



# Share with us

MDAA Newsletter

October 2008

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## You can contact us

**by phone:**  
(02) 9891 6400

**or**  
1800 629 072

**by fax:**  
(02) 9635 5355

**by e-mail:**  
mdaa@mdaa.org.au

**Website:**  
www.mdaa.org.au

**by writing:**  
PO Box 9381  
Harris Park  
NSW 2150

**by coming to the office:**  
Monday -Friday  
9.00am - 5.00pm

40 Albion Street,  
Harris Park,  
NSW 2150

## MDAA AGM

A gentle reminder to our consumers and supporters: we will be having our 12th Annual General Meeting on the 26 November. As with the previous MDAA AGMs, this year looks promising starting with the formal business agenda and then loads of fun of dancing and music after. Please see below for more details:

**When: Wednesday, 26 November 2008**

**Where: Granville Youth & Community Recreation Centre, 3A Memorial Drive, Granville**

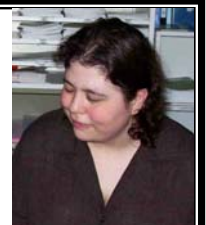
**Time: 10.30am Start with Morning Tea follow by the AGM, Speeches, Music, Entertainment and FOOD**

Come along and join MDAA's annual celebration and catch up with friends, MDAA staff and workers from other organisations!

## ONE-OFF BONUSES FOR PENSIONERS

MDAA welcomes the financial crisis support package of \$4.8 billion announced by the Prime Minister and Treasurer as this will provide immediate financial support to millions of low and middle income earners who are in financial distress. Under this assistance package, carers, people with disability and other pensioners will receive a **One off Pension Payment or Bonus** of \$1400 for single pensioners, \$2100 for couples combined; one-off carers payment of \$1000 to Carer Allowance recipients for each eligible person in their care. All payments will be made automatically direct into the bank accounts of around six million Australians over the two-week period beginning 8 December 2008.

Welcome to **Hannen Abdallah**,  
a new Project Worker for  
the Advocacy In Action Project



## MDAA ACTIVITIES HELD IN SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2008

### SEPTEMBER

**A consultation on the Disability Support Pension (DSP)** was organised by MDAA and NEDA on 11 September so that both organisations can provide an informed response to the Pension review conducted by the government. In order to present the views of our consumers, MDAA and NEDA invited them to a meeting where they talked about their concerns and issues in relation to the DSP, Carer payments, allowance and other entitlements from Centrelink.



### OCTOBER

#### **Morning Tea at MDAA**

On 23 October MDAA members and friends got together to talk about how to become a member of MDAA Committee. David Abello, MDAA Vice Chairperson and Vanco Djoneski, an Individual Advocate provided a lot of information to the participants. After their talks, a well deserved morning tea was enjoyed by everyone.



#### **Visit to the NSW Parliament**

A group of MDAA members and consumers enjoyed a visit to the State Parliament where they were given a tour of the NSW seat of government and a lecture on where and how the politicians make the laws. The consumers and staff had a role play and went through the process of debating an issue which is very close to everyone's hearts - access to transport for people with disability. At least those who attended had a taste of being a politician even for just 30 minutes!

#### **Nepean Disability Expo**

George Ayoub, an Individual Advocate; Tony Shoushani, Community Voices and MDAA Committee member; Joyce Van Akkeren, Cultural Abilities and Luis, Community Voices

worker participated in the Nepean Disability Expo and set up the MDAA stall on 24 & 25 October. MDAA staff were busy providing information and talking to the general public about the organisation. It was a great day for networking.

#### **Belated Happy Carers Week! (19-25 October)**

The staff and the Committee of MDAA would like to take the opportunity to wish our carers a happy carers week. Carers Week is to celebrate and raise awareness on the contribution carers make to the lives of people they care for.

This year's theme is "Because I care...".



## ARABIC SUPPORTED PLAYGROUP

Macarthur Diversity Services, Family Resource Links, Northcott Disability Services & Families NSW invite the Arabic families with young children to attend their new Arabic Supported Playgroup

When: Every Friday

Where: Jessie Thompson Building, Browne St, Campbelltown (Opposite Centrelink)

Time: 10am-12noon

Commences: Friday 17 of October 2008

For more information please contact any of the following:

Cecilia or Najla at Macarthur Diversity Service on 4627 1188 or Lorinda at Northcott on 46408705 or Leanne Charles on 4640 8704 & 0409228247.

The Playgroup does not operate during school holidays or on Public Holidays

## CASE STUDY

Ms. Said is a person with multiple disabilities and wants to bring her sister from overseas to care for her.

