

SACOSS

NEWS

Justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians

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Autumn 2017



SACOSS

South Australian Council
of Social Service

As the peak non-government representative body for the health and community services sector in South Australia, the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) believes in justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians.

For information on membership, we invite you to visit our website or phone us.

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Wendy Malycha is Citizen of the Year 2017

SACOSS congratulates Wendy Malycha, CEO of St John’s Youth Services, who has been named as Adelaide’s Citizen of the Year for 2017.

This award recognises the outstanding contribution Wendy has made towards improving the lives of young people in Adelaide.

Wendy joined St John’s Youth Services in 1993 and has been instrumental in changing the way organisations work with young people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage. In that time they have accommodated more than 15,000 young South Australians in crisis.

For Wendy, attending the Citizen of the Year award ceremony was a chance to reflect on opportunities and partnerships, saying:

“I have been fortunate to be in a city where the combined interests of many people in the Adelaide City Council and the State Government have enabled us to collectively establish the world’s first crisis accommodation service located in a mixed tenure apartment building.”

“We can all be proud that Adelaide leads the world in responding to the needs of our most at risk young people. By accommodating them in modern apartments and supporting them to independence, young people in this city rarely face the long-term homelessness we used to see, and are now respected citizens in the community.”



Editorial

Ross Womersley, Chief Executive Officer, SACOSS

In this edition of SACOSS News we chose to focus on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) because it has to be one of the biggest changes in the way services for people who live with a disability are funded and organised in my living memory.

Not that it's the first time we have attempted to give life to services deliberately organised to give agency to the people who receive them, nor the first time that support is shaped in a way that attempts to help people get access to the good things in life. However, in this instance it's the sheer scale and speed with which these reforms are to be implemented that is most alarming. Here we have focused on the NDIS but many of the issues can be equally applied to the consumer-directed funding reforms in the aged care sector.

Many of you will know that in South Australia the first stage of the NDIS began as a trial for children 13 years and under on 1 July 2013. Original estimates suggested this would be 5000-6000 kids, and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) struggled against considerable challenges to transition this group within the timeframes.

From July 2017 existing service users and new participants over the age of 18 will enter the scheme progressively, based on where they live, and by July 2018, the NDIS is expected to be covering all of South Australia and all age groups. Estimates suggest this will eventually be as many as 32,000 people who live with a disability with possibly as many as 26,000 people to transition to the scheme in less than two years.

There are three things worth considering. Firstly, these reforms had their origins in mass disappointment from people who live with a disability (and their families often) about our existing service structures largely because these were not operating in ways that led people towards the good things in life. In fact, in many instances they were doing the very opposite by segregating people away from community life. The NDIS was always conceptualised as one key in unlocking the pathway towards liberation and a good life in the centre of our communities.

Secondly, one of the key elements in the transition to the NDIS was to ensure people had lots of time to consider what their hopes and dreams were, as well as the types of support they might need to access in order to help them get there. People who live with a disability, and their family members where appropriate, are meant to have access to "planners" who can help them think about these things and advise them about the personal care they might need to put in place in order to get where they want to go. Then on the

basis of this, the person will be allocated the resources they need to get going on this journey.

Thirdly, between now and July 2018, the numbers imply that as many as 1000 people a month will need to be supported to make this transition to the new scheme – all with the good guidance they require to get to where they want to go. This is an enormous number of people and one can only anticipate in the demand to get people "on scheme" most won't get the really considered individual assistance they need to make serious plans to change their circumstances.

So, what can we reasonably anticipate? Clearly we will see a small number of people who are able to use this new system to advantage and as a result build themselves better lives in their local communities.

On the other hand I suspect the great majority of people will possibly get some small gains but will not get the quantum leap we were hoping for when we argued strongly for highly personalised supports. In many instances there will be a lot of luck involved.

You'll be lucky if you happen to build a relationship with a service provider who has really strong values built into their support arrangements which recognises that if you live with a disability the pathway to life at the core of our community is not straightforward and money for personal care may not always be the solution. In fact it's full of potholes, blind corners and paths that go nowhere near where you thought you were heading. In this context the role better services will play is to find ways to join people on their journeys, helping to guide them through obstacles and confront the barriers of low expectations and ever present discrimination.

Let's all hope that despite the odds being stacked against it, this type of support for people can actually flourish and we're not going to be saying in 10 years time that the NDIS was well intentioned but failed to take us where we were hoping.

I was brought to thinking about the inadequacy of good intentions in another context recently. For the last couple of years SACOSS has been proud to serve as one of the sponsors for Reconciliation SA's breakfast which commemorates the Apology Kevin Rudd made as our Prime Minister to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who had their children stolen from them and to the children who lost their childhoods and ties to family and culture because they were forcibly removed.

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At this year's breakfast, like in years past, we heard directly from people who'd survived these experiences and about some of the scars they collected and wounds they had been left with. It's always sobering. None the less, I am always struck by the courage and generosity of those who provide testimony in an effort to encourage and draw the rest of us to understanding.

This year one of those people was Aunty Eva Johnson, taken as a child many years ago from her family in Daly River in the Northern Territory. Amongst other things she uses her poetry to provoke and encourage those of us who were not party to those same experiences to deepen our appreciation of what it's meant. I asked if we could publish one that she shared with us at the breakfast – her version of the Lord's Prayer.

I chose it because it so starkly reflects the impacts of activities undertaken in the name of good intentions. It also reminded me of the role some of the charitable sectors, missions and agencies have played in enacting these policies and I wondered to what degree our sector has really taken responsibility for the role we played. Should we be speaking to elders of the stolen generation about whether there is a way our sector too can play a role in reconciliation? I'd be interested to hear your own reflections on this.

In the meantime Aunty Eva tells me she has a whole collection of poems she'd love to see published.



Elder and Stolen Generations woman Aunty Eva Johnson

The Indigenous Prayer

Aunty Eva Johnson

Dear Lord,
I thank you from the depths of my heart
And from the well springs of my soul
I beseech thee to accept my humble words of gratitude
For all that you have done for me and my people
Lord, I thank you for the protection laws,
for assimilation, for Christianising a proud and noble race.
Thank you for poverty, starvation, alcoholism, suicide,
diseases such as smallpox, diphtheria, VD, and of course forced sterilisation.
I especially want to thank the churches for their
well spirited organised fundraising campaigns
using Indigenous people and our conditions as incentive
for their appeals. Lord, I thank you
and bless all those anthropologists Lord who dig up our graves and dust
our bones and destroy the dignity of our dead,
Lord, I thank you,
and thank you for missionaries and their humble words
and goodwill, and dedication.
Thank you for used clothes, mis-matched shoes, the Bible,
handbags, the alphabet, velvet soap, evening gowns,
wedding veils and Lord, thank you for the Queen.
Lord I give thanks for tin sheds and food rations,
and bless the mining companies and Pine Gap missiles.
I especially give thanks for loyal understanding and sympathy,
police with riot helmets, mace, dogs, handcuffs and paddywaggon.
Thank you for blind justice Lord with ten thousand laws
And all-white juries, and especially for the soul destroying
Institutions, Lord I thank you,
and Lord bless Australia, the clever country,
the land of opportunity, freedom and justice for all.



From the new chair

David Panter, chair of SACOSS

I feel privileged to have been elected as the new chair of SACOSS and look forward to being able to make a positive contribution to our work and purpose over the next two years. I'd also like to take this opportunity to personally thank Helen for the wonderful work she has done over the last six years as chair and for her ongoing support to SACOSS through her membership of the Policy Council.

SACOSS over the last 70 years has achieved many things to be proud of but is at another moment in its history when it needs to take stock and look at how best to re-energise itself to tackle what lies ahead.

The evidence suggests that whilst overall some progress has been made in tackling inequality for some, there is still a substantial divide between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' and all the projections suggest this divide is going to deepen in the years ahead. Consequently, the issues SACOSS has championed in the past haven't gone away and still need a champion. However, the context in which that needs to happen is changing and evolving.

Each year brings new challenges and 2017 is no different. We find ourselves in a world where many of the gains that have been made since the Second World War to tackle inequality and achieve greater tolerance of difference in society are being challenged and potentially eroded. Whilst this plays out on a world stage it is also very real here in Australia and indeed, South Australia.

We have to look no further than the way our politicians are currently dealing with energy security – rather than engaging in the reality of the future and agreeing solutions we have a return to a rehash of 'old' vs 'new' technologies; with debates that appeared to have been previously won regarding climate change now being reopened and questioned.

Meanwhile the consumer picks up the cost with an increasing burden of this falling on those with the least ability to respond.

As we build up to the 2018 state election it is important that we have a clear agenda based upon those things which, unchecked, drive inequality. The three overarching issues which affect us all are housing affordability, access to affordable power and the increasing shift to a digital world. Our state budget submission this year focuses on this latter point in particular; with many of the services people need only being accessible digitally and this access costs, yet again placing a bigger burden on those who have less.

In addition to these issues which touch us all, we also have to ensure that we champion the needs of particular groups within our communities who face specific disadvantage. This year's report on Closing the Gap shows just how far we still have to go to improving the life opportunities of first Australians, and the current debate on funding for the NDIS at the expense of other welfare programs are just two examples.

It is critical that we build on our past successes and set out a clear strategic path for how a peak body operates in that changing world.

How is its traditional membership base changing? Who are the new members and what are they looking for? What alliances are needed to ensure advocacy success? How is the role of social media changing the art of the possible?

These are just some of the questions that we need to, and indeed are being addressed, in developing our new five year strategic plan. Such an approach will ensure that SACOSS continues, not just to have a life, but more importantly continues to have real positive impact on the lives of the most disadvantaged within the state.



Reflections from the outgoing chair

Helen Connolly, outgoing SACOSS chair

As I write this piece and mark the end of my formal involvement as SACOSS chair, it is a time for me to reflect on the sector and social service broadly, and on critical SACOSS achievements over the past six years. It is however not the end of my relationship with SACOSS and the broader COSS network because for me, like the long line of chairs that came before me, advocating under the SACOSS banner for better public policy is something that really does get into your blood.

Whilst I started in the chair's role believing in the power of people, I leave the role convinced now more than ever that the road to a more socially just community is about changing the rules, changing minds, behaviours and practices and changing lives.

This requires each of us as individuals, teams and organisations to work together to create new ways of tackling poverty and inequality and delivering better outcomes for vulnerable South Australians.

I am extremely grateful to have played a part in the life of an organisation that started from humble beginnings as a youth welfare organisation to what is now a 70 year-old SA institution. During these seven decades there have been difficult times: wars, recession, conservative politics, shrinking government and extreme social and technological change. SACOSS in response has grown and developed into an influential and representative voice of disadvantaged people in our community that calls on us to take action against poverty and inequality.

