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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Update from the Commissioner | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Welcome to our first newsletter for the year. I’m pleased to let you know that we are well and truly back in the swing of things for 2025.  We were thrilled to once again sponsor the VALID Having a Say Conference in Geelong and spread the message that people with all types of intellectual disability are able to come to us with complaints and concerns about disability workers. It was great to meet so many people from across the disability sector, chat about the work we do and the importance of feeling safe and empowered with your disability worker and service.  I also had the pleasure of participating in our ‘What does quality support mean to you?’ workshop alongside Jen Jackson-Hall, the Disability Services Commissioner. It was a fantastic opportunity for participants to share examples of great support from a disability worker and what has made them feel happy, safe and respected. We've got some photos and more information about our time at the conference below.  The Commission team, the Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria and I are looking forward to meeting with many of you throughout the year to work together on continuing to build a safer, stronger disability sector in Victoria. | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Upcoming events | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **School issues: where to go for help webinar**  If your child is having issues at school, it can be very stressful, but raising a concern can help address these issues and improve the situation.  To explain what help can be provided to families, the Association for Children with Disability (ACD) is hosting a free webinar on Wednesday 26 February at 7.30pm which will feature the following speakers:   * Dan Stubbs, the Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner * Liana Buchanan, Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People * Frank Handy, Chair of the Independent Office for School Dispute Resolution * Karen Dimmock, CEO, ACD   We'll discuss the types of concerns you can raise, what help is available, and how to work with the school for a better outcome for your child.   This is a unique opportunity to gain valuable information and not to be missed!  To register for your free ticket visit [https://bit.ly/SchoolFeb25](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/bit.ly/SchoolFeb25__;!!C5rN6bSF!FCqvp52gbU_VLhp1yHe5K9YScoQW0oyGpdl0pPlCfdYye0OX4HeqdNvg3sHTGbeJNHUTLRBprokD9-9CMhKZn5CF9g$) | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Out and about | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **VALID Having a Say Conference 2025**  The Victorian Disability Worker Commission was proud to sponsor the 2025 VALID Having a Say Conference. VALID is the peak body for intellectual disability and it was great to interact with so many people from right across the disability sector. There were more than 500 attendees across the three days and over 50 organisations exhibiting and/or sponsoring, including disability service providers, peak bodies, government and community organisations.  Highlights included:   * Commissioner Dan Stubbs delivering the keynote speech during the opening ceremony where he spoke about how quality support means respect and participation for people with disability and that quality disability workers support people with disability to be able to participate more fully in the community. * Our 'What does quality support mean to you?’ workshop. Delivered in conjunction with the Disability Services Commissioner, we were joined by 30 participants and talked about the importance of great support from a disability worker. Some of the key themes we heard from participants included being listened to, their decisions being respected and being supported to reach their goals. Check out the illustration below to see more insights from the workshop. * Most importantly, the valuable conversations we had at our booth, with people with disability, support workers, carers and others from across the sector about supporting safety and quality in the disability sector. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Five VDWC staff member smiling at our booth. | | | |  | | --- | | Commissioner Dan Stubbs on stage delivering his keynote speech. |  |  | | --- | | The team hosting our'What does quality support mean to you?" workshop. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [A multi coloured illustration showing what makes a great disability support worker. Includes feeling happy when feeling welcomed, when being supported to reach goals, when with friends & family and when helping others. Feeling respected when being listened to, when decisions are respected, when good communication is used and when the plan is known. Feeling safe when triggers are understood, when there is a plan, when workers are skilled and qualified and when being included.](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/mcusercontent.com/232a0a9d44abb1b0358bac209/files/9e618281-65ea-f1d0-93b0-b03adbbf6115/What_Makes_A_Great_Disability_Support_Worker_Less_Detailed.pdf__;!!C5rN6bSF!AXfG4vgyOVrwZQzwGxF0hFoIdeusSgWIipF_pmQwezIwlSE1NQG8p3LNB1JcIpkOiDq3s5pI687JK8ixnKvJWFAvdp8Vn4pm$) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Image descriptions: Image 1 - Commission staff smiling at the VDWC booth. Image 2 - Commissioner Dan Stubbs on stage giving his keynote speech. Image 3 - Commission staff in a room with participants for our 'What does quality support mean to you?' workshop. Image 4 - A multi coloured illustration showing what makes a great disability support worker. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Midsumma Pride March 2025**  The 2025 Midsumma Pride March was a wonderful celebration of diversity, inclusion and community. Commissioner Dan Stubbs and Commission staff were proud to march alongside People with Disability Australia and the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Pride Network, in support of LGBTQIA+ people with disability and disability workers.   