

May Newsletter

Welcome to our May Newsletter. We are sorry it has been a while since you heard from us. We have had a very busy March and April. Keep reading to find out what we have been up to.

Message from our CEO – Kat Johns

We're excited to share several developments at PWdWA, as we continue to grow our reach and impact across Western Australia. Firstly, we have officially opened our new office in the Belmont Hub. This modern, accessible space will allow us to serve our community more effectively and build stronger community connections. The new space offers meeting rooms, quiet workstations, an accessible open plan workspace and a changing place bathroom. We plan to develop a studio where we can build our YouTube channel and better engage the community. We look forward to welcoming you to one of our events in the future.

Reflections on Our Election Forum

Last month, PWdWA hosted a highly successful Election Forum at the University of Western Australia. We were honoured to welcome Senator Jordon Steele-John, Dr Anne Aly MP, and Senator Hollie Hughes, who each spoke passionately about disability rights, inclusive policy, and the critical importance of consultation with lived-experience experts. Their presentations sparked a lively and constructive discussion around the NDIS, employment and education.

PWdWA Conference, June 19–20

I'm delighted to invite you to our bi-annual PWdWA State Disability Conference, taking place on **Thursday, June 19, and Friday, June 20, 2025**, at the Esplanade in Fremantle. As a valued PWdWA member, you are eligible for a discounted conference ticket. Tickets include entry to all sessions, conference materials, catered morning and afternoon teas, and lunch on both days.

PWdWA in Action

PWdWA Election Forum

PWdWA had political candidates talking disability and human rights at an election forum we hosted before May's Federal Election.

Major disability candidates from Labor, the Greens, and the Liberal Party of Australia answered questions from PWdWA's members, our partners, and the wider disability community on a variety of concerns for our community.

Among them was the Assistant NDIS Minister, the Hon Dr. Anne Aly MP from the Australian Labor Party, PWdWA member and Australian Greens disability spokesperson Senator Jordan Steele-John, and Liberal Party of Australia Shadow Assistant Minister for NDIS Senator Hollie Hughes, who answered questions and shared their platforms for people with disability.

Dr Aly's party Labor was re-elected to government in a landslide majority at the May election, with the Greens also securing a very favourable position in the Senate.

PWdWA systemic advocates look forward to working with you over the coming weeks and months as both the state and federal governments emerge from caretaker mode and join us to set a way forward for our community, the NDIS and the state Foundational Supports program.

We appreciate all your questions and issues flagged during the election forum on:

- how foundational supports will work
- how NDIS cuts will be addressed
- disability discrimination, migration discrimination, and the Disability Discrimination Act
- inclusive education and the Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education ACIE Roadmap,
- disability employment and unfair wages (and #EqualPayEqualRespect), foundational supports, and
- the state's Autism Health Roadmap and the related National Autism Strategy.

We want to thank our CEO, Kat Johns, disability advocates Amanda Ellis, Tyla Fitch and Susan Anderson for organising the forum. We also want to thank:

- Youth Disability Advocacy Network (YDAN) and YDAN's CEO, our MC for the night, youth campaigner Isabella Choate.
- our partners at Developmental Disability WA (DDWA) and DDWA's CEO, and our presenter, Mary Butterworth
- the team at National Disability Services WA and its State Manager, our co-host, Frances Buchanan, for their support.

We also thank our panellist-partners, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations CEO and #FairAustralia.au campaign co-lead Ross Joyce.

PWdWA is advocating for all our newly elected politicians to engage with people with disabilities and co-design their efforts with us to ensure our community has the necessary supports.

It is essential to address the concerns raised by PWD at our forum about access to the NDIS, especially those highlighted by residents from regional WA, from the Pilbara in the north to the Wheatbelt, Peel, South-West and beyond.

The forum is available on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9aV9PzMt0A>

PWdWA in Focus

New Home for PWdWA

PWdWA has a new home! On April 1st, our team moved into the second floor of the Belmont Hub. Joining Sussex Street Legal Centre, The Centre for Accessibility Australia, Valued Lives and other not-for-profit organisations. Located at 213 Wright Street, Cloverdale, the Hub is a locked building, so to let us know that you are here to visit, you will need to press 200 on the intercom at the Wright Street entry, next to 8 Yolks café and wait for instructions.

There is free 2 and 4-hour parking out front and 4-hour parking across the road at the Belmont Forum Shopping Centre. To get to us using public transport, you can catch Bus 38 from the Perth Station Bus Zone B. To use the Armadale/Thornlie train line, exit at Burswood Station, travel 478m to bus stop 14451, and catch bus 270 or 935. If exiting at the Oat Street Station, travel 234 m to bus stop 28723 and catch bus 999 or 37.