But the last six years have not been smooth sailing and as I reflect on this time my thoughts are with the people who I have journeyed with as part of successive Boards, Policy Council, members and staff. They have all been called on to exercise values-based leadership, brave advocacy, strong resolve and confidence in the pursuit of justice and opportunity.

It has indeed been a privilege to work with them all as we experienced a few years of uncertainty, ambiguity and volatility characterised by trends such as:

- Blaming and shaming individuals for a poorly performing economy and the failure of social infrastructure
- The increasingly complex socio-political environments that have led to service losses, damaged relationships between government and the sector, inefficient contracting, inadequate funding levels and muffled advocacy voices

- Major disinvestments in early intervention and prevention in the areas of child protection, financial counselling and primary health
- A move to individualised funding models at the expense of personalised services, social inclusion, and support to build and sustain family and community capacity
- New waves of ecological crisis, political disruption, economic transformation and social inequality meaning that disruptive change is the new norm with organisations forced to radically rethink mission, purpose and operating models
- Blurring of for profit, for purpose and for good organisations and the emergence of hybrid business, brokers and intermediaries, which have challenged our definition of the sector.

Health and community services play a vital role as part of the fabric of a strong and resilient community. The sector is an asset brokering connection and relationships, and building individual family and community capacity. However, we know that tackling deep inequality and poverty requires collaboration and the bringing together of diverse stakeholders and interests. We need government, civil society and the private sector to co-own social issues and find ways of addressing the challenges.

I remain impressed by the critical role SACOSS plays in attending to these complex relationships, sharing information freely between groups to influence the system and grow the network of relationships. We achieve this through:

- active recruitment of members with shared values and vision
- strategic positioning of SACOSS members on other participatory processes
- direct representation
- research-informed policy

In recent times we have seen a number of joint campaigns and initiatives within the sector that are supported or led by SACOSS. Facilitating the sector's involvement in campaigning, supporting broader representation and participation in public policy development to groups that otherwise might not be involved have become a critical feature of our ways of working. Through shared resources and collective action we can be more impactful advocates.



Helen Connolly appointed SA's first Commissioner for Children and Young People

By Lauren Novak

South Australia's first Children's Commissioner has pledged to monitor the wellbeing of the state's

young people as an "early warning sign" on the health of the whole community.

The State Government recently announced Helen Connolly as the first Commissioner for Children and Young People. She will take up the five-year role on April 18.

The long-awaited position was recommended by the Nyland royal commission into SA's child protection system, which was prompted by the horrific abuse of young children by former government carer Shannon McCoole.

The Government and Opposition had argued over the extent of the powers which should be granted to the commissioner to investigate cases of child mistreatment or system failings, which had delayed the process.

New laws establishing the office were approved late last year.

They give the commissioner the power to investigate systemic issues but not intervene in or adjudicate individual complaints.

The commissioner can examine a specific child's case if it is part of, or representative of, a broader systemic issue.

Ms Connolly, who has worked in leadership roles including at the Red Cross and SA Council of Social Service, said she viewed the welfare of children as "an early warning sign of overall community health".

"The experience of children in their early years has an impact on not just their future growth and development but on the functioning of the whole community," she said.

"(I) believe that the commitment to a Commissioner (role) is a tangible expression of the importance we, as a community, attach to children.

"I have no blueprint (for the role) as yet. It will be a matter of getting into the role and working out what the priorities are. It's a responsibility but I'm up for the challenge."

Education and Child Development Minister Susan Close said Ms Connolly had more than three decades of experience working in human services and had been involved in developing child protection, housing and refugee services and policies.

"She is passionate about finding new and different ways of increasing opportunities for social participation of all people, especially those who are marginalised or excluded," Dr Close said.

Opposition Leader Steven Marshall said the state's children needed this appointment "years and years and years ago".

Labor have been sitting on their hands (but) we're absolutely delighted that we're finally going to have this much needed officer in our state," he said.

SA already has a Guardian for Children and Young People who advocates on behalf of children in state care.

Ms Connolly's role encompasses the welfare of more than 400,000 South Australian children.

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As I sign off my top 10 SACOSS achievements of the last 6 years are:

- The Vital Services Decent Pay campaign and subsequent Equal Remuneration Order
- Scoping Study and subsequent funding of a Consumer Credit Legal Service
- Energy concessions, utilities literacy funding and Cost of Living Reports
- Compulsory third party insurance improvements for vulnerable people
- Without Taxes Vital Services Disappear campaign
- Pre-election and Mid-term Report Cards
- Online betting legislative reform

- 10 Year Asset Plan refurbishment of Marjorie Black House and the improvement of its accessibility
- Significant changes to the Constitution resulting in a more streamlined operating environment and more effective governance arrangements that are modern, clear and consistent
- Investment in community radio as a means of showcasing the work of the sector and engaging membership

As members we should all be proud of how SACOSS has responded to these shifts, adopted new ways to reach new audiences, developed campaigning capacity and forged new partnerships to achieve impact.



The NDIS must deliver authentic transformational benefits to succeed

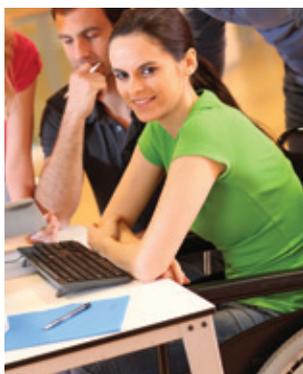
Robbi Williams, CEO, JFA Purple Orange

Amidst the noise of implementation and the dramas of plans and portals, it is helpful to remind ourselves why the NDIS is a critical social welfare reform in Australia.

The consultation in 2009 for the National Disability Strategy revealed the experiences of many people living with disability and their families. The subsequent report, *Shut Out*, charted the extent of their exclusion from Australian life. Together with concerns about the adequacy of disability support funding, this contributed to a National Disability Strategy that asserted the importance of people living with disability taking up their place as valued members in community life and in the economy. A fresh approach to disability funding and support was one of the mechanisms to support this. The subsequent referral to the Productivity Commission resulted in recommendations that led to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

As set out in the Productivity Commission's report, there is a link between exclusion – the absence of opportunities to be part of community and economy – and inadequate supports. Flipping that to the positive, good supports are an important ingredient for people to take up valued roles as members of their community and contributors to the economy.

We can reasonably conclude that the NDIS exists primarily to fund supports that advance its participants' chances of moving into rich and meaningful lives. This is consistent with the National Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.



Given the magnitude of change needed to combat the exclusion experiences reported in *Shut Out* and given the scale of the NDIS, it follows that every design and implementation decision needs to uphold the goal of valued roles in community life. This means that the support arrangements for each person need to deliver transformational benefits, assisting the person

to build confidence, to build knowledge and skill, to build access to ordinary mainstream resources like other people, to build personal networks, to find genuine fair-waged work, and so on.

Transformational benefits are different to transactional benefits. Transactional benefits are those delivered in the moment: assistance to get up, a prepared meal, a vacuumed carpet, a car ride, and so on. Transactional benefits are of course important – these are part of the understanding of adequate supports. The art of transformational benefit is in how such routine supports are designed and facilitated.

This takes vision, highly intentional planning, belief in the person's intrinsic value, and deep respect for the person's central role as the decision maker in their own life.

If we are only delivering transactional benefits, then for many people living with disability and their families, all we are doing is making people more comfortable in their exclusion and, as an even worse consequence, less restless for change and less convinced that a rich and meaningful life is possible.

So if we are to properly assess the impact of NDIS design and implementation decisions and if we are to properly assess the social return on investment, we might look to whether the arrangements are systematically and coherently delivering transformational benefits.

I fear they may not be. The current focus is on managing the mechanics – dates, people, money – of migration from state and territory systems to the NDIS. The scale and complexity of this implementation task appears to have stripped any significant focus on transformational benefits.

I believe the NDIA leadership wants the scheme to deliver transformational benefits in people's lives. However, the development of key NDIS policy and implementation decisions, coming as they do from a range of political and public forces – state and territory governments, the Disability Reform Council, Commonwealth departments, the NDIA – inadvertently may be creating a scheme of crystallised and calcified processes; brittle, inflexible and capable only of delivering transactional benefits at best.

To avoid this, the Australian governments and their agencies should foster, and the disability community should demand, a watching brief to ensure that each and every design and implementation decision builds the flexibility the scheme needs if it is to deliver an authentic transformational impact in people's lives.

Lucy's story: why we're grateful for the NDIS

Edel Lawlor

In 2014 my beautiful daughter Lucy was born with an undiagnosed craniofacial syndrome. As part of her syndrome we spent a lot of time during the first two years of her life in hospital. The medical staff noticed a delay with her speech, mobility and fine motor skills so suggested we contact the NDIS to see if we were eligible.

To be honest we have been extremely lucky with the care and support Lucy has received. I think Lucy was born at the right time because she was among the first age group to trial the NDIS.

I didn't really know where to start or how to apply for the scheme, so I phoned the number from the website and accessed the application form. The application was really daunting; I didn't know what to write or what services Lucy needed. I engaged the help of my lovely sister-in-law and CEO of Down Syndrome SA (DSSA) for advice.

I think the best thing I have done through this whole process is to ask many people for advice. I went on Facebook and looked at forums online with mums of children receiving the NDIS. I learnt so much from other people's experiences.

We received formal approval fairly quickly and a planning meeting was arranged a few weeks later. Before the meeting I spoke to the staff at DSSA and they were able to help me with decisions on what Lucy needed and what I should ask for during her planning meeting, as well as help set out realistic goals for the next 12 months.

Their experience was invaluable and set us up for an extremely easy transition. I am a very disorganised person and having someone to do all the paperwork and financial side of things was a godsend. Over the past few years we sought out the best speech pathologist, physios and OT. I enrolled Lucy in hydrotherapy, kindergym and a dance program for children with special needs. Each service was through different providers, however DSSA managed it all for me.

The NDIS gave us funding for a chair and table which Lucy uses to do different activities during the day. She was also given an amazing high chair that will grow with her over the next several years. Each year at the planning meeting her goals changed and each year we were given funding to match her new needs and goals. The list of services is



endless. We use a podiatrist for her feet, which started the progress to walking just before she turned two. I have downloaded apps to help with her communication.

Lucy's progress has been staggering and a pleasure to watch. Without the NDIS I don't think she would have advanced the way she has. It has been a very positive process and one I would highly recommend. Even if you don't have a clear diagnosis or pathway it is essential to ask someone to help you. Join a Facebook page or online forum. Knowledge is power. Become informed and access the services you are entitled to.