It was great to see such strong participation and support again this year. The Commission remains committed to supporting the rights of the LGBTQIA+ disability community and encourages anyone who has concerns about their disability worker to contact us via our [online form](https://portal.vdwc.vic.gov.au/public/home) or to call us on 1800 497 132. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Vic DFFH Pride in our future banner: Delivering LGBTIQ+ equality for all Victorians slogan – colourful photo with all looking happy – Some of the people featured left to right are: Nathan Chapman, Cath Watkins, Kevin Veale, Anne Congleton, Argiri Alisandratos, Penelope Steuart, Bek Pasqualia. | | | |  | | --- | | Commissioner Dan Stubbs featured with President of People With a Disability Australia (PWDA) – Trinity Ford |  |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Image descriptions: Image 1 - DFFH and VDWC staff smiling and holding a colour banner at the march. Image 2 - Commissioner Dan Stubbs and President of People with Disability Australia, Trinity Ford. Image 3 - Commissioner Dan Stubbs with a People with Disability Australia staff member. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Hearing from Aboriginal community members**  The Commission is committed to building relationships with Victoria’s Aboriginal community. We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are more likely to be living with disability than other Australians and we want to ensure that everyone receives safe, quality disability services. We also recognise that for Aboriginal people with disability, engaging with services such as our complaint service, can be difficult.   We are working to build a more culturally safe organisation to better serve all Victorians. As part of this work, Commission representatives, joined by Deaf Indigenous Community Consulting and Karabena Consulting recently visited Geelong, Wyndham Vale and Bendigo to meet with community members, advocates and disability support workers to learn more about the experiences of Indigenous communities when using disability support or working in the sector, and how the Commission can better support First Nations communities.  Participants highlighted the importance of cultural safety, collaboration between agencies, and clear accountability, with a strong focus on listening to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.  Community members obtained lots of information to share. We are committed to continuing to build partnerships and engagement in 2025. | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In the media | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Helping you choose a quality disability worker**  The Victorian Disability Worker Commission recently featured in Link Disability Magazine discussing what makes a quality disability worker and the importance of feeling safe, respected  and empowered when using disability services.  Disability workers who are registered with the VDWC have been assessed on their background, qualifications, experience and skills, so you can rest assured knowing they have the right attributes for safe practice.   Read all about it on pages 40-41 [here](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/issuu.com/theintermediagroup/docs/link_magazine_february_march_2025__;!!C5rN6bSF!AXfG4vgyOVrwZQzwGxF0hFoIdeusSgWIipF_pmQwezIwlSE1NQG8p3LNB1JcIpkOiDq3s5pI687JK8ixnKvJWFAvdmDDrb0P$). | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Resources and Support | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Training and Development Catalogue** To support professional development, the VDWC and the Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria have created a Training and Development Catalogue to assist disability workers with building their knowledge and skills to work safely and competently.  The catalogue contains over 200 training courses, resources and activities across a wide variety of specialty types, delivery methods and skill levels. It provides disability workers with a single resource to search and connect with appropriate training, and the ability to filter to specific topics or areas of interest.   Access the catalogue [here](https://www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/courses-overview). | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Human Rights Solutions, a new consultancy service offered by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission** Human Rights Solutions brings the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's 40 years of expertise in addressing systemic issues and building capabilities for enduring change, to the private sector. Human Rights Solutions enables the private sector to engage the Commission to help them navigate human rights complexities, ensuring safe, fair, and inclusive workplaces with high standards of integrity and transparency.  To learn more [click here](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/mcusercontent.com/232a0a9d44abb1b0358bac209/files/f66cf34f-6cf9-f73c-d1f7-0a91753e3be3/VEOHRC_Human_Rights_Solutions_prospectus_Accessible.docx__;!!C5rN6bSF!AXfG4vgyOVrwZQzwGxF0hFoIdeusSgWIipF_pmQwezIwlSE1NQG8p3LNB1JcIpkOiDq3s5pI687JK8ixnKvJWFAvduiCabDt$). | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Become a registered worker | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Have you been thinking about becoming a registered disability worker?**  If you're unsure why registration is so important for people with disability and the wider sector, [click here](https://www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-07/Registration%20case%20studies.pdf) to read some of our registered worker's stories.  Registration is currently free and shows you're committed to raising the quality of the disability workforce and delivering safe, respectful services.  Through registration, the VDWC seeks to increase safeguards across the entire disability sector, creating better choices for people with disability.   To learn more about registration visit [vdwc.vic.gov.au/registration](http://vdwc.vic.gov.au/registration) | | | |
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