

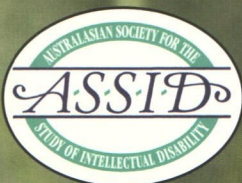
Volume 31, Issue 2, June 2010

# IDA

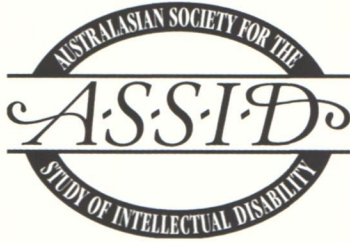
Intellectual Disability Australasia



**disability support workers**



Magazine of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability



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**Front Cover:**

*Viola adunca* - Early Blue Violet "watchfulness, faithfulness" photo by Walter Siegmund

# editorial



## Hello to all,

This edition of IDA arrives at a very exciting time for ASSID.

The mid-year meeting was held in Melbourne at the end of May and Board members participated in a lively and invigorating two days of hard work and planning for the future.

A number of burning issues were raised at the meeting, and most exciting of all, we were pleased to welcome our new Executive Officer, Kerrie Akkermans. You will find a brief 'bio' and photo of Kerrie in IDA. Many of you may have already had the opportunity to talk to Kerrie, as her first task was to undertake some market research by surveying as many members as she could, to get a good understanding of the issues that people see as important.

Outcomes of the mid year meeting will be available through regional councils and directly from Board members, but there were a number of key issues that it is important to note.

Firstly, the Board, after careful consideration and taking into account the views of ASSID members have agreed to review and update the Association's image. Accordingly, the Board voted to change the name of ASSID from 'The Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability' to 'The Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability- Research to Practice' (ASID)

It was felt that the new title would achieve the objective of removing any perceptions that the name 'objectified' people with disabilities. Everyone agreed that the importance of research had to continue to be emphasised, and this could be achieved by incorporating a 'tag line' into a new, contemporary logo. The tag line would have the added advantage that it successfully recognises the connection between the value of research is in its application to practice which of course is of ultimate benefit to those people with an intellectual disability.

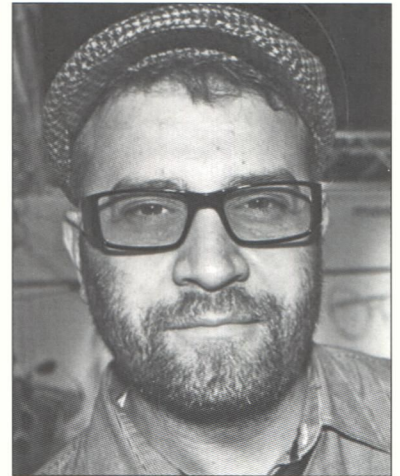
Other key issues that the Board focussed on over the weekend were the need to make good connections with researchers in the field, including the fledging Research Network, to continue to advocate for a national policy framework on the elimination of restrictive practices, to commission the development of a new logo that reflected the new name and to commission the development of a new website that would include more information for members. Finally the Board completed its annual review of membership fees. It was agreed that there would be an increase of approximately 6% in fees from 2011/2012. The new fees will be ratified by each region at their forthcoming annual general meetings.

I hope you enjoy this month's IDA. The focus is on Direct Support Professionals in this issue. But do watch out for the usual updates and invitations to nominate colleagues and fellow

# Support for Disability Workers

A Churchill Fellow shares the highlights of his research fellowship trip

by Sam Murray



It has been said that if you change the expectation, you will change the outcome. I was recently awarded a Churchill Fellowship to examine the expectations of direct support staff in the United Kingdom, Norway, Canada and the USA. The sole purpose of the tour was to examine the way in which other countries support the role of the disability support worker (DSW) to achieve positive outcomes for people with a disability.

The research trip covered five countries across ten and a half weeks, and was made up of meetings and visits with DSWs, people with a disability, universities, disability service providers, hospitals, acute mental health units, government and non-government departments.

One aspect to be considered before the trip, and indeed upon my return, was the perceived intent of my project. First and foremost I am a disability support worker. I have been for over a decade and this is what drives my passion. I work day to day with the people that support people with a disability and of course spend most of my working life in a direct support role.

And it is these experiences over time that has led to exploring how to enhance the support we provide the supporters.

There is much ongoing debate about the notion of professionalising the disability support workforce. In my opinion this should not be about mandating the need for tertiary qualifications or similar for all DSWs. Indeed, it

would be an over-simplified solution to establish this as the norm.

More importantly, such a notion fails to recognise the sophistication of the role and the already existing skills required to support people with a disability to lead the lives they want to lead. Many of these skills, values and attitudes cannot be captured in current educational settings.

What is required is a consistent professional development program for all DSWs that is standardised across the sector, with specificity applied to each individual setting to accommodate the nuances of each job role requirement.

The widely accepted clinical definition for intellectually disability comes from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). AAIDD define intellectual disability, as being a condition that is identified by below average intelligence and limitations in adaptive behaviour, manifesting before age 18.

I mention this because in the early 1980's Marc Gold, in his *Try Another Way* approach, proposed an alternative definition of intellectual disability; namely that it is a condition that 'requires above average training procedures and superior assets in adaptive behaviour on the part of society which will be manifested throughout the person's life.'

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## editorial

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members for the annual awards, presented at the annual conference, in Brisbane later this year.

Finally, on behalf of all ASSID members, I extend my congratulations to Glen Jose, who was awarded a Public Service Medal in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Glen has been a long-standing and committed member of ASSID Victoria, and has served on the Australasian Board in various capacities, including as Treasurer.

Well done Glen!

**Cheers, Sue**

# Support for Disability Workers

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There is an urgent need to develop a better understanding of the concepts inherent behind the terminology; training versus professional development. It is one thing to send DSWs to a training session on any given topic, whether it is positive behaviour support, autism awareness, how to lead a team, conflict resolution or any number of other topic; but what is missing from this training, is the opportunity to provide adequate assessment of the workers' understanding and application.

In short, training does not address competence. Professional development, as proposed by Marc Gold's *Try Another Way* approach, puts the responsibility back to the sector to ensure that DSWs are equipped with all the necessary skills and attitudes to ensure positive outcomes. It is not sufficient to hope that DSWs will 'get the job done' without competency-based 'on the job' assessment to ensure application of the skills training.

One of the key findings from my tour was the important role of a registration and regulation system such as the one operating in the United Kingdom.

The Care Standards Act (2000) established the General Social Carer Council and the Scottish Social Services Council to oversee the workforce supporting people with a disability. Improved standards have been achieved primarily through registration of all social carers, the regulation of the sector through the provision of a Code of Ethics and a set of standards for both employees and employers. Within the standards is a set of minimum levels of qualification.

