

August 2016 | Issue 124

Identikite

The official newsletter of Identitywa



 Identitywa
Sharing the journey



Our Vision

All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing.



Our Mission

Identitywa works in partnership with individuals and families to build a community where people with disability enjoy a fulfilled life.

We support individuals to achieve their goals, whatever they may be. We offer families the support they need.



Our Values

Above all else, we make a commitment to act.

We will look for the opportunities rather than seeing the barriers.

Our approach will be objective, transparent and fair. We will always be honest and open and no matter how challenging, we will endeavour to see it through to the end.

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Our Board: Tony Curry, Jenny Drury, Nathan Ebbs, Graeme Mander (Chair), Levy Mpofu, Phil Scott, Linda Walsh (Treasurer), Terry Wilson.

Cover photo: Support Worker, George, having fun with Kiara and Reece who both access services from Identitywa's Yeeda Street house.

CEO Report

Over the past couple of months I have met a number of people who have inspired me with their passion and their commitment to improving the lives of people with disability.

A family member recently rang me to commend the work of a support worker and to describe how important it is for people to be surrounded by those who know them well and whom they trust.

Identitywa is dependent on a skilled and competent workforce and we are continuously reviewing our practices to ensure we have excellent recruitment and better retention rates. The phone call from the family member really brought home the challenges we face as we move towards the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the critical workforce issues that will only escalate.

As a sector we will need to better understand the challenges, and develop effective strategies to ensure we can respond to future demand with high quality services.

In WA we are fortunate to have the backing of the Disability Services Commission and the sector peak body National Disability Services (NDS) who are collaborating in the development of a WA Disability Plan to address workforce and other critical issues.

The recent NDS Disability Support Worker Awards event provided many examples of workers who go above and beyond to facilitate great outcomes for the people they support. I am pleased to report that Identitywa was well represented with five nominations of outstanding staff from across the full range of service areas. To be nominated by either your peers, families or individuals is a great achievement and all those nominated were real winners.

The news about the NDIA is described in detail on page 6. I would like to add my support for the announcement. We have started the planning and preparation to ensure we are well positioned to offer our services to existing service users and to those who may be contacting Identitywa for the first time. We continue to learn from the NDIS trial sites and by the time for full roll out in 2017, we will be

ready. We are still unclear about some key issues with regard to continuity of support and the interface between disability and aged care. However, we are communicating our strong support for ageing in place and ensuring that real choice and control can be exercised by service users.

The beginning of a new financial year brings with it an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved, and most importantly, to focus on where we want to be.

Over the next few months we will initiate a full strategic review and commence work on a strategic plan to lead Identitywa over the next three years. Within this process there will be opportunities for users of Identitywa services to comment and provide feedback both on their past experiences and their hopes for the future. I urge you to be part of this and help us to shape our future.

Marina Re, CEO

Lotterywest \$1.6 million grant

The Hon Donna Faragher, Minister for Planning; Disability Services, was joined by Lotterywest Board member, Garry Trinder, to present a certificate from Lotterywest to Bishop Donald Sproxton, Auxiliary Bishop of Perth in May, 2016.

Mrs Faragher said the Lotterywest grant would allow Identitywa to refurbish heritage listed buildings in the Catholic Archdiocese-owned old St Brigid's School in Northbridge.

"The new corporate base in Northbridge is close to public transport and provides a central location with great access for the



^ Minister Faragher with Bishop Sproxton with the Lotterywest Certificate.

people Identitywa supports, as well as their families and carers," she said.

"The refurbishment of the heritage listed property will create office space, meeting rooms and a fully accessible large area that will be

adapted to provide a state-of-the-art training facility."

People supported by Identitywa, their families and staff also attended the presentation hosted by CEO, Marina Re, at Identitywa's Kensington office.



Senior staff, nominees and the people who nominated them, attended the annual Disability Support Awards night held in July.

The DSA have been established by the National Disability Services and the Disability Services Commission to "recognise people in the disability sector providing supports of the highest standards to increase the quality of life and inclusion of people with disability in Western Australia.

"These are people who go beyond ordinary standards of service and have a profound impact on the lives of the people they work with and support."



Creating a dedicated room for sensory activities was the motivation for the Federal Member for Stirling, Michael Keenan's, pledge for Identitywa's Hillsborough Drive house in Nollamara.

