

Advocacy for
Disability
Access and
Inclusion Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT
2015 - 2016

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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 2015-2016.

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion 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 experiences of the last few years, has in many ways, been mirrored again. The National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) was funded for another 12 months at the 'very last minute'. This kind of uncertainty makes it difficult for the Board to plan effectively and in time to implement effective change or programs.

There continues to be very rapid change in the disability sector together with frequent reviews or reflection of the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This contributes to the complex environment which we are operating in. ADAI has kept abreast of these changes and reviews and we have continued to offer an effective and positive advocacy service to clients. However, due to this environment, there are continued new challenges and demands, both financial and structural for continued effective service delivery. The Board is continually monitoring the environment and adjusting its model and service to ensure we are meeting the external environment demands and to position ADAI in the best way possible to take advantage of any opportunities that may occur to ensure our continued presence in the sector.

As a result of this, we developed positive liaisons with Seniors Information Service (now Catalyst) and arranged to share a Chief Executive with them. We also appointed an Operations Manager to provide daily support to and management of our advocates. We also moved offices to Currie Street, Adelaide and closed the regional office in Clare. With the office located in Currie Street, this now provides a far more accessible location for our clients and is in an area where many other services they may require are located. It has also given us the opportunity to implement innovative ways to provide services to clients across the state.

The Board has reviewed its strategic plan to ensure we are delivering the requirements of the NDAP agreement and to recognised changes the NDIS implementation and roll out requires.

As outlined in previous years, the extensive change and continuous review and reflection at national level of the NDAP program and its relationship with the NDIS, continues to provide uncertainty of funding for all National Disability Advocacy Programs across Australia. The Board endeavours to review what has occurred in a range of other national programs to anticipate what might be apply to independent advocacy services. The Board continues to liaise and work with our national body DANA and to interact effectively with DSS at State and Federal level.

In conclusion I would like to thank the Board members whose professional skills and commitment to ADAI have enabled us to achieve much during the year. The Board is currently seeking to expand its numbers with a member with well-rounded marketing skills and experience to further support our work. I thank our CE Jenny Hughes and Operations Manager Karen Field who have been welcome additions to ADAI. I also thank staff who worked with ADAI during the year and have now left our organisation. I 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 need it. 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 Management

About ADAI

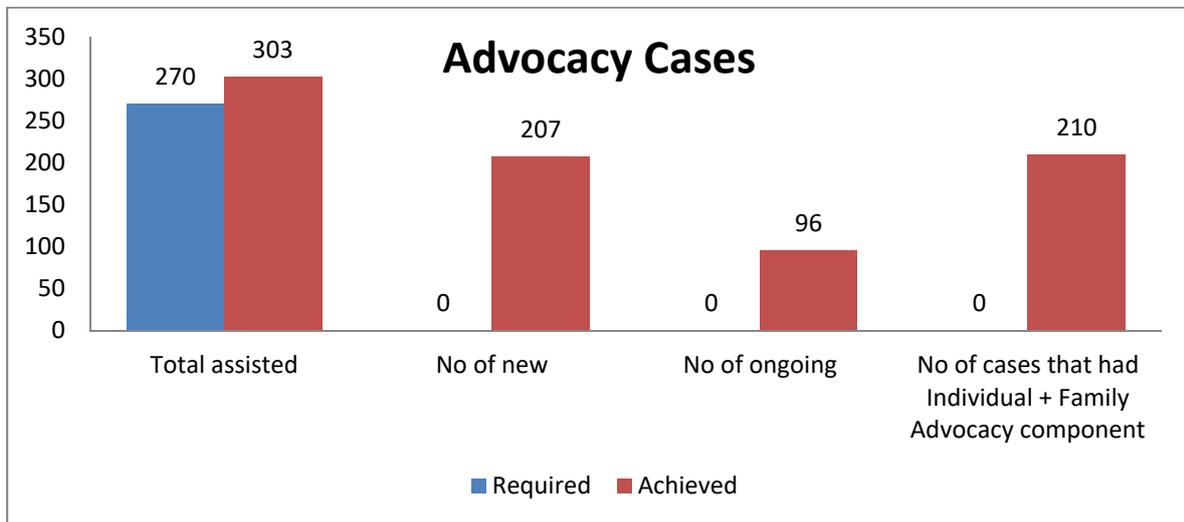
Service In Brief

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 2015/16 we provided advocacy services to over 300 clients across South Australia and in doing so achieved a 12% higher outcome than funded for.

