way. Because of this innovation, the demand for our services continues to be very high.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has funded its National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) until June 30th 2020. Between now and June 30th 2020 they will review the programme and make a further announcement to the programme's format. As announced in August 2017 the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has provided additional funding to ADAI to support advocacy for our members in any appeal process required with the NDIA.

The Board has continued its collaborative relationship with the Catalyst Foundation and both organisations have signed a twelve-month extension to their MOU to have Ms Jenny Hughes as the ADAI CEO until the next scheduled annual review at June 30th, 2019.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to thank our CEO, Ms Jenny Hughes, for her continuing work with the organisation and providing her perspective on the advocacy sector and continued stewardship of ADAI.

ADAI through the great work and dedication of its staff has kept up to date with changing landscape of advocacy and, via internal analysis and reviews; we have continued to offer an effective and positive advocacy service to clients. The Board is continually monitoring the environment and adjusting its model and service to ensure that staff and clients are supported by best practice. ADAI, once again passed our annual quality assurance audit so a special thanks to staff, members and the Board for best positioning the organisation for the audit. We continue to seek to position ADAI to take advantage of any opportunities that may occur to ensure our continued presence in the sector.

The Board endeavours to review what has occurred in a range of other national programmes to anticipate what might apply to independent advocacy services. It continues to liaise and work with our national body, Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA) and to interact effectively with DSS at State and Federal level.

The Board continues to review its Strategic Plan to ensure we are delivering the requirements of the NDAP agreement. It seeks to remain current with any NDIS implementation and roll out requirements.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all Board members whose professional skills and commitment to ADAI have enabled us to achieve much during the year. The Board made one additional interim appointment this year to fill a vacant Board position. Ms Susan Kite is a welcome addition to the Board with experience in both People and Culture and Nursing (please refer to her biography for more detail). Sue has nominated to continue as a board member at this AGM.

The Board would like to welcome the new staff who have brought a wide range of professional skills and experience to support and assist ADAI in its work and its desire to continue the provision of independent advocacy services to those who request it. We thank departing staff members for all their efforts and wish them well for the future. We also thank the Department of Social Services who fund our program and continue to work with us in an effective and collaboratively manner.