In response to feedback from a member of his constituency who was aware of the services of Identitywa, Minister Keenan made contact with CEO, Marina Re, to find out more about the Children's House and to discuss the possibility of creating a dedicated space.

"This commitment will create a sensory

environment that will be used as a soothing space to calm children with stress or anxiety, or to engage children with learning difficulties through modified practices," Mr Keenan said.

Funding will be used to retrofit an existing area within the centre with interactive sensory equipment such as tactile boards, sound machines and audio visual stimulation equipment.

CEO, Marina Re, said she greatly appreciated the support. "It is wonderful that the catalyst for the Minister's donation originated from a family who really value our services," she said.

^ Minister Keenan, Marina Re and Support Worker, Lauren, pictured with James who regularly stays at the house.

Congratulations are extended to the following Identitywa nominees:

Aleysha Chopra: *Emerging Leader*

Meggan Stone: *Excellence in Personal and Community Support*

Carolyn Moore: *Emerging Leader*

Wendy Ferrier: *Excellence in Personal and Community Support*

Deb Ryan: *Excellence in Personal and Community Support*



^ Support workers Jake and James celebrating with Aleysha Chopra (centre), and Fahima with her son, Sawaiz, who nominated Aleysha.

Government announcements welcomed

Expansion for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Two major announcements by the Commonwealth and WA State governments were made in July which significantly impacts the people Identitywa supports - now and into the future.

The first was a joint media release from the Commonwealth and WA State Governments announcing an expansion for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) trial in Western Australia.

The release outlined that more Western Australians will gain access to the NDIS over the next year with the Commonwealth Government and the Western Australian State Government extending the current trials to July 2017. The trial sites have also been expanded.

The Commonwealth and WA governments established a comparative trial of two different models of the NDIS in 2014. The WA NDIS (formerly NDIS My Way) operates in the Lower South West region and Cockburn-Kwinana area. From 1 October 2016, the WA Disability Services Commission will expand the NDIS model to local government areas Armadale, Murray and Serpentine-Jarrahdale.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) model delivered in the Perth Hills region will be expanded to Bayswater, Bassendean, Chittering, Toodyay, York and Northam from 1 January 2017.

As part of the agreement, the Commonwealth and WA State governments have set the target to finalise arrangements for the statewide roll out of the NDIS in WA by October 2016, with the rollout expected to start on 1 July 2017.

In his media release the Federal Minister for Social Services, Christian Porter, said the agreement will give certainty to around 10,900 current and future participants of ongoing support and will ensure more Western Australians will benefit from the NDIS while the details of the full scheme model are being finalised.

Mr Porter explained that since the launch of the Western Australian comparative NDIS trials, more than 4,000 Western Australians have had access to the increased funding, and choice and control over their disability services provided through the NDIS.

No-fault insurance

The second significant announcement was made in April by the WA Treasurer, Mike Nahan, regarding legislation passed by the WA State Government for a No-fault insurance which will cover catastrophic injury caused by motor vehicle crashes from July 1, 2016.

Supported by all State political parties, the legislation will ensure the lifetime care and support of certain people who are catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents in WA and who are not able to successfully claim under the existing compulsory third party insurance scheme.

Employee Recognition Awards

Looking for staff who are

*Amazing,
Inspirational,
Outstanding,
Fantastic!*

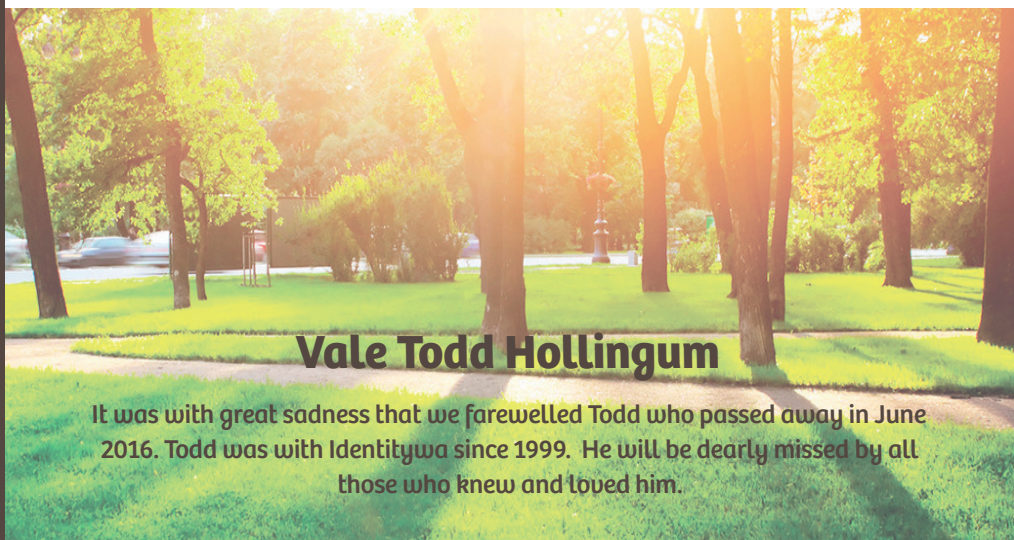
It is time once again for members of the Identitywa Community to nominate a staff member for the annual Employee Recognition Awards.

