Disability Support Workers
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
18 NOVEMBER 2009, MELBOURNE

30 YEARS OF PROGRESS IN AUSTRALIAN
DISABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT
(1981-2009)

Dr Mike Steer
RIDBC Renwick Centre &
The University of Newcastle

Burton Blatt, 1927-1985
Christmas in Purgatory:
A photographic essay on mental retardation

Burton Blatt & Fred Kaplan (1974)

There is a hell on earth, and in America there is a special inferno.
We were visitors there during Christmas 1965

Wolf Wolfensberger

Originator of Citizen Advocacy and Social Role Valorization,
Foremost propagator of normalization in North America.
THE PRINCIPLE OF NORMALIZATION, 1972

The use of culturally normative means to enable persons to have & maintain life conditions that are at least as good as those of average citizens and as much as possible: enhance or support their

- BEHAVIOUR
- APPEARANCE
- EXPERIENCES
- STATUS & REPUTATION

| FRIENDLESS  | APPEARANCE |
| DISCONTINUOUS EXPERIENCES | VALUED RELATIONSHIPS |
| MATERIALLY POOR | LIVING ARRANGEMENTS |
| LOW SKILLS | INCOME |
| LIFE-WASTING | ETC |
| SEGREGATED | ETC |
Instruments for evaluating human services in terms of SRV:

**PASS** (Wolfensberger & Glenn, 1975)

**PASSING** (Wolfensberger & Thomas, 1983).

**Foundations Forum (NSW)**
The Early Days

Newfoundland

Childrens Home
Exon House

Victoria

Gold Rush Legacy
St Nich’s Hospital
Colanda- electronics
Dax Homes & MR Nurses
Beechworth- Cages & Rotting floors
MRD Admissions & Discharge Committee
From Health to Community Services

The Early Days in Australia

• 1811: First institution, Castle Hill Asylum, established in NSW
• 1852: Adelaide Lunatic Asylum established
• 1860 Royal NSW Institute for Deaf & Blind Children established
• 1866: Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind established
TIMELINE

1901 — Alice Betteridge born: first deafblind person to receive education in Australia.

1910 — Invalid Pension introduced

1933 — First folding, tubular steel wheelchair was invented.

1941 — Discovery of link between rubella in pregnant women and blindness in newborn babies

1945 — Sickness benefit introduced

1948 — Helen Keller visits Australia.

1950s — First sheltered workshops for children with disabilities

1952 — First guide dog training centre in Australia established in Perth

1960s — Text telephones invented

1969 — Vaccine for Rubella became available.

Milestone 1975

UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, Adopted 9 December 1975

- Disabled persons are entitled to same political & civil rights as others, including measures necessary to enable them to become self-sufficient.

- Reiterated rights of disabled persons to education, medical services, & placement services.

- Recognised right to economic & social security, to employment, to live with their families, to participate in social and creative events, to be protected against all exploitation, abuse or degrading behaviour, & to avail themselves of legal aid
Milestone - 1981

International Year of Disabled Persons

UN General Assembly: Themes = equalisation of opportunities, rehabilitation & prevention

Planning began 1976 with National Advisory Council for the Handicapped (NACH) and the Standing Interdepartmental Committee on Rehabilitation (SIDCOR).
National IYDP Unit established Canberra in Department of Social Security

Strategies integrated into national policies
for socio-economic development,
preventive activities include development & use of technology for prevention,
legislation eliminating discrimination on access to facilities, social security, education and employment.

MILESTONE 1987
Disability Council of NSW

Established by Act of Parliament,

Duties

• To advise Government on disability matters;
• To raise community awareness about people with disability and their aspirations; and
• To promote participation by people with disability
MILESTONE
CS(T)DA 1991

• Sets out responsibilities of Commonwealth, States & Territories Governments & types of supports to be provided

National Goals
• Provide range of innovative services
• Shift as far as possible to funding non-government services
• Simplify service access arrangements
• Promote access to generic services, including transfers of existing services to generic services
• Reduce administrative overheads, streamline administration

CS(T)DA SCOPE OF SERVICES

Accommodation Support
Advocacy
Competitive Employment
Independent Living Training
Information Services
Print Disability Services
Recreation Services
Respite Care Services
Supported Employment Services
Early Intervention (Therapy) Services
Other Therapy Services
Research & Development, Assessment, Case Management, Staff Training
COMMONWEALTH

ACROD/NDS

STATES & TERRITORIES

COMMUNITY GROUPS

NGOs etc Recipients of Government $$$

ODD MAN OUT


Medical Advances & Health
Technical Innovation
Education
Participating in Community Life
Employment Opportunities
The Arts
Sport
Finding a Voice
MEDICAL ADVANCES, HEALTH, SAFETY

