

**RIVERLAND RESPITE & RECREATION
SERVICE INC.**

28A Kay Avenue

BERRI S.A. 5343

ABN: 54 571 932 525

PHONE: (08) 8582 3110

(08) 8582 3690

FAX: (08) 8582 3884

EMAIL: respite@riverland.net.au

“Local People Supporting Local People”

Berri, the 4th of December 2009

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING OPTIONS AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE
AGEING WITH A DISABILITY**

Dear Sir/Madam

We would like to make a submission in regard to above inquiry.

Riverland Respite & Recreation Service Inc. (RRRSI) is a not for profit, non-government agency that provides a Day Options service, staffing for supported accommodation and a range of respite, recreation and holiday opportunities for people with a disability and their families living within the Riverland Region for over 20 years. RRRSI employs over 45 local people and sources the majority of its products and services from

the local region and assists over a 100 people with disabilities and their families in the region.

Access to services is arranged for eligible persons by referral from the relevant government agency, Disability SA. RRRSI is a fee based service, with clients being able to access services either with government funding from Disability SA, alternate funding sources or self funded.

Respite – We offer flexible respite to meet the individual needs of each family. Respite is available 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year and aims to allow families to have a break from the ongoing caring role or due to an emergency situation. Respite can be provided either in a centre based setting at Respite House in Renmark (fully wheelchair accessible), in home respite or in support workers homes. All respite services are fully staffed with trained and experienced support workers.

Recreation/Holidays – We organise and facilitate a variety of recreational and sporting activities including football trips, monthly Diner’s Club, Ten Pin Bowling and Discos to encourage and maintain ongoing social interactions and connections for our clients within their own communities. We also organise holiday trips, both short and week long trips to a variety of locations.

Day Options- Day Options aims to assist people to maximise their skills in a personalised, fun and supportive environment.

Our Day Options venue is conveniently located in Berri, South Australia and operates 48 weeks of the year, 5 days a week.

Core themes are Community Integration and Participation, with fostering of collaborative, local partnerships.

Service Excellence Framework

Our Day Options venue is conveniently located in Berri, South Australia and operates 48 weeks of the year, 5 days a week. Core themes are Community Integration and Participation, with fostering of collaborative, local partnerships.

We have over the past years noticed a increased request of ageing clients with a disability, seeking to transition from their respective employment settings to a Day Options service, mainly due to an accumulation of ageing related health issues. In the past, choices were basically limited to accessing Day Care services through Community Health Services, which were not set up to support ageing people with disabilities. Support needs for people with disabilities require a highly individualised focus that includes both the needs and wishes of the individual and families and carers. Community Health Services are generally purely ageing orientated and are often not resourced or staffed to support ageing people with a disability.

Funding to access a disability specific Day Options service is, in the State of South Australia exceedingly difficult due to funding limitations of the relevant government department, Disability SA, and the structure of assessing needs, which in turn determines possible funding. In our experience, over the past 10 years, none of the people in question wishing to transition into a new phase of their lives, were successful in receiving funding. It was either left to parents and families to self fund access to Day Options or service like ours, were placed in positions to refuse a request for service or absorb those clients for free, placing added financial stress on already stretched resources. One must remember that many of the clients wishing to transition, are living with their parents, whom themselves often are in their 80's and 90's. It seems clear that a new approach is required, with potentially a Day Options service that specifically caters for the needs of aging people with disabilities.

We fully support and encourage the Committee to strive towards a ageing specific Day Options service provision due to changing nature of required services and support for ageing people with a disability and a disability specific service structure that is already in place.

Kind regards

Stefan Hirschi

Chief Executive Officer