Shane McDougall
Chairperson, Board of Governance

About ADAI

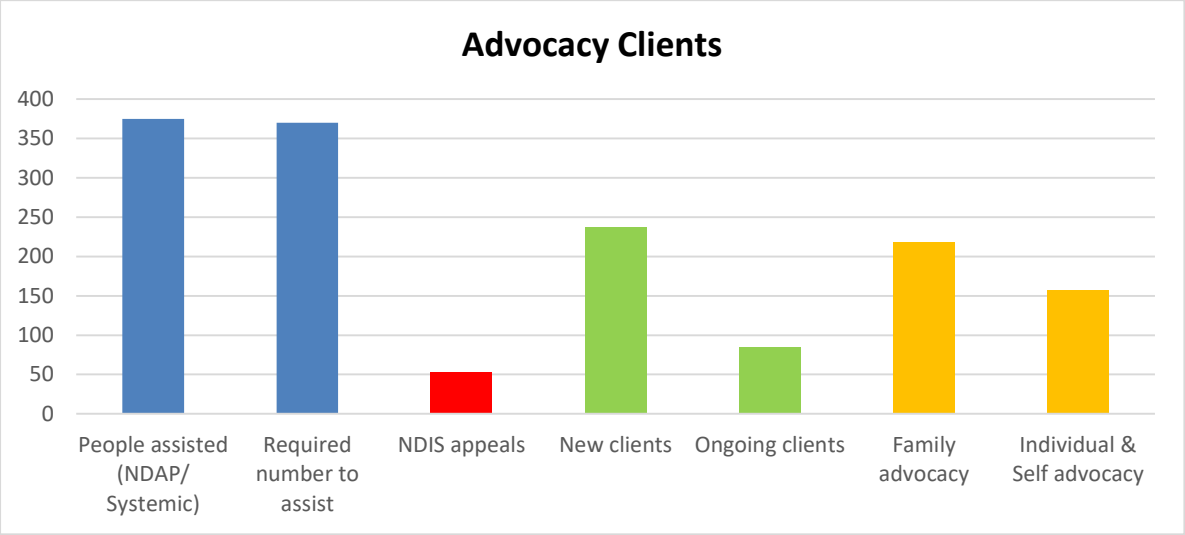
Service In Brief

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion is funded by the Australian Government to provide a free Advocacy service for people living with disability across South Australia. In 2018/19 we provided advocacy services under the National Disability Advocacy Program to 375 clients and assisted 53 people with their NDIS Appeals process to June 2019. Many clients have achieved an improved NDIS plan through the Internal Review and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) process.

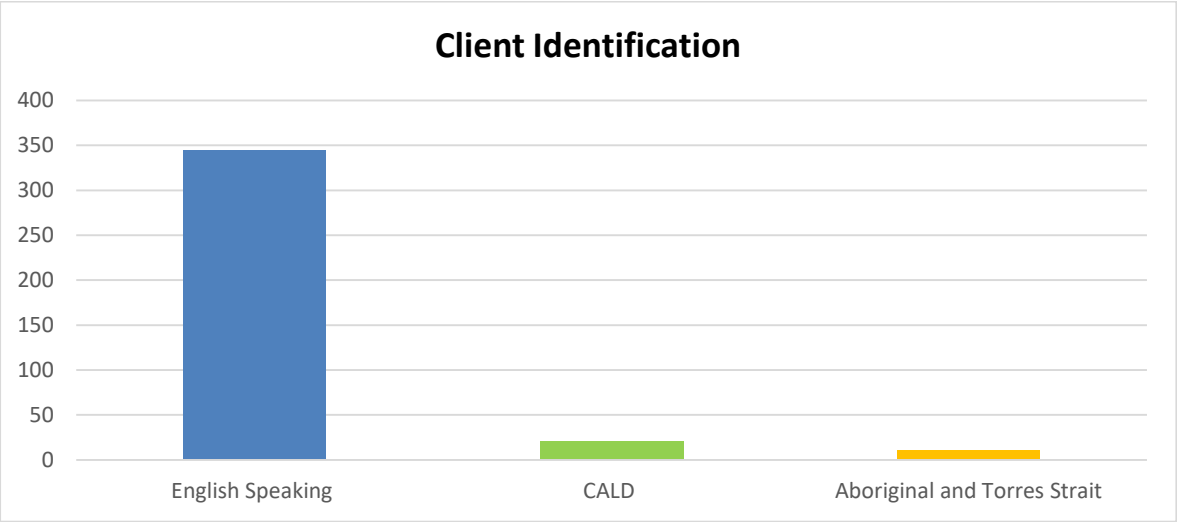
Our Clients

Our clients live in South Australia and we work with all age groups. Demand for advocacy services is increasing and our service is culturally appropriate and supportive of assisting individuals, their families and carers to address their needs.

