



# RIGHTS IN ACTION INC

*Independent advocacy for people with disabilities*

## NEWSLETTER

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**September 2018 – Issue 48**

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### **Message from the Senior Advocate**

Welcome to the September and 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition of our Newsletter. Rights In Action was established in 2003 through a funding grant from the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services to provide Individual Advocacy for People with Disabilities in Cairns and Yarrabah. Over the last 15 years RIA has grown from 3 staff to 7.

Our programs have expanded to include Systemic (Social) Advocacy and NDIS Appeals. Our area of coverage has grown and now covers Cairns, Yarrabah the Atherton Tablelands and Douglas Shire (NDIS Appeals only). This growth has occurred through strong support from people of all abilities in our community, who value the Rights of People with Disabilities to live a life, free from exploitation, abuse and neglect.

On Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2018, we celebrated our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by holding a function at the Salt House to say Thank You to all those who supported the establishment of RIA and supported us over the years to help People with Disabilities get a fair go. Those dozens of people who volunteered their time on the RIA Management Committee to ensure we had robust governance policies and procedures in place and those who worked for us to promote and protect the Rights of People with Disabilities in our Community. There has also been many who have volunteered their time to assist on Special Projects and Systemic Advocacy Campaigns.

The Keynote Speaker was Carlee Beattie, who grew up in Cairns and became an Australian Paralympic women's long jump champion. She has medalled at many World events, including silver at the 2012 Summer Paralympics, gold at the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in the Women's Long Jump and represented Australia at the 2016 Rio Paralympics. In 2013 Ms Beattie held the World Long Jump Record for women of all abilities. She is a proud RIA member and holds seats in the IOC and AIC. It was great to hear how with hard work and perseverance she reached the pinnacle in her chosen sports.

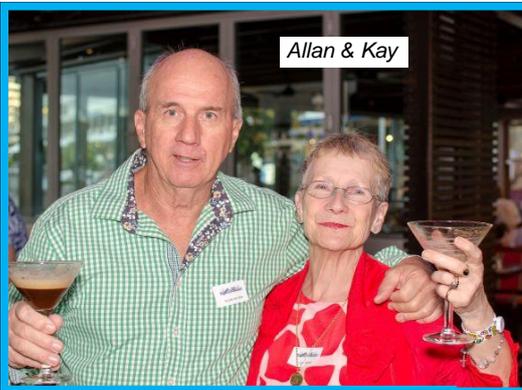
Over 70 Members, Supporters and Guests, along with past and present Management Committee Members and Staff attended the Celebration.

James Barnes, RIA President acknowledged our Life Members, Jan Corcoran OA, Sue Tomasich, Rob Pyne, Gill Townsend and Vina Duplock, all of whom made a significant contribution to the establishment and success of the organisation. He also thanked our major sponsor for the night, ISP Fish Markets who supplied a wonderful array of Seafood for those who attended, The Salt House and the 10 other local companies who supplied prizes for raffles later in the evening.

A great night was had by all. Here are some snaps of the celebrations!

