

**Multicultural Disability Advocacy
Association of NSW
Annual Report 2008-2009 Summary
Chairperson's Report**



2008 – 2009 has been a year of growth and change for MDAA.

This is a Summary of the 2008-2009 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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MDAA received funds for two new innovative projects, the Sibling Support Network Project and the Accommodation Support Development Project. Funding was also increased and made permanent for South East Advocacy (SEA) at Bega and new funding was received to run Disability Rights Awareness Training for ethnic community workers.

We formed partnerships with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) who provided MDAA with a part time solicitor to assist advocates work more effectively on legal matters and with IDEAS (Information on Disability & Education Awareness Services) to increase the availability of individual advocacy in various locations.

Two highly successful projects were completed this year. The "Raising Kids Together" Information Kit Project was launched in December 2008 and the cultural abilities' training contract with Disability Services Queensland was concluded in June.

The expansion of the organisation means new and more effective equipment and systems are being developed or upgraded to cope with the increased volume of staff and work.

I would like to thank our funding bodies and our various community partners for their cooperation and support in helping MDAA grow and develop.

Finally, I would like thank my fellow committee members, the staff and volunteers for their commitment and all our members and consumers for helping MDAA reach its goal of ensuring the rights of people from NESB with disability are safe and protected.

Milanka Zivanovic



Philip, a CIWDA client and a student at TAFE, was having his Disability Support Pension (DSP) reviewed when he discovered he was eligible for a Pensioner Education Supplement. He applied to have the supplement backdated and was refused. Philip, with the help of his advocate, appealed this decision through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and went to see his local politician. As a result the Centrelink website has been amended to give people the correct information about their entitlements and his Education Supplement was backdated on approval of his DSP.

What is MDAA?

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

MDAA works to:

- Promote the rights of people from NESB with disability, their families and carers in NSW and make sure their rights are safe and protected.
- Get fair access to, and good results from, government and non-government services for people from NESB with disability and their families and carers.
- Improve the quality of life and level of participation in community activities for people from NESB with disability and their families and carers.

Our main areas of work are:

- Individual Advocacy and Advocacy Development
- Systemic Advocacy and Research
- Industry Development and Cultural Abilities
- Organisational Development

1. Individual Advocacy & Advocacy Development

Individual Advocacy

We help people from NESB with all types of disability to stand up for their rights, when they have problems with housing, immigration, health services, school, work or disability services.

MDAA has individual advocates in Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and Griffith to support people with disability across the state. MDAA also supports and runs advocacy services in the City/Inner West and Bega.

This year, the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), increased the funding to SEA at Bega providing 22.5 advocacy hrs/week and making the funding permanent.

In 2008-09 we supported 399 people with all types of disability (intellectual, physical, psychiatric, sensory, brain injury, etc):

- 207 were new consumers, 192 were ongoing, and 233 files were closed
- most consumers were over 40 years of age
- consumers spoke over 40 different languages at home, with the five top languages being: Serbian, Arabic, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Bosnian, Dari.

The top 7 issues for individual advocacy this year were:

- Accommodation (128 consumers)
- Subsidies/ entitlements (53 consumers)
- Immigration (42 consumers)
- Health (26 consumers)
- Education (25 consumers)
- Family/ social support (17 consumers)
- Employment (10 consumers)

Making Complaints Helps Services Improve

This forum was run by the staff of MDAA and the NSW Ombudsman Office on 24 June 2009.

The session dealt with making complaints at MDAA and about other community services. The aim was to make people aware that it is OK to complain or give feedback to any service as this helps them to improve.

Susan Laguna from MDAA explained MDAA's Complaint Policy and some consumers did a role play on how to make a complaint. The staff at the NSW Ombudsman gave people tips on how to communicate effectively with services.

Consumer comments included: "It was very helpful it because it was about our rights"

Advocacy development

MDAA works to change community attitudes about disability and cultural diversity and increase the self-advocacy skills and knowledge of people with disability. Some of the information and training sessions this year included:

- An Open Day for Consumers
- A Lobbying Forum on consumer rights
- An Election Forum about the election process and voting options for people with disability.
- A Healthy Life Style Forum about nutrition, health and gentle exercise.
- A Tenancy Rights Forum, about the rights and responsibilities of tenants

Raising Kid's Together Project

The "Raising Kids Together" Information Kit Project was funded by DADHC and developed by MDAA, Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) and Multicultural Health Communication Services (MHCS). The resulting Information Kit and DVD about children with disability, their families and the services available in NSW, was launched in December 2008. 765 Information Kits have been distributed.



Advocacy in Action (AIA) Project

Rural Disability Network: A major development for AIA was the emergence of the Rural Disability Network (RDN). A number of people began identifying the need to develop a way of ensuring the voices of people living in rural and regional areas were heard by those who develop policies. We were able to facilitate a teleconference bringing together people with disability from across NSW. A Working Group has developed an Action Plan for RDN.

Sibling Support Network Project

This is a project for young people 12 -17 years old from CALD backgrounds who have a brother or sister with disability. The project will provide training and support to young people in developing multi-media and website skills. We will be working with three groups of young people across the next three years to assist them to develop a blog where they can begin to record their experiences, images and stories and continue to build rapport and solidify friendships with the other participants.

NSW Network of Women with Disability, ANZ Project

We support the NSW Network of Women with Disability through a project funded by ANZ Charitable Trusts, to develop the skills of women with disability who are members of the Network.

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) ~ the Network attended a range of events to promote and represent the Network.

International Women's Day (IWD) ~ to celebrate IWD, the Network was involved in, and also held a number of events. These included: IWD Sydney March/Rally Festival, Living Library, ChickChat Teleconference; Representations of the Network in various IWD celebrations.