Lucy is a work in progress and I don't know what the future holds but I know it's a bright future and one we are not alone in. I have met so many wonderful people through this process and journey. I look forward to seeing how Lucy develops in the future.

SA's first Accessible Beach Day



Dignity Party's Kelly Vincent MLC joined fellow mobility aid users at Henley Beach recently to trial three types of beach friendly wheelchair and an accessible beach mat during South Australia's first ever Accessible Beach Day. With nearly 300 people with disabilities coming along to access the sand and water, this was the biggest Accessible Beach Day ever held in the southern hemisphere.



Towards the NDIS: Managing the tension

Prue Gorman, Executive Officer, Community Living Project

“If I advocate cautious optimism it is not because I do not have faith in the future but because I do not want to encourage blind faith.”

Aung San Suu Kyi

At Community Living Project, we strongly believe that every person, regardless of ability, is of inherent value and entitled to live a good life in the community. We are simultaneously excited about new opportunities under the NDIS for people with disability to create a good life, and alarmed about the scheme’s ongoing uncertainty and lack of safeguards for those people who are most vulnerable.

The NDIS offers a clear focus on building the capacity of people with disability, and their families, to make their own decisions and take control of their individual support. We are hearing terrific examples from interstate where families who have the chance to be well informed and prepared, and encouraged to dream of a different future, are crafting support for their son or daughter that is much more likely to facilitate an ordinary, typical life embedded in right relationship, positive roles and welcoming community.

Success in achieving such positive outcomes requires providers to be far more creative in the way in which we help people prepare, to foster opportunities for people to think beyond the confines of traditional service paradigms, and to have the courage to release our ingrained control mechanisms and handover (with the right support and information) decision making and authority to the person with disability, their family and their supporters.

Unfortunately, with every story of success and positive change, we hear others where limited access to pre-planning support, and poor outcomes from the NDIA planning process curtail any opportunity for crafting an ordinary life, and force people with disability to continue in unsatisfactory and life-limiting traditional support options. Other exhausted families are left in the role of parent providers.

Many families in SA with new NDIS plans have highlighted the variability in planning decisions and we observe frequent errors in plan pricing. For some families, this has meant trying to establish services that are highly complex and under resourced; the fact that the review process is so lengthy and difficult to manage only puts additional pressure on even the most articulate and prepared families.

Community Living Project supports Ben, shown here returning home from shopping, and Jocelyne, who runs a microenterprise producing and selling treat-sized bags of dried fruit.



Many of these concerns are directly related to the scale and speed of the rollout, with great pressure being placed on planners to achieve target quotas.

While CLP is heavily investing in supporting the people and families we are currently involved with via pre-planning, like many others in the sector we hold great concerns for those people who have little support and may lack capacity to articulate their dreams, and their vulnerabilities may not be readily assessed in an hour and a half phone call with a planner who may never meet them face to face.

Our duality of excitement and concern extends to the future role of providers in the new world of providing personalised support within an insurance-based, commercialised context. Our experience working alongside families for over 30 years tells us that support that is highly personalised, with a compelling shared vision of inclusion, working through right relationship with the person and their family that has been built on trust developed over many years, can facilitate a good life for people with disability, including for those people who may have been labelled as highly dependant and 'challenging', within a cost that is both 'reasonable and necessary'.

A concern we hold is that the fragmentation of support into 12 month parcels, potentially coordinated and managed by one provider while directly supported via another provider (or several), may potentially lead to a reduction in coherent support practices and long-term planning for people who are socially isolated, highly vulnerable and most likely to have the least voice.

One key component of inclusive support that facilitates good lives is the capacity of services to get out of the way of natural relationships and the person's community. We are constantly asking our support workers to provide less direct support and more facilitation; facilitation that, when done well, leads to people with disability being welcomed and included into community.

Services that are highly visible in people's lives can unintentionally and unconsciously drive community away. This sits somewhat at odds with the new world of commercialism and marketing, which demands that providers create a strong brand to attract new 'customers'.

As a 'niche' provider focused on inclusion and community, how can this sit comfortably with either our values or our limited resources?

Transition to the NDIS is relentless and affecting every part of CLP. Given the 'efficiency' of incoming NDIA pricing, we need to implement a new administration and information management system, at our cost. We have committed significant internal resources to preparing each person and family with their pre-planning. We are redesigning roles and utilising existing resources to train and prepare staff for the changes ahead.

We are developing a new website and undertaking marketing strategies that we hope are not too abrasive. We have identified our NDIS service focus and are reconstructing service models that have relied on block funding for sustainability.

All of this is happening at our own expense, while day to day support continues to be provided, albeit within a continually contracting state-managed environment. With the individualisation of our previous block funding, some of our long term families are experiencing a loss in flexibility for additional support when times get tough, and others are grappling with a sense of uncertainty around the future direction of government policy and are reflecting to us 'Here we go again'. Staff are naturally expressing uncertainty about their future roles, and the increasing workforce casualisation and diminishing access to staff development funds raises real concern about the longer term quality of future support.

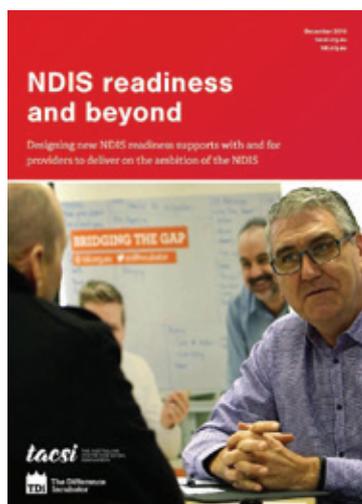
And yet we persist in our optimism that the NDIS of 2017 and beyond will reflect the scheme's original intent, that of increasing the access of every person with disability to a life that holds the same promise and opportunities that exists for any other citizen.

We take heart from the emerging stories of positive change in people's lives, and are invigorated by the growing capacity of families to share information and innovation via social media.

We suspect, however, that despite all the shiny gadgets and technological fads, our future support base will still come from traditional avenues, through shared stories of real lives, blossoming in welcoming communities, where people with disability can aspire to meaningful days, reciprocal relationships and a positive future.



Designing in the dark: preparing for the full introduction of the NDIS



Learning how to prepare for the unknowns in the NDIS future brought 18 South Australian disability service providers into a project to help design supports that would accelerate readiness across the sector. Working with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) and The Difference Incubator (TDi) these providers have helped chart a new route to NDIS readiness with the research and recommendations captured in the free report “NDIS Readiness and Beyond”.

Kerry Jones and Mel Lambert from TACSI explain:

From the beginning of the project it was clear that disability service providers are committed to the goals and values of the NDIS and, at the

same time, aware of the challenges involved in shifting their service models, cultures and business systems.

One service provider described it as “designing the future in the dark” – trying to prepare for a future NDIS environment that wasn’t yet concrete but for which preparations had to be underway.

“No one really knows what the reality will look like on the ground... I’m not entirely sure ... how we stretch from the present to a future we don’t entirely understand”

– Service provider

Over the past two years TACSI and TDi have spent time supporting providers – from large NGOs to start-up social enterprises and the NDIA itself – to be NDIS-ready. Based on that experience it seemed likely that exploring approaches used in the commercial sector would help providers to develop the types of services that the NDIS consumer-directed funding model will require.

To help both funders of capability building and disability service providers, the report provides insights into organisations’ preparedness for the NDIS, their perceptions of existing NDIS-readiness offers and opportunities to supplement those offers.

Accelerating readiness without cutting corners

With the NDIS scheduled to be operating statewide for all age groups by July 2018, it was important that readiness supports could be developed quickly but still be effective, practical and relevant for each organisation’s particular circumstances.

To meet this challenge, the project experimented with some alternative forms of capability building – rapid assessments for all 18 providers and prototyping new models of support with four, diverse providers.

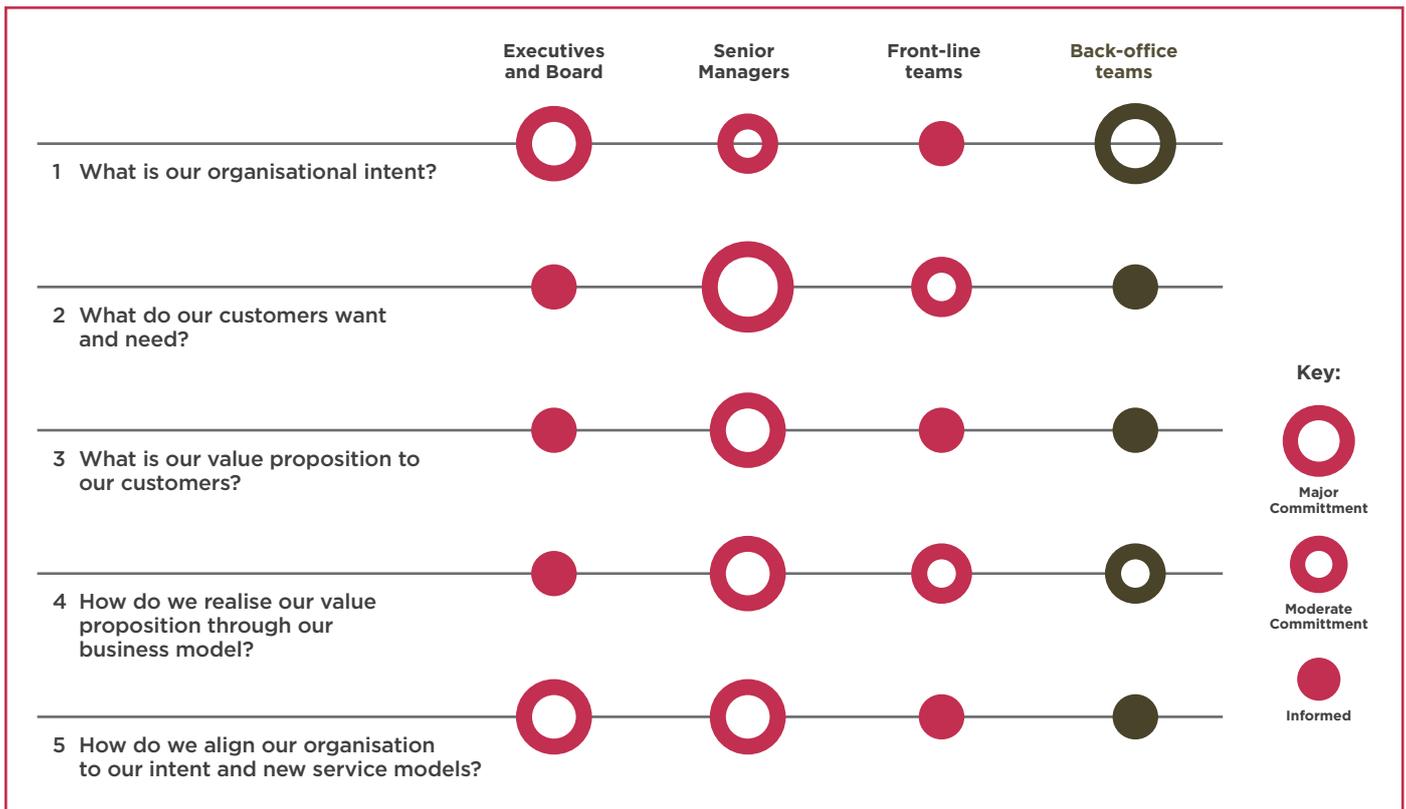
It became evident that introducing approaches from human-centred design, business modelling and change management created real value for providers, enabling them to make significant progress on their NDIS journey.

