



RIGHTS IN ACTION INC

Independent advocacy for people with disabilities

NEWSLETTER

STREET ADDRESS: Ground Floor, 88 Abbott St
PHONE: (07) 4031 7377

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO Box 1041N, North Cairns QLD 4870
FACSIMILE: (07) 4031 7383

EMAIL: info@rightsinaction.org

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Message from Manager

Welcome to the June edition of our Newsletter. It is hard to believe that we are already half way through the year. There is so much happening, let's start with some positive news for advocacy agencies.

Our Funding

RIA continues to be funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) under the National Disability Advocacy Program. In addition to our advocacy program, DSS now provides us with funding to assist people with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Appeals. Our Advocates can assist a person to appeal a NDIA decision through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).

RIA is also pleased to report that Minister Coralee O'Rourke, Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors, has announced a commitment to continue provide funding for disability advocacy until 30 June 2021. Discussions with Queensland Department of Health regarding Mental Health Advocacy continue.

Our Advocacy Work

From July 2017 to June 2018, RIA has assisted 96 people (this is 19 more than our funding targets), and 108 people with information and/or referrals to other local services. The RIA team continues to provide *free* advocacy and information about NDIS appeals with presentations to the community and disability sector. We have also commenced a review of our systemic advocacy.

Our support and membership



This year RIA reaches a milestone of 15 years. We are currently planning a celebration later in the year and will be welcoming all members to join us. If you were a previous Board, staff member, volunteer or a member of RIA, it is important that you contact us to update your details. Please contact us on 4031 7377 or send an email to info@rightsinaction.org Membership is now due. If you are not a member, but would like to join, you can access a membership form from our website www.rightsinaction.org

We thank you for your continued support and look forward to catching up with everyone soon!

DriveAbility Driving Assessments

[DriveAbility](#) offers clients in Cairns and the Tablelands an option for Driving Assessments and lessons. Amanda has teamed up with Paul James from Howards Driving School who now has a modified vehicle available as well.

It is the only modified vehicle available in Cairns. Paul and Amanda are able to complete assessments for clients with cognitive or physical issues and have a number of vehicle modifications available, for example, spinner knobs, hand controlled acceleration, brake lever and left foot accelerator.

Paul is also available for ongoing Driver Rehabilitation and lessons.

The process for gaining a Drivers Licence is to first pass the Learner drivers test at the Department of Transport & Main Roads. Once you have your Learners Licence an assessment can be arranged followed by lessons.

The assessment takes approx. 3 hours and involves physical and cognitive testing with the Occupational Therapist followed by a 1 hour drive with the OT and Driving Instructor. A report then goes back to your Doctor who will notify the Department of Transport of the medical conditions and driving conditions for your licence.

The best way to book a Driving Assessment is to complete a referral form and email or fax it to Amanda with any other relevant medical information.

The referral forms are available on the Facebook page [DriveAbilityOT](#), or you can contact Amanda directly on 0438 658 188.



Paul and Amanda



Modified vehicle

Rights In Action [Staff](#)

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ADVOCATES

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Marlene Levasseur

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Qld Mental Health Commission

COMMISSIONER VIEWPOINT

[Budget](#) time every year provides us all with the opportunity to re-assess how effectively we are utilising existing funding—as well as look at what new opportunities arise to continue the reform agenda in the mental health, alcohol and other drug, and suicide prevention sectors.

In this context, I welcome the announcements in the Federal Budget related to mental health, AOD, and suicide prevention, and particularly the focus on older Australian's mental health.

However, additional funding is only one part of the reform equation. We, as a sector, have to continually check: are we delivering the right kinds of services, at the right time, in the right place? It is up to all of us to work together, guide reform and bring people along with us. Only then can we begin to create sustained and effective change.

This month we provided informational sessions to Parliamentarians on the Queensland mental health system; supported the bringing together of contemporary evidence and dialogue in the area of suicide prevention; continued to refine and develop the renewed Strategic Plan; closely monitored



New Improvements to Payments & Service Finder

[Payment](#) and Service Finder helps you find, estimate and compare payments. It can help you locate services, if you need some extra support.

Centrelink made it easier for you to use. You can now choose to search for either **Payments** or **Services**.

To use Payment Finder, answer some simple questions, like your age and income.

To use Service Finder, just tell us the state or territory you live in and the services you're searching for.

