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## profile: Roger Stancliffe

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I led a project to teach teenagers to travel independently by public bus to their community-based special school. I still know several of those involved, and their travel skills have served them well through decades of adult life when travelling to work or to visit friends. Clearly, my time as a practitioner was formative. Such experiences guided the focus of my later research and my ongoing interest in applied investigations that have real-world effects.

More recently, I headed the team that published the first Australian evaluation of *Active Support*. With different groups of great colleagues, in the last few years, I have conducted exciting projects on *Transition to Retirement (TTR)*, and on *End of Life*. Each project had an intervention component, intended to directly benefit participants with intellectual disability. For example, a number of the TTR participants are still regularly attending their mainstream community group 6 years after we first supported them to join. I see that the trajectory of my work has paralleled my own life in some ways— as a new graduate working with teenagers on independent travel and now as a 60-something researching retirement!

As a researcher and academic, a key opportunity was to serve as Editor of ASID's journal, the *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability*, for 6 years from 2003 to 2008. This role put me in contact with excellent researchers around the world. I thank my mentor Professor Trevor Parmenter (a past JIDD editor and my boss during this period) for supporting me to take on this editorship. I maintain this interest through editing special issues of journals from time to time – most recently issue 6, 2017 of the *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities* focusing on end of life, co-edited by Michele Wiese (Western Sydney University) and Sue Read (Keele University, UK).

Since 1994, a major highlight has been an ongoing collaboration with wonderful colleagues at the University of Minnesota, notably my Minnesota mentor Charlie Lakin. This opportunity has not only been a major influence on my work, but also opened

exciting new experiences for my family, who usually travel with me to Minneapolis. There are numerous international opportunities in our field, and I have certainly enjoyed my share.

I have worked with many superb colleagues in Australia and internationally, some of whom I have named. Likewise, I hope I have been a helpful collaborator and mentor to younger colleagues to assist them to become leading researchers in their own right. It has also been a great pleasure to work with many fine students who have often gone on to do exciting things.

Most importantly, at a personal level, a major highlight is being a friend and advocate to my mate Peter. Friendship is its own reward, but knowing Peter over many decades has also kept me grounded and taught me so much.

### How has your work changed practice?

With due modesty, I can claim to have contributed to the uptake and implementation of Active Support in Australasia. Our TTR work on supporting older workers with intellectual disability to develop a socially inclusive retirement lifestyle has raised expectations and influenced practice in this phase of life.

The current research on end of life is helping break the silence around the once taboo topics of dying and death, to help people with intellectual disability better understand these issues, so they can express their wishes, make informed choices, and deal with the loss of friends and family.

### What could ASID do to implement the findings of your work?

ASID is already very active in supporting research translation through conferences, webinars, journals, IDA, and so on. ASID could also consider how to support development and dissemination of research-based practical resources for use by people with ID, families, and disability practitioners. ●

*profile:*

# Patsie Frawley

**Associate Professor  
Deakin University**



**I**t's interesting to be asked to reflect on my work in the field of intellectual disability when professionally things have changed dramatically for me with my appointment at Deakin University almost three years ago moving into higher education teaching after a number of years working as a researcher. Luckily for me, the teaching job still allows me to engage with my research in sexuality, abuse prevention, political participation, advocacy and inclusive research approaches, however the balance has shifted.

Being in a teaching role, coordinating new post graduate programs in disability and inclusion has enabled me to bring current research in the broader field of disability into our program.

Our two courses – Graduate Certificate of Disability and Inclusion and a Masters of Disability and Inclusion engage students in developing contemporary understandings of disability and how to apply these in a policy and practice context strongly focussed on rights, equality and inclusion in society.

This takes me back to what led me to work in this area. I started off studying Social Work but that only lasted one year, I followed this with a primary teaching course but this was not for me. While studying this course I completed a major in Special Education – it was actually called Exceptionality interestingly enough. After graduating from teaching and a fairly un-startling year teaching I quickly found my way back to University and did post graduate studies in Special Education.

During my study I worked at Kew Cottages as an emergency teacher. At that time the institution

had a school program for all residents with different 'levels' depending on the severity of disability. It was here that I gained an incredible insight into how the institutional environment completely determined what was possible for people. I can't begin to talk about what I saw here; as a young woman moving into my own life of adulthood I was appalled and as an up and coming advocate I was motivated.

After this I began working with adults with an intellectual disability transitioning from school to a newly developed adult service. In this bespoke service I spent time with young people who, like many young people were trying to 'become adults', socially and personally trying to carve out their place in the world in their own right. Again my eyes were opened to the barriers they faced in doing this and as the assigned 'educational instructor' I was given a blank page to work with them towards their goals.

This is where my interest in sexuality in the lives of people with an intellectual disability began. It had clearly been overlooked in these young adults' lives – quite the opposite was the case for every other young adult I knew at the time.

Fast forward over the years since then. I have kept many of those people in my mind as I have pursued my career as an educator, researcher, project worker and policy advocate. What I learned then was the importance of seeing each person as a person first

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