The report finds that for disability service providers to develop sustainable business models under the NDIS, i.e. to develop compelling offers for their customers - they need support in answering five questions in sequence:

1. What is our organisational intent?
2. What do our customers want and need?
3. What is our value proposition to our customers?
4. How do we realise our value proposition through our business model?
5. How do we align our organisation to our intent and new service models?

A ‘readiness route map’ in the report shows the relative importance of each of these questions to four key groups: executives and boards, senior managers, front-line teams and back-office teams.

Route map to NDIS readiness



Further information

Download the report tacsi.org.au/project/ndis-readiness-and-beyond/
 Sign up for invitations to seminars relating to the report, and other TACSI partnership opportunities tacsi.org.au/project/ndis-readiness-and-beyond/

Acknowledgements

TACSI would like to thank the providers who were involved in the rapid consultations and prototyping for their participation and honest feedback, and The Difference Incubator, our research and prototyping partner.

This work has only been possible with the generous financial support of the Fay Fuller Foundation.

"It can seem so huge you don't know how to get there. So for us this process has been really useful in breaking it down into bite-size chunks..."
 - Service provider

Realising the NDIS ambition

For all the providers spoken to, the NDIS was something they welcomed. However, the scale of the change and the risks bearing on their organisations seemed to be influencing many of them to be conservative, making the full potential of NDIS hard to realise.

That's why the recommendations in this report extend beyond preparing providers to function in a new system. Instead, they aim to enable providers to deliver on the ambition of the NDIS - to enable a genuinely better quality of life for the hundreds of thousands of Australians with a disability and their families and carers.

Importantly for providers, the report includes a set of practical resources to begin tackling the five deceptively simple questions and help them structure this journey to NDIS readiness and beyond.



Honours for Simon Schrapel

Simon Schrapel, CEO of Uniting Communities and former SACOSS Chair, has been awarded an Australia Day Honour for his outstanding service over many years.

The award recognises his "significant service to the community, particularly to children and families through social welfare organisations, programs and initiatives."

Simon has been involved with and taken a leading role with a very large number of social services and welfare organisations. Some highlights include:

- Chief Executive, Uniting Communities (formerly UnitingCare Wesley), since 2010.
- Executive Director, Anglicare South Australia, 1999-2010.
- Chair, South Australian Council of Social Service, 2004-2010.
- President, Australian Council of Social Service, 2010-2013
- Chair, Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia, 2001-2007
- Chair, South Australian Council for the Care of Children, current, and Member, since 2006.
- Chair, Foodbank South Australia, current and Member, since 2003.
- Director, Foodbank Australia, since 2014.
- Chair, School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy Advisory Group, since 2014.



Community-based psychosocial rehabilitation: A casualty of the NDIS

Geoff Harris, Executive Director, Mental Health Coalition SA

The NDIS is designed to deliver much needed disability support for 12% of Australians living with severe and persistent mental illness. However, due to the way some jurisdictions are planning to fund the NDIS by defunding other services, this means that the other 88% of Australians with severe and persistent mental illness will face a mental health system with less service options.

The Mental Health Coalition of South Australia (MHCSA) is committed to advocating for a holistic approach to mental wellness for all South Australians. For people severely impacted by their mental illness, this means having access to the appropriate mix of mental health treatment, community-based rehabilitation and disability support to manage their illness and build a good life in the community.

Getting the balance right

A well-integrated mental health system has three elements: clinical treatment, psychosocial rehabilitation and psychosocial disability support. Think of these elements as three legs on a stool: for the stool to be stable each one needs to be in place or it will fall over.

When psychosocial disability was added to the NDIS it was welcomed by the mental health sector as a significant improvement to what was previously a poorly funded pillar for people severely impacted by their mental illness.

Unfortunately, the way some jurisdictions appear to be planning to pay for this is by cutting funding to many psychosocial rehabilitation programs. We know that most Commonwealth-funded programs are “in scope” but in SA mental health service providers in the non-government sector have yet to receive any advice from the Department regarding how the transition will work for people with mental illness and what will happen to state-funded, community-based psychosocial support services.

Independent evaluations have shown these services to be highly effective in supporting people to build a better quality of life and reduce their use of emergency departments and unplanned acute care services.

At the full rollout of the NDIS it looks like the disability leg of the mental health stool will grow stronger whilst the psychosocial rehabilitation leg atrophies alarmingly. So what we’re facing is a stool that can topple over. The impact will be felt by thousands of South Australians with mental illness who will have a poorer quality of life, their family and friends and by increased presentations to emergency departments and acute mental health settings.

We have seen no credible justification for defunding evidence-based psychosocial rehabilitation programs to pay for the NDIS. Our analysis shows that over a 10 year period, jurisdictions need to retain around 98% of current investment in psychosocial rehabilitation services to avoid creating new gaps for people with severe mental illness who will not be able to access the NDIS.

What is the difference between psychosocial disability support and psychosocial rehabilitation?

We often hear the NDIS talk about “reasonable and necessary” support. When we look at that through the lens of psychosocial disability this means help to manage with a person’s day to day activities, and to build their capacity to engage in their community.

Meanwhile psychosocial rehabilitation aims to support the person by setting goals that will enable them to take full control and live a meaningful life without the need for ongoing support.

Most psychosocial rehabilitation programs run for up to 12 months with the goal always being that the person will move on independently. Both disability and rehabilitation support work hand in hand, are very important and must be available on an individualised basis.

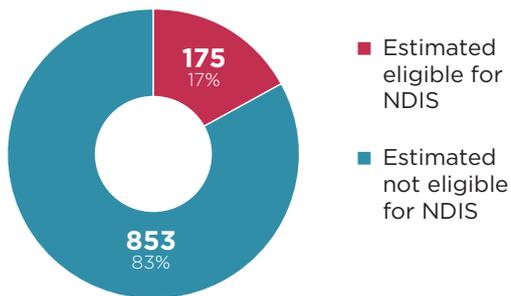
In 2014-2015 approximately 18.3% of the South Australian population reported experiencing a long-term mental health or behavioural problem (ABS, 2015). That’s around 141,000 people, many of whom will never seek treatment or be well supported solely by primary health services (eg a GP, psychologist etc). The NDIS will support about 5200 South Australians (8% of the revised number of 64,000 nationally). So South Australians who fall between the group that experiences psychosocial disability and those who need only primary health intervention are at risk of falling through the cracks of receiving an effective service.

What does it mean for us?

It would appear that neither the Commonwealth nor the South Australian Government intended to reduce the availability of community-based psychosocial rehabilitation services to fund the NDIS. However by transitioning mental health funding to provide NDIS packages it has become clear that unless there is a significant change in approach, governments will dramatically reduce access to rehabilitation support in the community resulting in loss of service, most especially for those who don’t meet the NDIS eligibility criteria.

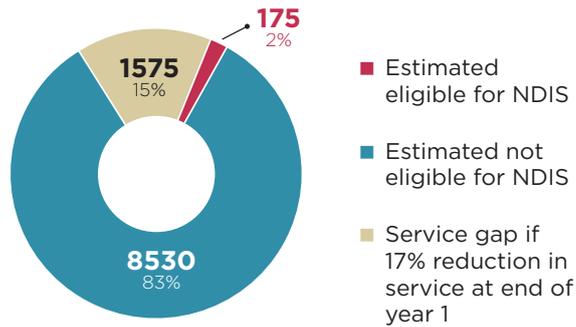
IPRSS Now

Total IPRSS clients: 1028



IPRSS 10 Years

Total IPRSS clients: 10,280



17

In 2016 the MHCSA wanted to understand the impact of the NDIS on South Australians living with mental illness and therefore undertook a data collection exercise. We identified 6997 people who were accessing 15 programs across 11 organisations.

When we looked at state-funded programs we found of its 2985 participants 606 or just 20% were potentially eligible for NDIS. This left around 80% or 2379 people ineligible for NDIS funding.

With Commonwealth-funded programs we found of its 4012 participants only 967 or 24% were likely to be eligible. This leaves an estimated 3045 people ineligible for NDIS.

If both state and Commonwealth-funded psychosocial services cease, this could result in a total of 5424 people without access to services, and 1573 NDIS participants without access to rehabilitation support options. Projections over time further compound the detrimental impacts of this for people with severe mental illness.

While no clear indication has been forthcoming from SA Health about future funding for programs “in scope” for NDIS, there has been some talk about reducing funding by the percentage of people likely to be eligible for an NDIS package.

For example: If the state-funded Individual Psychosocial Rehabilitation Support Services (IPRSS) program continues at the current level of funding it will deliver community-based rehabilitation to 10,280 people over 10 years (assuming 12 months average length of service). If IPRSS funding is reduced by 17% (equivalent to estimated access rates to NDIS), this looks like a reasonable approach in the first year. However NDIS numbers are not projected to grow except inline with population growth. This means that over every subsequent year there is a gap of 173 people per annum who will no longer have access to the reduced IPRSS service or to NDIS. So reducing total funding by 17% would result in a gap over 10 years of 1577 people who will receive neither IPRSS services nor NDIS.

This is compounded by the fact that there will be South Australians who are no longer able to access Commonwealth-funded programs and will instead be looking to the state for support.

The Primary Health Networks have been charged with the local planning and commissioning of services, however guidance from the Commonwealth Department of Health appears to specifically exclude community-based psychosocial rehabilitation programs. Unfortunately, therefore the NDIS

will, in improving disability support needs, do so at the expense of community-based rehabilitation.

What should be done?

