



NEXUS INK

EDITION 38 JULY 2015

Thank-you to all those who have contributed to this edition of Nexus Ink. For article ideas or contributions, or for copies of this newsletter, contact Alona or Adrian in the office - 6278 1771.

59 – not out!

Fifty is a mile stone for many things – age, cricket etc – so it's time for a round of applause for our Nexus staff. This year they provided a service to 59 people. The core of our service and 94% of our funding is still providing supported residential services to 36 people, but this year we also provided afternoon and overnight rostered support as well as daily support for people living in their own homes.

We also provided a range of community access support and training for life skills, social skills and transport to a number of people in their own homes either with DHHS funding or through the NDIS.

Nexus staff have been able to take the skills they had developed over many years of working with people in accommodation settings and easily transfer them into community settings – sometimes with big surprising results. Two highlights from the year were to be able to introduce a new mobility device that we used in our group homes to someone who is living independently, helping them maintain this independence; and providing some in home support for a young man with autism where staff were able to slot into the home routine and

get him doing more for himself so he was not relying on his mother as much (which of us didn't try to get mum to do as much as we could wrangle!).



Administration Orders for People in Group Homes

For many years the residential disability sector has provided financial management for residents who are unable to manage their own finances; often with little family or external input. This has been done in good faith but without a formal legal "umbrella". While Nexus has internal checks and balances, like our rigorous policy of staff auditing all client and house financial records each month, this does not mean that there is legal coverage to do this.

There are a number of ways this legal umbrella can be created. A person with some capacity might provide a family member authority through giving them Power of Attorney over their affairs. But not everyone has the ability to do this, and in these cases it is most common for people to be granted an Administration Order made by the Guardianship and Administration Board (GAB). Getting an Administration Order is a rigorous, but relatively easy process, and many family members take on the role of Administrator on behalf of their relatives who live in supported accommodation.

The Nexus Board has been looking into this process and over the next few months a Nexus senior manager will call family members to discuss who in your families might consider taking on this role.



Brush up your Computer Skills

Nexus made a successful Skills Fund application in partnership with National Disability Services to provide computer training to Disability Support Workers. There are 2 courses available – introduction to computing for people with limited computer knowledge and a more advanced program for people who want to develop better skills using programs like Microsoft Word and Excel. We have funding for a total of 20 places. Staff need to contact Adrian or Craig to book.

New Town Residents' Holidays and more.....



Suzie enjoys the Taranna Devil Park



ABOVE: A ripper day at the Nitro Circus for Adam and Janine



ABOVE & RIGHT: Janine's holiday to Port Arthur and the Tasman Peninsula saw her visiting the devil park and going on a boat trip as well as enjoying the Port Arthur historic site.



LEFT: Brett enjoyed many outings over the summer months, but the trip to Cradle Mountain was a highlight for him, he loves being in the wilderness.



Suzie has a great new hobby after visiting the Hobart regatta ground recently where she thoroughly enjoyed the experience of kite flying. She is looking into becoming a member of the Kite Flyers of Tasmania Club.

Alison Found her Credit Card!

Now that we are running more day programs for some of our retired residents Alison Hodges (Manager Client Support) thought it was time to clean out the corporate credit card on some new activities. Everything from board games, balls, things that stack and even bingo were delivered to the office last week from our good friends at Windmill educational equipment.



Three of our houses now have residents who are either at home full time or for part of the week – normally this is on medical advice and, like most of us in



the community wouldn't expect to be 70 with multiple health problems and still going to work 5 days a week! We have had some great health and mood turn-arounds when people can be home during the week and even just have a couple of days were they get to sleep in and have a quiet day around the house.

The program with all of Alison's new activities is also broken up with outings, cooking, sing-alongs and the odd nap.

Staff Moves

Since our last Nexus Ink we have welcomed 10 staff gaining permanent or fixed term contract work with us. In particular our community service and our Independent Living Program has taken most of these people. Nexus recruits permanent staff from internal advertising from our casual workforce, so our recent appointments have kept Adrian and Craig busy conducting interviews, and with employing new casual staff.

This quarter 13 new casual staff and 1 permanent employee started work with Nexus. This creates a lot of work for Craig, our work place mentor, who makes sure new casuals are "buddied" into at least two houses. The buddy

process helps them learn the procedure and equipment used in each house and also gives them time to read the profiles for each client. Craig also meets with them and conducts some observations of their work.

We have also appointed **Jackie Horsley** to a new position of Finance Manager. The changing nature of funding for the Disability Sector under NDIS and the retirement of Ray Sund, Judy Lockhart and Cam Douglas over the past 12 months has opened this role at Nexus.