Currently, the approved qualification is a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) or Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ), both similar to a Certificate 3 or 4 in Disability here in Australia.

Another key finding was the use of online technology to enhance the skills of DSWs.

The College of Direct Support set up in Minneapolis, under the auspices of the Institute for Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, is a thorough and expansive online system of development that sets realistic and achievable standards for the DSW workforce through the use of topic specific modules.

The modules are easy to use for all levels of computer literacy and are complemented by on the job training and portfolio compilation.

The additional benefits of this systems, are that it can also be used for effective induction, ongoing short term interventions such as pandemic training and the like, as



well as acting as a database tracking what level staff are at and what areas still require supports. It can be tailored to specific service sites and individual learners.

I visited a number of service providers currently using the College of Direct Support as a means of developing staff and was interested to see the difference on service quality between the providers that did not effectively use the College, or were not using it at all, in comparison to those that were using it to its full potential.

The difficulty in utilising the College of Direct Support in Australia is the cultural and legislative content that would need to be amended to reflect a local context.

Although these were the two significant areas of the project that I believe can enhance the current Australian disability workforce landscape, there were a number of other broader visits and observations worth sharing.

One was shown to me by Michael Brown, of the University of Napier and the National Health Service in Edinburgh. Michael showed me around the local disability services with some amazing programs to be seen. One highlight was meeting with the Community Learning Disability Nurse team that have a full time post at the three major hospitals in Edinburgh.

Interestingly, although in recent years Australia has seen the closing of the register for Mental Retardation Nurses, Scotland and the United Kingdom are seeing a strong re-emergence of this role in the community.

The Community Learning Disability Nurse in these posts acts as a liaison between individuals and organisations with their own hospital staff. They meet with ward nurses and doctors to plan and prepare for planned admissions, and act as an immediate font of knowledge and support for emergency admissions.

Marilyn Sangster, of the University of Edinburgh is currently completing her PhD examining the closure of the register in Australia, at the same time as the growing support of the role back in Edinburgh.



# Staff Support and Satisfaction

by Vivienne C. Riches

BA, Dip. Ed., MA (Hons), PhD, MAPS



The Annual General Meeting for ASID NSW/ACT held on the 29th October 2009 provided opportunity for members to explore some of the issues involved in staff support and satisfaction. These are critical issues in the disability field as currently it is a struggle to attract sufficient competent and committed workers to staff our government and non government run accommodation and day support services, and we face significant challenges retaining and rewarding competent staff, and nurturing professionalism within the industry.

A brief presentation by the author provided a rationale of how and why good staff support and practices are critical, as they affect the behaviour and quality of life

of people with intellectual disabilities whom staff support as well as affecting staff satisfaction and retention rates. Reference was made to the ASID Code of Ethics (ASID, (2007) and Quality in Practice information on staff hiring and evaluation (The Council on Quality and Leadership, 2007), as the need for clear expectations for staff were outlined.

Typically, staff training is assumed to be the most effective and efficient method of better equipping staff, reducing staff stress and changing staff behaviour, and to this end professional development often targets complex concerns such as challenging behaviour. However, as Cullen (1992) stated "*staff can be taught to behave appropriately in our training ses-*

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## Support for Disability Workers

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Where to from here? The Fellowship Trust requires a full report outlining my trip and the findings. However, there needs to be some robust debate and gathering of experts to ensure that progress can be made to further bolster the skill set of the DSW workforce across this country.

We have so much to be proud of both within the disability sector and in a broader Australian context.

We have seen the closure of most of large institutions around the country and we continue to work hard at shutting down those that remain. We have seen, in Victoria, the inception of the Office of the Senior Practitioner to oversee the reduction of restrictive interventions being used. We have some of the best early intervention programs in the world. We have national reform currently being considered to introduce a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

These are great feathers in our collective caps and have established a laudable legacy to pass on to future

generations. More importantly each of those feathers represents greater outcomes for people with a disability in Australia.

Now it is time to ensure that we are cementing some significant professional development for the DSW workforce across all States and Territories. Another legacy we can create today, that we can leave behind for the generations that follow.

The Productivity Commission is currently reviewing disability care and support and it seems timely to capture this focus and make some real difference. If you are interested in providing commentary on the professionalisation of the disability support workforce then please contact me on [sam.murray@yooralla.com.au](mailto:sam.murray@yooralla.com.au)

The full report will be available on the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust website at the end of June. [www.churchilltrust.com.au](http://www.churchilltrust.com.au) ♦

# Staff Support and Satisfaction

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sions but they do not necessarily behave appropriately when they return to their work settings. In fact it would not be too strong to say that they rarely do so”.

Could it also be that lack of understanding of what staff require can result in imposed training strategies that in the long term may be irrelevant or inappropriate to staff needs? Campbell (2007, p.146) albeit in reference to training in challenging behaviour, claimed that “short term staff training strategies may meet immediate perceived staff training needs, but without a longer term and more comprehensive assessment of the mechanisms underlying staff behaviour, these strategies may be a ‘false economy’, which do not change how staff view or respond to challenging behaviour, or the frequency or intensity of the behaviours themselves.”

Practice leadership is one strategy that is being increasingly introduced in many jurisdictions as a method of better supporting and equipping staff. Data from one evaluation project were shared that piloted a type of practice leadership position. The aim was to better support staff who were working in community residential settings with consumers who had intellectual disability and complex health and/or behaviour problems. The evaluation included an examination of the support functions provided by the pilot positions and the support and satisfaction levels of the recipient direct care staff. Evaluation data indicated some direct care staff were resistant to support and training from superiors they did not know or trust, and instead these staff looked to and valued support from peers with whom they worked. Other staff welcomed training and support from practice leader type positions and preferred and valued support from management and support personnel over peers (Riches & Stancliffe, 2006). Overall, the study concluded that managers and staff who support direct care staff need to have a range of skills and competencies as well as personal qualities that are critical for building trust, influence and fairness in the workplace.

