



Update from the Commissioner

Welcome to our June newsletter.

We're pleased to be meeting and hearing from different communities and organisations across the disability sector. If you are interested in having me or other representatives from the Commission come and talk about the work we are doing please email us at education@vdbc.vic.gov.au. I also see it as a great opportunity to hear from the disability community about various issues, including what we can do better.

This month we headed to the Inner Gippsland area for our second regional visit of the year and met with many locals from Warragul, Traralgon and Leongatha at our public forums. It was great to have the Disability Services Commissioner Jen Jackson-Hall join us and we look forward to working closely with her in the future to continue to make a safer, stronger disability sector. Read more about the event below.

Inner Gippsland Forums

Commissioner Dan Stubbs was joined by Disability Services Commissioner (DSC) Jen Jackson-Hall and a number of other VDW staff for a series of public forums around Inner Gippsland in early June. These forums are part of our work getting out to different regions across the state to meet with local communities.

These forums, in Warragul, Traralgon and Leongatha (VDWC only) were attended by people from across the sector and community – people with disability, families and carers, disability workers, service providers, advocates, students and more. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet with and hear directly from a variety of local voices to find out what issues they are seeing and how the Commission can better support the disability community in these regions.



It is crucial that the Commission reaches regional communities, families and workers, particularly those who may be more isolated.

In addition to hearing from people, these forums were an opportunity to remind attendees that if they are having a problem with their disability worker, there is someone they can contact. Both VDWC and DSC have a no-wrong-door approach and encourage people to reach out, and if we can't help we will ensure you get to the people who can.



[Read our media release](#) to learn more about our visit.

Next, we are planning to visit Mildura in September – so please let us know if you're in that region, have contacts/networks there or suggestions about who we invite to the information forums by emailing us at education@vdbc.vic.gov.au.

Keep your eye on our eNewsletter, website and our social media for updates.

Image description

Image 1: Staff from the VDWC presenting to the attendees of the Leongatha public forum.

Image 2: Staff from the VDWC and DSC presenting to the attendees of the Traralgon public forum.

For the disability workforce

Code of Conduct

The Disability Worker Code of Conduct is a legal requirement and applies to all disability workers delivering disability services in Victoria, regardless of their funding source.

The Code sets the expectation that when you support or provide services to people with a disability, you must:

1. act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions
2. respect the privacy of people with disability
3. provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill
4. act with integrity, honesty and transparency
5. promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided to people with disability
6. take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against, and exploitation, neglect and abuse of, people with disability
7. take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.



Our new poster highlights the overarching themes of the Code - Respect, Quality and Safety and identifies the requirements disability workers must adhere to when providing supports or services to people with disability.

Email us at info@vdwc.vic.gov.au if you would like us to send you a hard copy of the Code or receive a digital copy to display around your workplace. The complaints and notifications we receive are usually due to breaches of this code, so it's crucial everyone's aware of it.

Prohibition Orders

The Commissioner has the power to issue prohibition orders for unregistered disability workers to avoid 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 practice 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 vdwc.vic.gov.au/prohibition-orders

Become a registered worker

Proudly registered with the VDWC and showing what quality support looks like.

The Victorian Disability Worker Commission recently featured in Link Disability Magazine highlighting the story of registered worker Tanae and the different ways she supports Darcy to gain independence and build new skills. We also discuss how we're supporting disability workers to be the best and most competent professionals they can be.

Read all about it on pages 28-29 here - https://issuu.com/thein.../docs/link_magazine_june-july_2024

[Click here](#) for more information about becoming a registered worker.

[Click here](#) to see a list of registered disability workers.



Image description

Registered disability support worker Tanae and her client Darcy in a park.

Working with the new Social Services Regulator (SSR)

While the Government has announced that the VDWC will merge with the [Social Services Regulator \(SSR\)](#) in 2026, we continue to provide services to the disability sector. Our operations continue to include assisting you with making a complaint or a notification as well as registering disability workers.

So, we assure people with disability, workers and providers that we continue to be here for you. After the merger the SSR will continue to deliver these functions.

National Disability Services (NDS) Survey

The NDS wants to hear from you! What do you think it takes to be a disability support worker?

Complete their survey to be in the running to win 1 of 3 \$500 eGift Cards.

The survey will close at midnight on Sunday 21 July 2024.

To complete the survey visit: www.painteddogresearch.com/NDSworkforce

This survey is being hosted by Painted Dog Research on behalf of NDS. If you have any queries or issues with the survey, please contact calvin@painteddogresearch.com for assistance.

News and updates

2024 Victorian Disability Awards nominations now open

Nominations for the 2024 Victorian Disability Awards are now open. Victorians are encouraged to nominate a person, group or organisation that champions disability rights and inclusion, promotes the use of co-design, advocates for improvements to policies, programs and services and role models disability pride.

They will be open for 4 weeks, closing on 19 July 2024.

The Victorian Disability Awards have a strong focus on recognising the achievements and contributions of individuals, groups and organisations that have made a real contribution to the lives of people with disability in a broad range of areas, including community services, social justice, law, health, science, environment, arts, sports, media and education.

Whether it is someone you know who always stands up for the rights of people with disability, someone or a group who is doing great things in their community, or an organisation that goes above and beyond to ensure their environment is accessible for everyone – all nominations and efforts are welcome for recognition.

Nominations can be submitted online at the [awards website](#).

If you are having trouble completing your nomination online, please contact the Awards Secretariat on 03 9285 3873 or awards@dffh.vic.gov.au

[Click here](#) for an Easy Read poster.

Update to protections for people with disability

A fact sheet and summaries are now available to help you understand the Disability and Social Services Regulation Amendment Act 2023 and the changes it has made to the law.

The Amendment Act strengthens rights and protections for people with disability in Victoria.

Learn about the changes at [Disability and Social Services Regulation Amendment Act](#).

Residential rights for people with disability

On 1 July, there will be changes to the Residential Tenancies Act. These include:

- access to stronger residential protections against eviction and rent increases for Victorians with disability
- choice about the type of residential agreement they're living under, if they live in specialist disability accommodation
- expanded range of disability accommodation settings that Community Visitors can visit.

The changes will also increase the number of disability accommodation and support providers that must follow the rules under the Disability Act 2006 and the Residential Tenancies Act.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the changes.
[Click here](#) for an Easy Read information sheet.

What's been happening

This month the Commissioner and other representatives from VDWC have met with people with disability, systemic advocates and disability workers at an information session in partnership with the Disability Resources Centre (DRC). We presented to labour hire organisations that work in the disability space, in partnership with the Labour Hire Authority (LHA). We were also fortunate to join a leadership forum with representatives from the Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO) forensic residential program, to provide more information about how they can work with us.

These were great opportunities to ensure these groups are aware of our services and hear from these organisations about issues they are facing. If you, your community/network or organisation would like a tailored session to learn more about the VDWC and provide feedback to us, please contact us at education@vdbc.vic.gov.au.



Image description

Commissioner Dan Stubbs presenting at an information session in partnership with DRC.

Keep in touch

If our e-newsletter was forwarded to you and you'd like to subscribe please go to: 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