



# RIGHTS IN ACTION INC

*Independent advocacy for people with disabilities*

## NEWSLETTER

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**December 2016 – Issue 42**

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### **Message from the Manager**

Hi All

This is the final Newsletter for 2016. The year has passed so quickly and we still have so much to do and say, but I'll try to keep it brief.

First, I would like to thank our small team, Bob, Dianne and Mary for a wonderful year fulfilling the human rights of people living in Cairns, Yarrabah, Atherton and Mareeba.

On 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016, RIA held its Annual General Meeting in which it elected new members of the Board of Management. The Board members for 2016 – 2017 are listed on page two in the left column of the Newsletter. At the AGM we bid farewell to two long serving Board members – Joseph Lynd and Mark Phillips. We thank them for their tireless contributions and strong governance. Our new Vice President position is yet to be nominated and will be confirmed at the January 2017 Board meeting.

There have been many changes in the disability and human services sector and we welcome the new legislation of the Mental Health Act 2016 found at

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2016/16AC005.pdf> and further information <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/clinical-staff/mental-health/act/2016>

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will become available in Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Croydon, Etheridge, Cape York and Torres Strait from 1 July 2018. A person may meet the access requirements to become a participant of the NDIS up to 6 months prior to this date. The NDIS Act can be found at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013A00020> and the NDIS home page <https://www.ndis.gov.au/>

Next year, RIA will receive new funding from the Department of Social Service to assist people to understand their rights and to provide support to people who want to appeal decisions made by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) with regards to their application or plan. The NDIS Appeals service (previously known as the external merits review – support component) will provide assistance to anyone who wishes to lodge a plan review with NDIS; or an external review with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. More about this in our upcoming Newsletters.

In closing I would like to wish everyone good health, happiness and a safe and prosperous New Year!



# Silver cord telephone reassurance service

## Rights In Action

### Staff

MANAGER  
**Robyn Renton**

ADVOCATES  
**Bob Paten**  
**Dianne Wellington**

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER  
**Mary Klasek**

FINANCE OFFICER  
**Ted Barber**

VOLUNTEER  
**Ariel Pose**

## Management Committee 2016/17

PRESIDENT  
**James Barnes**

VICE PRESIDENT  
**Vacant**

SECRETARY  
**Bernadette Dimla**

TREASURER  
**Allan Wilson**

GENERAL MEMBERS  
**Jan Corcoran**  
**Antonia Gambi**  
**Christine Ryan**  
**Jane Simpson**

The [Silver](#) Cord Service provides vital friendship and security calls, assisting people to remain at home safely and improve quality of life.

The Silver Cord Telephone Reassurance Service provides vital friendship and security calls, assisting people to remain at home safely (particularly people aged over 65, or aged over 50 if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, people with ongoing medical conditions and people with a disability or their carers).

This service is available to eligible clients Queensland-wide.

### What type of calls can I receive?

- **Security calls** can be made seven days a week to ensure you are safe and well. The purpose of these calls is reassurance so that if the call goes unanswered, an activation process is commenced to ensure your wellbeing.
- **Friendship calls** help you stay connected in the community through regular calls from a like-minded volunteer. Our clients love to hear from their 'phone friends', and for some, it may be the only friendly conversation they have all week. Our caring callers love the chat too.
- **Respite calls** can be made after you return home from hospital, or while family and friends who normally check on you are away.

For more information call 1300 78 5646 or click on the link –

<https://www.stjohnqld.com.au/Services/Social-Services/Silver-Cord-Telephone-Reassurance-Service>



## Media Release



### Cuts to transport funding opposed by national disability groups

[National](#) disability groups are calling on Federal Senators to block a Bill that will reduce transport support for people with disability.

The *Social Services Legislation Amendment (Transition Mobility Allowance to the National Disability Insurance Scheme) Bill 2016*, currently before the Senate, will restrict access to essential transport funding to only those eligible for the NDIS. The Bill has been to the Senate Community Affairs Committee, where people with disability gave extensive evidence about the problems with the legislation, which was not accepted by the Government. This Bill will impact the hundreds of thousands of people with disability who will not have access to the NDIS, including people over 65.

