



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On the 16th March, I had the pleasure of co-hosting the launch of the ASID Intellectual Disability and Complex Support Needs Position Paper with my fellow Board Director Mr Paul O'Dea from Queensland.

A wide range of leaders in intellectual disability were invited to come together to learn, discuss and debate the topic, as well as to network with like-minded colleagues. Attendees included representatives from service providers, practitioners, academics, peak bodies, and state and federal government (Australia only).

Professor Leanne Dowse (Chair in Intellectual Disability Behaviour Support, UNSW and lead author of the background paper) kicked off with a thought-provoking presentation exploring:

- What we mean by complex support needs,
- Estimating the population of people with intellectual disability who have complex support needs,
- The cost of unaddressed complex support needs,
- Effectively responding to people with intellectual disability who have complex support needs and,
- Key principles for future action

Dr Jeffrey Chan (Senior Practitioner, Behaviour Support, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Australia) presented on behalf of Mr Graeme Head (Commissioner). In addition to a brief presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the Commission, we were honoured that the Commission affirmed the ASID Position Statement.

Following our two formal presentations, we moved to our panel presentation. Our panellists were invited to provide a brief response to the Position Paper from their own area of expertise as follows:

- Mr Morrie O'Connor (Coordinator, Community Living Association, Queensland), response based on being a service provider for people with intellectual disability and complex support needs.
- Mr Michael Sullivan (Director, NSW Council for Intellectual Disability), response based on the importance of the voice of people with intellectual disability being heard in planning.
- Mr Adrian Higgins (Researcher, Aotearoa New Zealand), response based on differentiating complicated from complex.

Our panellists were then joined by Professor Dowse and Dr Chan for an audience question and answer session. Together we debated and discussed what good support looks like for this population, policy and funding directions, the role and place of case managers in the disability sector, and the skill set required of the sector.

The evening was a great success! We are thankful to our wonderful presenters and panellists for their time, energy and eloquent statements on this important topic. We are also thankful to our participants in

showing a powerful collective commitment to a topic and population that is all too often put in the 'too hard basket'.

Complex Support Needs is a 'Hot Topic' for our ASID Divisions over the next few months so keep an eye out for upcoming events. For those who were unable to attend the launch, I invite you to reflect on the series of questions posed by Mr O'Connor regarding whether our systems offer the things required by people with complex support needs:

Do our systems:

- Provide time to be gently persistent over weeks and months?
- Provide flexibility to connect with people and the way services are delivered, in a way that builds trust?
- Allow the space to hear people?
- Attract and value workers who can work this way, who can manage risk and remain cognisant of their own self-care?
- Manage risk in a way that doesn't exclude people?
- Reward workers who are in the most contact with people with complex support needs?
- Silo our responsiveness, or are we open to recognising complex needs and focus on support across these needs?
- Recognise that we need to work with people in the context of their relationships?
- Value the person and want to hear their voice? and
- Seek to support the person to find their voice?

The event provided a space to bring likeminded leaders together and we look forward to continuing the conversation with this group and others across our Australasia.



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