An advocacy service was provided through the Clare regional office to service the mid north region. This office closed on 30 June 2016 to enable a more flexible service to meet client demand.

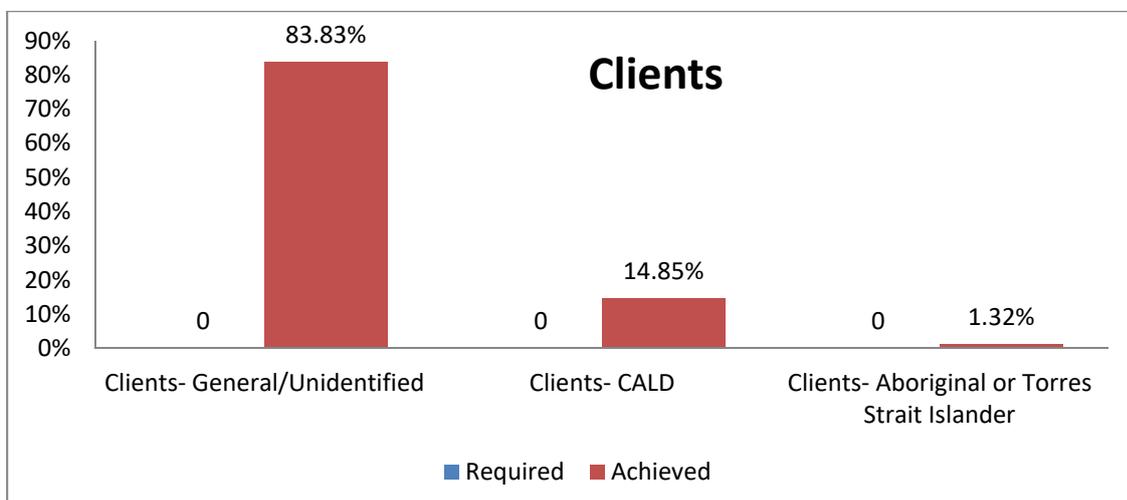
While demand for advocacy services is increasing, graph 1 highlights the number of advocacy cases managed in 2015/16 including those cases that had both individual and a family advocacy component.

Graph 1: Advocacy Cases



In 2015/16 our service inclusivity is demonstrated by our capacity to service clients who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and use our advocacy service to support them as they seek to address their needs.

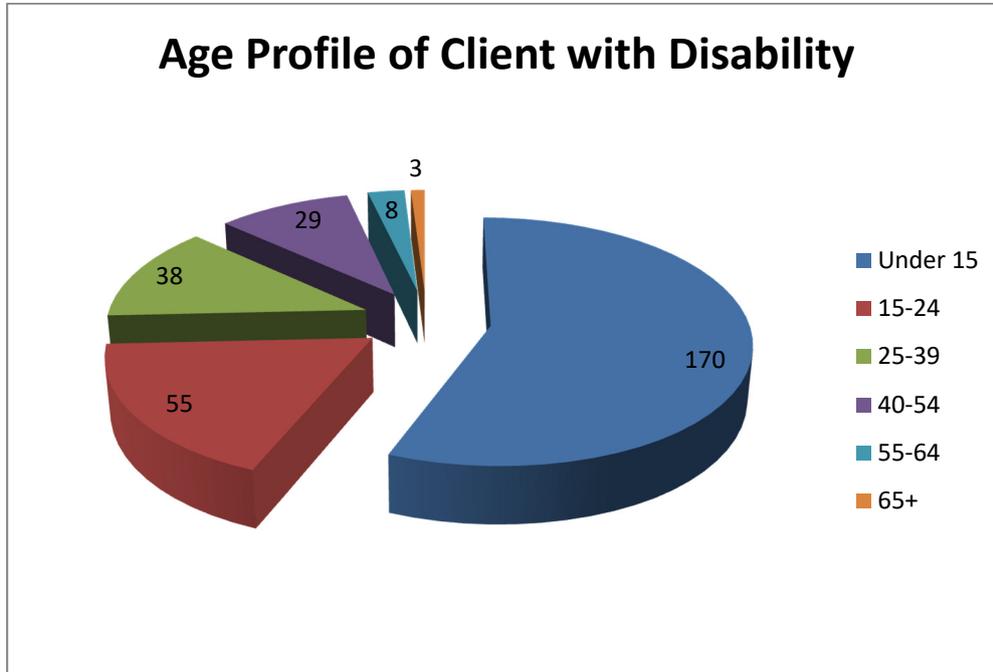
Graph 2: Client Identification



Age Profile of Clients

ADAI is proud to have assisted clients from various cultural and social backgrounds including culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those facing financial difficulties. Our clients' ages range from under 15 years of age to over 65 years of age.

