CALL FOR PAPERS

DisAbility & Rehabilitation Professionals’ Association
3rd State Conference
Health and Disabilities – Issues and Strategies for Change
16th - 17th July 2007

dArpa will accept conference presentations on any of the following themes and will accept papers on any other themes related to health and people with disabilities.

CONFERENCE THEMES

- Health issues that affect the quality of life of people with disabilities
- Health issues and community inclusion
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
- The effects of ageing on the health of people with disabilities
- Medication use and people with a disability
- Complementary therapies and people with disabilities
- The health education needs of workers supporting people with disabilities
- Generic health professionals/allied health professionals and their understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.
- Multiple Chemical Sensitivities
- Diet and implications for people with disabilities
- Leisure, recreation, and lifestyle issues for people with disabilities
- Sexual health
- Ethics and health care for people with disabilities

ABSTRACTS must be submitted by 10th April, 2007 to:
Jenny Loveder, Dept of Disability Studies, Flinders University, Sturt Rd, Bedford Park, SA, 5042.
Email: jenny.loveder@flinders.edu.au  Phone: 08 82013745; Fax: 08 82013646
See dArpa website for more information including abstract format or contact Brian Matthews via email: brian.matthews@flinders.edu.au

Consumers of disability services are strongly encouraged to present. All Presenters are invited to attend the Conference as our guest (no cost) on the day of the presentation.
About dArpa...
The DisAbility and Rehabilitation Professionals' Association (dArpa) was formed to provide a focus for Disability and Rehabilitation Professionals in Australia. dArpa’s aim is to gain a higher profile in the community for qualified professionals who work in the areas of disability and rehabilitation and seeks to promote Disability and Rehabilitation Professionals as a credible and respected group who are uniquely placed to design, implement, manage and evaluate a wide range of services for people, families and organisations.

dArpa membership is open to anyone with a tertiary degree in Disability or Rehabilitation Studies, or an allied discipline. dArpa encourages membership from a range of professionals who are engaged in work in the disability and rehabilitation fields, including Disability Studies, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Psychology, Rehabilitation, Recreation, Social Work, Special Education, Speech Pathology, & any other relevant disciplines.

dArpa Associate Membership is also available to students in a relevant human services or related area, people working in the field who may or may not have relevant TAFE qualifications, and any other persons the committee deems appropriate (eg consumers or potential consumers of services, interested family members)

dArpa in 2007/08
2007/08 is looking at being an exciting year with many exciting projects underway:

• dArpa is holding its 3rd state conference in July 2007.

• dArpa is currently in discussion with other associations and agencies regarding ways to strengthen relationships with Disability professionals and groups in other states of Australia. This will benefit dArpa members by providing more opportunities and increasing networks with disability professionals in other states.

• dArpa is looking at holding more events and workshops than ever before.

• dArpa Newsletters will become more regular now that we have a new Newsletter Editor.

• And as always we have our informative website keeping you up to date on latest events, job information and much more.

Join the dArpa committee

dArpa needs a strong membership group and a strong, dedicated committee to make these events and goals happen. Due to other commitments, some of our long term dArpa committee members have recently resigned. We are therefore looking for new, enthusiastic, dedicated people to join the committee.

The dArpa committee meets once a month. Meetings usually only last a few hours. Being a committee member has many benefits including the opportunity to keep abreast of current movements in the disability field, great opportunity for networking and meeting other people, personal development, looks great on resumes and many more…

Interested? If so, please contact Brian Matthews (dArpa Chairman) via email brian.matthews@flinders.edu.au. Consider this, is someone from your organisation on the committee? What if someone from every organisation met once a month, discussed current issues and trends, disability professionals would be quite a force. Imagine the possibilities!
Active Support is coming to an agency near you...

Active Support is an approach that has been used in England, Wales and Australia to promote learning and engagement in people with a range of severe physical and/or intellectual disabilities. CARA (Community Accommodation and Respite Association) and Leveda have recently organised full day workshops for staff and an open overview of the approach was presented by Keith McVilley in an evening seminar co-sponsored by ASSID SA and Leveda.


This model and the processes used build on the extensive research that has been conducted over the last 25 years on support strategies for people with disabilities and the approach has been shown to improve engagement and quality of life for people with severe disabilities. Watch the dArpa newsletter and other disability related publications for more news on this useful development in the field.

Makaton SA has been resurrected!

