

Disability Services Newsletter

General Manager Update

Wendy Pettifer

JULY 2020



Apologies for the absence of a newsletter in June. Unfortunately, I broke my wrist quite badly, requiring two surgeries (so far!) to put it right, and although I took very little time off, I really needed to reduce the amount of typing I was doing. Everyone keeps asking me how I did it, and the embarrassing truth is that I did it skateboarding so probably the less said about that the better – except to reassure everyone that I won't be skateboarding again!

COVID 19 UPDATE

I've sent out a lot of information recently about measures we are taking to reduce the risk at Woodville, and we are still monitoring the situation very carefully. Currently we are:

- Taking temperatures and recording the details of everyone entering Woodville buildings
 - Taking client temperatures prior to entering transport
 - Only accepting essential visitors to sites
 - Carrying out hospital grade cleaning
 - All staff wearing masks when with clients
- Approval required for activities outside of the centres, and no approvals currently for community access activities which are indoors
 - Providing infection control training to all staff
 - Providing hand sanitizer for everyone
 - Promoting social distancing and hygiene protocols to staff and clients

We continue to have weekly senior leadership team meetings to discuss our approach to the crisis and wherever we can see areas for improvement we are addressing them. We recently had an independent audit of all the work we have done in relation to COVID 19, with a very positive response from the auditor – which was very pleasing. I want to encourage you to also carefully follow the advice provided by NSW Health, particularly in relation to venues. This information is updated daily and can be found here [COVID LOCATIONS](#).

We've also been looking at ways that we can promote good COVID safe practices to staff and clients in disability, and today we started filming a video to support this work. It will be starring a few familiar faces, and we'll be uploading it to Facebook once it's finished, as well as showing it in our centres as a training tool.

GPS TRACKERS

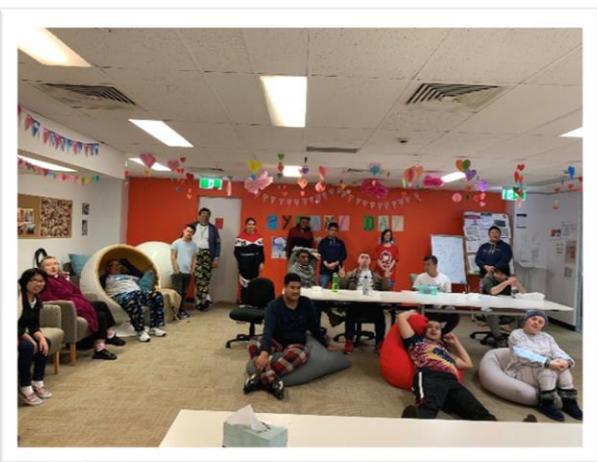
Just as a follow up to my recent letter home informing you that we are fitting GPS trackers in all our transport vehicles, I wanted to let you know that the hardware is being fitted over the weekend. The trackers will not yet be in operation, as we have more work to do with the set up and the roll out of some new procedures but we are on our way!

ACTIVITIES

After a short period of relative normality, we are again in a situation where our activities are a bit limited. However, the staff work hard to ensure that clients have a fun and stimulating day and they have recently enjoyed a Pyjama Party, bbqs, dance classes (which our dance teacher Anna records for them every week), movie sessions, exercise sessions and the usual arts and crafts, numbers and words activities and choir.

This is a difficult time for us all in terms of adjusting to this restricted lifestyle. I know I am getting bored and a little frustrated with the current situation, and keeping everyone engaged and amused is a challenge. But don't worry – we are up to it! Today, for example, we've had a bbq – despite the rain! – celebrated birthdays, done exercises on the mats, and watched a range of world music bands in the media room. Clients in GeekAbility watched a movie whilst eating lunch, and I've seen people doing word puzzles, jigsaw puzzles and drawing.

We are looking forward to a time when we are able to get things back to normal but in the meantime, we are doing our best! Don't forget that we are also now running our Saturday Social service at Earth every Saturday, and we have quite a group attending, so if you are interested please do contact Toby.



NEW CLIENTS AND TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL PROGRAM

Despite these strange times, we continue to have a steady stream of new clients joining us at Woodville. This is testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff, who impress me every day with their care and commitment to our clients. Since my last newsletter, we have welcomed Nhung, Loan, Meredith, Suzanne and Louis to the Earth Centre, and Maria and Toufic to GeekAbility, so if you see any new faces around please do say hello.

It is also the time of year when we start to see potential young people from local schools who are considering accessing services at Woodville. This transition can sometimes be stressful for both clients and families so this year we have launched a specific program which aims to ensure they



have a smooth introduction to our services. We will be gradually introducing these new clients into our services from about October onwards and running some events to welcome them and their families into the Woodville community – assuming that COVID allows it! If you know of anyone who might be interested in coming to Woodville, do encourage them to get in touch with us.

NEW STAFF AND WORK AVAILABLE AT WOODVILLE

Over the last couple of months we've seen a very welcome increase in the amount of services our clients are accessing at Woodville, with many choosing to spend additional days with us and taking up the opportunity to come to Saturday Social every week. This, combined with our new clients, has meant that we have recently run a successful staff recruitment campaign and you should be seeing some new faces on the floor over the coming weeks. We have recently welcomed Sagesse and Ikenna to the Woodville team, and we expect to add more staff soon. We are still recruiting, so if you know anyone with experience of working with

people with disability and a minimum of a Cert 3 or 4 Disability (or a suitable equivalent), then do encourage them to apply. And of course, if you see a new member of staff, give them a warm welcome.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING

As many of you know, we are planning to launch Supported Independent Living accommodation at Woodville, and I thought it was about time we gave you an update on progress. Understandably, the COVID crisis did temporarily stall progress but we have a group of prospective residents and we are now actively looking for a first property. We are commencing work with interested clients and their families on the information required to secure the funding required from the NDIS, and if you have expressed a firm interest in this we will be contacting you about it. If you are interested in Supported Independent Living, make sure you contact Michael Doran and let him know. He can be reached on 0490 049 242.

A NEW MEMBER OF THE WOODVILLE FAMILY

And last – but definitely not least – in June we had a new arrival! Jenna's beautiful daughter Jordan cleverly arrived exactly on her due date and mother and baby are doing well.



Best wishes and stay safe!

Wendy

Email: wpettifer@woodville.org.au

Phone: 0448 976 271