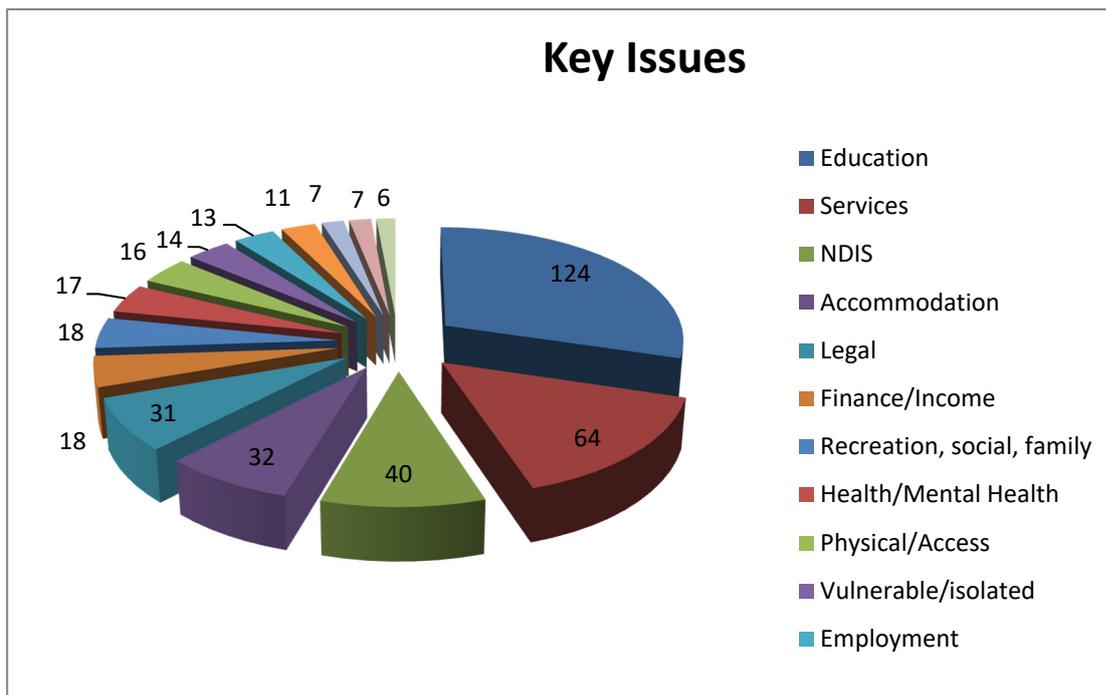
Graph 3: Age Profile of Client with Disability



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 education, the NDIS implementation, services offered, accommodation and legal support.

