



Beacon

The Magazine of the Australian DeafBlind Council

No. 43

November 2012

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1. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT - ALISA WILLS

It's with a heavy heart I have tendered my resignation as Administrative Officer of ADBC. I will be finishing with ADBC on 14th December which will allow time for the processes to be undertaken to find a replacement and, if possible, for me to provide assistance in the handover prior to my finishing.

I'm very proud of what I have achieved as the Administrative Officer of ADBC. When I came into the role there was a significant need to reinvent ADBC's profile in the disability advocacy arena and although there is still much to be done, I feel confident that I am leaving ADBC in a position to move forward in a positive direction. To this end I am also committed to finding a suitable replacement hence my resignation date being 14th December. This will allow for completion of all administrative things such as AGM, news sheets and Beacon. However if a suitable candidate is not found prior to my finishing, things will be up to date on my departure.

An example of some the submissions which have been written by ADBC are:

- In May 2012 Response to Draft Report Communicating with People with a Disability National Guidelines for Emergency Managers . A full version of this submission can be viewed at <http://www.deafblind.org.au/reports.asp>
- In July a request from Gabrielle Mullen, Policy Officer for National Disability Services requested information from organisations in the sensory disability area for a paper they were putting together for government on Connecting Disability Support with Sensory Need. ADBC wrote an extensive response to this request on 3 August 2012.

Unfortunately when this paper was released, at the end of August 2012 there was no mention at all of deafblindness as a unique and isolating sensory disability in its own right.

ADBC subsequently wrote to Ken Baker, Chief Executive of NDS for clarification on what NDS consider a sensory disability and ADBC's disappointment at the content of the paper. Dr Baker's

response acknowledged that this paper could have perhaps better defined deafblindness as a sensory disability in its own right.

- A response to the focus questions by government on Eligibility and Reasonable & Necessary Support for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. A full version of this submission can be viewed at <http://www.deafblind.org.au/reports.asp>

I'm pleased to confirm that the National DeafBlind Conference 2013 will be held in Sydney on 4th-7th October 2013. The conference will run from 4th-6th October with a social day to be held on 7th October. A venue will be confirmed. For any queries, please contact Trish Wetton at Forsight Foundation on email forsight@bigpond.com or (02) 9872 9000

Our work on the constitution is continuing and hopefully into 2013 this will be finalised.

Once again ADBC's News Sheet has gone out in January, April, July and October. The News Sheet continues to be a great way to get information to our members and we continue to receive positive feedback about this.

ADBC's AGM was held on 12th November 2012. The committee for 2011/12 was Sven Topp President, Steven Hardy Vice President, Elvira Edwards, Celestine Hare Treasurer and Legal Officer, Carleeta Manser, Carla Anderson, Mike Steer and Gail Staggs.

The committee for 2012/13 will consist of Sven Topp President, Steven Hardy Vice President, Elvira Edwards, Celestine Hare Treasurer and Legal Officer, Carleeta Manser, Carla Anderson and Gail Staggs. With Mike's Steer tendering his resignation from the committee there is currently a professional position vacant.

This will be my last report as Administrative Officer of ADBC, I would like to thank the committee for their ongoing support, Able Australia for providing the resources to help grow ADBC and a particular thank you to Mike Steer, who will be resigning from the committee, for his contribution to ADBC over a great many years, particularly putting together Beacon. His knowledge, understanding of deafblindness issues and presence on the committee has been of great assistance and I wish him well for the future.

Please contact me on (03) 9882 8596, Monday, Tuesday, Friday 9.30am-2.30pm or info@deafblind.org.au if you have any further queries.

2. ABLE AUSTRALIA

www.ableaustralia.org.au

Deafblind services have been actively applying for various short and long term funding to increase the level of support to the deafblind community. While many of the people with deafblindness are on waiting list for funding, Able Australia has organised a number of activities to reduce the isolation and boredom.

One of the activity will be “Able Day in the Sky” scheduled for December. This is a life time experience for many of the people who have hearing and vision losses. This will be held on 8th of December at the Moorabbin airport along with a lunch and a visit from North Pole. The day has been organised with the support of Concept Coordinators by Jan Flude and Antoinette Puzzolo. Without doubt this will be a popular activity.

Another popular activity is the annual National Deafblind Camp 9 to 11 March at the Phillip Island Adventure Resort. The theme is Mexican with all of the trimmings!! The Recreation program continues to attract a large number of people with various deafblindness on 3rd Saturday of each month as well as a fortnightly on Wednesday. For more information about recreation program, please contact Fiona Goldab at fiona.goldab@ableaustralia.org.au

Three resource guide kits (DVDs) are being made with focus on Deafblind communication techniques, Interpreting for people who are deafblind and Deafblindness and the elderly.