Based on your answers you'll get options to explore, or search again if you need to.

You can get to Payment and Service Finder from our [Home Page](#). Or, from your Centrelink online account through myGov.

We don't keep any of the information you enter.

[Read More](#)

the drug law reform occurring in Victoria and the ACT; and welcomed new members to the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council.

All this will assist us to keep improving the system in Queensland and ultimately produce better life outcomes for people living with mental illness and problematic alcohol and other drug use.

[Read more](#)

Article from eNEWS 2018

NDIA Announcement - Local Area Coordinators (LAC's) & Early Childhood Intervention (ECEI) Providers



[Mission](#) Australia is one of the local partners in the community in the delivery of the NDIS. They are delivering the Early Childhood Intervention (ECEI) and/or the Local Area Coordination (LAC) services from 1st July 2018 in Cairns.

Local Area Coordinators work with people with disability and their families. The LAC can help you understand and access the NDIS and link you to information and support in your community.

LACs have three key roles:

- Link you to the NDIS
- Link you to information and support in the community, and
- Work with your local community to make sure it is more welcoming and inclusive for people with disability.

If you are eligible for NDIS funded supports they can help you to:

- Create your first plan
- Put your NDIS plan into action
- Review your plan

[Read more](#)



CAIRNS COMMUNITY
LEGAL CENTRE INC

**For seniors concerned about:
Elder Abuse Mistreatment, or Financial Exploitation**

[The](#) team at the Cairns Community Legal Centre encourages enquiries from community members **who cannot otherwise afford legal advice**.

The Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) is part of the Cairns Community Legal Centre and provides free legal and social work support for Senior's. You may have worries around Centrelink; residential care (costs and charges); family problems, experiencing physical or psychological abuse; neglect or mistreatment; or your money may have been taken without your knowledge and/or consent. SLASS can also explain Wills, Powers of Attorney, Advanced Health Care Directives as well as many more areas that are relevant to Senior's.

Growing older can be distressing, frustrating and confusing at times.



The [rest](#) of Australia will soon be joining northern Queenslanders in getting a My Health Record created for them unless they choose not to have one.

The three month opt-out period will start nationally on 16 July 2018.

Currently, 5.7 million people currently have a My Health Record, with their important healthcare information available in one place.

Have you accessed your existing My Health Record yet? Visit myhealthrecord.gov.au today.

Media Release – My Health Record Opt Out Date Announced

More than five million Australians already have a My Health Record, which provides a summary of their key health information, delivering better health outcomes for patients and their treating doctors and specialists.

Every Australian will be offered a My Health Record unless they choose not to have one during the 3 month opt out period that will run from 16 July to 15 October 2018.

[Read More](#)
Article by e-newsletter

Sometimes mobility and cognition decreases, preventing us from being as independent as we used to be. You may need assistance with navigating My Aged Care (MAC) or the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) to access support at home, or you may need assistance in accessing Residential Care.

The SLASS team at Cairns Community Legal Centre can support and assist you through the processes, services and / or charges related to Aged Care. In addition to offering in-person (office) appointments with our solicitors and a social worker, the Centre offers home visits and to places such as retirement villages and hospitals.

The SLASS team can also provide community education talks for groups - for example in clubs, retirement villages, residential care facilities and libraries. These are informal sessions which provide Senior's and others, such as carers and their families, with the opportunity to ask questions about matters affecting Seniors, as well as providing information on how to access the Centre's services.

For an appointment please call 07 4031 7688 or 1800 062608

[Read more](#) about other legal services Cairns Community Legal Centre provide

Editorial & picture provided by Symone D'Avis Social Worker CCLC

Systemic Advocacy

[Rights](#) in Action primarily focuses on independent advocacy; working with people to achieve goals and make changes in their lives. We have received funding from the Department of Social Services for Systemic Advocacy. This is where larger, social change may occur.

In 2015, a Consultation Report: **Representation for people attending the Mental Health Review Tribunal was undertaken.** The Report identified a number of issues and provided recommendations that were considered in the review of the Mental Health Act 2016.

RIA has commenced a project that aims to:

- evaluate whether the recommendations in the report have increased attendance and representation at the Mental Health Review Tribunals.
- identify and discuss the implications of the new Mental Health Act 2016 on the recovery, health and wellbeing process.
- raise awareness and facilitate the recovery process of those under a Treatment Order by improving people's understanding of their rights, choices and access to supports within the mental health care system.
- identify and make further recommendations for the improvement of mental health policy and practice by recognising the value of those who have lived experience of mental illness their family, friends, carers and communities.