Other activities included: running a 4 day leadership retreat for 21 women with disabilities across NSW; attending a carer's conference and participating in a panel to promote mental health awareness in the Griffith community.

2. Systemic Advocacy and Research

MDAA works to improve policies and services for people with disability and their families.

MDAA made submissions to the following inquiries:

- Violence Against Women and Children:
- National Disability Strategy:
- Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
- Australian Citizenship Test Review
- Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2008

MDAA organised a consumer consultation for the Office of Home and Community Care. The consultation gave consumers an opportunity to discuss their experiences using Home and Community Care Services.

All of our submissions are available on MDAA's website www.mdaa.org.au.



3. Industry Development and mdaa cultural abilities

The Cumberland Prospect Region NESB Access Project (RAP) continued to provide support to a number of disability service providers. We facilitated cultural competency audits with two new disability service providers and worked in collaboration with the MAP Workers in Cumberland Prospect and Nepean areas to implement interpreter training. The RAP gave presentations about working in a culturally competent way with CALD people with disability to the Cumberland Prospect Disability Interagency and the Carers in Action in NSW 2009 Conference.

Accommodation Support Development Project for People with an Intellectual Disability from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

The CALD Accommodation Support Development Project is a two-year project to implement a pilot accommodation support model. The aim is to assist in developing culturally appropriate accommodation services in the Metropolitan South Region for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with intellectual disability.

The Project involves two components:

1. Providing direct operational support to the two new CALD Drop-In Support Services in the Metropolitan South Region, to ensure that they are fully operational within as short a period as possible.
2. Working with existing accommodation support services in the Metropolitan South Region to improve service access and delivery for people from CALD backgrounds with intellectual disability.

Community Voices Project

- Community Voices (CVs) made 16 presentations to increase awareness of issues for people of NESB with disability to over 550 people. Two community voices were key speakers at DADHC's "Cultural Competency in Services" Conference.
- We organised stalls at the Nepean Disability Expo, Cabramatta Centrelink and Parramatta Town Hall on International Day of People with Disability, International Women's Day at Cabramatta, Age and Disability Forum at Bankstown Council and Fairfield Refugee Week celebrations.
- In June 2009 we trained six new community voice members.



mdaa cultural abilities - training and support

As part of our contract with Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) we delivered 13 training days to 244 staff in the 2008-2009 year on 'Working Cross Culturally' (CHCCS 405A). In NSW we delivered 'Working effectively with diverse clients and co-workers' (CHCCS 405A) for the Mental Health Coordinating Council and Breakthru.

We ran the following workshops scheduled on the training calendar: 'Promoting to and Networking with Ethnic Communities' (1 session); 'Making your Services Accessible to CALD Communities' (2 sessions), and 'Getting the Most From Interpreters and Translators' (4 sessions).

In 2008-2009 we designed and delivered 34 tailor-made training sessions to staff of government and non-government disability services, employment services, home and community care services, and a range of human service departments, including the NSW Ambulance Service, where we delivered 10 sessions on cultural awareness to 384 staff.

We also received a grant from the Law and Justice Foundation to develop and provide training in disability rights awareness to ethnic community workers in the Sydney Metropolitan and 2 regional areas. To date, three out of four sessions have been provided with 45 ethnic community workers in attendance.

The total number of people who participated in mdaa cultural abilities training this year was 1274. This is an increase of almost 300 staff from last year.

4. Organisational Development

At the beginning of 2009, work began on the Organisational Plan, which turns the Strategic Plan into specific tasks and projects for the year. This plan assists the staff to meet the goals and directions MDAA set down for the next few years.

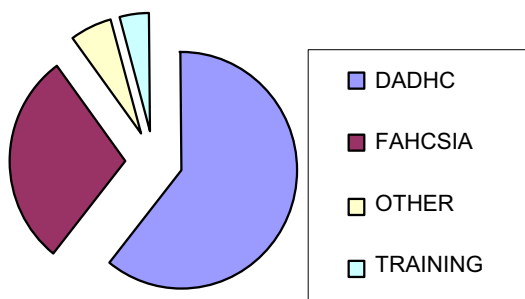
This year we:

- encouraged consumers and organisations with similar aims to become members
- updated our website regularly
- produced 6 consumer newsletters
- emailed our NESB + Disability monthly e-newsletter to over 1000 people
- participated in the NSW Ombudsman's round table for disability peak bodies
- worked closely with National Ethnic Disability Alliance on submissions and policies
- provided quarterly statistical reports to DADHC and FAHCSIA
- participated in many interagency networks and committees (see below)
- arranged or supported training for MDAA staff and management.

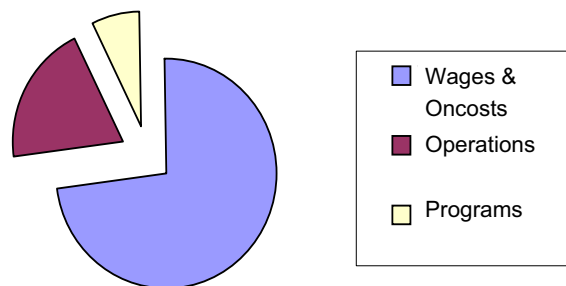
The Committee of MDAA wish to thank the staff for their commitment and professionalism through out 2008-09 and acknowledge the ongoing commitment and enthusiasm given by the volunteers without whom MDAA could not do its work. Thank you all very much!

MONEY

Income = \$1,543,003



Expenditure = 1,445,603



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。

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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 tifhimx dan id-dokument, jekk jog`bok jempel lis-Servizz ta' l-Interpretu (131 450) u itlobhom 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 iliflikiye 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.