These kits are aimed at staff, educations, allied health professionals, TAFES, universities, interpreters, Auslan students, case managers and many more. For more information, please contact Carla Anderson, Manager of Deafblind Services, carla.anderson@ableaustralia.org.au These resource guide kits will be made available by the end of this year.

3. LET'S CONNECT UPDATE

The second Let's Connect National Deafblind Meeting was held on Wednesday 17th October at Able Australia in Camberwell. The meeting was moved to Camberwell from Traralgon at short notice due to

unavailability of interpreters. Delegates with deafblindness who attended were:

Eddie Szczepanik - WA
Emma Gordon - SA
Elaine Dillon - Tas
Irene McMinn - NSW
Alan McAlister - Qld
Heather Lawson - Vic
Trudy Ryall - Vic
Michelle Stevens - Vic

Others in attendance were:

Leah Hobson - Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
Meredith Prain - Able Australia
Carla Anderson - Able Australia
Sue and Danielle - friends of Elaine's from Tasmania

8 interpreters were also in attendance + 1 support worker

The first half of the meeting was spent giving feedback on the needs of people with deafblindness to Leah Hobson from the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations. Leah spoke about the National Disability Insurance Scheme and will take the feedback to the committees working on implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Key issues raised were:

- Need for flexibility - that funding packages can change as people's needs change
- Need for skilled qualified interpreters and support guides
- Need for funding for advocacy for deafblindness

The next half of the meeting was spent discussing the role of the Deafblind Action Information Officer and how to support more people with deafblindness to join committees. Trudy Ryall, the Deafblind Action Information Officer will once a week send out calls for people with deafblindness to attend advisory committees, other meetings or give feedback on the needs of people with deafblindness. It is important that people with deafblindness get involved in raising awareness of their needs. Trudy will post to the DBAust list and the facebook group. If any person who is deafblind does attend meetings or do local advocacy it is

important to tell Trudy so she can share information about what is happening with everyone. For more information contact Meredith Prain meredith.prain@ableaustralia.org.au

The next Let's Connect National Deafblind meeting will be held before the next National Deafblind Camp on Friday 8th March 2013.

4. CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEAFBLINDNESS TO RECEIVE E COMMUNICATION TRAINING

The Let's Connect Project funded by V. V. Marshmann Trustees will fund two people with deafblindness living in rural areas in Australia to:

- Fly to Melbourne to receive two days of training in e-communication
- Attend the National Deafblind Camp

If you are interested in receiving this training and attending the camp or would like to nominate someone please write;

- Your name and where you live
- Why you would like training in computers and / or phones
- for people with deafblindness ?
- What you hope to learn from the training

Please send expressions of interest to meredith.prain@ableaustralia.org.au

5. ABLELINK

Ablelink has launched two exciting projects this year and these have led to the establishment of iLearn Share a peer training program teaching braille and low vision access to iphones and ipads.

- The Transport Accident Commission supported the establishment of a Peer Training program to teach grade one braille and the funding was used to run 'train the trainer' workshops, develop resources and conduct braille training.

- The Community ICT Skills Grant from the Victorian government provided money to purchase mobile devices including iphones, ipads and braille displays for training and "try before you buy". We have launched this project with an 'ilearn Share' workshop, to encourage all trainees and their support workers to get involved with sharing what they know and get involved in peer training.

6. SENSES FOUNDATION – WESTERN AUSTRALIA

www.senses.asn.au and www.deafblindinformation.org.au

Exciting Research Projects Underway in Western Australia

A significant donation to Senses Foundation in 2011 from Andrew and Nicola Forrest, of Fortescue Metals Group shares, has made it possible for Senses Foundation to undertake two research projects in the 2012/2013 financial year.

A study to identify basic demographic information about the people who are deafblind in Australia

Senses Foundation has commissioned a study using the data from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) throughout Australia, from April to December 2009. This study will identify:

- The number of individuals with a dual sensory disability of vision across Australia
- The age and gender of these individuals
- The geographical distribution of these individuals, with a specific aim of ascertaining the number of individuals living in rural and remote areas of the country.
- The degree of activity and participation limitations for the target group which will assist in determining the specific service needs of individuals with a dual sensory disability.