**Bob Paten**





Allan & Kay



Dorothy



Robyn, Dianne, Kirrily & Gaynor



Jackson & Jack



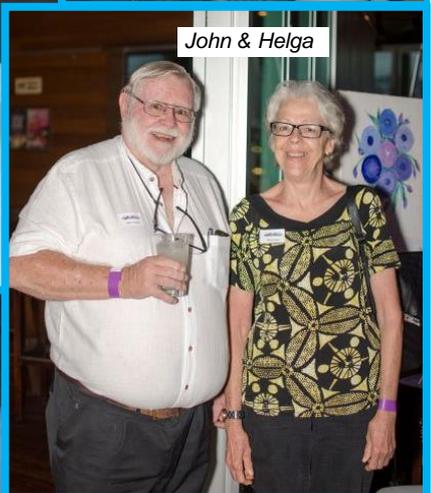
Bernadette, Zachary, Christine & Peter



Carlee & Damian



George & Ted



John & Helga



Kimmy & David



Robyn, Vina & Ruth



Jane, Marlene & Mike



Lyndsey & Allan



Sarah, Lyn, Grant & Tania



Mary & Suzie



Gabrielle, Mellise & Aileen



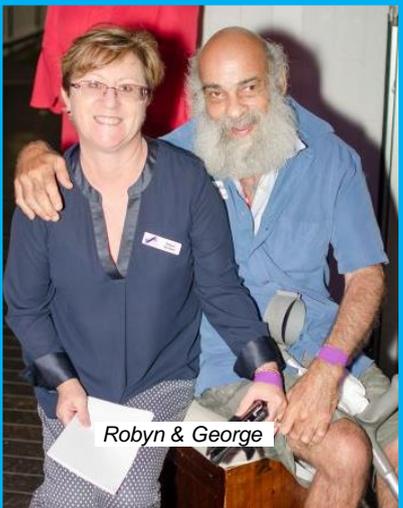
Harry, Karen & Nita



Julie, Giselle, Ben & Iain



Ted, Zachary & Sean



Robyn & George



Suzie & James



Carlee & John



Mellise, Ingrid, Gabrielle & Aileen



Anna & Gill



Carlee & Jan



## Rights In Action

### Staff

#### MANAGER

**Robyn Renton**

#### SENIOR ADVOCATE

**Bob Paten**

#### ADVOCATES

**Dianne Wellington  
Marlene Levasseur  
Zachary Tonkin**

#### ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

**Mary Klanssek**

#### FINANCE OFFICER

**Ted Barber**

## RIA Board of Management 2017/18

#### PRESIDENT

**James Barnes**

#### VICE PRESIDENT

**Jane Simpson**

#### SECRETARY

**Bernadette Dimla**

#### TREASURER

**Allan Wilson**

#### GENERAL MEMBERS

**Jan Corcoran**



*Left to Right: Dianne Wellington, Advocate - Rights In Action with Lawyer Rebecca Grouios and Manager Hayley Grainger from NQ Women's Legal Service in Cairns.*

## Advocacy for Justice & Human Rights

In August 2018, Rights In Action Inc. presented NQ Women's Legal Service Cairns with a Certificate of Appreciation to acknowledge their exceptional legal representation for women experiencing domestic violence including women with disabilities.

NQWLS Cairns is a community based legal service developed and operated by women for women residing in North Queensland. The service offers assistance in areas of law which primarily affect women including family law, domestic violence and child protection. Monthly Outreach Services are provided to Atherton, Mareeba, Innisfail, Mossman, Port Douglas. NQWLS key services include casework, representation, community legal education, legal advice, information and referrals. Service delivery is by booked appointments or phone advice.

**Tel:** (07) 4033 5825

**Website:** <http://www.nqwls.com.au> **Email:** [cairns@nqwls.com.au](mailto:cairns@nqwls.com.au)

**Street address:** Suite 4, Level 1, 88 Abbott Street, Cairns QLD 4870

**Mailing address:** P O Box 2542 CAIRNS QLD 4870

#### **Hours & appointment times:**

Office Hours – Cairns - Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm

Telephone Advice Times

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9:00am to 1:00pm

Pre-booked Appointment Times - Monday to Thursday



#### **Advanced Personnel Management**

The Professional House, where Rights In Action is located, is set to become a social services hub of government and non-government services for the community. Current services include health, mental health, disability advocacy and a women's legal centre. The Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service has moved in.

Last month APM joined this hub of services to deliver the Parents Next program on behalf of the Australian Government in Queensland.

# NQ Connect



The [service](#), called NQ Connect, provides free and safe online and phone counselling and support for anyone aged 15 years and older who is feeling the pressures of everyday life.

The service has a team of professionally trained counsellors available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to confidentially listen to an individual's concerns, and provide support and assistance to develop coping strategies.

They can help you with any of your concerns, stresses or worries. Also help you with anger management, anxiety, depression, grief, loneliness, relationship problems, suicidal thoughts, work stress and more.

You can call the helpline number 1300 059 625 at any time to speak to a counsellor.

Phone and [online counselling](#) is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Karla McLeod from APM explained how the ParentsNext program works..

"The ParentsNext program helps parents with the skills and assistance they may need to get a job after motherhood. Mothers are usually referred to us through Centrelink when their child is six months of age and they are on parenting payments. Their participation continues until the child is six years of age."