Following consultation with NGO leaders and people with lived experience of mental illness, the MHCSA wants the **South Australian Government to uphold its commitment as outlined in the bilateral agreement to continuity of service by undertaking the following:**

1. Recognising the need to ensure balanced investment in a three-part system for mental health services and disability support for people with severe mental illness through clinical treatment, psychosocial rehabilitation and disability support.
2. Continuing to retain ongoing funding at the same level in community-based rehabilitation regardless of the percentage of consumers who get access to NDIS. This will maintain continuity of access for people with mental illness to this important part of the mental health system.
3. Working with consumers, carers and NGO service providers to establish a comprehensive and timely transition planning process for the mental health component of NDIS.
4. Advocating to the Commonwealth to continue providing rehabilitation services (such as PHaMS, Mental Health Respite: Carer Support, Day to Day Living etc) regardless of how many people gain access to NDIS. Reduced funding of these services will result in poorer mental health for people with severe illness and increased need for crisis and acute care services provided by the State.
5. Advocating for support for consumers to access NDIS beyond the transition period.

We need your help to advocated for a balanced mental health system where people can gain the benefits of disability support via the NDIS without thousands of other people with severe mental illness losing access to psychosocial rehabilitation.

References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2015, *National health survey: First results, 2014-15*, ABS cat. no. 4364.0.55.00, Canberra
- O'Halloran, P 2016, *About Psychosocial Disability and the NDIS, Introduction to the Concept of Holistic Psychosocial Disability Support*, Mental Health Australia

Introducing our new-look meeting rooms



SACOSS member groups have long had the opportunity to use our Marjorie Black Room and Daphne Gum Room for their meetings and events at very competitive hire rates. Now that our planned renovations have finished, we are pleased to welcome back our regular users and warmly encourage those who have not yet seen the rooms to drop in and take a tour.

The Marjorie Black Community Room

The Marjorie Black Community Room is a flexible, pleasant space that seats approximately 60 people theatre-style. Features include a laptop, data projector and screen, flat screen television, lectern, electronic whiteboard, flip chart easel, and an audio hearing loop. We have replaced the older furniture with modern trestle tables that are easy to use and comfortable, stackable chairs. There are also kitchenette facilities including a microwave, bar fridge and urn, and the whole premises is fully accessible including bathroom facilities and entry ramp.

The Daphne Gum Room

If you need a room for a smaller group such as a board meeting, the Daphne Gum Room is a smaller space that comfortably seats 10 around a central table, with a fixed flat screen television and flip chart easel. This room is self-contained in that it has its own kitchenette with bar fridge and kettle supplied.

These beautifully renovated rooms are located at the rear of the SACOSS premises at 47 King William Road, Unley. The venue is close to bus and tram stops and there is plenty of free parking available in the side streets.

We have updated our website to include a booking availability calendar, a downloadable price list, booking

forms and the terms and conditions document. You can also view a slideshow of images showing different seating configurations, all at www.sacoss.org.au/room-hire

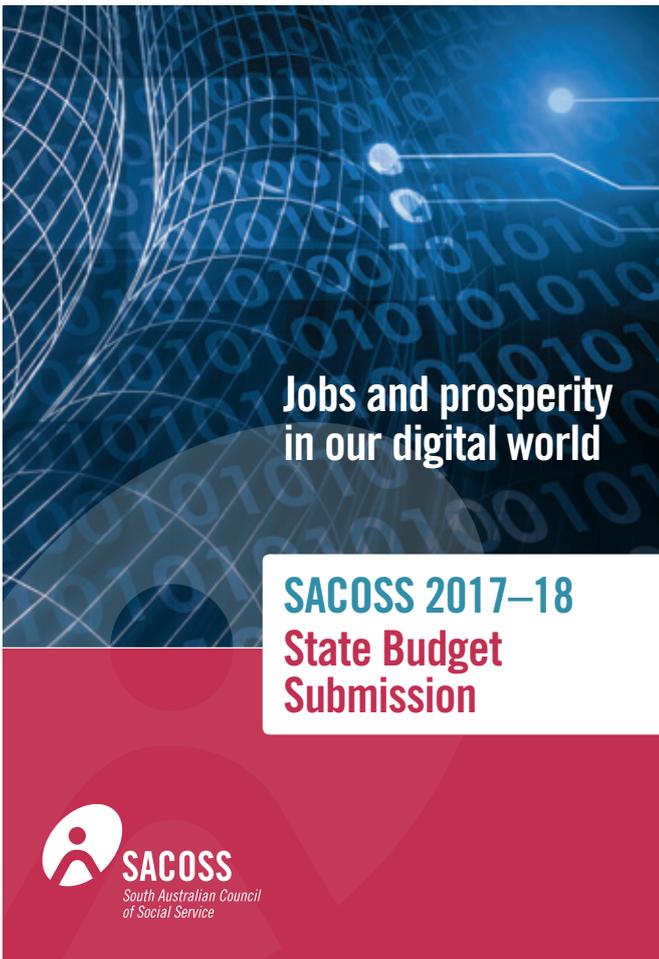
For further enquiries or to request a time to see the rooms prior to booking, please contact Gabrielle Bond (SACOSS Events Coordinator) on 8305 4224 or 0401 969 646, or email gabie@sacoss.org.au





SACOSS launches State Budget Submission: Jobs and Prosperity in our digital world

Phil Saunders, SACOSS Senior Policy Officer



SACOSS recently launched our State Budget Submission 2017-18 Jobs and Prosperity in our Digital World which looks at the increasing inroads of digital technology into everyday life and the inequality and disadvantage that have accompanied its advance.

The Submission highlights SA's poor performance in digital inclusion relative to the rest of the nation, and in doing so calls on the government to put in place a strategy to boost jobs and other opportunities in our state.

The submission recommends, among other things, the establishment of a high-level stakeholder taskforce to develop a whole-of-government digital inclusion strategy. We are also proposing as an early step that the government convenes a digital inclusion summit to be held in the second half of 2017.

SA lagging all mainland states on digital inclusion

According to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII), SA performs particularly poorly. The South Australian ADII summary score is 51.6 points, which is significantly (5.3%) below the national average of 54.5, and 13.5% lower than the ACT which is the best performing jurisdiction. SA is second bottom, only higher than Tasmania.

Large numbers of disadvantaged South Australians do not have the phone and internet access they need to help them with job-hunting and training, and to interact with businesses and government departments.

This digital disadvantage is coupled with continuing high levels of unemployment and under employment.

SACOSS research released late last year identified that low-income people struggle to afford essential telecommunications services which is why we are also recommending the provision of un-metered (free) access to all sa.gov.au websites.

We need a strategy that aims to lift the digital inclusion of all South Australians and put our state on top of the listing so we know that we are in the best possible position to advance in a digital world.

The SACOSS submission contains 17 recommendations to tackle digital disadvantage, grow employment opportunities, provide skills pathways into growth industries and better address the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Included are two infrastructure projects to create jobs by building community centres and community housing that provide social benefits at the same time, and a 'becoming digitally ready workforce foundation' course.

Social justice initiatives include calling for a percentage based energy concession, income based rates for fines and charges, an alternative sentencing program for Aboriginal young people, a Commissioner of Aboriginal Young People and Children, allocations for NGOs for early intervention programs in child wellbeing and for support for young people leaving care beyond the age of 18.

The Submission reiterates SACOSS' long standing call that a fair and sustainable revenue base should be maintained for the benefit of all South Australians.

You can download the Budget Submission from the SACOSS website: www.sacoss.org.au/publications/submissions

SACOSS State Budget Submission 2017-18 Priorities

Growing Employment Opportunities for All South Australians

Digital Inclusion

1. Establish a high-level stakeholder taskforce to develop and oversee a whole of government digital inclusion strategy.
2. Convene a digital inclusion summit in the second half of 2017.
3. Provide un-metered (free) access to state government websites.
4. Provide project funding to SACOSS to assess the digital readiness of the community services sector, to scope opportunities to better utilise digital technologies and to build capacity within the sector to support digital inclusion both internally and among vulnerable and disadvantaged people.
5. Invest \$5 million per annum in an adult and community education Becoming Digitally Ready Workforce Foundation Course program.

Job Creation and Training

6. Generate new community infrastructure across rural and metropolitan South Australia by investing \$20 million in a Community Centres Building Scheme.
7. Build new digitally equipped houses for disadvantaged people by establishing a \$250 million Community Housing Loan Scheme through a rolling fund of the South Australian Government Financing Authority.
8. Revisit SACOSS 2016-17 State Budget training, skills and employment support proposals.

Social Justice Initiatives

Ensuring the Wellbeing of Children

9. Establish a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.
10. Allocate \$100 million from the funding committed in the government response to the Nyland Commission, over four years, for early intervention in child protection, including \$50 million to assist NGOs to participate in Child and Family Assessment and Referral Networks and resource NGOs to provide vital early intervention services.
11. Allocate \$1.5 million per annum to provide extended support services to young people in out of home care until age 21.

Addressing the Cost of Living

12. Transition to a percentage based energy concession.
13. Introduce income-based rates for fines and charges.

Creating an Effective and Efficient Justice System

14. Engage with local Aboriginal experts to establish an educational based alternative sentencing program for Aboriginal young people, possibly based on the UK Campus Educational Trust.

Revenue - State Tax Reform

15. That the Government Response to the State Tax Review not be seen as the end of state tax reform: that proposals put forward by stakeholders in the course of that review continue to be considered.



Update on SACOSS' campaign to boost telecommunications access and affordability

The high cost of telecommunications has been a recent focus for SACOSS, with our research showing that 62% of low income consumers struggle to pay and in many cases have to cut back and stop using services altogether. This puts them at a further disadvantage because we know that a phone or computer – with decent internet connection and sufficient data allowance – are necessary for job seeking, education, social inclusion and dealing with government.

As part of our campaign to boost affordability and access, SACOSS recently briefed the Productivity Commission, calling on them to consider more fully affordability issues in their Inquiry on the Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation.

The national peak body for communications consumers, the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), backed our submission to the Inquiry. SACOSS argued that the Commission's Draft Report and recommendations underestimate the challenges faced by many Australian households in paying for telecommunications.

The Draft Report proposes incorporating broadband as a baseline universal service, but largely dismisses telecommunications affordability issues as limited in scope and relevance.

We believe that the current Universal Service Obligation, which relates only to Telstra's provision of standard telephone services, is outdated. SACOSS and ACCAN support the Productivity Commission's inclusion of broadband as a baseline service for a revised obligation, however, we are concerned about affordability of services, now and into the future, and the adequacy of existing low income measures such as the Centrelink Telephone Allowance.

While telecommunications prices have not been increasing at the rate of other utilities, like electricity and water, the massive increase in demand for telecommunication services, brought about by new technologies and by government and businesses going online, has meant whole new expenditures for struggling households – especially those with children.

Our submission highlights that the Productivity Commission's analysis underestimates the importance of telecommunications in household budgets, and over-estimates the availability or effectiveness of government supports such as the Centrelink Telephone Allowance.