Graph 1: Advocacy Clients: 2018 - 19



Graph 2: Client Identification

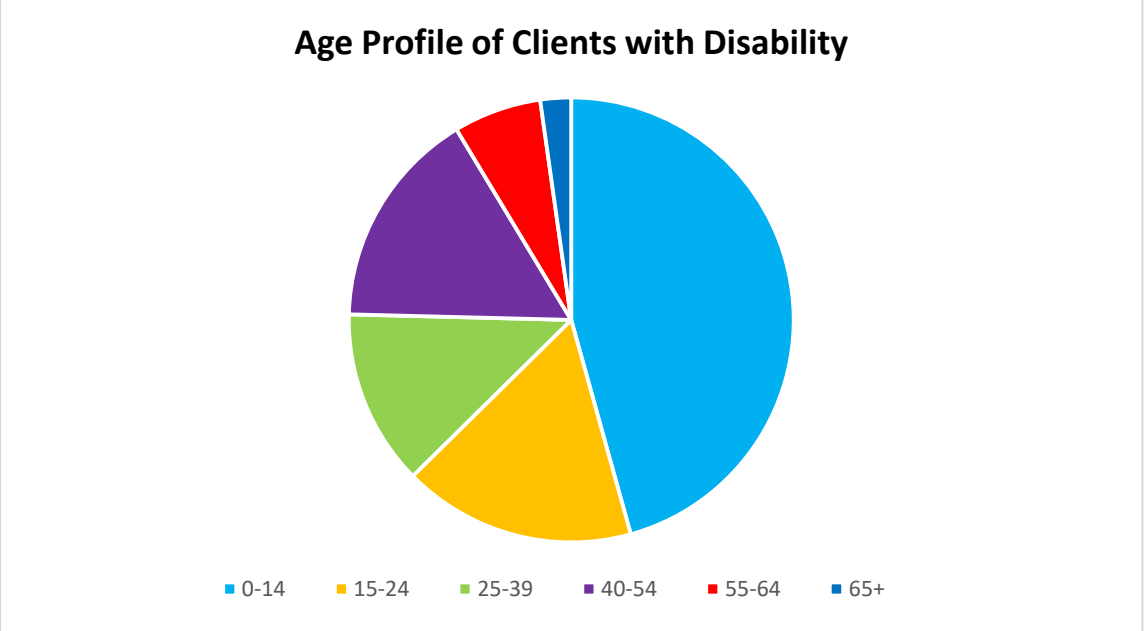


Services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island individuals increased by more than 180% in 2018/19.

Age Profile of Clients

In 2018/19 our clients ranged from children to individuals 65 years and over in age.

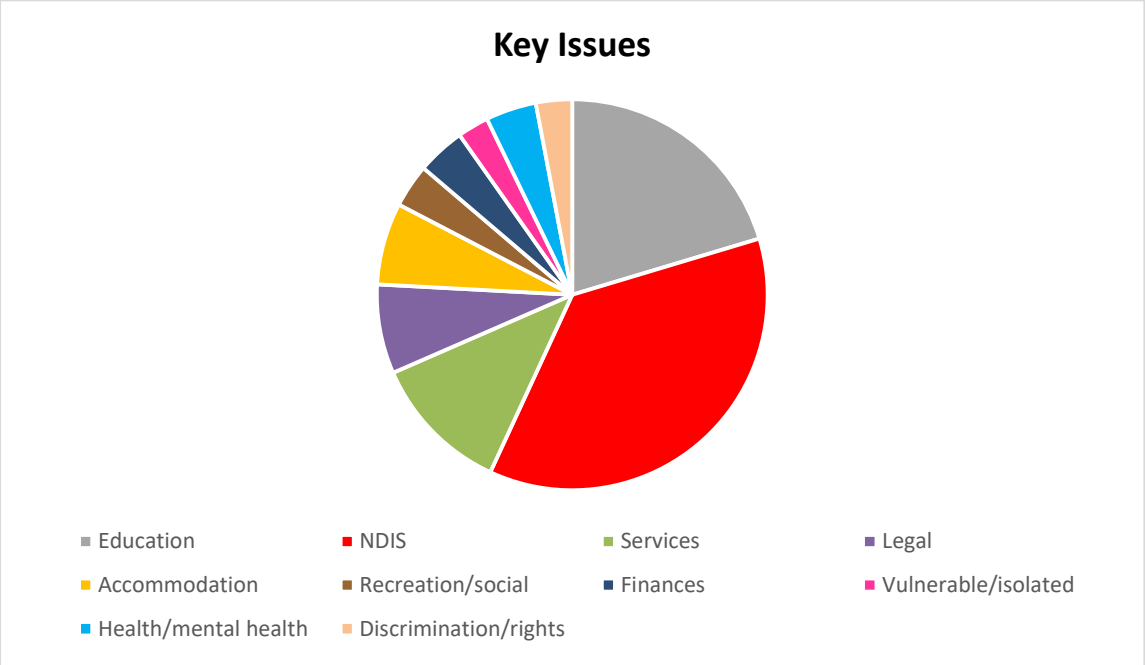
Graph 3: Age Profile of Clients with Disability



Key Issues for our Clients

Client support was provided across a range of areas that impact on our client's lives. Of most significance is NDIS, education, services including access and eligibility, accommodation and matters of legal significance.