"It is a pre-employment program to upskill and keep mothers 'job-ready'. This may require linking them with training organisations or creating employment opportunities, while also trying to address wider barriers to their engagement in the program".

Participants meet regularly with APM to develop a tailored Participation Plan and complete activities to help prepare them for employment.

APM helps participants to identify the type of job that will work best for them and will assist them to achieve their goals for education and employment. They will also connect you with other services and support when you need it.

This may include health, education, childcare, housing and connecting with other parents local to you.

For more information about APM call 1800 276 276 or visit [ParentsNext](#)

*Editorial written by Zachary Tonkin & Information provide by Karla McLeod Parent & Family Pathway*

## URGENT NEED FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN RURAL & REMOTE AREAS

[Young](#) people living in regional and remote Australia are being let down by a lack of support services to tackle their mental health needs, a new report released by ReachOut and Mission Australia revealed today.

Almost one in four young people in regional and remote Australia had a probable serious mental health illness according to Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2016.

While the prevalence of mental health disorders is similar for people living in and outside of a major city, research has shown the risk of suicide rises as distance from a major city increases. This indicates that young people living in regional and remote areas may be exposed to a unique set of structural, economic and social factors that result in poorer mental health outcomes.

Mission Australia's CEO James Tooney said: "Mental health concerns know no geographical or cultural boundaries; however, the provision of service does. Research shows that young people in regional and remote communities struggle to access the same level of support services as young people in urban areas.

[Read more](#)

*Published by Mission Australia*



Queensland  
Mental Health  
Week

6th - 14th October 2018

## Get SMS messages to help remind you to report your income

To get a [reminder](#) from Centrelink, you'll need to have a mobile phone and subscribe to the Electronic Messaging Service.

This will make it easier for you to manage your payment.

You can subscribe to the Electronic Messaging Service using:

Your Centrelink online account through my Gov, or  
The Express Plus Centrelink mobile app

If you have already got a reminder from Centrelink, don't worry. It's not a scam.

The message from Centrelink will include:

- Your name
- Your contact details
- Links to websites

Centrelink does not track the SMS service. So please don't reply.

## Jokes ...

Q. Why was 6 afraid of 7?

A. Because 7 8 9

Q. What did the fish say when it swam into a wall?

A. Dam!

Q. Why are ghosts such bad liars?

A. Because you can see right through them

## New campaign urges northern Queenslanders to consider other health care options rather than the ED

### The Emergency Department shouldn't always be your first option

New [campaign](#) urges northern Queenslanders to consider other health care options.

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) this week launched a major new behaviour change campaign in Cairns, Mackay, and Townsville which aims to help people consider healthcare options other than Emergency Departments (EDs) as their first choice.

The campaign aims to reduce ED presentations across the NQPHN region for non-urgent and non-life-threatening situations using an educational approach to increase people's understanding of the full range of primary healthcare services available to them.

The campaign, being rolled out across the Cairns, Townsville, and Mackay regions, directs people to the Sick After Hours website where they can:

- access the Health Direct online symptom-checker
- phone 13 HEALTH
- find a GP using the National Health Service Directory
- plan for the next time someone in their household needs medical help and advice.

[Read More](#)



[Following](#) the recommendations from the Independent Pricing Review, the NDIA has released the first set of changes in the [NDIS 2018/2019 Price Guide](#), which come into effect from **July 1, 2018**.

Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt announced the Australian Government is investing \$3.2 million in a new pilot project to improve the treatment and care of people with eating disorders

Support Act has officially launched "Wellbeing Helpline", a service to assist local musicians and those who work within the industry with their mental health.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially classified gaming addiction as a mental health disorder. The WHO's announcement has been praised and criticised by different psychologists and researchers working in gaming addiction.

These changes are the first step of 25 recommendations that came from the Independent Pricing Review to ensure that both participants and providers have an effective and sustainable NDIS

**Information provided by Kris Trott  
Chief Executive Officer  
Queensland Alliance for Mental Health**

# Ryan's Rule

Queensland Health

For all patients, families and carers

[Ryan's Rule](#) assists you to get help when you are concerned about a patient in hospital who is getting worse or not improving.