Attendees at the ASID NSW AGM were from a range of organisations and all were invited to consider and discuss these issues. It is recognised that participants were not a representative sample of workers in the disability field. Instead, participants were voluntary attendees and individual or organisational members of ASID, so responses must be viewed in this light. However, results are shared

Scale (range)	Mean	SD	*Mean %	*Range
Role Clarity (4-20)	16.5	2.6	82.5	50-100%
Coping Resources (4-20)	15.7	4.0	78.5	40-100%
Risk factors (4-20)	15.8	3.1	79.0	50-100%
Supportive People (4-20)	15.1	3.3	75.5	45-100%
Job Satisfaction (5-25)	18.4	4.4	73.6	50-96%
3SQ Total (25-105)	81.6	15.3	77.7	54-99%

**Table 1: Results on Staff Support & Satisfaction Questionnaire (3SQ)**

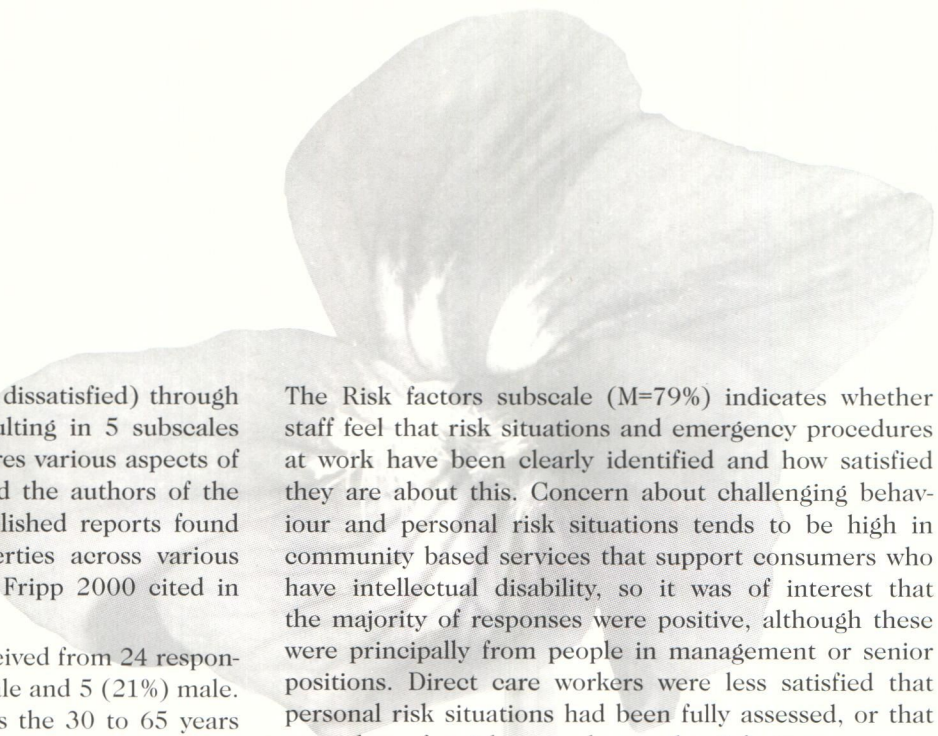
\*Raw scores were converted to % scores for ease of comparison across scales

in the hope this will stimulate further discussion and debate around this important topic.

Specific questions were posed around what staff need, what assists staff to become competent, supported and/or satisfied at work, and what strategies empower staff to provide quality care and behave professionally in the workplace. Small groups were formed and participants worked collaboratively to determine what they considered to be essential staff support needs. Responses were recorded, shared, and discussed, and results were subsequently collated. The following major themes were all identified as equally critical.

1. *Fair Working conditions*: including fair pay, fair and safe working conditions, professional development opportunities.
2. *Positive support*: Positive practices that provide encouragement, acknowledgement, recognition and support, as well as debriefing, supervision and clinical and operational supervision that empowers the individual.
3. *Good communication*: Open two way communication, regular team meetings, and involvement in discussions prior to big decisions being made.
4. *Clear expectations and role descriptions*: Clear role or position descriptions and guidelines leading to good understanding of what the job entails and the standards expected, and professional boundaries.

Attendees were also invited to complete the *Staff Support & Satisfaction Questionnaire (3SQ)* (Harris, & Rose, 2002a). This is a quick and easy method of gathering information about staff perceptions of support and satisfaction in work settings. There are 21 items that are



scored from 1 (very unclear/ very dissatisfied) through 5 (very clear/ very satisfied), resulting in 5 subscales and a Total Score. The 3SQ measures various aspects of the major themes listed above, and the authors of the Questionnaire claim several unpublished reports found good reliability and validity properties across various scales (David, 1997; Harris 1998; Fripp 2000 cited in Harris & Rose, 2002b).

Completed questionnaires were received from 24 respondents, 19 (79%) of whom were female and 5 (21%) male. Ages were distributed evenly across the 30 to 65 years age bracket. The majority worked in community settings (92%) and 54% had been employed with the same organisation for over 5 years, while 17% had been in their work place for less than 12 months. Respondents were employed as managers (11), case managers (5), support or training coordinators (5), team leaders (1), administrative support personnel (1) and other i.e. allied health professionals and academics (3). Again it is recognised that this was not a representative but a biased sample. Many respondents were experienced, held senior positions and are known to openly support best practice and high ethical standards. Results are shared for the purposes of stimulating interest and further work in this area.

Overall, support and satisfaction levels were good to very good for the majority of those sampled, according to the Total Scale mean (M=77.7%), the sub scale means (73.6% to 82.5%), and the maximum scores obtained across scales (96% to 100%). Greatest satisfaction was recorded on the Role Clarity subscale (M= 82.5%), which indicates how clear staff feel about the main objectives of their job, the expectations of their immediate manager, the limits of their responsibility and how satisfied their manager is with their work (see Table 1 for results).

However, the minimum range for the Total scale (54%) and the subscale ranges (40% - 50%) indicate there was great variation across respondents, and some individual dissatisfaction across all subscales. The lowest individual scores and highest dissatisfaction were recorded on the coping resources subscale, which measures the availability of counselling support and practical help at work and staff satisfaction with this. There were also several respondents who registered some dissatisfaction on the supportive people subscale, which examines staff perceptions of the support they receive from their immediate manager and their colleagues and how satisfied they are with this.

The Risk factors subscale (M=79%) indicates whether staff feel that risk situations and emergency procedures at work have been clearly identified and how satisfied they are about this. Concern about challenging behaviour and personal risk situations tends to be high in community based services that support consumers who have intellectual disability, so it was of interest that the majority of responses were positive, although these were principally from people in management or senior positions. Direct care workers were less satisfied that personal risk situations had been fully assessed, or that procedures for risk were clear and satisfactory.

The Job Satisfaction subscale (M=73.6%) explores whether staff often think about finding another job; whether they feel that they belong to a valued staff group and how satisfied they are with their current work situation; their level involvement in decision making; and the degree of support they receive in their job. Dissatisfaction was evident from a number of respondents, as 5 (21%) indicated that they had thought about changing jobs. An additional person who responded positively on this occasion noted on their form that their results would have been very different and quite negative a month previously, when employed in a job in which they did not feel supported or valued. This person had changed jobs as a direct consequence of dissatisfaction.