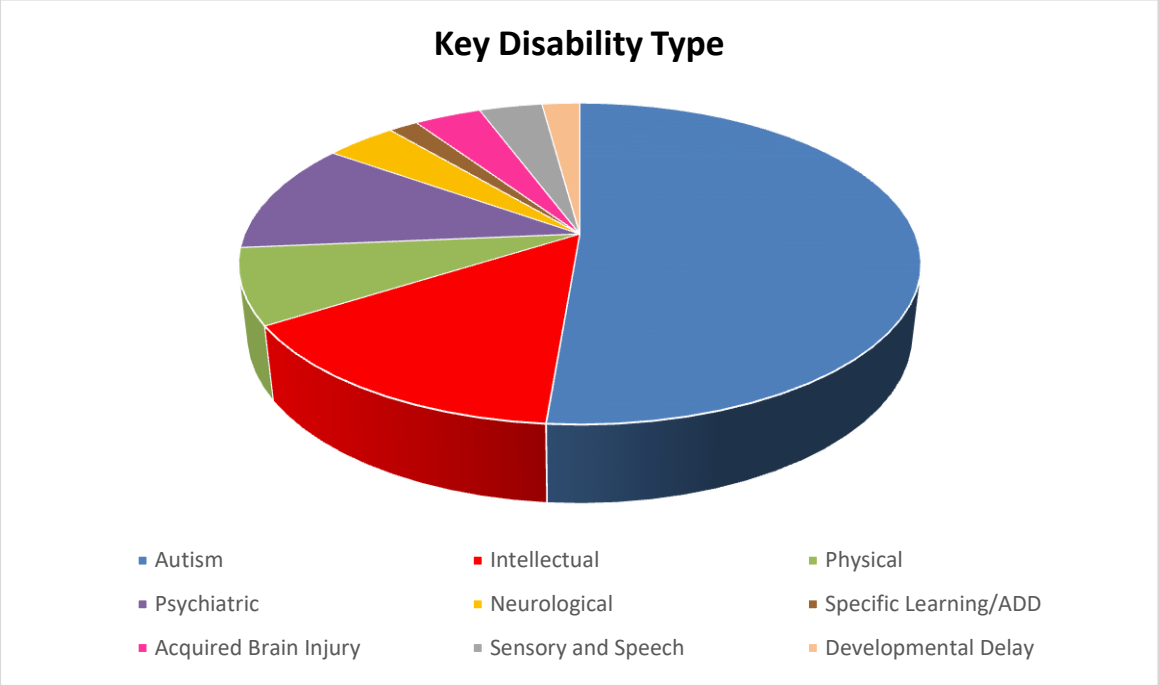
Graph 4: Key Issues



Key Disability Type

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion served clients who identified with the following disability type.

Graph 5: Disability Type



Our History

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to provide individual and self-advocacy services to people living with disability and their family and/or carer(s). ADAI services South Australia across all issues in a caring, inclusive, innovative and informative way.

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion and its forebears Family Advocacy and Parent Advocacy have provided advocacy services to South Australian's living with disability for over thirty years.

As well as assisting clients living with disability, Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion also works collaboratively with other disability and social service agencies or organisations.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to empower people living with disability, their families and carers through the provision of professional, issues-based advocacy services.

Our Aim

Our aim is to support individuals to build their capacity to represent themselves and fully participate in decision making that affects their lives.

Our Model

ADAI works to support someone to make decisions and navigate services. The ADAI model empowers people through…

A - Advocacy – our model is short term issues-based support for individuals living with a disability, their families and/or carers. Advocacy occurs at a time when the individual feels most vulnerable or disadvantaged.

D - Discussion- to enable individuals to make informed decisions.