Ms. Said's application for carer visa was rejected so she applied for the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT) to review the decision.

She applied for a waiver of the review fee due to financial difficulties.

The advocate wrote a letter of support and sat down with Ms Said to compile proof of her finances/expenses.

Finally she was granted a waiver of the review fee by the MRT.

## CENTRELINK DIRECT BILL-PAYING SERVICE

CENTREPAY is a direct bill-paying service offered free to customers receiving payments from Centrelink. Through Centrepay, customers can choose to pay bills by having an amount regularly deducted from their Centrelink payment and paid directly to an organisation on their behalf.

Centrepay is one of many services provided by Centrelink and is designed to assist people to become self-sufficient as well as enabling customers to better manage their money and to meet their financial commitments.

Centrepay is voluntary and customers who choose to use it benefit from convenience and security, and have peace of mind knowing that their payments are under control. Instead of having large bills every month or quarter, customers can pay their bills in manageable amounts direct from their Centrelink payment, making it easier for them to budget.

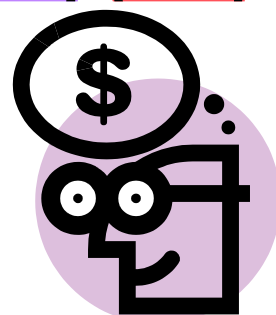
Using Centrepay, customers can pay bills such as rent, electricity, gas, water, telecommunications, household goods, child care, home care services, court fines, education fees, medical services and equipment.

To find out more phone:

Centrelink - Employment Services	132850		
Youth & Student		132490	
Family Assistance	136150	Disability	132717
Retirement	132300	Languages	131202

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

Centrepay Help Desk 1800 044 063



## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT: TAXI VOUCHER PROJECT

This scheme is provided by the South West Community Transport Inc and funded by the Home and Community Care program through the NSW Ministry of Transport. Participants in this scheme will need to meet the criteria and will be assessed as to their eligibility and be subject to priority reviewing on a regular basis. Priority will be given to people who are not eligible for the Ministry of Transport Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme.

### Criteria

To be eligible for consideration for access to the taxi vouchers under this scheme, participants must:

- Be a Home and Community Care target person i.e. Frail Aged, Young Person with a disability, Carer of either
- Have a permanent moderate to severe disability
- The amount of \$10 will be paid to Community Transport group for the issue of 11 vouchers with a value of \$55.
- Voucher limit will be one allocation per person per month.
- The vouchers are not to be used to supplement TTSS docketts.

- Vouchers are not redeemable for cash.
- Fare amount above voucher to be paid in cash by participant.
- Change will not be given on unused portion of the voucher.
- The vouchers are not transferable.
- The vouchers are not to be used for transport for education or employment purposes.
- Bookings are to be made by calling Taxi Company Call Centres – Bookings are not to be made by calling Taxi Drivers direct.
- Vouchers can be issued and used in multiple numbers.
- The funding for this service is limited and recipients will be prioritised regularly.
- Issued vouchers will be the responsibility of the recipient and no responsibility will be accepted for any loss or destruction.
- Vouchers may be used with any Taxi company in Australia.

**For more information call the Taxi Voucher Project Officer on 4629-6888**

## MDAA NEWS

Early in October, we said goodbye to Njau Gitu who had to leave MDAA due to family reasons. The MDAA staff had a nice farewell lunch with Njau. Good luck Njau!!

MDAA will be having a Fun Night on 25 November for all its staff and Committee

members. This event promises fun as well as an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other better. It will be held at MDAA Harris Park office after work. Thanks to James and Hannen for organising this event.

## Religious and Significant Days

### NOVEMBER

1	All Saints' Day	Christian
2	All Souls' Day	Catholic Christian
12	Birth of Baha'u'llah *	Baha'i
13	Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib	Sikh
15	Nov - 24 Dec Nativity Fast**	Orthodox Christian
24	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib	Sikh
26	Day of the Covenant	Baha'i
28	Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha	Baha'i

### DECEMBER

3	International Day of People with Disability	United Nations
6-9	Hajj	Islam
8	Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) **	Buddhism
9	Eid al Adha *	Islam
10	Human Rights Day	United Nations
22-29	Hanukkah *	Jewish
25	Christmas *	Christian
26	Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra)	Zoroastrian

Note: \* Usually begins sunset the day before; \*\* local customs may vary this date.

Dates and information largely obtained from the Interfaith Calendar ( [www.interfaithcalendar.org/2008.htm](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/2008.htm) ).

Detailed explanations about each holy day can be found on MDAA's website on the Frequently Asked Questions page ([www.mdaa.org.au](http://www.mdaa.org.au))