Finally, a number of respondents commented that while they received some support and attempted to provide support to others within their workplaces, attendance at ASID events provided a forum for networking and gaining emotional and instrumental support they did not get elsewhere. One respondent commented that other attempts to establish collegial support had been unsuccessful. It is pleasing to see that ASID does provide an important and valued support role for members, but ASID events currently attract a very small percentage of staff who are working in the intellectual disability field. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity, particularly when considering what are staff support needs and constructive ways to address these.

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# Individualised Funding

**D**ear Sue,  
As a visitor from the UK to Australia for the past four years to look at service delivery for people with disabilities, I would like to comment on some of the contents of IDA 2010.

I am a parent of a son with an intellectual disability, I have a seat on the National Valuing Families Forum in the UK, a graduate of Partners in Policymaking, Personalisation Rep for the North of UK and current Chair of West Lanes Peer Support Group. [www.ukpar.org](http://www.ukpar.org)

Some interesting comments are made regarding Inclusion and Community Support, all aimed at people with disabilities being part of the community. But unfortunately no strategy as to how these aims can be achieved.

Being involved in disability issues based on bringing up my own son, I would like to offer my own thoughts on the matter.

If children with a disability were integrated with other kids at the start of school age, they would have the opportunity to improve their social skills, social behaviour and learn how to make friends. By placing a child in a "special" school, society is segregating that child from his peers who have the natural ability to demonstrate these skills.

The word "special" has been the downfall of people with disabilities for decades, fortunately this is changing rapidly in the UK. Our sons and daughters are not special in the sense that governments mean, they are special to us their parents and family, but so is everybody else. Our sons and daughters are different, but there is nothing wrong in being different. If you took a cinema audience of a thousand people, you would find they were all different from each other. But although we are all different from each other, we all have one thing in common, we are all human beings and should all be treated equally as such.

If these children grew up with their peers from the start of school, through their teenage years and into adulthood accessing the social organizations like Cubs & Brownies, Scouts & Guides and other social clubs. You would find that by reaching adulthood in the company of their peers, the disability would become the norm and the person would be seen rather than the disability.

What is needed are laws to be changed to enable this to happen, already people in the UK have the right to send their disabled child to a comprehensive school, irrespective to what the psychologist says.

The next step is for people with disabilities to have the right to take more control over their lives and have more

## Staff Support and Satisfaction

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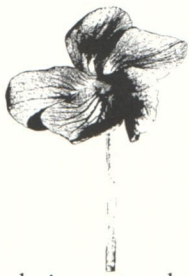
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choice as to who delivers their care. We have no problem with this in the UK as everybody has the right to have the value of their care paid to them direct, they then can choose if they want to use an agency for their staff or employ their own staff.

In Australia the system is vastly different, it seems that a persons money is held by a "service provider" who also does the assessment AND supplies the staff. Now if people in authority cannot see a conflict of interest there, then they should not be doing the job they are paid for. Recently I was in a house in Victoria when the carer phoned in to say she could only do one of the three shifts she was being paid for. The service provider had no one else to send so they had to struggle themselves. I wonder if the salary for those two shifts that were not worked, were repaid to the State by the service provider?? In the UK it would be illegal for a service provider to have complete control over the assessment, funds and staff.

Australia is lagging far behind the rest of the world in service delivery for people with disabilities. Your laws need to change to allow people with disabilities to employ their own staff, at the moment your laws prevent that. Your social services seem reluctant to pay the Individual Budgets directly to the individual, instead they employ a very expensive service provider to hold the money. WHY??

A huge saving is made by paying the money direct to the end user, by cutting out the middle man I predict a saving of 25% on your state social care budget.

I wonder if there is a parents movement in Australia that would be prepared to "encourage" state politicians to go down this road in the same way we did in the UK.

Change never comes from the top, it always comes from the bottom up. Perhaps the most powerful tool that can be used to achieve this is your newly published Human Rights entitlement.

I do hope that ASSID can play their part in improving service delivery to the disabled people of Australia, and give them the dignity they deserve and that people in other countries already enjoy.

**Les Scaife**

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**ASSID**

**membership**

**details**

**4 membership types:**

Organisation / Individual / Student / Associate

**to join:**

download a form from [www.assid.org.au](http://www.assid.org.au), or, contact the registrar at the address below

**to current members:**

please make sure you don't miss out keep your contact details up to date

**registrar:**

phone 1800 644 741 PO Box 84 Rosanna VIC 3084 Australia [assid.nat@bigpond.com](mailto:assid.nat@bigpond.com)

## Queensland

by Lisa Fraser

Qld ASSID promoted the first of the 2010 Site Visits on the 21st of April for FSG Australia. FSGA took the opportunity to host this event at their Sunnybank premise and provided ASSID members and others an opportunity to network and learn more about the various programs and services offered by FSGA. FSGA is a secular not-for-profit community organisation committed to a range of human service programs in disability, dementia, child safety, mental health, family and carer roles, and mental illness. Attendees of the Visit were surprised to learn of the diverse range of services and models FSGA engages in for people whose lives have been affected by disability. FSGA shared their commitment to the philosophy and principles of 'The Art of Gentle Teaching' which underpins their engagement with all stakeholders. ASSID Qld extends a warm thank you to FSGA for an informative and welcoming Visit for all involved.

Energy and excitement are growing for the Australasian ASSID Conference, *Seeking Excellence*, cosponsored by the Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine (AADDM) and the Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support. The Conference Committee have been engaged in a range of activities including finalising abstract submissions; applying for FaHCSIA funding to support people with disabilities to attend the conference; planning a diverse range of speakers and programs at the conference including a *Hypothetical* which will provide an opportunity for conference participants and a panel of experts to imagine and explore a case study and offer rich perspectives on possibilities; *Fifteen Minutes of Fame* will provide small NGOs an opportunity to showcase their programs, and the Committee is pleased to now confirm notable keynote speakers including:

- Dr Chris Oliver, Professor of Neurodevelopmental Disorders at the University of Birmingham
- Dr Jennifer Zarcone, Director of the Community Consultation Program in the Department of Pediatrics University of Rochester Medical Centre
- Deb Keen MAPS, deputy Dean of Research and Associate Professor in the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University
- Dr Helen Leonard, Clinician and NHMRC Senior Research Fellow
- Dianne Pendergast, Qld Adult Guardian and National Chair of the Australian Guardianship and Administration Council
- Sue Boyce, Senator and Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission

The draft program will be available on the ASSID website in mid-June and early bird registrations close on 30 June 2010. ASSID would like to thank the generosity and support of the following parties for their Conference sponsorship: Department of Communities, Qld Government, Nova Employment; Life Without Barriers; Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE; and TAFE Queensland; and Keynote sponsors, Endeavour Foundation and Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support.