V - Voice - provides a safe environment to have your say and feel valued.

O - On the side of the person, by building trust in partnership with client/advocate and other services for mutual resolution.

C - Connection and engagement with local community.

A - Access to services and referred when required.

C - Capacity to build and develop individual strengths and skills to empower own self Advocacy.

Y - Your rights - knowing your responsibilities and to be able to exercise your rights leads to control of your own life.

Our Values

We act with integrity, support independence, and:

- Are Respectful
- Are Resourceful
- Are Inclusive
- Are Accountable and
- Treat people with Dignity.

Our Strategic Objectives

Further to these aims, the strategic objectives of the organisation include:

1. To enable individuals with disability, their families and carers to access and attain their rights and entitlements under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

2. To continue to provide quality individual advocacy and support for people with disability to enable them to further develop skills and capacity to advocate for themselves.

3. To promote Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. as the preferred disability advocacy agency in South Australia for people with disability, their families and carers.

4. To work collaboratively with other disability and community services to maximize outcomes and benefits for people with disability, their families and carers.

5. To operate in accordance with accepted best practice principles in all aspects of our organisation.

6. To source additional revenue in order to broaden the organisation's participation in the disability arena.

7. To contribute to and incorporate changes that occur as a result of the continuing rollout and development of NDIS.

Our Service

Advocacy is supporting a person to speak up and be heard so that their rights are promoted, protected or defended. ADAI can support a person to speak up for themselves, to help them be heard by working with them to achieve the individual's goals or objectives.

We do this in a variety of ways including:

- standing alongside the person as a "partner" in the process;
- helping develop the person's confidence and ability to discuss the outcomes they want to achieve;
- supporting the person to make informed decisions and pursue their rights;
- recognising the person is the expert in their own life or the life of their child;
- focussing on one or two key issues at a time;
- advocating only after we have the permission of the person to do so;
- keeping the person informed and up to date on any new information or developments along the way;
- referring on to, or working with, other agencies that can provide assistance where appropriate;
- treating everyone we advocate for, or to, with respect, empathy, honesty and transparency;
- promoting the rights of all people living with disability in the community.

The issues or problems that our Advocates have supported in 2018/19 include:

- Accommodation;
- Service access and eligibility;
- Education and Training;
- Employment;
- Health care and/or treatment;
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS);
- NDIS Appeals;
- Social and Recreational;
- Transport.

Through the additional funding we received from the Department of Social Services, Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion continued to work within the Appeal Framework of the NDIS and was deeply involved in a range of NDIS review/appeal issues during 2018/19.

In addition, we experienced a significant and growing demand for advocacy support as NDIS plans were reviewed and clients sought additional support for increasing or maintaining services or plan values.

As a consequence of the work and support we undertook, the demand for our Advocacy services increased and the understanding of the role of an Advocacy organisation also increased. This was due in part to the education and promotion we delivered through a range of forums and expos we attended as we sought to inform and build confidence and capacity in people living with disability to advocate for themselves.

Our Logo

The Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion SA Inc. logo represents what we believe in and stand for:

Advocacy: A speech bubble representing speaking out on issues

+

Equality: The equal sign representing access and inclusion

+

South Australia: a proud South Australian organisation

=

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc.

Our Client Feedback

Client feedback is central to the way we offer and improve our service. We are committed to continually seeking client feedback and listening to our client's needs and experiences through regular client surveys and service evaluation.

In 2018/19, we received some wonderful and heartfelt feedback on our service from clients and their carers and families through letters, with flowers, email and telephone calls.