To read more click on the link: <http://ymjp.com/zV44rb>

### MEDIA CONTACT

**EI Gibbs**  
**PWDA Communication and Media Manager - 0408 682 867**

**Vanessa Sandhu**  
**Vision Australia Senior Communications Advisor - 0418 937 327**

## Oneplace Community Service Directory

[Oneplace](#) Community Services Directory is an easily accessible directory of community services to help Queensland families to get to the right service at the right time.

From parenting groups and classes to domestic and family violence support services, oneplace is the go-to resource for children, families, community members and professionals looking to find local support in Queensland.

Click on the link for the website -  
<https://www.oneplace.org.au/>



### CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

**Rights in Action will  
be closed from  
23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016  
Re-Open  
3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017**

## The Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program

[Pathfinders](#) is a not for profit organisation funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to provide **free birth certificates for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** aged between 0 and 21.

About 1/3 of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children born in Australia each year (6,000) do not register their births or obtain birth certificates in their first year of life. This makes them particularly vulnerable to missing out later in life. Pathfinders want every Australian to have a birth certificate, and to make our nation a fairer place. They want everyone to develop a legal and personal identity, to be full citizens, to contribute to society, and get the most out of life. They are also asking governments to make birth certificates **free and automatic at birth**, so future generations of Australians will not have to fill out paperwork and pay for this basic right of citizenship.

If your school or community organisation would like to access support to assist families obtain birth certificates for their children at no charge, please see attached information.

A brief explanation of the process is as follows:

1. Applicant (parent) must provide 3 forms of Identification with a Medicare card being one of the preferred forms as it shows the link between applicant and child
2. Complete the attached NABC sign-up day checklist
3. Complete the birth certificate application form for the State the child was born in (make sure the parent/guardian signs it)
4. Scan (colour preferred) and email back to **Hilton Naden** for processing.

Please note: You do not need to wait for a sign-up day event to access this support. Just follow the brief explanation above and you can't go wrong. But if in doubt contact Hilton.

If a parent would like their child's birth certificate to be received at the school or community organisation, the parent/guardian will need to complete the NABC Authority form and submit with the completed applications and JP signed ID.

When certificates are generated from Births Deaths and Marriages they will be sent to the contact officer on the authority form. This will give schools/community organisations time to get certified copies to be kept of the students file for when they transition to another school etc. before handing original to the parent.

There is no limit to the number of birth certificates required. E.G. if a family has four (4) children and they all need a birth certificate, then the parent would complete four (4) birth certificate application forms

If a child is not registered, please contact Hilton Naden who will be able to provide more information to support registration.

Contact Details  
Hilton Naden  
Coordinator  
National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program  
Pathfinders  
Coffs Harbour NSW  
Mob: 0427 726 559  
Email: [hiltonn@pathfinders.ngo](mailto:hiltonn@pathfinders.ngo)

## RIA Newsletter Articles

We encourage members, local services and the community to provide stories, interesting articles and advertisements for our quarterly Newsletter.

Our Newsletter is distributed **free** of charge by emails, post or by accessing our website.

If you would like to contribute to our next Newsletter, please contact Mary Klansek at our office on 40317377 or email [info@rightsinaction.org](mailto:info@rightsinaction.org)

*NB: Sometimes space is limited and we reserve the right to decide on the content of The RIA Newsletter*



### Reminder

Please contact Mary on 40317377 if you do not want us to send you our Newsletter

## Beware of phone calls from scammers pretending to be from Centrelink

The [Australian](#) Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is **warning people to hang up on malicious callers pretending to be from Centrelink** or the Department of Human Services.

These fake callers typically claim the recipient is eligible for an increase in their pension or benefits, but must either visit Canberra to fill out a form or pay a fee to have the form sent to them.

The callers typically ask for payment via wire transfer or iTunes cards. ACCC Deputy Chair Delia Rickard says: "To push you into paying this money, the scammer might threaten that you will not receive any further benefits until the situation is resolved."

"The Department of Human Services will never ask you to deposit money in order to receive a payment," Ms Rickard adds. "If in doubt, don't use any contact details provided by the caller. Look up the government department or organisation yourself in the phone book or online, and phone or email them."

Stay Smart Online recommends that you never provide financial or personal details in response to unsolicited calls, emails or other contacts.

Stay Smart Online has further information on [protecting yourself against scams](#).

