

# "DHS DSR DUMPING"

*The Department of Human Services, Disability Services, Victoria, has total control of almost all group home places throughout the state, through its DSR (Disability Support Register).*

## **"What is the Disability Support Register?", by DHS**

The **Disability Support Register** (DSR) is the system used by the Department of Human Services to record the current need for on going disability support. It provides a clear and accurate picture of the support that is currently required, so that when resources (funding or vacancies) become available, they can be allocated in a fair and efficient manner. It is not a waiting list. Resources are allocated to individuals based on a priority for access process.

The Department of Human Services' approach to supporting people with a disability focuses on individually tailored, flexible ways of responding to people's goals and aspirations. This is in line with the objectives of the State Disability Plan. It is all about working with people with a disability as partners, responding to people's individual needs, and supporting them to pursue a lifestyle of their choice. To reflect this approach, the Department of Human Services has developed a new recording system, the Disability Support Register (DSR), which will capture a clearer and more accurate picture of people's support requirements.

This overwhelming despotic power, provides this government department with the power to place totally incompatible clients with those living together in reasonable harmony - In an instant, totally destroying the lifestyle and quality of life of the sitting residents, and the moral of direct care staff.

Staff who have to work with 24/7 excessive behaviour, are understandably not motivated to much more than minder care. Where the despotic DSR process expects them to, for example, wear ear plugs, tolerate excessive behaviours and physical assaults for the same remuneration as staff working in low support situations.

Residents, unlike staff, cannot wear ear plugs, cannot take respite in the office and don't go home at the end of the shift - No one cares about them, their stress and anxiety, and their potential to learn bad, rather than good behaviours.

Community Service Organisations also frequently suffer the DHS despotic DSR, placing them under pressure to accept clients with very challenging behaviours, for which they are given few resources to allow them to cater properly for the client's needs.

In general, the power of the DSR Panel is paramount/supreme/despotic. There was, however, a challenge they did not expect in relation to a client they placed. A client who subsequently wrecked the house, attacked other very vulnerable residents and attacked staff.

The DSR no-move attitude, saw all the families unite, and challenge the department legally. The families basically won the day, and the department was ordered to relocate the incompatible client, and to ensure the families were always happy with the service.

As a consequence, the service has become exceptional with the provision of consistent quality of life care for the residents. This is, however, unusual, as families are mostly not united in an effort to secure overall quality of life care. Indeed, the DHS actually discourage parents/families from knowing each other. Unlike many Special Schools and Day Centres who encourage families to get together and share experiences, the DHS do not.

Nevertheless, these incompatibility incidents demonstrate this state government department has no proper behaviour management arrangements to provide proper, meaningful, consistent and outcome monitored behaviour management/modification, by placing clients with very challenging behaviours in regular group homes with no proper behaviour management.

The Luke Modra story is a classic example of the department having no proper arrangements to cater for those with very challenging behaviours.

The department totally failed to provide proper behaviour management for Luke Modra, then purchased external, interstate, services following assertive family support.

This shows the department has no proper arrangements to cater for those with very challenging behaviours, apart from placing them in any regular group home, where they disrupt the quality of life of compatible residents living in harmony, and they, themselves, get little or no proper support

Those with very challenging behaviours need to receive proper and consistent behaviour management by well qualified, dedicated, remunerated and outcome monitored/accountable staff, to help them to a level where their quality of life is significantly improved, and they are able to live a meaningful lifestyle with others in a regular group home.

The present situation where regular house staff are expected to cope with both compatible and non compatible residents, because the department will not provide proper/specialised help for those with exceptional challenging behaviours, is a disadvantage to all residents and staff in their quest to all have a quality of life.

**LISA Comment:** There is much questionable about the DSR. It is, however, a disincentive to CSOs. No matter how good CSOs make their service, they cannot use their service quality to attract customers. And those who would like to be customers of services they know are good, are blocked by the DSR. Perhaps we should ask the ACCC about this restrictive practice....

**Extra 1: Brisbane Symposium, April 11 & 12.** Tony & Heather, Coordinators of **LISA Inc** will be at the Rydges Hotel, Southbank, Brisbane, from the 10th to the 15th. Give us a call/drop in, have a chat about the complex disability issues. We will have our mobiles on 24/7. Tel: 0409-404550 or 0438-753667.

**Extra 2: Abused & Used** - New York Times article about Group Homes

**Extra 3: Comments from US Parents** about the New York Times article

**Extra 4: NSW Mother Punished by Bureaucrats for Daring to Question Service Level and Quality.** (This story is especially relevant given the current review of the Guardianship procedure in Victoria by the Victorian Law Reform Commission).

**Extra 5: Victorian Law Reform Commission (VLRC):** Opportunity to comment on their very comprehensive "Consultation Paper on Guardianship" **closes 20 May 2011**

**Extra 6: Productivity Commission, NDIS** - Submissions to their draft Report: **Closes 30 April, 2011.... This Month!!**

**Extra 7: Auditor General of Victoria** is reviewing/auditing **DHS ISPs** (Individual Support Packages). If you have anything to say about ISPs, say it to Renee Cassidy, Senior Audit Manager, VLRC. Tel: 8601-7165 or 0408-954015 or Email: [renee.cassidy@audit.vic.gov.au](mailto:renee.cassidy@audit.vic.gov.au)

**Extra 8: National Disability Strategy - Australia - March 2011**

**Extra 9: Quality of Life Factor - "Children Learn What They Live"**

**Extra 10: Help celebrate the launch of Alkira's uplifting documentary, "Abbey", along with a PRE RELEASE of the new heartwarming Australian movie "Red Dog".** Alkira will also showcase a short in-house slap-stick film, "The Egg Cup", produced by Angus Grant and featuring Anthony Bechaz. Date: **April 14th 2011.** Venue: Palace Cinema, Balwyn, Victoria  
**TICKETS: \$25 adult \$17 concession (includes light refreshments on arrival) On-stage presentation of certificates by Hon Mary Wooldridge, MP, Minister for Community Services For more information and bookings contact Alkira: (03)9890-1365.**

**Extra 11: Deakin University seeking research help in Victoria**

**LIFESTYLE IN SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION (LISA) INC.**

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