In 2007, Senses Foundation commissioned a similar study using data from the 2003 census. The report of that study entitled "Unseen and Unheard" has proven to be a significant and strategic document, justifying much of Senses Foundation's program development and supporting arguments regarding the quantum and needs of people who were deafblind in Western Australia.

Identify a tool which would be suitable for screening for Usher Syndrome in Australia

The second study Senses Foundation has commissioned aims to identify a tool which would be suitable for screening for Usher Syndrome in Australia.

Early diagnosis of Usher syndrome is very important. The earlier that parents and school personnel know that a child has Usher syndrome, the sooner that child can begin special educational training programs to manage the loss of hearing and vision. Early diagnosis also allows well informed decisions to be made as to the best communication method for a child who is deaf but who will also lose their sight.

Usher Screening programs are common in America, Canada and parts of Europe with screening manuals and training readily available for teachers and school nurses. However, Australia currently has no screening programs.

Once an appropriate screening tool is identified, Senses Foundation plans to lobby for the introduction of a screening process which dovetails the Newborn Baby's Hearing Screening currently available throughout Western Australia.

DrumBeat

On Saturday 7th of July, 2012 the Ushers Syndrome Support Group met to participate in a trial of the Drumbeat program. The Drumbeat program was originally developed to reach young people for whom talk based therapies were confronting. It uses music, drumbeat, rhythm and vibration to provide a sense of connectedness with others, encourages creativity and self-expression, reduces isolation, tension, anxiety and stress. The day was a huge success with fifteen members attending and getting their groove on. We will be repeating the program at the upcoming WA Deafblind Camp and are hopeful to be able to offer to other Senses client groups in the future. Special thanks to Vanessa Trengove from HolyOake for volunteering her time to facilitate this program.



Father Cyril Axelrod

Saturday the 25th of August, 2012 was a special day at Senses Foundation with Deafblind priest Father Cyril visiting us to share his life story. Father Axelrod is a Redemptorist priest who was born Deaf and was diagnosed with progressive blindness in his forties due to Ushers Syndrome. He was one of the first Deaf persons in the world to train to become a Catholic priest. He currently lives in London and helps the Deaf and Visually Impaired population in the Camden Town area.

"Most people's view of deafblindness is that it is unspeakable, unthinkable and unimaginable. For me it has become a new way of life and one that has offered a new direction...It has become the best teacher in my life."Fr. Cyril Axelrod

Fr Cyril uses himself as an example to those he interacts with, showing them that disabilities do not have to be barriers for people to being effective and equal members of society. "I think that out of all the projects I have, the most important one is myself as a model", he explained. By allowing others to see that his deafness and blindness were not hindrances to developing his unique skills and talents, he could become a living example of hope for them.

Father Cyril spent his time in Perth as a guest of the Emmanuel Centre, a Catholic self-help centre for people with disabilities and addressed numerous schools, disability services and Deaf communities in his role as bridge-maker. He hopes that one day he will have the opportunity to

reside in Western Australia to work with and advocate for people who are Deafblind. Thirty three people attended the day and were enthralled and inspired by Father Axelrod's story and philosophies "Regardless of whether we are hearing or Deaf or have any other disability, we are all equal and must have the same rights to education and work. We need to understand each other's differences, but not be frightened ... we have to respect one another."



SIBLING SUPPORT PROGRAM - "SuperSibs"

As part of our ongoing commitment to building stronger families Senses Foundation hosted a "SuperSibs' Sibling Support Workshop on the 9th of July, 2012. Senses Foundation established "SuperSibs" to support siblings of children with disabilities in 2006. The continuation of this program has been generously supported by PACT Construction in 2012.

Senses Foundation "SuperSibs" seeks to provide siblings of children with disabilities opportunities for peer support and education, the group provides a safe and supportive environment for sibs to share their feelings, concerns, questions and problems. This group creates an atmosphere for positive change and adaptation, reduces sibling's sense of isolation through new friendships and aids the growth of more positive attitudes and understanding toward their siblings. "SuperSibs' offers siblings a broad array of solutions and strategies from which to choose

to cope with their own individual challenges living with a sibling who has a disability.

Seventeen siblings attended the “SuperSibs” workshop on the 9th of July, this was our biggest turn out ever and fantastic to see families embracing the importance of this innovative program. Senses Foundation continues to celebrate and support the unique relationships between siblings and our next “SuperSibs” workshop will be run in the October school holidays.



7. NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES (NDS) www.nds.org.au

Call to continue audio description on ABC Television

A campaign is under way to continue the audio description (AD) service currently being trialled on ABC TV.