Jackie joins us from a private accounting and public utility background having spent the past 12 years working as a business accountant / business manager for Hobart Water, and then TasWater. Jackie has al-

ways held an interest in the disability sector including volunteering at Cosmos and the Cerebral Palsy Association and providing respite care for children with a disability.

Board Moves

The Nexus Board is a community based board with members from a cross section of life experiences and employment backgrounds. As vacancies occur the Board looks at what skills they need to boost amongst their membership. We have been looking for a person with a strong finance background and are very pleased to have **Marcus Pringle-Jones** join us to fill a casual vacancy.

Marcus attended the Hutchins School in Hobart and gained a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Tasmania before completing post graduate studies in finance.

His career focus has been in the financial services industry working for organisations such as Macquarie Bank, HSBC, CBA and for the last 3 years with Bell Potter Securities in Hobart. Marcus has worked in Sydney and Brisbane before returning to Hobart to raise his young family.



Marcus also has a strong commitment to community organisations including being on the advisory committee to the Salvation Army, a Board member of the White Cloud Foundation and a committee member of the Sandy Bay Regatta Association. White Cloud's main focus is to help increase resources and improve access to support for people, families and carers who live with depression and their work has included providing a multi-disciplinary clinic to women suffering early stage pre/post-natal depression.



NILP

With our first resident moving into his own apartment in early July, Nexus staff are excited about the start of this program to teach young people the skills to

live in their own homes independently. The staff apartment has been furnished and systems are now in place for the program to



begin in full. The next two residents will be moving into their apartments in the coming weeks. The whole Queens Walk complex is looking fantas-

tic, with the vegetable gardens and fruit trees maturing, and the warm and inviting interiors a credit to the planners, architects and builders.



Celebrations for Two Years of the NDIS

While not celebrated with too much fanfare there were a couple of notable passing comments on 2 July. Sarah Gillman (ABC Local Radio) did some nice interviews with parents talking about how NDIS funding had opened up new opportunities for their children. Sarah also interviewed Nexus CEO, Mark Jessop, about our partnership with Housing Choices Australia to offer the Nexus Independent Living Program (NILP) to 4 young people moving out of home into their own units with Nexus helping them learn the skills they need to live independently. Our first resident signed his lease on the 2 July, a nice way to celebrate the NDIS anniversary.

Mark ended the day by attending the "What's Next for the NDIS" meeting hosted by Life Without Barriers. Key speakers were the sector's Minister (The Hon. Jacquie Petrusma) who told us the State was backing the roll out and the next phase would be to add more people from across the State, but the details of this are still being worked on. Our other speaker was John Della Bosca, National Campaign Director for the Every Australian Counts movement, which is credited for keep on the pressure leading to the creation of the NDIS.

John gave us a brief history on the campaign and emphasised that there are still things to be done for people with a disability – least of all is to ensure that the NDIS remains well funded with bi-partisan support. He said the focus of the campaign was not so much on fairness or compassion or inclusion as much as it was on the fact that all Australians benefit if people with a disability are treated reasonably. For instance Mr Della Bosca has said that the total cost of funding the NDIS will be less costly than the future expense of supporting disability in the current way. This is because the model works on helping people with a disability to access services efficiently and also help them (and their families) engage in sustainable economic activity (eg get some part time work). John challenged all the people in the room to have a "stump speech" about how the NDIS will support people with a disability and how this benefits all Australians.

While there is still work to be done on the NDIS the real positive is that many committed people are doing this work and we see progress every day.



Mark with John Della Bosca



Resident Recipe Corner



Alona has contributed this recipe which is a tried and true family favourite. All my children have learned to make these muffins as they have become old enough to be trusted in the kitchen on their own, we use whatever fruit is in season, and alternate between white and dark chocolate as a treat. Adding half a cup of bran to the mix makes them a healthier sweet treat.



Alona's Muffins



Ingredients:



175gm SR Flour (or 250gm if not using bran)



75gm wheat bran and 1/2 tsp baking powder (optional)



120gm castor sugar



2/3 cup vegetable oil



2/3 cup milk



1 egg



1 cup seasonal fruit (e.g. berries, diced banana, diced or grated uncooked pear or apple)



1/2 cup choc chips (either dark or milk—optional, can be replaced with sultanas, raisins or currants).



Method



Place dry ingredients into a bowl; combine oil, milk and eggs, add to dry ingredients and mix well. Add fruit/ chocolate and mix. Line muffin pan with patty pan cases and divide mixture between them—should make 12. Cook in 175° oven for 30 mins.

