



This is a Summary of the 2006-2007 Annual Report. For a copy of the full report, please check our website or call us and ask for a copy.

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Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW Annual Report 2006-2007 Summary

Chairperson's Report



2006-7 began with a bang!

All our expertise and organisational skills were put to the test when MDAA and NEDA co-hosted an international conference at Homebush Bay over two days in September 2006. *'From tolerance to respect: cultural competence in practice'* attracted over 250 participants, speakers and presenters from all over Australia, and speakers from New Zealand, South Africa and the USA.

As soon as the conference was over we moved straight into organising MDAA's 10th birthday celebrations. We combined the celebrations with the annual general meeting in December 2006 and it was great to see old friends and colleagues from the early days of MDAA, to remember old times and talk about how far we have travelled since then.

As accommodation has been the main issue needing individual advocacy for ten years in a row, MDAA co-hosted a one day conference with Shelter NSW on *'Housing and support for people with disability: good news stories and new directions'* in May 2007.

We also did lots of training in cultural and disability awareness for NSW and Commonwealth government and non-government agencies.

'Advocacy in Action', our advocacy development project for people with disability in rural and regional NSW, also worked in several communities across NSW.

We continued to work in close partnership with other organisations to make sure people from non-English speaking backgrounds with disability have fair access to programs and services and a better quality of life in the community. It is my pleasure to present this report.

Milanka Zivanovic



Finding the right housing and support

Mariam's 11 year old son Leo has several disabilities. She applied for public housing over 10 years ago and got emergency accommodation until a suitable house became available.

Mariam recently heard a woman on Arabic radio tell her story and how MDAA had helped her. Mariam contacted MDAA and asked for help to get public housing.

The Department gave Mariam special assistance to rent private housing that meets Leo's needs. They found a suitable house and are waiting for repairs to be done before they move in.



Who is MDAA?

The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW (MDAA) is the peak body in NSW for people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) with disability and their families and carers.

MDAA is the only advocacy service in NSW specifically for people from NESB with disability, their families and carers.

MDAA aims to promote, protect and secure the rights and interests of people from NESB with disability and their families and carers in NSW.

Our functions

MDAA has five main functions:

- Individual advocacy
- Systemic advocacy
- Advocacy development
- Industry development
- Education, training, research and providing information



Our main priorities

- Individual Advocacy and Advocacy Development
- Social Change and Research
- Industry Development and mdaa cultural abilities
- Organisational Autonomy, Grassroots Links and Alliances

Individual Advocacy

We help people to stand up for their rights, for example, when people have problems with housing, health, immigration, school, work or disability services. We do this for people from NESB with all types of disability and their families and carers across NSW through our offices in Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and Griffith.

We also provide advocacy services for all people with disability living in Sydney and Sydney's inner west. This service, City Inner West Disability Advocacy (CIWDA), has two Individual Advocates and is in the same office as the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability at Surry Hills.

In 2006-7 we supported 418 people with all types of disability (intellectual, sensory, physical, psychiatric, brain injury, etc):

- 171 were new consumers, 247 were ongoing and we also closed 205 consumer files
- most consumers were between 30 and 59 years of age
- over 65% of the consumers were born in a non-English speaking country; 91 were born in Australia; 6 were born in other English speaking countries; and the birthplace for 49 was not recorded
- consumers spoke over 50 different languages at home, with the five top languages being Arabic (50), Serbian (27), Turkish (25), Punjabi (19) and Italian (15)

The top 5 issues for individual advocacy this year were:

- Accommodation (249 consumers)
- Health (66 consumers)
- Immigration (57 consumers)
- Family/ social support (42 consumers)
- Subsidies/ entitlements (42 consumers)

Advocacy Development

We work to increase awareness and change community attitudes about disability and cultural diversity, through information days; training and information sessions for people from NESB with disability, their families and carers; and through 'Advocacy in Action', our project for people with disability, their families and carers living in regional and rural areas of NSW.

- members formed an election group to develop a workshop for people from NESB and their families on 'how to make your vote count' in the NSW election; the group ran several sessions before the March 2007 election
- we ran 7 consumer forums for people from NESB and their families
- we published 5 consumer newsletters with information about MDAA projects including a photovoice art project and exhibitions with CIWDA consumers
- with NSW CID we ran a series of workshops for young people with disability involved in the Community Participation program and their families in regional NSW



AIA in BROKEN HILL

There was no local advocacy service so we decided to explore the issues for people with disability in Broken Hill. We searched the internet, including the local Council's Disability Action Plan and Social Plan. We spoke to people in Broken Hill about what was happening there. We went to Broken Hill and spoke to service providers and people with disability about the area and local issues.

We went to a day program and met the clients and we also met some people who do not use services, through a person who provides informal support in the area. We went to the Disability Support Group BBQ. We also met a group of service providers and visited their services.