Follow these steps to raise your concerns.

1. Talk to a nurse or doctor about your concerns  
*If you are not satisfied with the response*
2. Talk to the nurse in charge of the shift  
*If you are not satisfied with the response*
3. Phone 13 HEALTH (13432584) or ask a nurse and they will call on your behalf

Request a Ryan's Rule Clinical Review and provide the following information: -

- Hospital name
- Patient's name
- Ward, bed number (if known)
- Contact phone number

A Ryan's Rule nurse or doctor will review the patient and assist.



## Ryan's Story

Ryan Saunders, *pictured above*, was nearly three years old when he tragically died in hospital. His death was found to be in all likelihood preventable. Staff did not know Ryan as well as his mum and dad knew him. When Ryan's parents were worried he was getting worse they didn't feel their concerns were acted on in time.

Ryan's Rule has been developed to provide patients of any age, families and carers with another way to get help.

**Please note – Ryan's Rule is not for reporting complaints.**



## The emotional & practical considerations for succession planning & the NDIS

[Planning](#) for a time when you are no longer able to be a primary carer can be an emotional and stressful experience. However, starting the conversation about when you are no longer there to support the person you care for can provide both of you with peace of mind.

To assist, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) can provide additional support staff within an NDIS plan to support family wellbeing. By submitting a Carers Statement at the planning meeting, you can highlight the personal impact of your caring role. For example, you may wish to return to work or study, take a holiday, go travelling or disclose an illness, all of which would reduce your capacity to continue caring. [Continue Reading](#)

There are some online tools available for parents, carers and people with disability which provide information and templates to help you and the person you care for tell your story and share information about your needs with other

Just a reminder...



Membership fees are a small contribution of \$5.00 per year or \$20 for 5 years. However, we do accept more generous financial donations.

Membership benefits include:

You receive our quarterly Newsletter that provides current information on local services, systemic issues and campaigns, changes to government legislation, social events and activities.

You can contribute to the direction of our organisation by attending meetings and providing your views and feedback that is welcomed and valued.

Financial members are encouraged to nominate as a Board member at our annual general meeting. Any member who introduces new members to RIA will receive one-year free membership for themselves.

We hope you will join us and become involved.

## 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**

#### **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.*

appropriate contacts.

[My Health Record](#) and [Know Me](#)

(Please note the Know Me website is current undergoing a significant upgrade. Please contact Tascare on 62728265 or email [eo@tascare.org.au](mailto:eo@tascare.org.au) if you require assistance.

There are a range of financial and legal requirements that need to be considered regarding succession planning. For further information please visit <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/> , and click on NDIS & Carers, and then helpful-resources.

## New Services for Carers

The [Australian](#) Government is investing an additional \$85.6 million to roll out a range of new early-intervention services for Australia's 2.7 million unpaid carers.

Getting help early can make a big difference to a carer's life. From October 2018, carers will benefit from a range of new services and supports to help manage daily challenges, reduce stress and plan for the future.

### What is changing?

The Australian Government will introduce a range of new tailored supports and services for carers set to benefit anyone looking after a person with disability, mental illness, chronic condition, or an older person requiring support.

To fund the new services for carers, the Australian Government will introduce a \$250,000 family income test threshold to the Carer Allowance payment from 20 September 2018. The income test also applies to Carer Allowance Health Care Cards.

This brings Carer Allowance in line with other welfare payments including Carer Payment, which includes an income test. This change will only affect one per cent of Carer Allowance recipients.

[Read More](#)

### What is Carer Gateway?

The national online and telephone service [Carer Gateway](#) was launched on 14 December 2015 to make it easier for carers to find information, practical advice and services to support them in their caring role.

Carer Gateway has already connected over half a million carers with practical advice and information.

Carers can contact Carer Gateway by visiting the website or calling the 1800 422 737 phone number, Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm.

For more information visit the [Department of Social Services](#) website.

## Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 16th October at 5.00pm



**RYDGES**

PLAZA • CAIRNS

**LILLO Restaurant & Bar**

**Cnr Spence & Grafton Street**