By email

"Thank you for your support with the AAT process. The outcome has been successful, and we have enough funding. We couldn't have done without you." *Client's mom*

By Letter

"Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for everything you have done to assist with my daughter's application, you are wonderful." *Client*

By Letter

"Thank you so much for all your help and the kind and gentle way that you give that help. You are a very unique person and I am sure that you will be someone who will be sought after by many who need an advocate. I am extremely grateful for all that you did for me. I will keep referring people to you service" – *Client*

By Letter

"We are over the moon with an outcome of the school meeting - the one plan is now implemented - Thank you for just being in the meeting as it made a difference to us and boost our confidence. I did not feel stupid and intimidated as I have done in previous meetings. Thank you so much" – *Client & Client's mom*

Case Studies

Case Study 1

MG had acquired a very serious physical disability thirty years ago. With surgery and determination, he was able to restart physical work. However, working with his disability placed greater stresses on his body and he was forced to stop work again. He wanted to start a new career but required a Police clearance. The granting of this clearance was delayed for months because of charges which had been laid against him briefly before being dropped. ADAI brought to the attention of the authorities the serious consequences the delay was having on his ability to move on and start a new career. The following day the clearance was granted, and MG was able to start his new career.

Case Study 2

This family sought support regarding an inadequate NDIS plan for their son. English was their second language and the family had had a series of prior issues with the NDIS. The father applied himself for a review and then sought support from ADAI. ADAI spoke to the family regarding proceeding to the AAT, but that was not the preferred option.
The annual review occurred, and the ADAI Advocate addressed the review meeting, highlighting the reasons a better plan was justified under the legislation and the Operational Guidelines.
The result was a much improved plan which fulfils the son's needs.
The ADAI Advocate attended the implementation meeting and assisted the father with accessing service providers. The father emailed ADAI later indicating how pleased the family was with the outcome.

Our Board and Our Staff

Our Board

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Incorporated is governed by a volunteer Board of Governance. It is responsible for the effective governance of the organisation, its policies, procedures, financial management and accountability, and to ensure the organisation operates in accordance with its funding agreement requirements.

Mr Shane McDougall, Chairperson

Shane McDougall is a senior Group Financial Controller with experience in a range of manufacturing industries and the accounting service sector. This has included the construction industry, the food industry, the flexible packaging printing sector, airport management and accounting service provider. Experience has been gained in both financial and operational management roles to group Finance Controller level for an ASX listed company. Shane has family experience with disability. He holds a CPA. Shane is also the Treasurer of DANA, the national Disability Advocacy Network of Australia, based in Canberra ACT. DANA represents advocacy agencies at the national level.

Ms Leonie Challans, Deputy Chair

Leonie Challans has worked extensively in the tertiary sector in the areas of human resources management, equity and diversity and workplace relations. She also worked in the disability area with a focus on employment for people living with disabilities and their transition from school to post-secondary education. Leonie has worked on national projects, state level committees, and has had previous Board experience. She is very keen to see people with disabilities be able to access all avenues of life. Leonie holds an Advanced Diploma of Human Resources Management and a part complete Bachelor of Management.

Ms Narelle Schubert, Treasurer

Narelle Schubert has an Advanced Certificate in Accounting and has worked for many years in the Health and Education sectors in South Australia, in various accounting and administration roles within Finance, Payroll, Community Services and Health and Student Services. Narelle has lived with disability most of her life and has personal experience utilising services to support disability, access and inclusion and is a self-managing participant of the NDIS.

Ms Jennifer Cousins, Secretary

Jen Cousins has extensive experience and qualifications as a developmental educator, disability advocate, and as a VET trainer in the Disability and Community Services sector. Jen has been a Lecturer in the Disability and Advocacy Programs of Community Services and Health Program in TAFE SA since 2005 and was Principal Lecturer from 2009 -2012, and National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) for the Adelaide Metropolitan Region from 2012 – 2016.

Jen holds a Masters of Adult, Vocational and Workplace Education, a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies) and is currently the Principal Lecturer in Community Services and Health – Individual Client Support at TAFE SA. Jen has extensive personal experience as a carer of family members with disability and is very passionate about creating accessible and inclusive communities.

Ms Meredith Norton

Meredith Norton has been a board member for approximately six years. Her background is in supporting students with disabilities to access education. She has been a high school counsellor, a welfare manager, a university disability liaison officer and manager of disability services at university and TAFE. She also has family experience of disability. She has recently retired from the position as Manager, Student Services for TAFESA. Meredith holds a Bachelor of Arts; Graduate Diploma of Education; Graduate Diploma of Language & Literature and a Graduate Diploma of Educational Counselling.

