

WARWICK & DISTRICT DISABILITY SUPPORT GROUP Inc.

Postal address: 20283 New England Hwy, The Glen, 4370

The most current ABS data shows that, for the Warwick area, there are some 1069 people with a severe or profound core activity disability. Severe or profound core activity disabilities refer to a serious impairment of a persons' mobility, communication, or their capacity to self care. At present in Warwick, we have overnight respite facilities for 3 people at any one time, no emergency respite, limited in-home respite, no emergency accommodation, and no effective options for people with high needs. To access such facilities, affected families must travel to Brisbane or Toowoomba, and this is inadequate.

In terms of longer term accommodation options, there is one house run by Endeavour Foundation, and three others through Community Options which in total house some 20 people with low to medium care needs. No options exist for those with high care needs.

Ageing carers are the most disadvantaged as there is no plan for their relief. Our group believes that any program developed to address their needs should include.

1. A properly constructed and funded transition program which allows their charges to develop the skills and the confidence to begin the process of moving away from home. To be effective, this transition should begin when the person with a disability has reached an appropriate age, not when the carer has triggered some age threshold.
2. Creation of a type of "Lifestyle Centre" which provides the social network to support people with a disability when they can no longer work. (as in reaching retirement age, for example)
3. The ability to become a stakeholder in their future. This would be regarded as a moral right for everyone without a disability who works in Australia, but is out of the question for most people with a disability. There are challenges here, but long term benefits also.

Further Information can be obtained by contacting the Chairman, WDDSG, on

- (07) 4667 1909
(...)

Warwick & District Disability Support Group (WDDSG)

Terms of Reference

Background

This group was formed as a result of action taken from a meeting convened in 2007. This meeting was chaired by Lawrence Springborg in his capacity as local Member of Parliament to address the needs of concerned carers in our community.

Purpose

Vision

The group believes that the community must be involved in addressing the local needs of people with a disability. The group wishes to be part of that involvement and work with others to see that these needs are recorded and acted upon.

Mission

To ensure that the best possible services are provided for people with disabilities so that they are able to maintain a lifestyle which allows them to reach their potential.

Objectives

- In the short term, to identify the number of people in our community with needs, and to record and summarise those needs.
- In the medium term, to ensure a strategy is developed to provide solutions to those needs.
- In the longer term, to ensure that these strategies are implemented.

Deliverables

- From the concerned carers meeting, three general accommodation needs were identified. In the first instance, these needs will form the initial focus of our activities. These are:-
 1. Long term accommodation with support for high needs and 24 hour care.
 2. Options for care when carers age and ability to provide care is compromised.
 3. Assistance for transition from home to independent care.
- Additional options for consideration identified at the forum will also be adopted. These options include:-
 1. Community housing
 2. Short-term recreational accommodation options
 3. Overnight respite
 4. Emergency respite
 5. Village-style accommodation with controlled (limited number of) residents with special needs

Governance

Membership

The group is a committee with roles allocated annually by show of hands at a meeting convened for that purpose. This meeting will normally be held in the first quarter of each calendar year, or at a time agreed upon by the committee.

Role	Description	Nominee
Chair	Convene and control meetings. Act as spokesperson for the group on relevant matters.	Peter Stacy Dawn Scrymgeour <i>(Alternate)</i>
Secretary	Record and circulate minutes. Act as spokesperson for the group on relevant matters	Christine Stacy Barb Fischer <i>(Alternate)</i>
Treasurer	Manage the financial affairs of the group. Act as spokesperson for the group on relevant matters	Barb Fischer Christine Stacy <i>(Alternate)</i>
Member	Attend meetings. Act as spokesperson for the group on relevant matters.	John Davis. Lawrence Springborg. Dawn Scrymgeour. Tracey Watt. Meg Potts. Di Johnston. Rosemerry McArthur Pam Burley Margot Tesch David Gavin (DSQ)
Guest	Attend meetings on request. Involvement in business of the group by invitation.	

Relationship to other Committees / Organisations

Organisation 1

The Endeavour Foundation.

- Share appropriate information and assist with strategic matters.
- Attend joint meetings and discuss issues of mutual interest.

Organisation 2

Blue Care

- Share appropriate information and assist with strategic matters
- Attend joint meetings and discuss issues of mutual interest.

Organisation 3

DSQ

- Share appropriate information and assist with strategic matters
- Attend joint meetings and discuss issues of mutual interest.

Rules of Engagement

Frequency & location of meetings

Monthly, at venues to be advised.

Quorums

Correspondence, content of meetings with other organisations, details of promotional activities and any commitments given or implied must be reported at the next meeting for discussion and incorporation into the minutes.

Minutes & Agendas

The group will provide minutes of all meetings prior to the next meeting and will, whenever possible, provide an agenda. This will be done electronically unless by prior arrangement with the secretary.

Thankyou for the opportunity to speak. My name is Tracey and I have a high needs disabled 17year old daughter, whom our whole family love unconditionally, we want her to be happy and comfortable, as many other carers want for their disabled loved one. However I am 49 years old and find it difficult to care for Hannah full time and work, enjoy a relaxing holiday, visit a friend for coffee or pursue a hobby to its fullest or even simply to go out for dinner with my husband. Moreover being able to attend this today would have had to involve another family member who would have had to give up their regular schedule to care for Hannah, so that I could leave in time. In contrast my daily timetable still runs around school time 9-3pm.

My parents and parents –in-laws are now aging and find it too difficult a task to help us with caring for Hannah. Hence as a result of the majority of the responsibility being left to my husband and myself, I am starting to feel depressed, trapped and I am always tired. As well as Hannah to care for I have a daughter about to have a baby, which I would like to have time to enjoy and a son who needs me as well.

Next year Hannah finishes school, unfortunately there is nothing to move on too. Hence any personal free time will be further limited which may have a more depressing effect on my already fragile state. Hannah, while needing full time supervision, likes to be out socialising and involved in activities with other people her own age. Being able to achieve this can involve a lot of physical effort, infact too

much for one person to cope with. Regular, even daily respite could improve day to day life for carers as well as provide a quality lifestyle for those with disabilities.

The government donated millions of dollars to the disabled members of the community, however care providers in the community still receive limited funding, which has resulted in 1 to 2 hours per week available for respite. Lack of funding can also be seen as care providers has ceased holiday activities available to school aged disabled people. Some wonderful people in our local community volunteer their time to provide music and other activities for disabled people. Unfortunately those disabled people with high care needs cannot always access these activities because of the amount of time and amount of people that have to be involved to achieve a successful day.

In a wonderful world it may be possible for a percentage of our taxes to go to the disabled so that a venue could be designed to cater for a day time activity Centre opened from perhaps 8am to 8pm. A Centre where perhaps there is music playing, activities happening, an occasional bus ride, people cooking lunch or tea, a birthday party taking place, some community musicians, dancers or girl guides visiting etc. As well as a day activity centre access to long term accommodation could be offered. Long term accommodation could be offered so that carers of disabled people may feel satisfied that their loved ones are in a caring and safe environment and relieve them of the worry of what might happen if they no longer are available. There may be many carers in the community who are elderly and finding it difficult to cope

with the care needed for their disabled dependent. Therefore a long term accommodation facility may be a much needed support.

Thankyou for your time

*Tracey Watt - Parent & Carer
Warwick & District Disability Support Group Inc.*