The income support system is failing to make telecommunications affordable, both because the Centrelink Telephone Allowance is inadequate and poorly targeted, and because base level payments like Newstart and Youth Allowance are too low to ensure that recipients can afford telecommunications.

The SACOSS submission to the Inquiry can be found on our website: sacoss.org.au/submissions

Our report, *Connectivity Costs: Telecommunications Affordability for Low Income Australians*, is also available for download at: sacoss.org.au/reports/general



Connectivity Costs

Telecommunications Affordability for Low Income Australians





Never the “So-Called” Stolen Generations Apology Breakfast 2017

Samara Young, Reconciliation SA

It has now been nine years since Kevin Rudd gave the national Apology to the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian Government.

In February 1200 people gathered at the Adelaide Convention Centre to observe this important anniversary, and to acknowledge the past and continued injustices inflicted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and commit to a reconciled future of understanding and respect.

The focus of this year’s breakfast was *Never the “So-Called” Stolen Generations*, challenging the rhetoric of denial exhibited by David Oldfield in NITV’s *First Contact* (2016).

The morning began with Emma Donovan’s stirring rendition of Ruby Hunter’s *Kutjeri Lady*, which played as the Survivors of the Stolen Generations and their families processed into the hall while the rest of the attendees stood in respect. Kurna Elder Katrina Power joined the procession before taking to the stage to officially welcome everyone to Kurna country.

“Let us talk together, let us eat and drink together, let us dance together, let us laugh and cry together so that our children and their children can feel the wind and the breeze, that they can find sunshine in the rain and shelter in the storm but most specially that they can feel the warmth of a new campfire which we today created for all of them.”

Katrina Power, 2017 Apology Breakfast

The ceremonial aspect of the morning continued when Helen Connolly, Co-Chair of Reconciliation SA and past SACOSS Chair, lit the candle of Truth. The Hon. Kyam Maher MP followed by lighting the candle of Justice. Survivors of the Stolen Generations, Edna Oosting and Miriam Raymond looked to the future, lighting the candle of Hope and Healing.

Using film as a platform to share stories and educate the non-Aboriginal population of our nation’s past, Reconciliation SA showed excerpts from NITV’s *First Contact* (2016) as the centrepiece of the morning’s program. As the footage took to the screen, guests were



challenged by a balance of mistaken, insulting opinions through to heartfelt compassion and empathy. They were confronted by the reality of the Survivors of the Cootamundra Girls Home and Kinchela Boys Home as they shared their own harrowing experiences.

“I don’t subscribe to the word Stolen...there was no government instituted racial removal policy; that has been proven time and time again in court despite the attempts to prove there was.” – David Oldfield, Reunion Episode First Contact 2016.

Responding to the clip, South Australian Aboriginal man David Rathman AM PSM asked Oldfield and the audience, “Do you need a court to prove the sad truth of this part of our history?”

As Governments have finally come to acknowledge the forced removal of Aboriginal Children through apologies to the Stolen Generations and the states begin to take steps towards reparation, we can no longer deny history, the effects of which still stand before us today. David also drew our attention to the fact that in SA there have been successful cases relating to the Stolen Generations proven through the courts.

“A young girl from Altunga named after the Hale River, Tiny was taken and put into service in the far north of this state to never see her mum again. Her living legacy was that she shared strength, resilience and a positive eye to the future with her children and ensured their lives would repeat the past. She suffered her pain in silence and never burdened her family. The removal did happen; Tiny was my mum.”

David Rathman, Apology Breakfast 2017.



Above: David Rathman (courtesy of Ivan Copley)

Below: (L to R) Jenni Caruso, Roger Jarrett, Wilma Moran, Richard Campbell and Peter Buckskin (Co-Chair Reconciliation SA)

Previous page: (L to R) The Hon Kyam Maher MP, Miriam Raymond, Edina Oosting and Helen Connolly (Co-Chair Reconciliation SA)

Survivors of the Stolen Generations and participants of First Contact, Uncle Richard Campbell and Roger Jarrett from the Kinchela Boys Home and Aunty Wilma Moran from the Cootamundra Girls Home, joined by South Australia’s Jenni Caruso, also shared their stories and reflections on First Contact at the breakfast.

Together they reflected on the trauma of being separated from their families, land and cultural identity, their resilience in overcoming these hardships and the ongoing journey of healing shared by all Australians.

The audience has reflected that the participants showed incredible resilience and demonstrated a significant amount of grace by telling their story without anger and rancour. It has also fed back to us that the strength of character shown in sharing the stories was central to making the program work.





Child protection update

SACOSS, together with expert stakeholders including the SA branch of the AMA, recently formed an alliance to voice concerns that the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill – the legislative response to the Nyland Royal Commission recommendations – did not go far enough to prevent the harm of our state’s youngest citizens

A key issue of concern is that the Bill does not put sufficient emphasis on harm prevention. SACOSS, together with the Australian Medical Association (SA), the Child and Family Welfare Association, the Youth Affairs Council of SA, and the Council for the Care of Children, called on the Government to rework and build on the child safety Bill to ensure bold changes occur as a part of child protection reform.

Despite the government’s rhetoric about the importance of prevention, the Bill is effectively limited to responding to harm once identified, and has missed a golden opportunity to mandate provisions aimed at keeping children safe from harm.

It also fails to address significant challenges for the state’s child protection system, for example regarding specific measures to provide for the safety of Aboriginal children and young people, and their over-representation in the system.

In A Fresh Start, the government said “prevention will always be the best solution”, but their actions so far do not support their words..

Minister dodges any responsibility to address early intervention and prevention

In fact, this new Bill is weaker than the Child Protection Act 1993 because it effectively exempts the Minister from many of the functions held under the previous Act.

These include important early intervention and harm prevention functions such as family strengthening, parental education programs, partnership building, and supporting the Aboriginal community to establish its own programs to prevent and reduce the incidence of abuse.

These were all obligations under the old legislation and they couldn’t be needed more today. We are extremely disappointed that despite its consultation the government has failed to take heed of the great majority of recommendations, made during consultation on the draft Bill, by the alliance.

While SACOSS welcomes the Bill’s provisions reinstating the consultative role of gazetted Aboriginal organisations in the placement process for Aboriginal children and young people, we remain deeply concerned that this is undermined by a framework that only requires this, when it is reasonably practicable. Equally, the requirement that efforts be made to keep young people connected to their culture is framed as a “should” rather than as a “must”.

Tuesdays 6pm on

101.5fm
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25



S M A L L

C H A N G E



Justice, opportunity
and shared wealth for
all South Australians

Small Change is SACOSS' weekly radio program that shares stories of achievement, innovation and social justice. Broadcast Tuesdays at 6pm on Radio Adelaide, you can also listen to and download the podcasts at radio.adelaide.edu.au/program/small-change/

Here are some podcast highlights from the past few months:

Living with schizophrenia: a family's story

While open conversations about mental health and wellbeing are becoming more widely accepted in our community, there are some topics that remain largely unspoken. This is particularly the case for psychotic illness.

Pat Sutton is an advocate and a carer for her adult sons, Ben and Peter, who are living with schizophrenia.

Pat spoke to Small Change to explain how she felt when she first heard her sons' diagnoses, how her family has learnt to understand and live with the illness, what it's been like to access mental health services over the last two decades and what changes need to be made in the sector to make life better for those living with psychotic illness.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/living-with-schizophrenia-a-family-story/>

Reflections on SA's child protection system

In August of last year, Royal Commissioner Margaret Nyland and her team made recommendations about improvements to South Australia's child protection system in the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission report.

While many of the 260 recommendations were of no surprise to those working in the sector, they do reflect the changes that need to be made and have contributed to the ongoing discussions surrounding children's wellbeing and safety.

Small Change spoke with Executive Manager of Family Outreach and Relationship Services Kirsty Drew about the work that Centacare does in this sphere, her reaction to the report and what needs to be done to keep children safe in our community.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/kirsty-drew-reflections-on-sas-child-protection-system/>

Peer support program to ease job agency struggle

Anti-Poverty Network SA has received high numbers of complaints from job-seekers about their job agencies and as a result has set up its own peer support advocacy service. The service sees unemployed people from the network accompany job-seekers on their job agency appointments as defenders and witnesses.

Pas Forgione from Anti-Poverty Network SA joined Small Change for a chat about the service, alongside Eileen Darley, a job-seeker who has been having concerning experiences during her job agency appointments.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/peer-support-program-to-ease-job-agency-struggle/>

Formative experiences at a Liverpool mens' nightshelter

Our very first job is often a very formative experience and no matter if it's two months, two years or two days, we often remember where we were, what we did and perhaps most importantly, what we learnt.

Kasy Chambers is Executive Director of Anglicare Australia, but she hails from Liverpool and started out in the sector as a 19-year-old university student, volunteering at the Crypt Nightshelter for homeless men.

During her two years there, she learnt a lot about the importance of having genuine interactions with the people seeking out services - things as simple as knowing how a person likes their tea or making an effort to call them by their first name.

She shared with Small Change these and some of her other memories of her time at the shelter, and how they have helped to shape her approach in her current role at Anglicare Australia.

<https://radio.adelaide.edu.au/formative-experiences-at-a-liverpool-mens-nightshelter/>



UK Champion for youth justice visits Adelaide

Wendy Malycha, CEO, St John's Youth Services

In the final throes of 2016, after another year delivering services to hundreds of amazing young people, undertaking accreditation for ASES and FOYER, and following holding a successful conference on youth housing in November, I was in the wonderful position of facilitating a visit to Adelaide by David Chesterton.

David's visit was co-hosted by the South Australian network of Anglican agencies a.c.Care, Anglicare Willochra, Anglicare SA and St John's Youth Services.

David is known to many around Australia for his work in supporting the development of the Foyer movement in Australia. In the UK he claims to be retired, yet remains an elected politician, is both a Youth Court and Family Court Magistrate (Chairman) with 20 years service, and a social entrepreneur with extensive senior management experience in the Third Sector. David created the UK's largest provider of Foyers, accommodating 600 homeless and vulnerable young people in the East End of London.

David is inspirational, a leader with a passion for social justice, particularly in relation to young people. Sensitive to, and understanding vulnerable groups, David thinks outside the box to create constructive alternatives to established practice. A strong focus on delivery has resulted in an impressive record of initiating, negotiating and delivering complex projects – including creating and managing the social and economic regeneration dimensions of a major housing association.

He has shaped public policy through persuasively influencing local and central government with innovative approaches to working with young parents, young offenders and young people experiencing psychosis, and is the pioneer largely responsible for the establishment of active use of the enclosed docks of London's Docklands.