The group at the day program identified a project for telling people in Broken Hill about themselves using photographs. We assisted the group and their support staff to work out a plan for taking the photos, writing their stories and putting together an exhibition.

After people took their photos, we assisted them to tell the story of the photo and write it up for the exhibition and their support staff assisted in framing and mounting the exhibition.

People did not know the rights of people with disability or what to do if their rights were not being respected and they asked us to provide training about rights. We asked the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability to do a training session for the group at the day program and members of the Disability Support Group.

Advocacy in Action

AIA supports people living in regional, rural and remote NSW, regardless of their type of disability or cultural background. We assist people to develop skills and confidence and to make links with supporters and resources, to bring about local, regional and state-wide changes. We work with people on local projects they identify and we respond to their skills and connections: we meet people where they are and go on from there. This year we did this in Bega, Broken Hill and Young.

STEP 1: Identify a local area to work in

STEP 2: Get to know the area

STEP 3: Organise a meeting of interested people

STEP 4: Assist the group to work out the question

STEP 5: Assist the group to work towards the results they want

NSW Network of Women with Disability, ANZ Project

We continued to support the NSW Network of Women with Disability through a project funded by ANZ Charitable Trusts.

This year the network:

- ☺ ran a Writers Seminar with Helen Razer
- ☺ worked with various regions on local activities for 'Reclaim the Night'. Events in Glebe, Harris Park, Penrith, Newcastle, Queanbeyan and Coffs Harbour included seminars on healthy relationships, sexual health, personal safety in the home and the community, and workshops on self-defence and drumming; women also attended the Reclaim the Night march in Sydney
- ☺ supported a regular group of volunteers to identify and develop resources for the Network
- ☺ wrote and distributed two 'Women's Newsflash' newsletters



Publications

- What are my child's rights? Information for parents
- 2007 Calendar with recipes
- Travelling Decade DVD - 10 years of MDAA: our stories
- MDAA DVD
- Make your vote count
- Website
- Factsheets



Social Change and Research

We work to change policies, procedures, practices and service delivery in government and non-government agencies to meet the diverse needs of the NSW population, particularly the needs of people from NESB with disability. We do this by writing submissions; doing research; participating in committees and working parties; organising meetings with politicians, public servants, service providers.

Some of the main issues we worked on this year were:

- we are part of the NESB Housing Task Force, a network of non-government agencies working to get housing that works for people from NESB; we also participate in the NSW Department of Housing's Multicultural Forum, which meets regularly with the Department to exchange information on current housing issues for people from NESB.
- submissions to NSW Health on 'Health Futures'; the 'Service Framework to Improve Health Care of People with Intellectual Disabilities'; and the review of the forensic provisions of the Mental Health Act; we also made a submission to the Mental Health Coordinating Council about social inclusion and mental health
- submissions on the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) guidelines on the Community Participation and Transition to Work programs; the children and young people leaving care program; draft policies on decision making and consent, and out of home care for children with disability
- we developed a leaflet setting out the main issues affecting people from NESB with disability in NSW, namely, housing, mental health and education, and sent it to all consumers, members and candidates for the NSW state election; we also made a submission to the NSW Electoral Office about making the voting procedures more accessible to voters with disability
- a submission to the NSW Attorney-general's Department on a draft model bill about sterilisation of children with intellectual disability
- a submission to the Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in response to their discussion paper on succession planning

Industry Development & mdaa cultural abilities

We work with communities, government and private agencies to increase knowledge and understanding of the experiences of people from NESB with disability. We develop resources; provide information, advice, training and support. We also train and support Community Voices, who are people from NESB with disability and their families who share their stories to raise awareness about the diversity of the community and how to provide better access to services for people from NESB with disability.

The highlight and focus for the year was '**From Tolerance to Respect: Cultural Competence in Practice**', an international conference MDAA and the National Disability Ethnic Alliance (NEDA) co-hosted on 7 and 8 September 2006 at the Novotel Hotel, Homebush Bay. Over 250 people came from NSW, interstate and overseas. The conference discussed local, national and international ideas about the best ways to respond to community diversity and competing needs in service development. It brought together some of the most thought-provoking and experienced practitioners in the world.

The Community Voices program made 20 presentations to over 250 people.

The **NESB Regional Access** Project continued, providing support and training to services funded by DADHC in the Cumberland/ Prospect area.

We continued working with African, Indian Subcontinent and Latin American communities through our **Community Links** project.

We started **an audit** with the Disability Council of NSW to increase the **cultural competence** of the Council's programs, policies and services. We did a similar project funded by the Motor Accidents Authority (MAA) to build the cultural competence of Complete Care, an attendant care service.

We also received many requests for **training** in cultural and disability awareness tailored specifically to agencies' needs. In 2006-2007 we designed and delivered 30 of these tailor-made courses.

