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From the CEO's Desk



Since its introduction, NDIS has totally changed disability service provision, not only in our 'neck of the woods'. We are just one of the first areas chosen in NSW before the whole State and later the rest of the country use the new system.

Our staff think, breath, talk and dream NDIS (well, almost), but to be able to advise carers and NDIS clients, we had to educate all of the office staff and our care workers about the significant changes under this system. Like it or not, we, just like all of you had to get our head around the rule changes affecting all facets organising and delivering our service to you including new terminology. 'Freedom of choice' seems to be the catch-word most carers are confronted with and happily so. Some of you are already experimenting by choosing multiple providers or changing providers, attending other programs on offer and using additional assistance from Plan and Support Coordinators who'll help to organise and navigate the maze of information and service options.

By diversifying our service provision under NDIS, 'Connections Plus Australia' in short CPA is now registered to deliver service in the following areas:

- Accommodation/Tenancy
- Assist personal activities
- Daily tasks/Shared Living
- Development-Life Skills
- Household tasks
- Participate Community
- Personal Activities
- Group/Centre Activities
- Assist Access/Maintain Employment
- Support Coordination
- Assistance Products for Personal Care and Safety

For the past weeks we attended many Plan meetings with Local Area Coordinators to assist carers and disability clients to understand NDIS proceedings and explain options in Plan service delivery. For carers and clients who have no internet access or computer, we installed a special unit at our office so these people can access their Portal at their leisure. Additionally, we can assist carers to better understand Plan and Portal access by making an appointment with CPA staff.

Rainer Strassberger



We now have Supported Disability Accommodation Houses

Available NOW!

Connections Plus has a choice of 'Supported Disability Accommodation' with one house in Merimbula and a NEW option in Bega, a perfect alternative for people who have accommodation in their NDIS plan.

Both properties are fully wheelchair accessible, which of course includes the bathrooms. They are also equipped with all modern amenities to make stays a pleasant experience. Air-conditioning, ramps, lifters, slings, wheelchairs, hospital beds and fully disability trained personnel ensure the best care possible.

Call Connections Plus to arrange an inspection.



GET INVOLVED!

Be Part of the 2017 PERTH2PAMBULA Support Team

Dane Waites is our own Cliffy; he loves to run and more than anything else he wants to run from Pambula to Perth.

It's a challenge that the vast majority of us wouldn't even consider but for Dane it's a passion that has burnt bright in his heart for some time.

By sharing your time you will enable a reality that has been 14 years in the making. Dane has been training 6 days a week to realise his goal of running from Perth to Pambula.

Dane invites you to be part of this amazing journey commencing in June 2017.

This journey will see Dane run over 100 marathons across four Australian states and three time zones.

If you are interested in being part of Dane's Support Team, contact Connections Plus to obtain an Application form.



COME ALONG TO THE SNOW TRIP

TO SMIGGINS HOLES AND PERISHER VALLEY

What's Involved



This year we have organised a snow trip to Smiggins Holes and Perisher Valley to be held from Saturday 1st July to Friday 7th July 2017.

Staying at the Apex Foundation Chalet, Smiggins Holes NSW

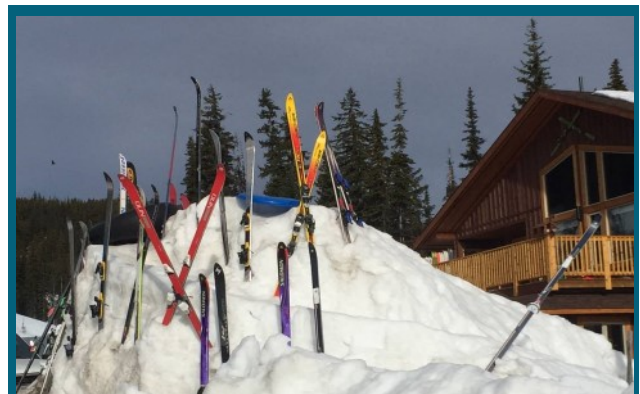
When we get there on Saturday night, we will have dinner and a quiet night in to get ourselves ready for skiing on Sunday.

Sunday we are off to Perisher Valley to go cross-country skiing. There are lots of easy areas to practice on if you have not tried this before and it is really great fun.

We will take our lunch with us and provided the weather holds we should be able to stay there most of the day. At the end of the day we will come back to our cabin to have a nice home cooked meal.

After breakfast each day we will decide as a group whether we would like to go back up to the snow for the morning (we might have had enough by then) or just relax.

Call Connections Plus for more information.



Saturday 1st July to Friday 7th July 2017

Tick of Charity Registration

You will notice on our web site, we have now received the Tick of Charity Registration

Helping to enhance public trust and confidence in registered charities.

The ACNC Tick of Charity Registration (the Registered Charity Tick) aims to give reassurance to the public that the charity is transparent and accountable by highlighting its presence on the ACNC Charity Register.

We hope that the Registered Charity Tick will have a positive effect on public trust and confidence in the charity sector and we encourage members of the public to check the Register to find out more details about charities they wish to support.



Visit: www.acnc.gov.au for more information

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Where you'll find the latest news, upcoming events, photos galleries and more!!!!



www.connectionsplus.com.au

Not only is the website a great way to promote our services to the wider community, it is also envisaged that it will be a great way for our current families to provide feedback on the service, check out what's been happening and send requests to the office. So make sure you check it out and give us some feed back on what you would like to see on this site.

SPEND YOUR NDIS MONEY !!!

There is no benefit in not utilising your NDIS funding. You can't save it and you can't roll it over to your next NDIS Plan.

For example, the Social Club may seem like a daunting cost for a night out, but your NDIS Plan is funded to accommodate this.

When the time comes for your Plan to be reviewed, if you have not spent your funding, your allocation may be reduced in your next Plan.

Speak to
Connections Plus
for further
clarification.



Hello to everyone from the Finance desk...

The introduction of the NDIS has been a highly vaunted improvement to the way in which disability services are offered. As with most things, the realities are somewhat different to the advertising campaigns. It is pleasing to see that most of the plans that we have seen have been a vast improvement in terms of funding than what we had available under ADHC block funding. Some of you will have had plans that have been underwhelming, but many of these have been able to be successfully renegotiated.

We have always prided ourselves in listening to the various issues that you face and being as flexible as possible in providing a solution. The rules governing the NDIS definitely remove some of this flexibility. The main issue that has arisen is what exactly the NDIS will allow to be funded. The NDIS helpdesk staff are unsure themselves as I have received different answers depending on who answers the phone.

As long as it relates to the disability, or a barrier that it creates, we feel it is more than fair to be able to claim it from the NDIS funding. This area will gain more clarification over the next couple of years and is highly



likely to be adjusted, as will many areas of the NDIS. As usual, we will keep you informed as the information is passed to us.

There was a moderately lengthy lead time to the NDIS arriving in our area and we analysed our processes and procedures to make sure they would be compatible with the way the NDIS operates. However, even with the best laid plans, it is impossible to fully know what will work and what won't until you actually experience it.

It has become apparent that our IT systems really aren't up to the job. I have been sending you invoices or charging to your plans, with what I feel, is insufficient information to make it easy for you to keep track of where you are up to. We are now in the process of implementing a fully comprehensive care package called SupportAbility. This will provide many improvements. I won't bore you with details, but our processes will be much more efficient and transparent so that you know exactly what to expect and what will be charged to your NDIS funding. We are currently loading all of our current paper-based information onto the system, and are aiming to have it fully up and running by end of June. **- John How**