Recognised internationally as an authority on housing and support solutions for homeless and vulnerable young people, David has already undertaken extensive work in Australia with the community sector, Commonwealth and State governments, and is a member of the Board of the Australian Foyer Foundation (www.foyer.org.au)

So – why the visit to Australia?

Well - I asked him! I have known David for a long time, and as a fellow Board member of the Foyer Foundation have kept up with what he is up to in the UK. Most recently he has been instrumental in the development of a new youth

justice initiative that is in a special category of its own as the only joint Department of Education and Ministry of Justice scheme of its kind in the UK.

During the many years he was directly involved in foyers in the UK, he observed many young people known to be involved in offending to re-start their lives living in the foyer environment. They reconnected with school and settled into living in a supportive community. Then an old offence would come up and the young person would go to court. If sentenced to a period in detention, even if only a few months, all the good work of the foyer would be undone. As a Youth Court magistrate, David understood that the courts had no option but detention if the offence was serious or posed risk to the community, but as a worker with young people also understood that this was not the best response for the young person or the community in the longer term.

We share much with the UK, our judicial systems are similar, our responses much the same. Young people are detained for sometimes multiple minor offences – there is not real family intervention, the short sentences disrupted schooling and damaged family ties. In short, he concluded that the punitive response of detention was costly, and a failure. UK reconviction rates for young people re-offending rates are high for those detained were at 75%. As David so succinctly put it – *“you wouldn't go to a mechanic who charged you an exorbitant fee and promised only a 25% chance your car would be fixed, why do we pay so much to punish people when most will reoffend, and 75% will be reconvicted?”*

The outcomes in Europe are vastly different. Young people are only convicted for major crimes that placed human life at risk – assaults, attempted murder, use of weapons or firearms; really serious young offenders. Those detained were a highly-concentrated group of very dangerous young people, yet their reconviction rates are much lower, nearer 20%. He wanted to know what they did differently and visited youth justice services in Spain and the Netherlands to find out.

Firstly, in both cases the emphasis on security was very low, in Spain the facility had two guards at the entrance, all other staff were psychologists, or highly qualified and experienced teachers. The Governor was a very experienced school principle. There is a focus on mental health and the impact of trauma. The days are full, from 7.30 in the morning to 9.00 in the evening every minute is managed with a mix of school classes, physical activity and work experience. 365 days of the year – no weekends, no holidays. These young people have no time to be bored, to disengage, and at night they are tired and sleep.

Meanwhile, there is intensive work with the family on lifestyle, living skills and parenting, and families are brought together to cook and share meals together before release, and this work continues post release.

The Netherlands has more security – to open doors internally. They are not allowed contact with young people unless directed by staff, or a staff member is attacked, but otherwise their system is the same as Spain.

It is costly, but in these situations reoffending is dramatically reduced, and reconvictions slashed, saving those countries millions of Euros over the lifetime of the young person

David's visit provided a rare opportunity for policy makers in this state to hear from someone with a unique mix of experience and in-depth understanding of the complex planning needed to address youth justice, homelessness and educational disadvantage, managing the development and delivery of projects, and the realities of being an elected politician.

He also has insight into our systems here, and had previously visited youth detention centers in Victoria, and Cavan here in SA.

David made himself available to meet with anyone we wished him to speak with – and we set a grueling schedule for him! And lucky me, as I got to chaperone him as he met with many people here in SA, and to sit in on his presentations, the key one being the one convened by SACOSS. He told of his experiences in Foyer, in youth justice, the revelations of visiting Europe, and the plans to establish young offender campuses in the UK, and those of us lucky enough to meet him or see his presentations have much to think about.

The Model

Proposals for the Campus School to meet the needs of young offenders is an innovative concept developed by the Campus Educational Trust, and is based on proven

responses to serious crime in Europe, Spain and the Netherlands, where recidivism rates are as low as 20%.

The key features of the Campus model are:

- An enhanced curriculum through an educational day until 7.00 pm, 7 days per week and 365 days per year. Initially obligatory attendance by order but earned autonomy will prepare them for transition to education training or employment
- The Campus is designed for up to 36 young people and located in the areas served by a specific youth court to ensure young people are not placed away from their families
- Young people convicted by a court or on release from the secure estate may attend, and may include those on remand /bailed
- Admission routes
 - Welfare agency pre-sentence report recommends Campus placement to the judiciary who then name the school on a Community or other order
 - Young person leaving custody has Campus named as part of the license conditions to make maximum use of release on temporary license from custody
- Mustering the range of specialist provision needed for young offenders
 - supported accommodation – and may be, in due course, purpose run residential accommodation
 - health including mental health
 - personal support on transition
- Assuring arrangements for safeguarding public protection by joint work with welfare, Police and other agencies
- Youth Court managing breach processes on the Campus site to enable a more problem solving court approach

If you would like a copy of David's presentation please contact wendy.malycha@sjys.com.au



New arrivals benefit from specialised mental health support service

Linda Jordan, Baptist Care

A recent survey revealed that almost 1 in 7 young people aged 4-17 years-old were assessed as needing support for mental health concerns in the previous 12 months.

The impact of this is not only significant for the young people concerned, but also for their loved ones. By the same token, when a family member is experiencing mental health problems, this can have a detrimental impact on a child or young person's emotional wellbeing.

In recognition of the high incidence of mental health concerns in young people, the Department of Social Services provides Commonwealth funding for the Family Mental Health Support Services, a national early intervention program. The program is designed to provide support to young people up to the age of 18 who have or are at risk of developing mental health issues, and their families.



Baptist Care's Family Mental Health Support Service (FMHSS) has recognised the inter-related nature of a child's wellbeing and their family health. In supporting children and young people, the program uses a range of techniques to engage with individuals and their families. Services and therapies

include: individual counselling with the child or young person including play-based therapies e.g. sand tray and art therapy; group activities with child participants; family therapeutic counselling; and group education sessions e.g. a parent cafe.

In response to an expected increase in humanitarian entrants and refugees into Australia from 2015/16, and in recognition of the traumatic circumstances many young people and their families will have experienced pre-arrival, the Commonwealth Government identified the need to expand some existing FMHSS programs in regions where the new arrivals were expected to settle. Baptist Care was one of the organisations which received funds to expand their Family Mental Health Support Service and provide more specialised support to humanitarian entrants.

In 2015, 10% of Baptist Care's FMHSS clients were already humanitarian entrants. Newly-arrived families with histories of trauma were experiencing significant stress in their endeavours to orientate themselves to an unfamiliar language, country and culture. As parents and caregivers understandably struggled with feelings of being overwhelmed, the well-being of the young people in their care was also being affected.

Staff had long-since learned that a different approach is needed to successfully engage with new arrivals. While mainstream clients customarily walk in and are quite open in sharing their needs and struggles, more time needs to be invested to build trust with newly arrived communities. Solid relationships must be established first before families are willing to open up about past trauma and issues they are experiencing in settling in Australia.

In working to achieve this, three cross-cultural staff members were employed who had experience working with communities from refugee backgrounds. Written materials were translated into seven languages and translators were accessed for counselling and group sessions. Resources were invested into community education and information sessions with stakeholders, including health practitioners, early learning centres, kindergartens and schools.

Feedback was sought from relevant CALD communities about the services and mode of delivery that would be of most benefit. Their feedback helped to develop specialised initiatives – Butterfly Crossing, Soaring Stories and Calmer Kids – three narrative therapy programs specifically designed for children and young people who have experienced trauma.

Butterfly Crossing, an art therapy program for teenage girls, encourages creative expression to build trust and give voice to feelings and emotions. Soaring Stories is a similar program for teenage boys which utilises kite making as a way to explore participant's values and skills and acknowledge their hopes and dreams. Calmer Kids, a program for kindergarten and primary school aged children, uses story-telling, mindfulness activities, relaxation and breathing techniques, to teach traumatised children emotional regulation. The focus remained on learning to manage emotions through connections to body, movement and nature.



One of the challenges identified for children in newly arrived families was that often their parents and carers were experiencing feelings of disempowerment. This can be due to several factors, including: children and young people learning English much quicker than their carers, and the impact of children and young people's engagement with a different culture on family relationships.

A need was identified to provide information and practical skills about alternative parenting methods to assist parents and carers feel more empowered within their homes. For this reason, program activities focused on parenting skills were introduced. For example, a women's craft session has been successfully used as a vehicle for providing information and facilitating discussions about parenting techniques.

The capacity of the service to provide consistent home visits has been seen as a huge support by struggling families. One participant shared her gratitude in receiving support from the program, saying she felt "hopeful about 2017". Her child has autism and her family was struggling to orientate themselves to Australia while meeting his needs. They had no idea what help they qualified for or how they could access it. Weekly visits from counsellors helped build trust and direct them toward services that could help the family and improve their outlook into the future.

A key feature of the service has been that it is flexible enough to be adapted to meet individual's needs. For

example, depending on their pre-arrival experiences, many children (and their parents/caregivers) have had no or limited exposure to an education environment, let alone the expectations of the Australian education system. Staff have provided a vital link connecting parents to schools and providing support for participants and their families as they make this transition.

"These families need someone with the time, patience, skills and understanding - and that's what the team offers," explains Baptist Care FMHSS Manager Ally Ions.

When funding ceases later this year, participants will be transferred into the mainstream service where they will continue to receive support. Working with humanitarian entrants and refugees has been incredibly rewarding and the learning and experience will inform and enrich the Family Mental Health Support Service into the future.

"...in serving the best interests of the children, we serve the best interests of all humanity"

Carol Bellamy

Baptist Care is a leading provider of community services. Our motto 'Serving to transform lives' underpins our client centred practice.

Find out more at www.baptistcaresa.org.au.

UCWB's programs helping vulnerable communities

UnitingCare Wesley Bowden helps people and families of all backgrounds with the life skills and support they need to be confident and create a fulfilling future. For those who are experiencing personal, social or financial distress, UCWB helps them to cope with their immediate needs through a range of evidence-based programs and services.

Here, UCW's Vendra Begonja and Carolyn Dent write about two recent initiatives:

It's Up 2 Me

Vendra Begonja



It's Up 2 Me is a free online resource which offers information for everyday problems so users can make lasting changes to the way they approach the ups and downs of life.

The information and tools available talk directly to people who need assistance in a

respectful, helpful and practical way.

It is flexible, easy to understand and always available. The resources are printable for anyone without a computer or mobile App.

The material supports sustainable behaviour change, it empowers people to take control of their lives and builds hope... and it says that they are not alone.

As a website and App accessible across a range of technologies it provides information about everyday challenges including tenancy, wellbeing, budgets, employment, cooking and cleaning.

Users can choose where and when they access this information. It is available in multiple forms to suit individuals of different ages and abilities, for example people with limited literacy.