Development of vaccines to prevent serious illnesses that cause disability

Improvements in care of accident victims

Education about safety on roads & workplace

Education to reduce risks of birth defects caused during pregnancy

Recognising importance of care & understanding for people with disabilities

Technology, Communication & Mobility

• Touch replaces sight: Mountbatten Brailler
• CCTVs (Opticon)
• Talking Computers (JAWS)
• Talking Books (Books in the Sky)
• Sign language (Auslan)
• Hearing Aids
• Text telephones
• Guide Dogs, Wheelchairs, Long canes
Community Participation

- NSW HomeCare
- Meals on Wheels
- Carers
- Disability Standards for Public Transport
- Building Standards/Codes
- Captioning
- Holidaying
- Wheelchair access
- Awareness Events

Advocacy

HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION
(HREOC, 1981)
Purpose: To eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities and promote wider acceptance and inclusion.

NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES
(NDS, 1963)
National industry association for disability services in Australia. It established as ACROD with today over 600 NGO’s as members. NDS plays a critically important role in influencing government legislation and funding with regard to quality services for people with disabilities.
Employment Opportunities

• Business Services (House with No Steps)
• Open Employment Services (CentreLink)

Employer Obligations

• Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Act (1986)
• Disability Discrimination Act (1993)
• Employers required to make adjustments to workplace unless it caused unjustifiable hardship to business
• Workplace Modifications Scheme of Dept of Health & Family Services, businesses eligible for Govt funding to offset cost of adjustments

Australian Greats

1967, Professor Graeme Clark, University of Melbourne, began research on hearing devices surgically implanted in the ear (Cochlear Implants)

http://www.cochlear.com

1970’s Professor Hollows at UNSW. pioneers treatment of trachoma

http://www.hollows.org
LEGISLATION + PHILOSOPHY – IMPLEMENTATION = UNEMPOWERMENT

LEGISLATION + PHILOSOPHY – IMPLEMENTATION = FRAGMENTATION

LEGISLATION + IMPLEMENTATION – PHILOSOPHY = MALADAPTATION

Commonwealth Agencies

- CentreLink
- Commonwealth Care Link
- Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEWR)
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
- Human Rights & Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC)
- NSW Disability Discrimination Legal Centre
NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

BIG BUSINESS

COMPLEX STRUCTURE

HUGE BUDGET

150 Government agencies

130 required under Section 9 DSA to produce formal disability plans

NSW Government Agencies

• Anti- Discrimination Board (1977 Act)
• Dept of Ageing, Disability & Home Care
• Public Trustee NSW
• Office of the Protective Commissioner (merger?)
• Department of Community Services
• Legal Aid NSW
• NSW Dept of Education & Training
• NSW Ombudsman
DEALING WITH GOVERNMENTS

POLITICAL ARM

BUREAUCRATIC ARM

GOVERNMENT INTERESTS
THE PARTY
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
THE PUBLIC
THE MEDIA
THE OPPOSITION
NATIONAL TRENDS
REGULATIONS

SUPPLICANTS

COMMUNITY VOICES

• The Physical Disability Council of NSW Inc (PDCN), the peak body representing people with physical disability across NSW

• NSW Council for Intellectual Disability

A NSW association concerned with the rights and
The Charities

- Northcott Disability Centre
- The Deaf Society
- Spastic Centre
- Forsight Foundation
- Vision Australia
- Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children
- Brain Injury Association
- Down Syndrome NSW Inc
Some early 10 Year Plans

• Calgary Plan (mid-1970’s)

• Victorian 10 Year Plan 1987
  (Neilson Report)
• Disability Directions: Tomorrow’s Blueprint
  NSW 1993-4

Provide a Priorities Framework
Promote Optimism
Attempt to address policy drift

NSW Disability 10 Year Plan
Stronger Together

Launched by Premier, 26 May 2006

NSW annual expenditure over $1.2 billion on
disability access to public transport, specialist Health services,
Housing & Education
• $1.3 Billion in first five years
• Intensive consultation process
Minister attended 9 regional consultation meetings

• Strengthening families
• Promoting community inclusion
• Improving system capacity & accountability
PARADIGM SHIFT

DISABLED PEOPLE
NEED

specialised
treatment &
services delivered in
controlled
environments
to minimise contact
with
others

Unless RIGHTS
of PwD
are
focus of service
delivery
People will lead
DEVALUED LIVES

Delivery Pattern Changes Across Time

1960 2009
Human Services

Going well

No worries

Importance of the Community Voice

TIME

NEGLECT

COMPLACENCY

REFORM

NEGLECT

SCANDAL