If you have any questions, feedback or comments, please contact our Advocate Zachary at Rights in Action on 4031 7377.



Understanding Decision Making Workshops

[Guardianship](#) and administration matters can be complicated. You may be asked to provide support for a person to make a decision, or to work with their



Ready to start budgeting?

Part of being independent means managing your cash so you spend less than you earn. This gives you spare cash so you can cover surprise expenses and save for something you want.

Following feedback from young people in Queensland, they have added a budget calculator to Sortli to help you work out where your money is going and how you can save more!

How Does it Work?

By entering your income and your different expenses in the app, you can work out what you're spending your money on and whether your income covers your expenses.

The different categories include –

- Home & Utilities
- Groceries
- Personal & Medical
- Entertainment & Dining
- Transport
- Health & Fitness
- Finance & Insurance
- Children's Expenses

You are able to nominate the payment frequency for each item – weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly or annually. Best of all, your data is saved safely online so you can access your information later. You can also see a full summary of your expenses and what percentage of your income goes to what expenses.

For more information call 1800 655 105

decision maker. This often requires a solid understanding of Supported Decision making, Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) documents, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) orders and working with decision makers.

ADA Australia offers individual and group based training sessions on "Understanding Decision Making" to help people understand the intricacies of guardianship and administration issues.

Our courses are designed to increase knowledge, build understanding and provide an informative overview of guardianship and administration matters. Previous participants have praised our training approach and course content for its relevance to workers in the aged care, disability, mental health, nursing, allied health, residential care and community sectors. Training typically address issues related to:

- Supported decision making and Substitute decision making, particularly for health matters
- How to access support when a person's decision making capacity is impaired or questioned, and when decision makers are not acting in a client's best interest
- Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) and Advanced Health Directive (AHD) documents, their powers, limits and how they relate to everyday decisions
- The roles of the statutory agencies: Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), Office of the Public Guardian and the Public Trustee

This workshop provides a comprehensive overview of guardianship and administration matters. It is best suited to workers who support people with questionable, impaired capacity

The key concept of capacity is addressed and how it relates to decision-making in aged care, disability, mental illness, and health. It is delivered in an interactive way, facilitating applied knowledge to common work practices and real life scenarios. Topics include:

- Exploring capacity and consent
- Understanding supported and substituted decision making for health, finance and personal matters
- Understanding Advance Health Directives
- Understanding Enduring Powers of Attorney; their role and the limits of their power
- Applying substituted decision making, guardianship and administration in real-life scenarios
- Understanding the role of the Public Trustee, Public Guardian, QCAT and tribunal hearings

This training provides workers with a crucial understanding of legal and ethical considerations to best support clients whose decision making capacity is substituted, diminished, or being questioned. It equips workers with the skills to ensure the rights of their clients are upheld and their choices protected. The course also covers how to make informed professional decisions and safeguard the client's rights and organisations through improved practice.

Workshops run from 9.00am to 3.30pm with Morning Tea and Lunch Provided
The cost of the workshop is \$165 (gst inc.) per person.

Upcoming Workshop 2018 -

Monday 9th July 2018

Atherton International Club, 60 Kennedy Highway, Atherton.

Tuesday 10th July 2018

Brother Leagues Club, 99-105 Anderson Street, Manunda

[Click here to Register](#)

Alzheimer's Signs Reversed in Mouse Study

[Researchers](#) have successfully reversed the formation of amyloid plaques in the brains of mice with Alzheimer's disease, thereby improving the animals' cognitive function.

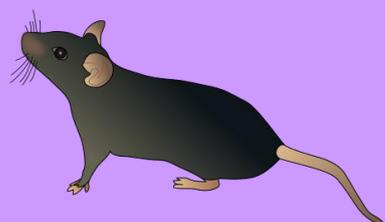
Investigators from the Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute discovered that gradually depleting an enzyme called BACE1 eliminates the plaques.

The study, which appears in the *Journal of Experimental Medicine*, raises hopes that drugs targeting this enzyme will be able to successfully treat Alzheimer's disease in humans. The vast majority of experimental treatments using a rodent model — whether for diabetes or [cancer](#) or Alzheimer's — fail to work in humans.