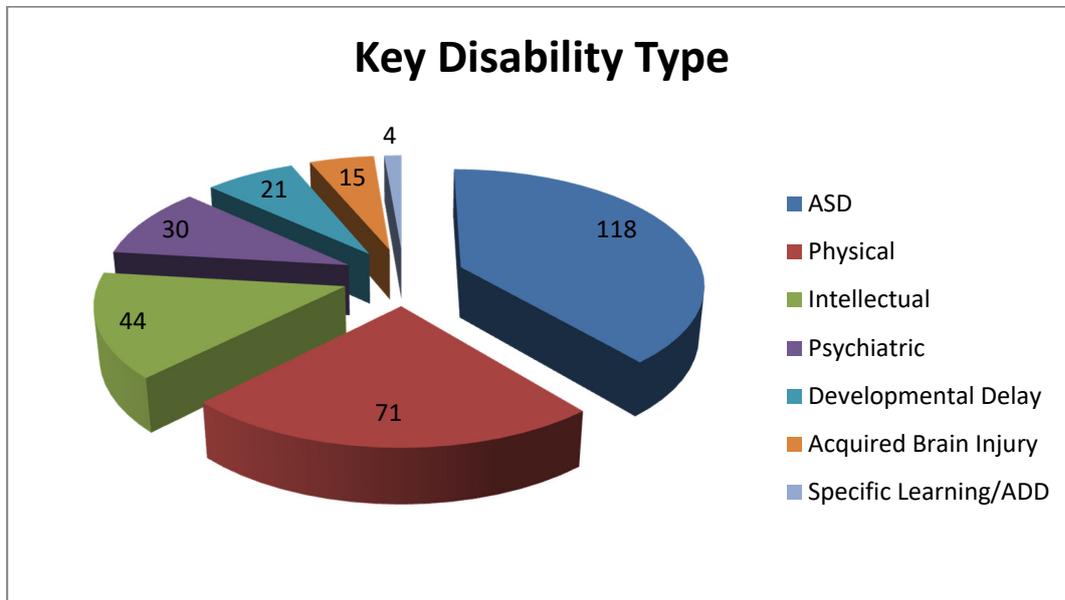
Graph 4: Key Issues



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 Federal Department of Social Services to provide individual, self and family advocacy services to people with a disability and their family and/or carer, living in South Australia. It is a small advocacy agency, with big aims. Its central office has moved to Adelaide to better service our clients. The office in Clare has been closed and ADAI services the entire state in a range of innovative ways.

The precursors of Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion are Family Advocacy and prior to that Parent Advocacy. These organisations have collectively provided services to South Australian's with a disability for over twenty five years.

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

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is supporting a person to speak up and be heard so that their rights are promoted, protected or defended.

Advocacy agencies such as ADAI can support a person to speak up for themselves, to help them be heard by, for example;

- Finding and providing information;
- Making phone calls or writing letters or emails;
- Attending meetings;
- Helping the person plan and practice for meetings, phone calls etc.;
- Helping the person draft letters or emails;
- Requesting a review of a decision that has been made which affects the person.

What is our Model of Advocacy?

ADAI is funded by the Australian Government to provide Individual Advocacy services for people with a disability. Individual Advocacy involves supporting adults who are living with disability and those who are representing or supporting a family member who is living with disability.

When an ADAI Advocate works with a person or family, they;

- stand alongside the person as a “partner” in the process;
- help to develop the person’s confidence and ability to discuss the outcomes they want to achieve;
- support the person to make informed decisions and pursue their rights;
- recognise that the person is the expert in their own life or the life of their child;
- focus on one or two key issues at a time;
- advocate only after they have the permission of the person to do so;
- keep the person informed and up to date on any new information or developments along the way;
- refer on to, or work with, other agencies that can provide assistance where appropriate;
- treat everyone they advocate for or to with respect, empathy, honesty and transparency;
- promote the rights of all people with a disability in the community.

What we do

An advocate can work with you to help resolve issues and problems with:

- abuse and neglect
- accessing services or support
- discrimination and rights
- legal and financial matters
- negotiating service goals and outcomes
- participating in community life
- receiving fair treatment

These issues or problems might occur in different aspects of your life, such as:

- accommodation
- Centrelink
- education and training
- employment
- health care and/or treatment
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- social and recreation
- transport

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 clients

Who can receive our free disability advocacy service from Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion?

Any person living in South Australian with a disability can receive our free disability advocacy service.

There is no age limit to access our services.

People with all types of disability access our advocacy services, including people with:

- physical disability
- acquired brain injury
- sensory disability
- intellectual or mental illness
- family and carers of people with disability

Client Comments

Our Clients are important to us and we continually seek to improve our service and listen to our client's needs.

We have received some wonderful and heartfelt feedback on our service this year from clients and their carers and families through letters, Facebook, and telephone calls. Here are just a few:

From a Facebook Review page:

This organisation has been a lifesaver for me in dealing with the nightmare which is having a special needs child in the school system that is not adequately equipped to support them.

A thankyou card received in August:

"without your help I would not be in the position I am now and I cannot thank you enough."

By telephone:

From a sister who remarked that my presence at the meeting prevented one of the workers across the table from bullying her and enabled her to more confidently speak what she needed.

From a mother who remarked that I seemed to know just what to say and how to relate to her in front of the others across the table that helped her feel safe and emotionally supported at a school meeting she had been dreading, including supporting her being able to say what she needed to say.

By Person:

From a drop in client who made brief contact and who was seeking to get connected into social networks and volunteering opportunities and felt heard.

By Letter:

From a client with whom we have worked on several occasions and is a woman living with intellectual disability who reports that I am the only worker who she feels really listens to what she has to say and follows through on commitments to call back.

Overview of Strategic Plan

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (ADAI) is a not-for-profit organisation providing a free advocacy services to any South Australian with a disability, their family or carers. ADAI provides independent, family and self-advocacy services. Our free service operated in metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia with two (2) office locations in 2015/16. The regional office in Clare closed on 30 June 2016 to enable a more flexible service approach to meet the increasing numbers of clients.

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion aims to enable people with disabilities to access their community and achieve better education, service provision and employment opportunities. We advocate with the person and/or their family/carers to fully participate in decision making and to work together with professionals as true partners.