DADHC contracted us to do a project on **new models of supported accommodation** for people from NESB with disability and this involved separate discussions with many groups from various communities and ethnic communities.





Organisational Autonomy, Grassroots Links and Alliances

We work to keep MDAA's good reputation as a respected organisation representing the experiences and needs of people from NESB with disability, their families and carers. When there are proposals to change services or laws affecting the lives of people from NESB with disability we consult MDAA members and consumers. We also make sure we keep in touch with diverse communities and seek their comments on relevant matters.

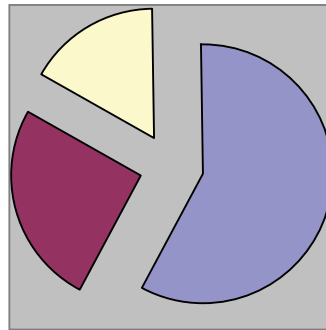
Speaking up for your rights

Asma is a young woman who was born in Pakistan and moved to Australia when she was a child. She has an intellectual disability and first came to MDAA seeking to become more independent from her family after getting married and later taking out an apprehended violence order against her mother. The advocate supported Asma in court and during mediation. One important issue for the advocate was whether Asma could tell him what she wants, because of her disability and the family conflict she is involved in. There are some complex cultural issues about families and marriage. A service provider plans to apply to the Guardianship Tribunal and our advocate will provide a report supporting Asma at the tribunal.

This year we:

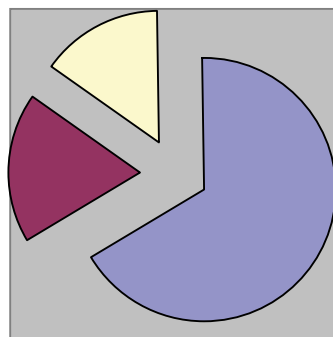
- adopted a new, plain English Constitution which is much easier for all members to understand; and we also started revising all our policies in plain English
- celebrated MDAA's 10th birthday – this highlighted how far MDAA has travelled as an organisation and how far members with disability, families and consumers have developed their skills in speaking up and getting their voices heard.

Money



Income:
\$1,517,628

- 1 = Dept of Ageing, Disability & Home Care
- 2 = Dept of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- 3 = Other grants/subsidies/income



Expenditure:
\$1,284,374

- Wages + Oncosts
- Operations
- Program

If you do not understand this document, please ring the Telephone Interpreter Service (131 450) and ask them to contact the MDAA on 1800 629 072.

ARABIC

إذا لم تستطع فهم هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم ١٣١ ٤٥٠ وأسألهم أن يتصلوا بـ MDAA على رقم ١٨٠٠ ٦٢٩ ٠٧٢.

CHINESE

如您看不懂此文件，請打電話給「電話翻譯服務台」(131 450) 請他們聯絡 MDAA 電話 1800 629 072。

CROATIAN

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GREEK

Αν δεν καταλαβαίνετε αυτό το έγγραφο, σας παρακαλούμε να τηλεφωνήσετε την Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων (131 450) και να τους ζητήσετε να επικοινωνήσουν με το MDAA στο 1800 629 072.

HINDI

अगर आप इस कागजात को पढ़कर समझ नहीं पा रहे हैं तो कृपया टेलीफोन सहायक सेवा (१३१ ४५०) को फोन करें और उनसे एम डी ए (MDAA) को १८०० ६२९ ०७२ पर संपर्क करने को कहें।

ITALIAN

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KOREAN

만일 이 문서를 이해하지 못하시면, 전화 통역 서비스(131 450)에 전화하여 MDAA 1800 629 072에 연락해 달라고 부탁하십시오.

MALTESE

Jekk ma tiffhimx dan id-dokument, jekk jog`bok jempel lis-Servizz ta' l-Interpretu (131 450) u itibhom jikkuntattjaw lil-MDAA fuq 1800 629 072.

POLISH

Jeśli nie rozumiesz treści niniejszego dokumentu, zadzwoń do Telefonicznego Biura Tłumaczy (Telephone Interpreter Service) pod numer 131 450 i poproś o telefoniczne skontaktowanie się w Twoim imieniu z MDAA pod numerem 1800 629 072.

SPANISH

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TURKISH

Bu belgeyi anlayamazsanız, lütfen Telefonla Tercüme Servisi'ne (131 450) telefon ederek, 1800 629 072'den MDAA ile ilifkiye geçmelerini isteyiniz.

VIETNAMESE

Nếu quý vị không hiểu tài liệu này, xin điện thoại đến Dịch vụ Thông ngôn qua Điện thoại (Telephone Interpreter Service) ở số 131 450 và nhờ họ liên lạc MDAA qua số 1800 629 072.

