

ISSUE 4

Newsletter

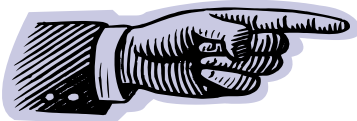


April 2010

Message from the Service Manager

Inside This Issue

1. *Message from the Service Manager*
2. *Support Staff – Feedback*
3. *Employee Profile Committee News*
4. *Holidays Specific training for Support Staff What's on*



WE WANT YOUR INPUT

Our newsletter is now in its fourth issue and has become a useful tool to reach out to all members of Leisure Connections and Support Staff. If you have any suggestions in regards to information that you would like to see in the newsletter or information you would like to be sourced for you please contact the Service Manager or Coordinator.

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Leisure Connections Newsletter. There have been a few developments here at Leisure Connections since the last Newsletter so I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date. Firstly, Katie has had a beautiful little baby boy. Dexter Britt-Pearson was born on 08/08/2010. Dexter is a very healthy and angelic baby. Congratulations Katie!

Katie is now employed by Leisure Connections as a Quality Officer and will be coming into the office twice a week to work on Policy and Workplace Practices. The Management Committee is currently reviewing our Policies and we need to ensure our Workplace Practices are in line with these policies.

Leisure Connections values the input of its members, so we would like to extend an invitation to all members to have input into the development and review of these policies. If you think you might be interested in providing some input into the development and review of Leisure Connections Policies please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss the most convenient and constructive way to do this.

Finally, Leisure Connections underwent its second Maintenance Audit on the 18th and 19th of March. A big thank you to all that participated and assisted in successfully demonstrating that Leisure Connections continues to meet the requirements of the Queensland Disability Service Standards and continues to improve on the service it provides.

MESSAGE TO SUPPORT STAFF – FEEDBACK

Leisure Connections strives to provide a high level of service. Feedback enables Leisure Connections to evaluate and improve on the way it provides a service and assists in ensuring it continues to provide a quality service. On the reverse side of Timesheets is an "Activity Feedback Report" it is to be completed for all hours worked before Timesheets are handed in to be processed. Feedback relating to the activity and support provided will also assist in reviews and in meeting the services accountability requirements. When completing the Activity Feedback Report please keep your feedback legible and detailed. By addressing the relevant prompts as follows you will ensure that you are providing a complete and detailed report; *What happened; is the Service User enjoying the activity; improvement of skills; inclusion by other participants; any concerns raised; any instances of interaction with other participants; feedback on control measures; feedback on goals identified at the previous review; opportunities provided for the Service User to make decisions; anything you feel we should know.* Please also ensure to fill in correct dates, your name, and the Service User's name and indicate in the space provided if a Hazard or Incident report has been completed and if you wish to be contacted by the Service Manager/Coordinator.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE: Julie Smith – Administrative Assistant

Let me introduce myself. My name is Julianna Smith and I have been working for Leisure Connections since Dec. 2000 as the Administrative Assistant.

I was born in Brisbane & my first job was when I was 15 where I worked @ the Mater Hospital until I join the Women's Royal Australian Navy @ 17, I served in HMAS Cerberus & HMAS Penguin. I was in the medical branch for 4 years and I met my husband in the Navy as well. We have lived in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and had three postings to Cairns, the first one in 1977 the final one being in 1990 when we decided that this was where we would settle. I have three children all grown up now; two were born in Cairns & 1 in Frankston Vic., 2 grand children with 1 on the way.

Shortly after arriving in Cairns in 1990 I was encouraged to become involved with one of the local soccer clubs. This involvement was at committee level & lasted for 10 years and also included 3 years at Federation level.

My first job in Cairns was at Mary Potter Nursing Home where I stayed for 7 years, I was on their Workplace Health & Safety Committee and a Member of the Auxiliary Club, until an accident prevented me continuing. This accident resulted in my becoming a mature age student obtaining a Certificate IV in Business & Accounting plus medical reception at Lorraine Martin College (when it still was a Training College). I found that the knowledge and skills I obtained from being involved in the soccer club allowed me to excel in these courses.

My first long term job since completing this course was at Outright Independence where I first began working within the disability field, albeit at administration level. When Outright Independence folded I was fortunate late in 2000 to obtain my present position at Leisure Connections, where I have met numerous wonderful and courageous people.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Australian Government has asked the Productivity Commission to undertake a public inquiry into a long-term disability care and support scheme.

Last year I wrote to all families advising of the proposal for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which will form part of the long-term disability care and support scheme. The estimated \$4 billion to \$5 billion a year needed to cover people under 65 would come from general revenue or a Medicare-style levy of 0.8 per cent.

The Commission will be releasing an issues paper this month and will be holding initial public hearings in June/July. We don't, as yet, know if any will be held in Cairns. If anyone is interested in lodging a submission or wish to have input we have the details at the office. There has been a lot of support within the disability sector.

The political scene is also "hotting up". Two mothers have launched a national grass roots movement which they hope to turn into the most powerful single issue campaign in Australian politics. They are calling themselves "Mad as Hell" are even asking people to pledge that in the next Federal and State elections they will only vote for a political party which promises "*to transform Australia's broken, inefficient, crisis-driven disability support system*". To take part in this campaign you only have to go to their website - <http://australiansmadashell.com.au> , click on Pledge, enter your name, email address and postcode then click Send.

Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities Bill Shorten was quoted recently as saying – ***"I have a view that disability is as big an issue as climate change in the electorate. It is the greatest political sleeper issue in Australia. I think that politicians need to wake up to the size of the disability vote"***.

Mr. Shorten has also advised that the government will decide at **senior levels** how to respond specifically to these campaign pledges. I guess a lot will depend on the success or otherwise of the campaign but given that there are 1.5 million people with severe disability in Australia the potential could be in the millions. WOW!

Unfortunately in the disability field we do seem to have the habit of "shooting ourselves in the foot" and one group is opposing the NDIS and have come up with an alternative – a Lifelong Disability Entitlement Scheme. I am looking into this group and what they propose and should have more information within the next couple of weeks.

The final report from the Productivity Commission is due by July 2011 so It looks like we may have some exciting times ahead! Let's hope they will be fruitful!

Colleen Dolan
Hon. President

REMINDER – HOLIDAYS

Holidays are an enjoyable part of most of our lives, so just a reminder for when these times do pop up, don't forget to advise Leisure Connections as soon as possible so as other arrangements can be arranged for support. Please consider whether you would like to change your activity to another day or if you want to have a break and cancel support for these days.
Happy holidays!!!!

Specific training for Support Staff

Leisure Connections is committed to providing a quality service which meets all the needs of its Service User's, many different aspects are considered to enable Leisure Connections fulfill this commitment. One of the most important aspects is ensuring Support Staff are provided with adequate training to fulfill their role. If you require Support Staff to be trained in a specific area Leisure Connections encourages you to contact the Service Manager or Coordinator. The Service Manager or Coordinator will then look into resources available to provide the training requested.

MAINTENANCE AUDIT

Leisure Connections Maintenance Audit was conducted in March, the Audit was very successful. Leisure Connections would like to take this opportunity to thank all people who were involved and contributed to its success.

WHAT'S ON

The QBL season has begun so go along and support the Marlins & dolphins!
Next home game – Fri May 28th 6:00pm

Cairns Adrenalin Film Festival
Zanzibar @ Calypso Backpackers
29th May 7pm

Robertson Brothers – Sunday 16th May
Brothers League Club

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