For more information click on the link <http://www.accc.gov.au/media-release/spike-in-centrelink-scams>

## Fair Rent Policy Announced for Public Tenants

[Queenslanders](#) with Disability Network (QDN) was pleased to join with Minister Mick de Brenni, and Peter Russo MP – Sunnybank, for the announcement of the new Fair Rent Policy on Saturday 19 November.

QDN was able to discuss the positive impact of the policy change with the Minister, and a member's lived experience as a public housing tenant, the need for accessible, affordable and well-located housing for people with disability which is embedded within the community.

To read more click on the link <http://www.qdn.org.au/all-blog-posts/fair-rent-policy-announced-for-public-housing-tenants.aspx>

## Changes to the Domestic & Family Violence Protection Act 2012

[On](#) 11 October 2016, the Queensland Parliament passed the Domestic & Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, which made significant amendments to the Domestic & Family Violence Protection Act 2012 to better protect victims of domestic & family violence and their families, hold perpetrators to account for their actions and support the delivery of integrated services responses.

To read more click on the link <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/reform-andrenewal/domestic-and-family-violence/simplifying-and-strengthening-the-legal-system>

## Electricity Concessions extended to Health Care Card Holders & Asylum Seekers

Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) is thrilled that more than 150,000 Queensland families will receive a rebate on their electricity bills as part of a new state government policy.

Following recommendations from QCOSS, the existing \$330 Electricity Rebate will be extended to include Commonwealth Health Care Card Holders and asylum seekers.

Pensioners, Seniors and Veterans card holders will retain their concessions.

QCOSS CEO Mark Henley said the extension of the rebate will make a genuine difference to the lives of Queenslanders currently struggling with the cost of living.

Until this point, we were the only state that did not give electricity concessions to Health Care Card holders and now we are leading the way through the inclusion of asylum seekers.

The new concessions will be available in April 2017, however will be backdated to January 2017.

Posted 30/11/2016 on Community Door's link -

<http://communitydoor.org.au/news/electricity-concessions-extended-to-health-care-card-holders-and-asylum-seekers>



# Queensland Fire & Emergency Service

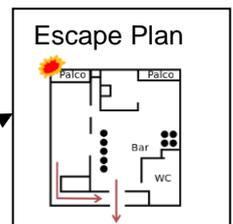
**Safe** home is an initiative of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services designed to assist all householders in recognising fire and safety hazards in and around the home. Once the hazards are identified you can then take steps to eliminate them. Firefighters will visit you upon request at a time convenient to you.

This is a **free** service provided by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services in the interest of developing a safer community.

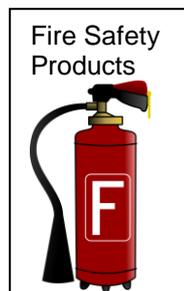
If you would like to take the opportunity to invite a firefighter into your home for a visit, do so by phoning **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**.



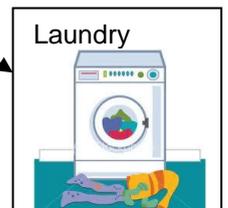
Smoke Alarm



Escape Plan



Fire Safety Products



Laundry



Fire Blanket Demonstration

For more information click on the link <https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/freeprograms/Pages/safehome.aspx>

# Xmas Jokes...

**Q.** Why are ghosts so bad at lying?

**A.** You can see right through them

**Q.** What happened to the Hyena who swallowed a stock cube?

**A.** He made a laughing stock of himself

**Q.** What do you call a penguin in the desert?

**A.** Lost

**Q.** What did Adam say to his wife on the day before Christmas?

**A.** Its Christmas Eve

**Q.** What do angry mice send each other at Christmas?

**A.** Cross Mouse Cards

**Q.** What did the beaver say to the Christmas tree?

**A.** Nice gnawing you

**Q.** Why did no one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay?

**A.** Because they were two deer

## Dianne's visit to the Polynesian Cultural Centre

In October my husband and I visited The Polynesian Cultural Centre on the northern shore of Oahu, Hawaii.

The Polynesian Cultural Centre celebrates and preserves the Polynesian cultures of the Pacific region. Performers from Hawaii, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and Fiji demonstrate various arts and crafts in seven tropical villages. The young people are trained and in the process learn about their language, history, artefacts, songs, dances, musical instruments and food preparation which helps to develop respect and pride for their cultural traditions. The shows were beautiful and so entertaining and colourful. It was an unforgettable experience.



**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
from the Board of Management and the Staff**

