



Update from the Commissioner

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2023. The Commission team, the Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria and I are looking forward to meeting with many of you throughout the year about what is important to ensure we build a safer, stronger disability sector in Victoria.

This week, I appeared at the **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability** and highlighted how vital it is for people with disability to be confident that disability workers are safe, skilled and professional.

The Royal Commission has revealed widespread abuse and neglect of people with disability. This is a key reason the Victorian Disability Worker Commission exists – to stop people who pose a serious risk of harm from providing disability services.

Our submission highlighted several key points, including that the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme in Victoria covers **all disability workers**, not just those funded by the NDIS, plus our important role in making the disability sector an attractive place to work.

I also highlighted that this pioneering scheme is the first of its kind in Australia, and described how the Scheme helps to protect the rights of people with disability, as well as our role in working closely with other regulators

I covered how the registration of disability workers promotes professionalism of the disability workforce and is key to driving increased quality and safety of service in the sector. The Royal Commission shows that our role in ensuring the safety of Victorians with disability is more important than ever before. You can read the VDWK submission [here](#).

This month we are excited to be supporting the **VALID Having a Say conference** and this is an event not to be missed! I will be joined by our friendly staff at the Commission and encourage you to come and see us at our exhibition stand, ask questions and pick up an information show bag.

We have also produced a new animated video on the benefits of becoming a registered disability worker, which is published on [our website](#). There are more details in our **News and Updates** section below.

Events



Having a Say Forever!

VALID Having a Say Conference February 20-21

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission is proud to be involved with the 2023 VALID Having a Say conference. Following a break due to COVID-19, this is the first face-to-face event held in two years.

Appropriately, the theme is 'We're Still Here!' The conference will be a celebration of both surviving COVID together and empowering those with disability to have their voices heard.

Commissioner Dan Stubbs will be delivering the keynote speech in the opening address of day two on Tuesday 21st February. The Commission will also be running a workshop on Tuesday 21st February titled: **'What is the Victorian Disability Worker Commission (VDWC) and how can they support you to be safe in using services'**. We are excited to again be involved in supporting this great event.

Date: 20-21 February 2023, 9:30am-3:30pm

Where: Deakin University, Waterfront Campus, 1 Gheringhap Street, Geelong.

For more information check out the conference program at www.valid.org.au. **Look forward to seeing you there!**

News and updates

Midsumma March – Sunday 5 February

Commission staff stepped out loud and proud on Sunday 5 February to support the annual Midsumma Pride March in St Kilda. It was great to support this event and promote the message of tolerance, diversity and inclusion.

We recognise that many people with disabilities, disability workers and family members identify as LGBTI+ and that this can be a factor for some in receiving quality and safe services.



Benefits of becoming a registered disability worker – animated video

The Commission has produced an animated video on the benefits of becoming a registered disability worker. The video highlights the benefits of registration as a means to improving safety standards across the disability sector and is now available for viewing. Check out the video on our [website](#) and social media channels.

Registration reminder for 2023

The new year is here and if disability worker registration is something you've been thinking about, now is the perfect time to submit your application. We're encouraging even more disability workers to register and show they have the right skills to deliver quality services.

Registration recognises you for the crucial work you do as a disability worker. The good news is that registration continues to be free in this year and your skills, experience and track record are all taken into account. You can find out how to register on our website at the [registration page](#). You can also find a registered disability worker on the [public register on our website](#).

How do I make a complaint?

If you have any concerns about a disability worker, our team is here to listen, help and guide you as we understand it can be difficult to take the step of contacting us on **1800 497 132**. You can also make a complaint via our [online form](#).

Single-use plastics restrictions – exemptions for those with disability

As of 1 February 2023, [the Victorian government restricted problematic single-use plastics](#) from sale or supply in Victoria. However, there are exemptions relating to people with disability. For example, **single-use drinking straws can continue to be used by individuals with a disability or other medical need**.

Subscribe to new prohibition orders

The Commissioner is able to issue prohibition orders to avoid a serious risk to the life, health, safety or welfare of a person with disability or of the public. In some cases, the disability worker may only be able to practise if certain conditions are met.

You can [sign up](#) to receive direct email alerts when there is an update to the public prohibition orders page of the Commission website. For more information visit <https://www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-orders>.

Keep in touch

If our e-newsletter was forwarded to you and you'd like to subscribe please go to: <https://www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/subscribe>

If you have any questions or comments, please get in touch via our website [Contact us](#) page, send an email to info@vdwc.vic.gov.au or call us on 1800 497 132.

For more information visit vdwc.vic.gov.au