The trial commenced in August this year and is due to finish on 4 November. Following the trial the ABC will provide a report to the Government on the feasibility of a permanent AD service. The ABC is seeking feedback on the trial through a web-based survey or by calling 1800 616 882.

The campaign is encouraging people to send postcards to Communications Minister Senator Stephen Conroy and ABC Managing

Director Mark Scott, appealing for a continuing AD service on TV. The campaign is a joint initiative of Blind Citizens Australia, Vision Australia and Australian Communications Consumer Action Network.

NDS supports the continuation of the AD service.

AD is a form of narration that enhances the access of people who are blind or vision-impaired to a video or artwork. AD is available on television in the USA, the United Kingdom, Canada and Europe and is currently being implemented in Australian cinemas and on DVDs.

Postcards can be ordered and email responses sent from the campaign website. Signing and postage instructions for people who are blind or vision impaired are available on the website, as are email alternatives to the postcards. There is a short timeframe, so emailing the Minister and Mark Scott at the ABC directly from the campaign website will be the most effective way to support the campaign. Otherwise cards need to be ordered from the website quickly so as to have time to be received, signed and sent back.

Contact Information:

Gabrielle Mullen, Policy Adviser - Sensory Disability, NDS National, Ph 02 6283 3214, gabrielle.mullen@nds.org.au

Revised Eligible School Leaver guidelines come into effect

Revised guidelines on Eligible School Leavers (ESL) broaden the eligibility criteria to include students who are in receipt of Disability Support Pension even if they have not attracted additional educational funding from State or Territory departments. The change is effective immediately.

ESL is a key part of Direct Registration by Disability Employment Services. On the positive side, the revised criteria bring clarity to a key element of the program; on the downside, there may still be some vulnerable students who miss out on direct access to Disability Employment Services.

NDS had raised concerns with DEEWR about the restrictiveness of the previous guideline.

The revised guidelines define an Eligible School Leaver as a "job seeker" who is transitioning from secondary school to post-school employment, or from a state or territory government disability transition-to-work program to employment; **and** who has evidence that they:

- attract additional educational funding due to their disability, or
- are receiving Disability Support Pension.

If NDS members can identify young people in the target cohort who will not be eligible under these revised guidelines DEEWR is prepared to consider further representations on the matter. NDS members are urged to contact Brendan Long with examples.

Contact Information:

Brendan Long, National Manager of Employment and Economic Policy, NDS National, Ph 02 6283 3202, brendan.long@nds.org.au

National report released on state of NDIS readiness

Workforce development emerges as a key pressure point for disability organisations in the results of a national poll 'Progress for Providers' conducted by NDS. The results provide the first comprehensive national snapshot of the state of readiness of disability service providers for the individualised funding and service delivery envisaged under a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Between August 2011 and June 2012, over 500 disability service organisations completed the poll. Individual state-based reports and the national reports are available on the NDS website. Every organisation responding to the poll received a benchmarking report or 'snap shot' of their own progress relative to all respondents in their state or territory.

Points of interest include:

- many providers are finding areas relating to workforce development especially difficult;
- smaller organisations are challenged across all areas of change, with the exception of 'community focus' and 'improving lives'; and
- the costing of services, contracts and accounting for individual service responses are concerns, perhaps reflecting an underlying requirement for IT systems and infrastructure to support individualised service responses.

The results are already informing NDS's sector development work and discussions with government, and complement earlier work to articulate the attributes or capabilities relevant to reorienting services [see NDS paper Preparing the Disability Sector for the New World on the NDS website].

The Progress for Providers poll provides a snap shot based on organisational self-assessments. As a resource it is primarily designed to facilitate conversation and action planning within organisations. However, the results should also contribute to the evidence required to direct large scale investment in preparing the sector. This year's Federal Budget made provision for \$122.6 m over four years to prepare the disability sector for the NDIS, with a focus on the launch locations. Some areas of sector capacity - such as workforce development - require a significant lead-time to deliver results, suggesting that planning and investment should begin as soon as possible.

What is required overall is a national industry-endorsed approach to change management, incorporating robust strategy tools and resources that enable providers to undertake detailed and comprehensive analysis of pressure points and areas of strength and to respond to those pressure points.

Most organisations want to prepare for the anticipated move to person-centred approaches, an indication being the large number of submissions to the Australian Government's Practical Design Fund (PDF). The successful applicants to the PDF have not yet been announced.