Ms Sandra Deakin

Sandra Deakin retired from the position of Senior Human Resources Officer at the University of South Australia in 2005. With a Graduate Diploma in Business Studies (Accounting) and a Bachelor of Labour Studies (specializing in Industrial Law) Sandra provides the Board with expertise in the areas of finance, human resources and industrial law.

Mr Brian Smith

During an extensive career in the SA Police Force Brian served in a wide range of areas. He has management level experience where he was responsible for the development, health, safety and welfare of all staff under management, maintaining discrimination and harassment free workplace and service deliver environment. He was responsible for ensuring the planning and management of all activities within the workplace were consistent with SAPOL's core functions to provide an effective and integrated police service responsive to community needs.

Brian has been awarded three police good conduct service medals. Brian has a Master of Public Policy, Charles Sturt University; Bachelor of Business (HRD), University of South Australia; Grad Cert in Applied Management, Australian Institute of Police Management.

Ms Michelle Anderson

Michelle has over 27 years' experience in the non-profit disability and social services sector, from hands-on service delivery roles through to executive management positions. Throughout her career Michelle has been approached to take up key management roles due to her ability to think strategically, influence stakeholders and manage change in complex environments. She has worked extensively in the disability employment sector, focusing on maintaining ethical, person-centred service provision within a competitive target-driven environment.

Prior to her current role as Manager, Inclusion with UniSA, Michelle spent two and a half years as Assistant Director with the NDIA and a further ten years with The Multiple Sclerosis Society of SA & NT. Michelle has a Diploma in Applied Science (Developmental Disabilities) and her career choices have been influenced by a genuine desire to shape a society that truly values inclusion and diversity.

Michelle also brings with her a combination of lived and family experience of Anxiety, Depression, OCD, Tourette syndrome, Autism and complex physical disability. Combined with her professional experience, this has enabled Michelle to develop an intimate understanding of the barriers and challenges that people with a disability, families and carers may face at both an individual and systemic level throughout their lifespan.

Ms Sue Kite

Sue is a senior human resource management practitioner possessing extensive experience in a range of human resource, management and organisational development roles within the public, university and private sectors and specializing in designing and implementing strategic programs that build leadership skills, workforce capability and organisational high performance. Sue has a Graduate Diploma of Human Resources Management and a Master of Nursing. Her current role is the Manager for People and Capacity at the Environmental Protection Authority.

Left to Right: Laura Jenzen, Meredith Norton, Shane McDougall, Brian Smith, Diana Calle, Ralph Brew, Sandra Deakin, Linda Mee, Natalie Berg, Leonie Challans, Jenny Hughes, Michelle Anderson, Kate Erne and Adrian Crowe.

Our Staff

Natalie Berg, Advocate

Natalie has over twenty five years' experience working with people from diverse backgrounds and needs with a strong skillset in disability. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Human Services Counselling, Diploma of Counselling, a Certificate IV in Disability Work and a Certificate IV in Family Support Work. Natalie has experience and a sound knowledge base in social inclusion, education including vocational training, employment, accommodation, and family support.

Ralph Brew, Advocate

Ralph has a longstanding commitment and experience in disability and human rights and has a specific interest in Sexuality and Disability. Ralph previously worked in training and development, education, consultancy and advocacy. Ralph has a Diploma of Counselling (Australian Institute of Social Relations); Graduate Diploma in Adolescent Health and Welfare (University of Melbourne), a Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies (Flinders University) and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAFE SA).

Diana Calle, Receptionist

Diana holds a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Finance. She has 16 years' experience in customer service, administration and management. Diana has experience working with seniors and people living with disability while working in the not for profit, public and private sectors.

Adrian Crowe, Senior Advocate

Adrian holds a degree of Bachelor of Laws and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice. He worked as in in-house advocate for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), representing the Repatriation Commission in matters before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) in all States and Territories. He also instructed counsel at the Federal Court. Adrian joined ADAI in May 2017 and manages NDIS Appeals and reviews at ADAI.