For the people working in the health, social or community sectors, it is SA's best go-to place for information and online skills-building resources for clients, tenants and customers.

It's Up 2 Me helps with:

- Making choices and approaches to help manage everyday life
- Improved health and wellbeing through access to information
- Improved capacity of workforce
- Improving skills and/or knowledge of financial issues

If your organisation works with clients and customers who might benefit from *It's Up 2 Me*, please contact Vendra Begonja on 8245 7179 or email her at vendra.begonja@ucwb.org.au

Vendra can present to your front-line and customer-facing staff, including a demonstration of the website and App so that you can promote this free service to your clients.

It's Up 2 Me has a separate product designed especially for organisations – called *It's Up 2 Me* Mentoring. This package is available for a modest sliding scale cost, depending on the size and revenue of your organisation, to help your staff use *It's Up 2 Me* with clients and customers.

It's Up 2 Me mentoring can help front-line staff improve the health and wellbeing for customers including:

- Tenancy and housing officers
- Community development and engagement workers
- Healthcare professionals
- Social workers

It's Up 2 Me also offers sponsorship opportunities for corporates and NGOs.



SA Community Foodies

Carolyn Dent



The *SA Community Foodies* is a state-wide program to improve the health and wellbeing among vulnerable communities by increasing knowledge of nutrition and healthy diet.

It is absolutely free to join and participate.

Some key features:

- *SA Community Foodies* uses volunteer peer leaders to provide activities to deliver four key messages in-line with evidence-based dietary standards
- The program doesn't just 'aim to' reach its target audiences – it reaches them
- Our number of volunteers across the state is 132
- Our Foodies have provided 345 nutrition and cooking sessions to 3513 participants in community settings

SA Community Foodies has adopted a progressive style of health promotion underpinned by the social determinants of health – it's social, it's fun and is so woven into ordinary life that you wouldn't know it's 'a health program'. *SA Community Foodies* has significant reach into the right populations and demographics, and we want it to grow.

As well as improvements in nutrition there has been significant growth in the participants' self-confidence, social skills, independence and living skills. This has translated into some participants gaining employment and some working in local community run cafes.

Like so many programs in SA's community, social and health sectors, *SA Community Foodies* is looking for ways to become sustainable post-government funding. UCWB is seeking partnerships to be able to continue this highly effective program for disadvantaged members of the community.

If your organisation is interested in hearing more, *SA Community Foodies* State Manager, Carolyn Dent, and Chris Arbon, Manager of Social Health, Wellness and Community Capability can present to your staff members, management teams or customers. Their presentation will give you a very clear idea of how Foodies works, what it looks like in action and the evidence we have gathered to verify its effectiveness. This will enable you to promote Foodies to your staff, customers, tenants and clients.

Carolyn Dent can be reached on 8245 7100 or carolyn.dent@ucwb.org.au

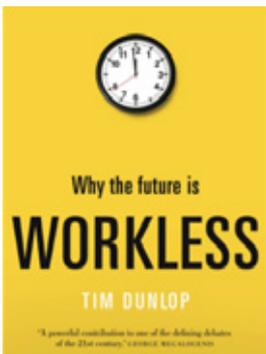
For more information please see our website www.communityfoodies.com



Why the future is workless

By Tim Dunlop

Reviewed by Phil Saunders



“What sort of society do you want to become?” is the challenge raised by Tim Dunlop in *Why the future is workless*. His ‘postwork’ outcome of a complete transformation of contemporary economy and society is, he admits, “ambitious and unapologetically utopian”.

The author attempts an understanding of the relationship between the modern technologies reshaping human connections and our ability to control them. Asking if robots and apps will take our jobs is

precisely the wrong question. Rather, we should be asking whether this is a good or bad thing. We have choices about how we are meant to live in an era of fulltime work coming to an end.

The ‘past’ and ‘present’ of work are underpinned by the socially and politically constructed idea of work being central to how we see ourselves and the society in which we live. From work (labour) being undertaken in private homes to the production of public workshops, hard work came to be seen as the basis of a just and moral society. Capitalism and consumerism grew side by side, with relationships of power and class, and the state as arbiter between unfettered markets and regulation.

More recently, forty years of market liberalisation, technological development and growing inequality have resulted in less and less rewards for the average person. The precariousness of unemployment, underemployment and casualisation that sees people falling off the edge of the economy is the norm for many.

As the digital economy leaves these people behind, the arguments continue to rage whether technology is taking too many jobs or creating opportunities not even imagined. Similarly, the rise of the so called ‘sharing’ or ‘gig’ economy is either offering a wealth of opportunity or is a tool of neoliberalism to wipe out worker conditions and soak up surplus labour.

Dunlop outlines the potential importance of a universal basic income – a monthly unconditional wage paid by government to cover the basics of life – that changes the way wealth is distributed to a manner independent of employment. If we don’t offer basic income there will be massive societal dysfunction and increasing prosperity for a small band of elites.

The author offers three possible pathways into the future:

‘Business as usual’ regards any anxiety about technology as overstated because, as usual, consumption, invention and the market will sort things out. Politics continues to be discounted in the decision-making process.

‘Back to the future’, hostile to neoliberalism, commits to full employment and the continuation of the welfare state and government services. A job is the most fundamental social protection, the defining characteristic of citizenship.

But both these paths deny the revolution we are in the middle of, the fundamental shift in the way in which wealth is being created. We cannot go back.

We must, the author argues, adopt ‘postwork’, the political project built around key actions that start now. We need to restructure our economy around a system that doesn’t rely on people earning a living by working. The information economy allows us to break the nexus between improving living standards and unsustainable growth.

Postwork is to be underpinned by challenging the concept of the work ethic; by embracing technology and allowing it to do work once done by humans and by providing a basic income as a floor below which people cannot fall. The role of the state is reimagined as providing the innovative and change leadership as it has often done in the past.

The author’s question remains. If the digital economy is redefining what we mean by ‘a job’ and its centrality to how we view our identities, and if machines can do much of what humans now do, what can humans do?

In exploring our values, culture and context what sort of society do we want?

Phil Saunders is a Senior Policy Officer at SACOSS
Why the Future is Workless is published by NewSouth 2016



Daphne Gum (1916-2017)



SACOSS has lost a great friend and generous supporter with the death of Daphne Gum in March.

Daphne was a teacher and leader, as well as a strong advocate for people with disability, for people with mental illness, and for everyone's right to an education.

In 1945, after nine years of teaching in SA she went to work at what

was then the Spastic Centre in Melbourne. She returned to Adelaide in 1946 to work for the Crippled Children's Association where she pioneered the teaching of children with cerebral palsy in SA.

In 1952 Daphne was appointed as Director of Education of the newly established Ashford House, which was set up to provide opportunities and education for children with cerebral palsy.

Daphne was also a pioneer in providing services to people living with mental illness. In the late 1950s after psychiatric wards closed and people were released to the community,

Daphne established friendship clubs and activities to provide social interaction for ex-residents.

She officially retired from teaching in her 60s but continued to work as a volunteer. From 1982 to 2006 she served as Chairman and Coordinator of the Marjorie Black Rehabilitation Centre.

This building is now Marjorie Black House and home to SACOSS, thanks to Daphne's efforts to ensure it was given to an organisation working to help all disadvantaged and vulnerable people across the state.

Daphne Gum turned 100 years old on January 24, 2016 and was honoured with the naming of the Daphne Gum Quiet Room at Marjorie Black House.

She remains an inspiration to many and will be missed.

Attribution

Information on Daphne Gum's early life is from an article written by Vicki Renner to commemorate Daphne Gum's 100th birthday, published in the Autumn 2016 issue of SACOSS News

News from Marjorie Black House

Recent SACOSS activities and reports:

- State Budget Submission 2017-19
- The Deepening Digital Divide – Sector Briefing on Digital Inclusion
- Report exploring the interaction between the health and community services sector
- Attendance at the national Digital Inclusion Roundtable
- Submission on telecommunications affordability to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation
- Successful Australian Service Excellence Standards external assessment
- National Consumer Roundtable on Energy
- Event featuring speaker David Chesterton from the UK on youth justice and education initiatives
- Cost of Living Update
- Support for campaign to end unfair Centrelink ‘robo-debt’ recovery
- The “Connectivity Costs” Report into telecommunications affordability
- Telephone survey of 600 water consumers
- Renovations of our office and Community Rooms
- New-look web page for room hire

And also in the pipeline:

- SACOSS conference to be held in September 2017
- Major report on public attitudes to state taxes
- SACOSS hosts Working With Resilience program with Organisational Psychologist Kathryn McEwen
- State Election platform and campaign
- Report on better targeting of the Energy Concession
- NGO engagement in the development of a sector public health strategy
- Public Health Week events
- Cost of Living Update
- Consultation on Cultural Principles and Protocols Guide, as well as calls for further endorsements
- 70 years of SACOSS - Join us for birthday celebrations later in the year!

Get involved with SACOSS

Help us enhance the voice of the community on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians. If you aren't already, become a SACOSS member today sacoss.org.au/membership

SACOSS sends out a fortnightly eBulletin to our members listing brief descriptions of upcoming events, job vacancies, and other items relevant to the community services sector. You can subscribe to the eBulletin and submit entries via our website. Visit sacoss.org.au/ebulletin for all the details.



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SACOSS on Twitter and Facebook

If you'd like to contribute to the next edition of SACOSS News, please contact SACOSS Communications Officer Tania Baxter via email Tania@sacoss.org.au



Vale Basil Hetzel, champion of public health

SACOSS pays tribute to and remembers with great fondness Dr Basil Hetzel, public health advocate and internationally recognised medical researcher, who died recently aged 94.

Dr Hetzel was an active member and supporter of the Mental Health Association, an organisation which SACOSS helped to establish in the 1950s.

As director of the RAH in the 1960s he was a strong advocate for mental health including suicide prevention, and was central to the development of Lifeline, an organisation that continues to help save lives.

Dr Hetzel is best known for his work in highland villages in Papua New Guinea, where in 1964 he discovered the most common cause of preventable brain damage: dietary deficiency in the mineral iodine.

Working with the Papua New Guinea Public Health Department, he was able to put in place a medical trial and go on to show conclusively that just one dose of iodised oil could treat severe iodine deficiency and prevent goitre and cretinism and for up to five years. It was also found that treating women pre-pregnancy could prevent medical disability in babies.

Following his discoveries, he helped set up the International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, which has worked with WHO and UNICEF to help develop national control programs.

It is thanks to Dr Hetzel's work that all around the world today salt is iodised as a preventative health measure.

Vale Dr Basil Hetzel, public health hero and saver of many lives.



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