

THE VICTORIAN STATE DISABILITY PLAN

What will the Victorian Government do?
What should the Victorian Government do?

The Victorian State Disability Plan was produced in 2002, with a forecast for 2012 - Which is now just around the corner! Yet the Department of Human Services, Disability Services, remains as the plan defined it in 2002 – **Reactive and Crises-Driven!**

The Department will remain in denial it has major systemic management problems until well past 2012. It totally refuses to accept that 95% of solving problems, is admitting they exist.

In 2002, the Plan said, “The Victorian Government wants disability supports to focus on supporting people with a disability in flexible ways, based on their individual needs, so that each person can live the lifestyle that they want to lead.

In 2009, the Department of Human Services can't even provide consistent quality of life care in their supported accommodation group homes. Most remain little more than basic minder care plagued by staff lore, peer pressure, and issue avoidance and in-denial regional management.

What should the Victorian Government do in 2009. It should congratulate the Head Office of the Department of Human Services for producing the necessary care policies, standards and values to allow its regions to meet the State Plan target for 2012. It should, however, reprimand the regions for allowing their services to remain reactive and crises driven.

Failure of regional management to stamp out staff lore and peer pressure, and adequately set, monitor and maintain direct care staff work value expectations which produce consistent quality of life care within departmental care policies, standards and values, means the department will almost certainly not meet the State Plan target by a country mile.

The Victorian Auditor General says, “*The DHS is unable to provide support for all those requesting it (unmet demand is around 1 370 people or 30 per cent), yet demand is increasing by around 4 to 5 per cent annually and DHS has not accurately quantified future support needs or the associated need for resources. The reactive nature of DHS's response to accommodation needs, combined with*

the stringent prioritisation criteria, is likely to continue, and therefore perpetuate a crisis driven system".

The Challenges Families Face:-

Some of the key challenges that people with a disability and their parents, families and carers told the Government about are in 2002, remain in 2009:

Enabling disability supports to be provided earlier and to respond better to people's individual needs, as well as to the needs of their families and carers.

Ensuring that disability supports enable and empower people with a disability, so that they can participate in the community and pursue a lifestyle of choice.

Valuing families, carers and volunteers for the contribution they make towards meeting the support needs of children and adults with a disability.

Supporting families so that all children and young people can live in a family environment and can develop relationships fostering the social, emotional and physical well being of all family members.

Strengthening rural, regional and urban communities, so that they are more accessible and more inclusive of people with a disability.

Recommendation:-

The Victorian Auditor General (4.1) recommends the DHS should assess the satisfaction of the residents' in its supported accommodation group homes (SSA), with their accommodation on an on-going basis, directly or through their family and friends, and incorporate the results in a system of continuous improvement.

Tony & Heather Tregale

LIFESTYLE IN SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION (LISA) INC.

Tel: 9434-3810.