Our aim is to achieve better opportunities for people with disability and their families and carers through advocacy, to continue providing our services and address the evolving needs of our clientele. Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion has refocused its service provision to ensure it can meet its strategic goals and objectives that includes:

- Providing advocacy and support for people with disability and their families/carers;
- Promoting Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. as the recognised disability association for individuals and their families/carers;
- Working collaboratively with other disability and community services to maximise benefits for people with disability and their families/carers;
- Enabling individuals with disability, their families/carers to access and attain their rights and entitlements under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability;
- Operating according to best practice.

Our Board and Our Staff

Our Board

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Incorporated is governed by a volunteer Board of Management. 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 the areas of human resources management, equity and diversity and workplace relations. She also worked in the disability area with focus on employment for people 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. Advanced Diploma of Human Resources Management and a part complete Bachelor of Management.

Ms Sandra Deakin, Treasurer

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.

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. Jen holds a Masters of Adult, Vocational and Workplace Education, a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies). Currently Jen works as the National Disability Coordination Officer for the Adelaide Metropolitan Region, a role which focuses on removing barriers that prevent people with disabilities from accessing,

transitioning and progressing through vocational education and training, tertiary studies and subsequent employment. 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 five 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.

Professor Annette Summers AO RFD

Annette is a retired Professor of Midwifery and Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of South Australia. She now holds an adjunct position of Professorial Fellow at Flinders University, School of Nursing and Midwifery. She is also a retired Colonel from the Army Reserves. She has a family member with disability. She has long term experience in both chairing and membership of boards and committees, including ministerially appointed positions. She has degrees in health, education and awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Flinders University.

Ms Narelle Schubert

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.

Mr Brian Smith

During an extensive career in the SA Police Force and 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.

Board members farewelled during 2015-2016

The Board farewelled Mr Brian Taylor, a Board member during the 2015/16 financial year.

Brian served the Board loyally and well for several years. He brought a wealth of experience and a very personal knowledge and experience of living with and caring for a family member with disability. We thank Brian for his service and wish him well.

Our Staff

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. restructured its operations on 1 July 2016 and is pleased to welcome the following staff:

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).

Kate Erne, Advocate

Kate has over 22 years' experience working in the fields of mental health, employment with a specialisation in Disability Employment Services, tertiary education and training and community services. Kate has a Master's in Education, a Bachelor of Education (TABOR Adelaide), a Certificate in Mental Health First Aid (Mental Health First Aid) and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Adelaide Training and Employment Centre).

Ilona Schultz, Advocate

Ilona has 20 years' experience in administration and senior management, and has worked in the not-for-profit, public and private sectors. Ilona holds bachelor degrees in Music and Law from University of Adelaide, and post graduate qualifications in Education from University of Queensland and in Legal Practice from Australian National University. Ilona has a Bachelor of Music (Performance), University of Adelaide; Graduate Diploma in Education, University of Queensland; Bachelor of Laws, University of Adelaide; Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, Australian National University.

Linda Mee, Advocate

Linda is a qualified social worker. Linda worked in the vocational education sector for twenty five years as an educator, a counsellor and a support person for people with disability. Linda has qualifications in AUSLAN as well as Training and Development. Linda re-joins the Advocacy team, having previously provided hourly paid services. Linda has a Diploma in Technology (Social Work), SA Institute of Technology (now University of South Australia).

Karen Field, Operations Manager

Karen has over 15 years' experience in Management roles in the Aged Care sector, 8 years' experience in Program Co-ordination roles in Aged Care and Welfare Services and 4 years as an Advocate. Karen is an engaging and supportive leader, who is able to drive change whilst supporting

staff to grow in their personal development. Karen is committed to supporting a client and their wishes as the focus of advocacy and has lived experience of disability within her family. Karen has a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of South Australia and a Certificate IV in Justice Studies.

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.

Karen Rodger, Bookkeeper/Receptionist

Karen has a Certificate IV in Office Administration and has worked as a Bookkeeper for over 20 years in a variety of industries, including community services, hospitality and construction. Karen joined ADAI staff in May 2016 after relocating from the Northern Territory.

Staff farewelled during 2015-2016

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. farewelled the following staff during the 2015/16 financial year. We recognise and thank them all for their service to Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (and its precursor organisations) and we wish them well in their new endeavours.

Luke Travers - Advocate

Kelly Gudgeon, Advocate

Graeme Duncan, Executive Officer

Samantha Hunt, Advocate

We thank them for their service and wish them well in their new endeavours.



Financial Report
2015/16