We would love to hear about staff whom you believe make a significant difference to the quality of the lives of individuals and families we support. They will be someone who demonstrates daily their commitment to Identitywa's Vision, Mission and Values and who creates an inspirational, happy, positive environment wherever they are. In other words, not only do people love having them around and working with them, but they are inspired by them!

Contact Rozanne Pugh via email at Rozanne.pugh@identitywa.com.au to have a Nomination Form emailed or posted to you, or go to our Website to download a form.



^ Teagen is supported by Cam at Identitywa's Nollamara Children's home.



Vale Todd Hollingum

It was with great sadness that we farewelled Todd who passed away in June 2016. Todd was with Identitywa since 1999. He will be dearly missed by all those who knew and loved him.

A place to call home

It was in 1996 when three families, motivated by their commitment to ensure the best future for their children, began a journey that would be life changing.

Each of the families had a teenage daughter with a disability. It was their hope to find accommodation which would provide for their daughter's current and future needs.

To their great delight and relief, through the support of Identitywa and the Department of Housing, a specially designed house was built for the girls.

Identitywa Engagement Leader, Ed Mayvis, was there to support the families at that time. Ed remembers it as quite an emotional experience.

"It was so important to the parents that the girls had the chance to be independent and to have accommodation that specifically worked for them," remembers Ed.

"Whilst this big step can be a time of excitement and anticipation for the future, it can also be daunting for families.

"It was vital that we were able to assist in the smooth transition to this new life for them and to continue our support as they were settled into their new home."

Fast forward 20 years to 2016, and it is wonderful to find that two of the original three, Chandra and Marie, are still happily sharing the house.

Chandra's mother, Liz, said while the transition time took longer than anticipated, Chandra is very happy living in the shared home.

"We are very grateful for Ed's support all those years ago. He was fantastic in assisting us at what was a difficult time."

"We know that Chandra's physical and emotional needs are being well cared for by Identitywa staff."

Marie's mother, Dorothy, said Marie has developed independence in areas that might not have flourished if she had not had the assistance of Identitywa's Support Workers.

"Wow, it's hard to believe it's been 20 years! As a parent it gives me comfort that Marie is happy and that she has a place that she can call home."

Identitywa's shared homes provide an important option for individuals and families seeking to access appropriate support - now and into the future.



^ Housemates, Marie, Emma and Matt enjoying their day out at Whitfords Nodes Park.



^ Chandra and Marie enjoying their sensory session with the support of Amanda.

Herbs, rice and flour provide perfect 'recipe' for fun

As part of the commitment to people in Shared Living, Identitywa offers a variety of supports focused on assisting individuals to achieve a great life. To be successful requires high quality assistance by support workers and other key staff.

Manager, Lee-Anne Brensell, emphasises the importance of providing a stimulating environment.

"Sensory opportunities and multi-sensory environments can open up a whole new world for the people we support. Providing a stimulating environment has many benefits; not only can we better support individuals to

develop language through more vocalisation and increased social interactions, but we can also promote mental and physical relaxation and a genuine sense of feeling safe, all whilst enjoying themselves and having fun."

Identitywa's Occupational Therapist, Amanda Wong, regularly coordinates a range of activities which encourage interaction and socialisation for the people supported by Identitywa.

Individuals sharing at Identitywa's Shakespeare Avenue house experienced first-hand Amanda's innovative approach to providing sensory activities when they had the chance to touch, taste and smell herbs such as mint, lemon grass and coriander. They also

had the opportunity to interact with a dough which was a 'safe' mixture of rice, food colouring and flour.