Robyn Dowley, Advocate

Robyn holds a Bachelor of Laws, a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice and a Bachelor of International Studies and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma in Family Dispute Resolution. Robyn joined ADAI in 2017 after 7 years in private legal practice. Robyn brings strong skills in negotiation, advocacy, mediation, interviewing clients and legal knowledge to ADAI.

Kate Erne, Advocate

Kate has over 20 years' experience working in the fields of Mental Health, Disability Employment Services, Tertiary Education, Training, and Community Services. Kate has a Master's degree in Education, a Diploma in Training and Assessment, a Certificate IV in Disability, and is an accredited Mental Health First Aid Trainer (Mental Health First Aid Australia). Kate is a member of disability organisations including the NDS/MHCSA NDIS Mental Health Interest Group, the National Disability Coordination Officer Program and the National Disability Services (NDS) Employment Sub-Committee.

Jenny Hughes, Chief Executive

Jenny has over 30 years' experience in management, community services, community engagement and social planning fields across all tiers of Government as well as working in the private sector. Jenny's work includes a strong focus on programs and projects which foster social cohesion within a community development framework and supporting and increasing community engagement across a wide range of sectors and issues. Jenny has significant experience in advocating for the community at a systemic level and has family experience of living with disability. Jenny sits on a number of government and non-government Boards and committees and has a Bachelor of Arts (Public Administration) and is currently studying Law.

Laura Jenzen, Business Manager

Laura has worked in Australia and overseas in finance, HR and management roles. Laura holds an MBA with the University of South Australia, an Advanced Certificate of Accounting with Victoria University, a Training Diploma from Flight Centre, and Certificate IV in Disability with Barkuma. Laura is a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society, awarded to the top 15% of MBA graduates. Laura enjoys volunteering with HOPE Worldwide and working with community projects.

Cassandra Sage, Advocate

Cassandra has over 25 years' experience in community mental health, general, theatre, child, family and community nursing, Disability and NGO case management. Cassandra's qualifications include Diploma of Enrolled Nursing, Certificate III in Disability and Community Service, Certificate in Children's Health 0-5 years and a variety of specialised certificates in Mental Health. Cassandra is passionate about working within CALD communities' and has a strong connection working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Staff farewelled during 2018/2019

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. farewelled Robyn Dowley, Ralph Brew and Laura Jenzen during the 2018/19 financial year. We recognise and thank Robyn, Ralph and Laura for their services to Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion and we wish them well in their new endeavours.

Left to Right: Laura Jenzen, Cassandra Sage, Kate Erne, Ralph Brew, Jenny Hughes, Adrian Crowe, Natalie Berg, Robyn Dowley and Diana Calle

Financial Report
2018/19

ADAI received funding through the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) and NDIS Appeals (Appeals) funding. The continuation of the Appeals funding enabled ADAI to employ an additional Advocate qualified to assist clients with the NDIS appeals process, to meet the increasing client demand for advocacy services and to support other advocates in the Appeals process.

The Financial Results for 2018/2019 were as follows:

Total income:	$578,904
Total expenses:	$589,816
Surplus / (Deficit):	($10,913)

The financial accounts and acquittal statement were audited by Mr Ian McDonald FCA. Mr McDonald's letter of external audited is included in this report.

The ADAI Board of Directors has approved the Financial Statements in accordance with the findings of the Auditor, Mr Ian McDonald.

Narelle Schubert
Treasurer

Ian G McDonald FCA

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

31 October 2019

Mr Shane McDougall
Chairperson
Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc.
149 Currie Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Shane,

Please be advised that we have now completed the external audit of Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Incorporated (Association) for the financial year ended 30 June 2019. The audit report has been signed without reference to any qualification. The signed financial statements have been provided to the Chief Executive Officer.

We have obtained all the relevant information and explanations that we required from the Association.

If further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Ian McDonald

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