ASSID, AADAM and the Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support, extend a warm invitation to engage in *Seeking Excellence* together at the 45th ASSID Australasian Conference in Brisbane in September 2010!

## New Zealand

by Gary Wyatt

Quietly working away in the background, the NZASID council members have very busy with planning for a number of national and local events for the remainder of 2010. With our conference approaching in the next few months, details further down, and a number of speakers keen to undertake local events around New Zealand, we certainly haven't been sitting back and enjoying the mild weather over the last few months.

More details on these local events will be released once confirmed over the next month or so and these details will be posted on the New Zealand Branch page of the ASSID website along with the usual email mail-outs. If you are keen to be included on the NZASID email list, please email me at [gary@accessability.org.nz](mailto:gary@accessability.org.nz) and place "NZASID mail list" in the subject line.

In regards to disability sector news in New Zealand, on the 14th April 2010, a new peak body The New Zealand Disability Support Network (NZDSN) was officially launched in Wellington by the Minister for Disability Issues, Rt Hon Tariana Turia. Video links were made to

regional launches in Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Christchurch and Dunedin. NZDSN is an incorporated society of members, represented by a Board of Governance. The founding board will include chairs of other peak bodies such as the National Residential Intellectual Disability provider group (NRID), The Association for Supported Employment in New Zealand (ASENZ) and Supported Living New Zealand (SLNZ), supplemented by others elected or co-opted from the broader membership. While primarily focused on the national context, NZDSN also aims to join the global community in working towards the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society

The chairman of the NZDSN Establishment Board, John Taylor said at its launch that "NZDSN aims to build a strong community based support service sector that contributes to a society that values the lives and enhances the full participation of disabled people,"

Planning for our 2010 conference is well underway with registrations now open. This year the conference travels to the Southern City of Dunedin, famous for its Scottish heritage, wonderful coastline and also its close proximity to the Southern Alps ski fields. The conference will open around midday on the 24th August 2010 and will close around midday on the 26th August. This is to assist those who maybe flying in through Dunedin Airport. More information on Dunedin City, including accommodation, can be at [www.cityofdunedin.com](http://www.cityofdunedin.com)

The Call for Papers is still open and details about this can be found on the New Zealand branch page on the ASSID website. Also available on the website is the conference registration form, which includes details on discounted accommodation rates at the conference venue.

This year our keynote speakers will be:

Professor Patricia O'Brien, Professor of Disability Studies, Centre for Developmental Disabilities Studies, Northern Clinical School, University of Sydney.

Dr Jennifer Torr, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Developmental Disability Health, Victoria.

Dr Brigit Mirfin-Veitch, Director, Donald Beasley Institute.

The theme of our conference this year is "*Transitions – Perspectives and Practices*" and we are welcoming presentations regarding

- Health
- Education by/for people with disabilities
- Child/youth transition into adulthood
- Mental Health
- Integration
- Ageing
- Parenting

And as always, NZASID is keen to provide a conference thread around Forensic and Dual Disability issues and we welcome presenters and participants from those fields as well.

## NSW & ACT

By Tina Purdon

Following the creation of our Strategic Plan as noted in the last IDA, the NSW / ACT Committee have made progress towards a number of the outlined Goals.

Planning is well underway for our State Conference and all ASSID Members and their colleagues are of course invited.

If you are able to get to Sydney for the Conference, we are positive that our State Conference will be very much worth attending! (And as the Conference is on a Friday, maybe stay and enjoy beautiful Sydney for the weekend!)

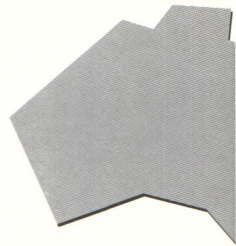
The theme for the State Conference is *Support* and presentations will be relevant to 3 areas:

1. Providing Support
2. Receiving Support
3. Recognition of Support

We are fortunate to have Professor Emeritus Roy I. Brown from University of Calgary, Canada as our Opening Keynote Speaker with the presentation; Complex Intellectual Disabilities – challenges for families, services and community support.

Professor Patricia O'Brien, Professor of Disability Studies, Centre for Disability Studies, Northern Clinical School, University of Sydney speak about her experiences at Trinity College, Ireland on developing

*continued page 12*



inclusive research opportunities where people with disabilities are partners in research.

Our keynote speakers will be complemented by a range of presentations by people with disabilities, service providers and researchers, speaking about their perspectives on 'Support'.

We are also very pleased to announce the inaugural ASSID NSW Disability Support Professional Recognition Award. This Award is designed to recognise the outstanding contributions made by disability support professionals in relation to the support they provide to people with disabilities in NSW and ACT. We have received sponsorship from Edmen Community Staffing Solutions and Disability Professionals Australasia for the Award, and thank them for their support of this very worthwhile initiative. This will be an exciting inclusion to our State Conference and we encourage nominations for the Award from across NSW and the ACT.

The NSW / ACT State Conference will be held on Friday 20th August, 2010 at Liverpool in Sydney. Please contact [ward@unitingcaredisability.org.au](mailto:ward@unitingcaredisability.org.au) for Program information and Registration forms.

As a new initiative for our meetings, the NSW / ACT Committee has decided to include an 'Ethics Discussion'. Committee members will be proposing current ethical concerns from either research or practice, for a short discussion and debate. We are hoping that much food for thought and lively conversation results from this initiative!

The Committee has also been discussing the proposed name and logo change and these discussions have informed input to be taken to the ASSID National Board meeting in May. We wish the attendees at this meeting all the best as they look to progress ASSID into the future.

## Western Australia

by Angus Buchanan

The second event of the year was a workshop - *A Practical Guide to Ethical Decision Making in Mealtime Management* presented by Jodie Ellis. Jodie is an experienced accredited practicing dietitian specialising in the areas of palliative care and developmental disabilities. Jodie is currently undertaking her PhD investigating the psychosocial impact of food and nutrition on palliative

care patients and their families. Two workshops were sold out and attended by over 70 people.

Planning has commenced to run a research forum later in the year. The intention will be to bring together researchers and interested people who would like to discuss, share and explore latest research being conducted in Western Australia. This one day will be in partnership with Curtin University of Technology.