Research explain that one of the earliest events in Alzheimer's disease is an abnormal buildup of beta-amyloid peptide, which can form large, amyloid plaques in the brain and disrupt the function of neuronal synapses.

[Read more](#)

Article by Psych **Central** Newsletter



Intent to claim is stopping on 1 July 2018

[You](#) will no longer be able to submit intent to claim for certain payments and concession cards. New rules apply.

New Claims:

From 1 July 2018, you need to complete your claim in full before you can get a payment. This also applies to concession cards. You need to submit all supporting documents before Centrelink can start to process your claim.

If your claim's successful, you will get a payment or concession card issued from the date you submitted your complete claim. Centrelink will longer pay you from the date you started your claim or contacted Centrelink about the claiming.

Next Steps:

If you have already submitted intent to claim before 30 June 2018, complete your claim within 14 days.

Contact Centrelink to discuss your options if you can't get a document because it's outside of your control.

While you're finding out about the payments, keep in mind Centrelink will need all supporting documents to assess your claim. Start collecting this information now so it's faster to claim.

[Read More](#)

Update your iPhone software:

From July, Centrelink will no longer support iOS 7 on the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app.

[Read More](#)

Reasons to Live One More Day, Every Day

Stories of triumph from Australians who refused to give into darkness
By Jas Rawlinson

[Every](#) year in Australia, over 2500 people take their lives. Everyday, 8 Australians lose their battle with hope. With so many of our friends, family and colleagues succumbing to mental health disorders, how do we change the statistics? How do we give people hope where they feel there is none?

These were the stark questions that inspired Brisbane writer Jas Rawlinson (who battled suicidal thoughts and depression for much of her early life) to start her journey into the creation of 'Reasons to Live One More Day, Every Day'; to seek out those who knew the dark and ugly face of depression, anxiety and trauma, and had found a way to overcome it. To share their stories in the hope of inspiring and encouraging everyday Australians that there is always hope; no matter how dark things appear.

Featuring memoirs from everyday Australian figures (both prominent and lesser known) who have battled everything from childhood cancer, to debilitating disabilities, eating disorders, the death of a child, and more, every story is a reminder that suicide isn't the solution—there is always new life to be found.

Raw, powerful, and at times heart wrenching, 'Reasons to Live One More Day, Every Day,' includes stories of triumph from Australians such as L-Fresh The Lion (Australian Hip Hop Artist), Lauren Watson (Paraplegic Aerial Performer), Sonia Anderson (Domestic Violence & Red Rose Advocate), and Michael Crossland (Motivational speaker and author).

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

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



Reminder

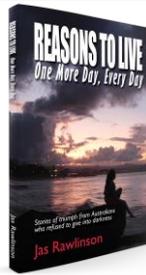
Please contact Mary on 40317377 if you do not want us to send you our Newsletter

DISCLAIMER:

Our Newsletter is a way to share information.

The information published is intended for general information only. RIA checks that information is factual however we are not responsible for any opinions or Articles provided by other services.

Information is not considered professional advice.



Endorsed by organisations like Success for Soldiers, and Lifeline, Reasons To Live One More Day has been reviewed by people all across Australia, and even the U.K!

This book is a must read for anyone who is looking for hope, inspiration, and honesty from those who have hit rock bottom, and found their way back out.

Biography

Jas Rawlinson is a Brisbane-based writer, freelance journalist and author. She is a passionate mental health advocate as well as the co-founder of Brisbane's first domestic violence memorial, and has had her work featured both nationally and internationally.



LEARN MORE & PURCHASE A COPY AT: www.jasrawlinson.com

oneplace

Community Services Directory

Oneplace is a family community services directory to help you find the right support in your local area.

<https://www.oneplace.org.au/>

Coming Soon.....

Disability Action Week

Disability Action Week will be held from **9–15 September 2018**. Disability Action Week is held annually in September with the aim of empowering people with disability, raising awareness of disability issues, and improving access and inclusion throughout the wider community.

RIA will be planning an event to acknowledge the important people who make a difference in the lives of people with disability. We will be asking people with disability for nominations, and hosting a presentation At the Cairns Council Reception Rooms on Monday 10 September 2018.



Rights in Action will be closed on Cairns Show Day 20th July 2018