Amanda explains: "An activity like this is a very simple way for support workers to engage the people living in our shared homes. Providing an experience such as this enables them to interact - passing things to each other, sharing with each other and also giving them a chance to satisfy their sensory needs by tasting, smelling and touching."

Whilst a little messy, the activity certainly makes for a fun time for everyone involved.

Promoting the prevention and management of chronic disease



A few health Facts

- 22% of people over 18 have cardiovascular disease.
- 5.4% of people over 18 have diabetes.
- 63% of people are overweight or obese.
- Only 8% of people eat enough vegetable each day.
- Only 40% of people exercise enough.

Source AIHW: Australia's Health 2014

While it is wonderful that Australians are living longer, the prevalence of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancers, respiratory conditions and diabetes are increasing throughout the general population.

The impact of these chronic diseases on the people living in Identitywa's shared living homes and in the community is an issue that our support workers are aware of, and are required to manage daily.

Critical to the success of individual health plans are the knowledge and skills of support workers. They are required to be constantly alert to potential medical problems as early intervention is vital.

In early 2016, the Board committed to increasing staff levels in the areas of health and therapy to provide relevant training for staff.

Identitywa's Clinical Nurse, Kerry Deakin, explains: "Our role is to understand, and to work with an individual's family and the health professionals supporting them, to ensure we are managing their medical needs.

"We are also keenly aware of the importance of being proactive in the prevention of chronic disease in the people we support," said Kerry.

"For example, we know that there are a number of contributing lifestyle factors which influence a person's general health and perhaps reduce the incidence of complications of chronic diseases.

"In our ongoing assessments of individuals, we identify the health supports that are required, by referencing individual plans provided by each person's health professional team and communicating with their general practitioner, medical specialist and therapist.

"With this important information, we develop their health care and mobility plans which outline the support required for our support workers to reference.

"We ensure these plans are updated as their circumstances or needs change."

Some of the areas covered in training:

Living with Diabetes Program

This program is conducted for House Seniors and Team Leaders as well as individuals with diabetes. It covers all aspects of Diabetes Care. Topics include: What is Diabetes?; Exercise; Nutrition; Reading Food Labels; Foot care; and Medications.

Meal Planning

We work with staff in meal planning to support individuals with special dietary requirements. Staff are also educated in strategies to assist with weight reduction.

Health Screening

Annual health reviews, undertaken by general practitioners, benchmark individuals against current expectations of age-related medical conditions as set down by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Management continue to review services and support needs of the varying age groups. Areas being considered for future support include:

1. A modified early warning system which will enable staff to collect and relay information to health professionals in a timely manner.
2. The inclusion of an Occupational Therapist in developing care plans for chronic health problems.
3. The further development of clear referral pathways to enhance the education and training of support workers.
4. In partnership with Silver Chain Disability Training Team, introduction of a self-directed learning package which educates support workers in the care and management of people who are insulin dependent living in Identitywa's shared living.
5. Increased focus on advance care planning, giving consideration to current and future health needs, wishes and values.
6. Implementation of electronic health records system.

< Team Leader, Katie, is one of the staff responsible for ensuring Rhonda, who shares an Identitywa house, has access to the high quality support to maintain her good health.

Significant benefits of Positive Behaviour Support

Identitywa's Vision is that all people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing. This commitment to supporting quality of life is also the core principle of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). The focus of concern is not with problem behaviour, and certainly not with problem people, but rather with problem contexts.

Carr E, 2007, 'The expanding vision of Positive Behaviour Support: Research perspectives on happiness, helpfulness and hopefulness', *Journal of Positive Behaviour Interventions*, vol 9 (1), pp 4–16.).

Providing guidance and assistance to support workers is a key responsibility for Identitywa's PBS Officer, Sophie Neale.

Whilst the support teams initially develop individual plans, Sophie provides guidance to ensure the goals and outcomes which have been identified to meet the individual's needs.

Central to all support is effective communication. Successfully communicating is critical but can be a challenge in the day-to-day management of support.

Sophie explains: *It is vital that we are regularly checking, updating and developing our understanding of what someone likes or doesn't like.*

A certain gesture may mean 'toilet', a groan means 'I've had enough', a louder groan can mean 'Please stop immediately!'.