There has been some confusion over keyword signing practices over the years but this confusion has now been resolved for sometime in most other states of Australia. Keyword signing is a practice that initially limits the number of concepts a person has to learn and encourages the communication of functional concepts through signing. The signing system used in Australia is AUSLAN (Australasian Sign Language) and in 2001 the Makaton Vocabulary was formally aligned with AUSLAN and produced in book form. Makaton is a vocabulary that was originally developed in the UK by Margaret Walker and the use of the vocabulary with signing has become common in Australia over the last 20 years (see the Makaton Australia website at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/sed/makaton/)

Novita has provided courses in key-word signing over a number of years since the previous Makaton SA group wound down due to changes in circumstances of many presenters and some confusion over copyright issues related to Makaton. However, recently, due to the hard work of Speech pathologists from Novita, Makaton Presenter training has been provided by experienced Presenters from Victoria and New South Wales to a substantial group of professionals working in the disability field (still mainly speech pathologists). Subsequently a Makaton SA committee is soon to be re-formed. As a consequence, agencies will be invited to submit requests for Makaton workshops and further information about this will be provided soon (please feel free to forward requests to Brian.Matthews@flinders.edu.au and he will see that these are ‘put into the system’). It will be important, over time, to encourage professionals from a range of relevant disciplines to become involved in Makaton Presenter Training so that the workshops can be “spread around” and so that the background and expertise of Presenters can be more easily matched to the agency or group requesting the workshop.

If you are interested in becoming a Makaton Presenter please let Brian Matthews know and he will add you to the list of interested persons for future training events...
Some great news...

HEALTH CHECK TO BENEFIT PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES (Recent Media Release)

A new Medicare rebate for people with an intellectual disability who have an annual health assessment is to be introduced by the Australian Government. The Assistant Minister for Health and Ageing, Christopher Pyne, said the new item recognised that people with an intellectual disability had complex health needs that were difficult to adequately assess because of the patient’s inability to recognise and communicate symptoms.

Mr Pyne said there were an estimated 80,000 Australians with an intellectual disability who would be eligible under the new item, at a cost of around $11 million over four years. "Current GP items available under Medicare do not allow sufficient time for the complex needs of people with an intellectual disability," he said. "As a result, evidence suggests that around 40 per cent of medical conditions remain undiagnosed and that only half of the diagnosed conditions are appropriately treated.

"The new Medicare item will provide a structured clinical framework for GPs to assess a patient’s overall health and plan for their long term care. "The item will allow GPs to spend extra time with intellectually disabled patients that will result in a more comprehensive care plan involving the GP and other allied health professionals to prevent the onset of chronic disease. "The new item is expected to be available to patients in July 2007," Mr Pyne said.

Got Something Interesting to share?

dArpa will happily include any interesting articles, news or events and projects relating to Disability. We are also happy to advertise upcoming conferences and workshops. Disability agencies are invited to submit information about events and projects occurring within their organizations. This is a great opportunity to advertise yourselves and what you do. We will also publish any upcoming jobs within your organisation.

If you have something interesting to share and would like it published in the dArpa newsletter please contact Brian Matthews (dArpa Chairman) at brian.matthews@flinders.edu.au or Melissa Flanagan (dArpa Newsletter Editor) at melissamcphail@optusnet.com.au.

Newsletter deadlines for 2007:
25th May 2007 for June Newsletter
24th August 2007 for September Newsletter
23rd November 2007 for December Newsletter

dArpa membership is still only $40 per year for full members!

Agency membership is only $60 per year!

Associate Membership only $20 per year!

Join Now!

Considering holding a workshop or conference?

dArpa will sponsor and assist in the coordinating and running of any workshops and conferences you may be considering holding.

Just let us know!

Upcoming Events...

2-3rd April 2007 NDS 2007 Ageing and Disability Conference
10th April 2007 Submission of Abstracts to dArpa 3rd State Conference close. Don’t delay, submit now!
19-20th April 2007 Intimacy and Sexuality in Asperger Syndrome
24-25th May 2007 CP Australia 2007 National Conference “Thinking outside the Chair”
16-17th July 2007 dArpa 3rd State Conference “Health and Disabilities – Issues and Strategies for Change”, Flinders University, Bedford Park, SA
September 2007 Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine—Annual National Conference “Sex, drugs and Rock n Roll”

5-8th November 2007 42nd Australasian ASSID Conference