ASSID WA is proud to announce the Guy Hamilton Scholarship for Honours students which will be presented on July 27th 2010. The Scholarship will be awarded annually to an honours student at a Western Australian University conducting research in the areas of intellectual disability. The scholarship is named in honour of Dr Guy Hamilton, who is internationally recognised for his outstanding pioneering work in the development of contemporary service approaches for people with intellectual disabilities.

The State ASSID Conference will be held in early September and we are pleased that Professor Patricia O'Brien, Professor of Disability Studies, Director of Centre for Disability Studies (CDS) has agreed to be the key note speaker. The theme of this year's conference is Seeking Excellence (which is intentionally the same as the Australasian theme) and exploring the questions:

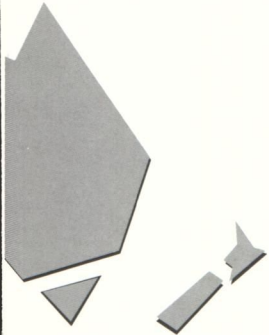
- \* What does excellence mean for a person with an intellectual disability?
- \* What do excellent services look like?
- \* How do attitudes and policies help or hinder in the pursuit of excellence?

Look out for registrations details soon!

## South Australia

by Denice Whardall

In March state elections were held in South Australia and Dignity for Disability candidate Kelly Vincent won a seat in the Legislative Council, becoming the nation's youngest parliamentarian. Ms Vincent has made Australian parliamentary history by being the youngest elected Upper House MP in Australia's history, the youngest female ever elected to an Australian parliament, and the first person who uses a wheelchair to be elected in the SA Parliament. The success of Dignity for Disability sends an important message to politicians around Australia that



the community supports the rights of those living with a disability.

South Australia has a Social Inclusion Board with the focus on providing the South Australian Government with advice on innovative ways to address some of the most difficult social problems. The Social Inclusion Board has been charged with developing a Disability Blue Print for South Australia and the Board are currently consulting with South Australian community. The ASSID SA committee is meeting with the Board to discuss how individuals with an intellectual disability and ASSID Members can have input into the Blue Print and we look forward to making a contribution.

The SA committee is currently organising training on the Art of Gentle Teaching and workshops will be held in the next few months.

Minda is a large non government not for profit disability organisation for individuals with an intellectual disability. Recently Minda hosted an Open Mind Seminar with Professor Jim Mansell and Dr. Patricia O'Brien that was open to other agencies and interested individuals such as ASSID members and this was followed by a Master Class which allowed a small group of people to have a more intimate conversation with Professor Jim Mansell and Dr. Patricia O'Brien related to restrictive practices. ASSID SA Committee would like to thank Minda for their generosity in sharing their resources with the wider disability sector and in doing so providing opportunities for sector development.

Several Workshops by SA ASSID Members are scheduled for the Northern Territory. The members are volunteering their time to conduct the workshops. At two scheduled workshops are in Darwin and we are aware that Alice Springs is a long way from Darwin and we look forward to workshops in other areas in the future.

## Victoria

by Sam Murray

Having just returned recently from a research trip overseas (see article), I am just bringing myself up to speed with the activities of the region.

Preparations are well underway for the DSW10 Conference at Melbourne University (Nov 17-18). This year's conference theme is: *10 Years On: looking back, but moving*

*forward*. We are asking presenters this year to focus on what has brought us to where we are today and where services, supports and policy should be heading.

One of our keynote speakers is Karen Nankervis, who was the founding chair of the DSW conference a decade ago, so it seem fitting to invite her back to address the delegation. In her address, "*Rights, Risks and Restrictive Practices: A retrospective and prospective view of supporting people who exhibit challenging behaviours.*"

We welcome back the Office of the Senior Practitioner (OSP) as a conference partner. The OSP will again run a stream on the conference program addressing behaviour supports for people with an intellectual disability – with specific focus on practical solutions to enhancing quality of life and reducing restrictive interventions, and the human rights agenda.

Other activities with Victoria include:

- taking an active role in the revitalisation of the Disability Support Worker of the Year awards, in conjunction with the Department of Human Services (DHS) National Disability Services (NDS), Disability Professionals Victoria (DPV).;
- co-establishing a group of professionals, in conjunction with VALID and the Centre for Developmental Disability health Victoria (CDDHV), to address the way in which services are supporting people with autism and complex behaviours;
- continuing our partnership with DPV to establish a Disability Support Worker Special Interest Group; and
- supporting a project with Victorian service providers, professional bodies and academics to examine workforce development of DSW's across the state.

Finally, we acknowledge the hard work of Louise Mountford our Regional Secretary who has had to step down from her role, and committee, for personal reasons. Thank you Louise, for your time and commitment.

## Tasmania

No report this edition ♦

# welcome

## ASSID

### Executive Officer



The Board is pleased to welcome our first Executive Officer to the ASSID Board: **Kerrie Akkermans**.

Kerrie joined the association earlier this year in a part-time capacity to undertake a range of duties to support the aims and objectives of ASSID.

She will be responsible for developing and implementing strategies to renew the profile, relevance of and business opportunities open to ASSID and its members.

Kerrie's first task was to undertake a survey of members to identify what are the key issues, concerns and hopes that members feel are important to consider for the future of ASSID.

Kerrie personally contacted at least 15% of the membership and her key findings were presented to the Board at the annual mid-year meeting in May. Further information will soon be available on the ASSID webpage.

Kerrie has an impressive history as an expert in researching an organisation's market and then reviewing their business processes to ensure that the product or service meets customer expectations

Working on specific projects and providing consulting advice or training, she has assisted many companies to improve their productivity and profit levels.

Having expertise in both marketing and systems means she is able to recommend strategies that consider both the front and the back end of business operation.

All of her work is underpinned by the philosophy of adding value through: -

- Innovative processes
- Minimising risk
- Integrating systems to relevant standards ie ISO9000, AS 4801

Kerrie holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Communications. She has expertise in quality management, aged care standards business consultancy. Kerrie has been involved in a number of Boards in the past and is currently serving on the Board of Elizabeth Bowery Lodge. She is a Registered Consultant with The Institute of Management Consultants. ♦

## IDA Advertising

- Display advertisement:  
\$176 (incl. GST) for quarter page (artwork supplied).
- Pre-printed inserts:  
\$242 (incl. GST). Weight restrictions apply.

Please contact:

The Editorial Assistant, Intellectual Disability Australasia  
email: [krvt@optusnet.com.au](mailto:krvt@optusnet.com.au)

*Note: acceptance and publication or distribution of material does not indicate endorsement of a position, program, material or product by the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability.*

# 10th ASSID disability support worker Conference



Call for Papers and Registrations are now open. Visit [www.assid.org.au](http://www.assid.org.au) for forms, updates and further information. On line payment options available.