We record as much as we can about how the person communicates from our first meeting. This assists us to develop our understanding of the person and their needs.

One tool we have to assist us in understanding and therefore communicating with an individual is our 'All About Me' books. These books are very effective in assisting us to communicate with an individual. They are designed to emphasise the strengths of each person and give them a voice. It is also important that we consider gestures and sounds that they already use to communicate effectively.

We want to give voice to the wants and needs and observations that might have previously gone unheard so that ultimately the individual is making more choices and having more input into the things in their life that matter to them.

An example of strategies used:

We change our own mode of communication to match the strengths and needs of the individual. For example, by increasing the use of visual references such as calendars, line drawings, photos, and real objects. Making communication visual and concrete in this way has a number of advantages.

- Visuals are not ambiguous or fleeting like the spoken word can be and so a person has more time to process their meaning and plan a response.*
- In addition, visuals give the person tools to speak back to us where they may not have been able to before.*

Increasing a person's communication skills gives so many more options and can give much-needed confidence which enables them to participate in the broader community.

Often it can be just small changes that make all the difference. For example photos or pictures in an agenda or calendar format can support people to experience that sense of predictability and routine that we all crave.

A change in plan need not be a surprise if we can communicate about it. Every skill developed opens a door whether it be the fine motor skills needed to get money out of a wallet or the communication skills to be able to order a drink at a café.

Taking a proactive approach to supporting an individual to experience a life that has meaning to them, requires a commitment to be trained to deal with unexpected and difficult events.

Supporting wellbeing for Richard with PBS

The implementation of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies has made a significant improvement in the daily life of Richard.

For Richard, who shares a home with three other men at Ganges Place, the early morning routine of showering and dressing was a particularly stressful time.

Team Leader, Katie van der Watt, explains: "Whilst he enjoyed the shower and the warm water, it was getting undressed beforehand and then dried and dressed afterwards which was an issue for him. His anxiety was palpable.

"By support workers implementing some of the PBS strategies suggested by our PBS Officer, Sophie Neale, Richard not only enjoys his morning shower now, but he understands and cooperates with the undressing and dressing requirements.

"It means he gets to start his day happy and relaxed rather than agitated and stressed as was the case previously," adds Katie.

To enable this much improved experience, Richard's support

workers spent time getting to learn more about him - what motivates him, what he likes and doesn't like and how he communicates.

"They established the structured routine for him which is one of Sophie's recommendations. Richard prefers predictability," emphasises Katie.

"His routine was documented to ensure everyone who was working with Richard was doing the same thing, in the same way."



A visual routine has been put in place to ensure Richard understands what is going to occur well in advance.

Support workers have created Richard's own 'Choice Boards' to provide him with an opportunity to indicate what he would like to drink or eat, for example. Given the success, they are now working on an activities version of the board.



^ Support worker, Mags, planning morning tea with Richard.





^ Lee, Trevor, Damien, Troy, Augi, Deb, Pierre, Carl, Kylie and Katie celebrating their great effort.

Up for the challenge!

The chance to participate in the annual HBF Run for a Reason, provided the perfect opportunity for Identitywa staff and people living in our Loxleigh Gardens and Dymchurch Court homes to rally together to raise funds which contribute to over 170 West Australian health-related charities.

Kat, whose son Augi shares at Loxleigh Gardens, wrote to House Senior, Debbie, and Support Worker, Kylie, after the event.

"I am truly grateful to you and all the Loxleigh Gardens' staff who organised and participated in the HBF Run for a Reason on Sunday. I was so happy to see the boys successfully complete the 4km walk. It was such a proud moment for all of them.

They were all very happy to celebrate their achievements, wearing their medals proudly and beaming from ear-to-ear. I wish to particularly thank Debbie for thinking of a solution for Augi to overcome his anxiety issues. Your solution of purchasing him an iPod and loading it with his favourite songs made a world of difference to him, enabling him to participate. For that, I am truly grateful."

There was reason to celebrate at Dymchurch Court house too. Joanne, who lives with four others in the house, also completed the 4km walk with the assistance of Support Worker, Linda.

Linda said Joanne was very excited to have received a medal at the completion of the run. All in all, it was a wonderful chance for staff and the people we support to share in a community event and to contribute to a worthy cause.



**A Catholic outreach supporting people
with disability and their families.**

We welcome contributions
to Identikite from people we support,
their families and staff.

Articles can be emailed to
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