PWdWA will be closing its Mandurah office on 1 June 2025.

PWdWA State Conference

PWdWA is proud to present the PWdWA State Conference 2025 “Participate and Contribute” at Esplanade Hotel Fremantle, on Thursday, 19 June and Friday, 20 June 2025.

- **Thursday 19 June 2025**
- Conference: 9.30 am – 5 pm
- Networking Drinks: 5 pm – 6 pm
- **Friday 20 June 2025**
- Conference: 9.30 am – 3 pm

Being able to participate in and contribute to the community actively is a central part of living a good life. Participating at school or work, being represented in community groups, volunteering, and being included in social and cultural activities are all important aspects of life for people, including those with disabilities.

This event will bring together individuals with lived experience of disability, community members, advocates, service providers, and policymakers to discuss critical issues and foster an inclusive society where people with disabilities can participate fully and contribute meaningfully.

The conference will focus on key themes including:

- Education and Young People
- Disability and Workforce
- Community Participation

- Empowering People with Disabilities

Registrations are officially open! <https://events.humanitix.com/people-with-disabilities-western-australia-state-conference-2025>

- Early bird tickets for Members are \$220.00
- Standard early bird tickets are \$290.00

PWdWA is excited to announce that we received notification on Friday that our grant application with Lotterywest has been successful. This grant will enable us to significantly reduce ticket prices. Additionally, part of the grant is to directly assist individuals from rural, regional, and remote areas of Western Australia in attending. In the coming week, we will share information on how to access the subsidy. Additionally, any individuals with disabilities who have already purchased a ticket will also be eligible for the grant.

Included in the ticket price:

- Access to both days of the conference to hear from 20+ speakers.
- Access to the networking drinks and entertainment on Thursday evening, including non-alcoholic beverages and finger food.
- Tea/ coffee on arrival, morning tea, and lunch on both days. Afternoon tea on day 2.
- Program booklet.
- Access to an Adult Changing area.
- Access to a quiet sensory area.
- View and speak to various organisations displaying trade tables and posters.
- Enjoy entertainment from a showcase of vibrant dance performances, a joyful choir, and other lively entertainment.

Keep up to date with all program updates by [visiting our website https://pwdwa.org/](https://pwdwa.org/).

Don't worry about parking or arriving late, stay at the Esplanade Hotel Fremantle – by Rydges with our special PWdWA discount code.

Book through PWdWA's State Conference 2025 | Rydges Hotels & Resorts

In Memoriam

PWdWA is saddened to announce the passing of former committee member Leah Clemens. Leah was a vibrant and compassionate person who made a lasting impact on our community. Mother to three beautiful children, Miles, Matilda, and Owen and a proud veteran of the Royal Australian Navy, Leah transformed her personal challenges into a mission of empowerment for others. After a back injury ended her naval career, she became a strong advocate for those often left unheard,

dedicating her life to championing the rights of people with disabilities, older Australians, and those facing mental health issues.

Leah's legal career reflected her unwavering commitment to justice and equality. She served with passion and integrity at Legal Aid WA and was a valued member of the Board of People With Disabilities WA. Her warmth and dedication to fairness will be deeply missed.

Upcoming

Write message here

Town	Hosted at	Dates
Merredin	Merredin Community Resource Centre	21/05 & 17/06
Moora	Amity Health Moora	20/05
Narrogin	Amity Health Narrogin	03/06
Northam	Jobs and Skills, 1 Hutt Street, Northam	29/05
Pinjarra	Murray House Community Centre	08/05 & TBA/06
Fremantle	St Pats Community Centre	14/05 & 28/05
Toodyay	Community Resource Centre	28/05 & 26/05
Waroona	Waroona Community Resource Centre.	15/05, 29/05, 12/06 & 26/06
York	York Community Resource Centre	27/05 & 24/06

PWdWA

Would you like your newsletters emailed rather than posted? Just let Vanessa know at vanessa@pwdwa.org.

- **Metro:** 213 Wright Street, Cloverdale - (08)6243 6948
- **Pilbara:** 1800 193 331. Online appointments by arrangement at Pilbara Community Legal Services, Karratha, Port Hedland, Roebourne, and Newman.
- **St Pat's Fremantle:** 39 Adelaide Street, Fremantle
- **Waroona and Pinjarra:** 1800 193 331. By appointment only.
- **Wheatbelt:** 1800 193 331. By appointment only.

 PWdWA is funded by the Western Australian Department of Communities and the Australian Department of Social Services.