Where: University of Melbourne,  
Parkville Victoria

When: November 17 & 18, 2010.

Timetables will be available after call for papers closes July 30th .

## Topics Planned:

- \* Challenging Behaviour
- \* Restrictive Practices
- \* Autism Spectrum Disorder
- \* Professionalising the workforce- moving into the next generation
- \* Everyday Practice and Services and Resources
- \* Legal Issues and the DSW
- \* Positive Supports
- \* Communication
- \* Human Rights

## Presenters include:

- \* Professor Karen Nankervis. Director, Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support, University of Queensland. A retrospective.
- \* Office of the Senior Practitioner. Restrictive Practices, Positive Supports and Human Rights.
- \* Wendy Lawson. Psychologist, author and inspirational speaker.

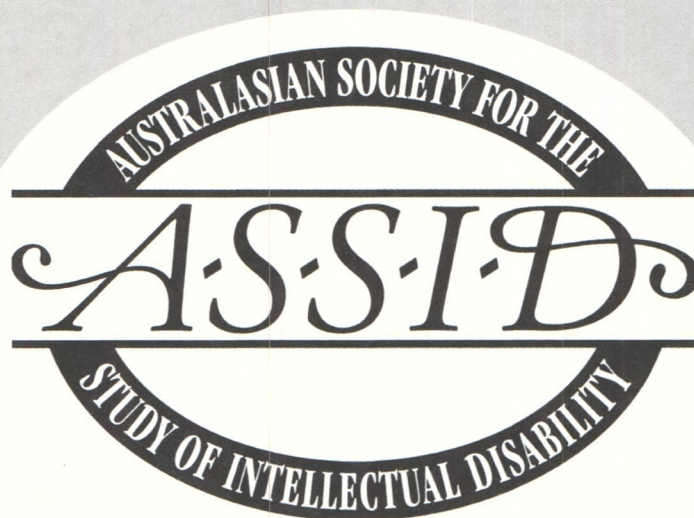
Wendy is a popular speaker who will share her views and ideas on living life as a person with Autism. She will discuss her poetry to illustrate what it is like for her living with Autism.

- \* Robyn Steward Co-Presenter with Wendy Lawson.

Robyn, an artist who paints with her fingers, will be sharing her workshops with a young adult with Asperger\*s Autism from the UK. She will be using her artwork to illustrate in a practical way aspects of life with Autism as she sees it. [www.robysteward.com](http://www.robysteward.com). ♦

call for nominations

# ASSID Awards for 2010



## ASSID Distinguished Service Citation

Nominations should be in writing and, ideally, submitted electronically. There is no specific application form that needs to be completed. The nomination should be accompanied by a brief biography of the person being nominated. This biography should include details that establish the nominee's distinguished contribution to A.S.S.I.D., which had enhanced ASSID's profile and/or operation. The nomination should be signed by at least two current ASSID members. Current members of the Australasian Board are not eligible for nomination.

## Honorary Title, Fellow of ASSID (FASSID)

The title may be conferred on individual ASSID members (including all classes of individual membership) in recognition of the member's exceptional and significant contribution to the field of intellectual disability. This contribution will have been in one or more of the following areas:

- Research,
- Service provision (including service development or improvement, administration),
- Advocacy and/or self-advocacy,
- Professional practice, and
- Teaching and staff training.

Nominations need only address one of these areas, but may address more than one if the nominee has made an exceptional contribution in more than one area. Nomination forms, with full details are available from The Secretariat.

Individual members who are awarded the title Fellow of ASSID (FASSID) will receive a certificate, presented at the Annual Conference, and thereafter will have the right to use the title Fellow of ASSID (FASSID). However, Fellow of ASSID (FASSID) is an honorary title, not a class of ASSID membership, and the member will need to continue to pay his or her membership dues to maintain current membership.

The decision to award an ASSID Fellowship is based on the following criteria:

- Exceptional and significant contribution to the field of intellectual disability.
- Substantial duration. (at least 7 years).
- Broad impact across a province or state, nationally or internationally.
- Current financial member of ASSID.
- Nominated and seconded by existing ASSID members.

NOTE - Service to ASSID is not a criterion for selecting ASSID Fellows as the ASSID Distinguished Service Citation focuses of service to ASSID as an organisation.

## ASSID Research Grants

Consistent with Object 2 of ASSID's Constitution ("to promote the research and understanding of intellectual disability") applications are invited from ASSID Members for research grants of no more than \$AD5000.

The following guidelines should be taken into account:

- Projects approved for ASSID support will add to the knowledge base of intellectual disability.
- Applicants for ASSID research grants must be able to provide evidence of approval of their project from a research ethics committee, or provide a commitment to obtain this approval.
- ASSID will encourage partnerships for funding of research with other organisations that share the same values as ASSID. This will not, however, exclude applications by individuals for research grants.
- Items of equipment will not normally be funded.
- The successful applicant(s) will be required to present the outcomes of their research at an ASSID function.
- The decision of the Research Grants Committee, once ratified by the ASSID Australasian Board, is

expressions of interest

## editor IDA

3 Year Term from 2011

**E**xpressions of interest are invited for the honorary position of Editor for the official magazine of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability (ASSID) – IDA

The Editor is an ex-officio member of the ASSID National Council and, in addition to participation in teleconferences and the annual mid-year meeting, attends the ASSID Annual National Conference.

National Council provides financial support to cover out of pocket expenses including conference registration, air fares, and some incidental expenses.

The Editor, in conjunction with other ASSID members, is responsible for attracting and editing articles, book reviews, conference reports, advertising, and regional reports, as well as writing quarterly editorials.

An editorial assistant provides administrative support, and the publications sub-committee of ASSID National Council provides advice and support as required.

Your expression of interest should include: a brief summary of the reasons for your interest, previous experience within the field of intellectual disability, and previous experience in

publication and/or journalism in a volunteer or professional capacity.

Demonstrated proficiency in written communication is essential.

Enthusiasm, a commitment to team work, an ability to set and meet goals, and an interest in ASSID and its objectives are considered essential.

Previous experience in publishing/journalism is an advantage but not a requirement.

On taking up the position of IDA Editor, membership of ASSID is a requirement.

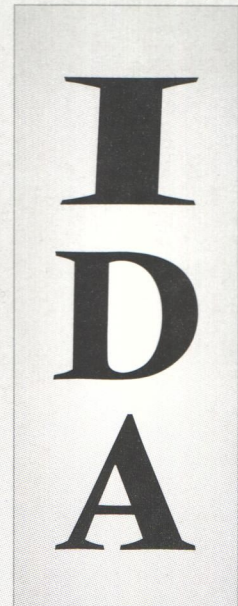
For further information contact Angus Buchanan at a.buchanan@curtin.edu.au

Expressions of Interest are sought immediately via -

email: [assid.national@bigpond.com](mailto:assid.national@bigpond.com)

OR

post: ASSID National Secretariat, PO Box 84  
Rosanna Vic 3084 Australia



## Award Nominations

*continued*

final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

- The Research Grants Committee will seek regular progress reports plus a final report on the progress of the sponsored research, and report the same to the Australasian Board.

Applications should include:

1. The name of the researcher and / or organization(s), and reason for their interest in this research subject.
2. The application should describe the beneficiaries of the project and how it will add to the understanding of intellectual disability.
3. An outline of the project for which support of the research grant is sought, including:
  - method to be employed in gathering data
  - method of analysis

- the power of the project
- consent procedures
- the plans for ethical approval
- a time line with critical milestones and an expected date of completion
- a budget

### FOR ALL AWARDS

Award nominations must be received at The Secretariat by ..Friday 13th August 2010e-mail [assid.nat@bigpond.com](mailto:assid.nat@bigpond.com) and will be reviewed by the Australasian Board with successful nominees announced during the Australasian Conference to be held Brisbane in September 2010. Enquires to The Secretariat: [assid.nat@bigpond.com](mailto:assid.nat@bigpond.com); PO Box 84 Rosanna, Victoria, 3084, Australia; Tel (Aus) 1800 644 741 or from outside Australia Tel. 61 + 3 + 9497 1926 ♦

# Transitions - Perspectives and Practices

## NZASID

### 7th Annual Conference

24th – 26th August 2010  
Scenic Hotel Southern Cross,  
Dunedin



NZASID is pleased to announce it will be holding its 7th Annual Conference from the 24th – 26th August 2010 in Dunedin.

Our theme this year is Transitions – Perspectives and Practices:

- Health
- Education by/for people with disabilities
- Child/youth transition into adulthood
- Mental Health
- Integration
- Ageing
- Parenting

We are pleased to announce the following confirmed keynote speakers:

**Professor Patricia O'Brien,**

Professor of Disability Studies, Centre for Developmental Disabilities Studies, Northern Clinical School, University of Sydney.

**Dr Jennifer Torr,**

Senior Lecturer, Centre for Developmental Disability Health, Victoria.

**Dr Brigit Mirfin-Veitch,**

Director, Donald Beasley Institute.

We invite you to add to the wealth of ideas and work going on within New Zealand and Australasia. Come and share your knowledge and your good practices. As with our past two conferences we will continue to run a Dual Disability stream and researchers and practitioners from mental health and forensic services are encouraged to submit papers within the conference theme.

Please Note: For enquiries other than submission of papers please use the following email with NZ-ASID 2010 in Subject Heading. [gary.wyatt@accessability.org.nz](mailto:gary.wyatt@accessability.org.nz)

Details of how to register for the conference will soon be available.

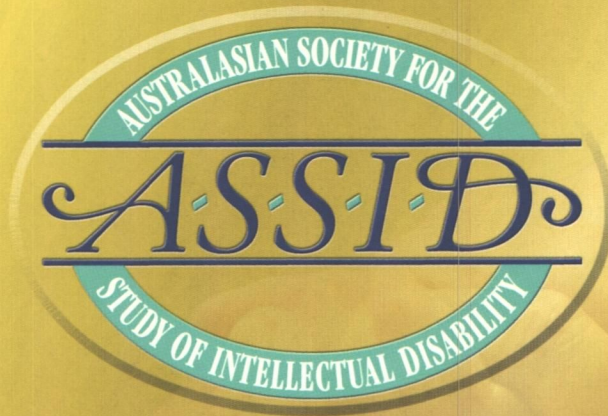
The Call for Papers form is currently available at [www.assid.org.au](http://www.assid.org.au). ♦



## upcoming events

29 - 30 July 2010	<p><b>First International Youth Mental Health Conference-</b></p> <p>Melbourne www.nds.org.au/events/</p>
11 - 13 August 2010	<p><b>ARATA Conference</b></p> <p><i>The tip of the iceberg</i></p> <p>Hobart, Tasmania www.ebility.com/arata/conf.php</p>
24 - 26 August 2010	<p><b>NZASID 7th Annual Conference</b></p> <p>Scenic Hotel Southern Cross, Dunedin enquiries please use the following email with NZ-ASID 2010 in Subject Heading. gary.wyatt@accessability.org.nz</p>
15 - 17 Sept 2010	<p><b>ADDC &amp; ANU International Conference: Disability and Development</b></p> <p>Darwin www.addc.org.au</p>
29 Sept - 1 Oct 2010	<p><b>45th ASSID Conference</b></p> <p><i>Seeking Excellence</i></p> <p>Brisbane, Queensland For more information contact assid2010@optusnet.com.au</p>
20 - 23 Oct 2010	<p><b>3th IASSID-Europe Conference</b></p> <p>Rome, Italy For information, correspond with the IASSID-Europe 2010 Conference Secretariat, Ms. Isabelle Biondi: the.biondis@alice.it.</p>
17 - 18 Nov 2010	<p><b>10th ASSID VICTORIA Disability Support Worker Conference</b></p> <p>Melbourne check www.assid.org.au or email dswconference@rmit.edu.au or telephone 61 (0)3 9925 7899</p>
24-26 Nov 2010	<p><b>The 4th Australasian Orientation and Mobility Conference</b></p> <p>Woemen's College University of Sydney. www.guidedogs.com.au/amc2010</p>

If you want to advertise your conference in IDA's upcoming events section,  
please e-mail: [susan.peden@dsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:susan.peden@dsc.wa.gov.au)



# SEEKING EXCELLENCE

**45th ASSID AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE**  
**29 September - 1 October 2010**  
**Hilton Hotel, Brisbane**

Co-sponsored by AADDM and CEBS

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**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: 9 November 2009**

**REGISTRATIONS OPEN: 9 November 2009**

**Abstract deadline: 1 March 2010**

**Early Bird Registration closes 30 June 2010**

**Standard Registration closes 31 August 2010**

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For more information contact:  
[assid2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:assid2010@optusnet.com.au)  
[www.assid.org.au](http://www.assid.org.au) or 07 3163 2496



Australian Association of  
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