Contact Information:

Gordon Duff, Executive Officer - National Policy Research Unit, NDS National, Ph 02 9256 3117, gordon.duff@nds.org.au

Government expands eligibility for 'Better Start'

NDS welcomes the Australian Government's announcement that it will extend eligibility for the 'Better Start' initiative to children diagnosed with PraderWilli, Williams, Angelman, Kabuki Make Up, Smith-Magenis, CHARGE, Cornelia de Lange, Cri du Chat syndromes and microcephaly. Since the program commenced in July 2011, NDS has sought an extension of eligibility to all children with a need for early

intervention; this expansion of eligibility is a step in the right direction.

Currently, 'Better Start' is available for young children with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, Fragile X syndrome, or a moderate or greater vision or hearing impairment, including deafblindness. To date, more than 5,000 children have registered and have received more than 53,000 early intervention services.

To fund the expansion, the Government will make an additional \$13.4 million available over 5 years; this will provide services to about 1,200 extra children.

'Better Start' provides families of eligible children under the age of seven with up to \$12,000 (up to \$6,000 can be used in any one financial year) to access therapies such as speech pathology, audiology, occupational therapy, optometry, psychology, orthoptics and services of teachers of the deaf. Under 'Better Start', children with the listed disabilities are also eligible for Medicare items up to the age of 15, providing there is a treatment and management plan in place before the age of 13. Medicare items are available for up to four allied health diagnostic services and for 20 allied health services (in total) per eligible child.

From 1 January 2013, parents or carers of newly eligible children will be able to register their child by contacting the 'Better Start' Registration and Information Service on 1800 242 636. Further information will be available on the [FaHCSIA](#) website shortly.

Contact Information:

Philippa Angleley, National Policy Manager, NDS National, Ph 03 8341 4302, philippa.angleley@nds.org.au

NDIS funding still not locked into the Federal Budget

The Federal Government's [Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#) (MYEFO) includes a new package of savings measures that will raise \$16.4 billion and a forecast surplus of \$1.1 billion for 2012-13. The measures include changes to company tax collection arrangements, changes to the private health insurance rebate, reductions in the baby bonus, increased tourist visa charges and transfer of unclaimed superannuation accounts to the ATO for management. Changes to salary sacrifice arrangements announced in the MYEFO are unlikely to affect NDS members.

The MYEFO does not cut disability funding, but nor does it contain any additional funding for the NDIS beyond the \$1 billion committed in the 2012-13 Federal Budget. Attention will now focus on the lead-up to next May's Budget to ensure that the NDIS grows beyond Launch Sites into a national scheme. MYEFO leaves the NDIS policy settings unchanged: it does not even acknowledge that five Launch Sites were announced rather than the four envisaged in last May's Federal Budget.

NDS remains concerned that the Government has not yet factored into forward estimates the cost of the full rollout of the NDIS. Given the Government's concerns about collapsing taxation revenues (which prompted the savings measures) and a fragile global economic outlook, pressures on spending priorities will be intense over coming months.

NDS strongly urges the Government to build on its laudable commitment to the NDIS and lock in the funding required to make the NDIS a reality (www.ndis.gov.au).

Contact Information:

Ken Baker, Chief Executive, NDS National, Ph 02 6283 3200,
ken.baker@nds.org.au

8. AUSTRALIAN CHILDHOOD VISION IMPAIRMENT REGISTER

The Australian Childhood Vision Impairment Register is hosted by the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children and is the first national register of children in Australia with vision impairment. The Register has been collecting data since 2009, and this data is providing important information about the types of eye disease and vision disorders children have and the support they need. The data is also used by service providers and researchers. VI Family Network, the website which hosts the Register can be viewed at www.vifamilynetwork.org.au. The latest findings from this register can be viewed at [http://www.deafblind.org.au/content-files/ACVIR%20newsletter%20august%202012%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.deafblind.org.au/content-files/ACVIR%20newsletter%20august%202012%20(2).pdf) or if receiving this news sheet in hard copy please go to the reports section of ADBC's website.

9. HUMANWARE

www.humanware.com

Maps 3.3 for Trekker Breeze

HumanWare is pleased to release updated maps for the popular Trekker Breeze accessible GPS system. As time progresses, street names, new developments, and pointsof interest change in your environment.

This completely free update to the Trekker Breeze maps ensures that you have the most accurate information available to you as youtravel. In addition, HumanWare is pleased to offer the latest New Zealand maps at no charge. To obtain the latest Australian/New Zealand maps, please follow the steps below. For Windows users, please note that internet Explorer is the preferred browser when following the below procedure:

1. Visit <http://license.humanware.com>
2. Invoke the Login Page link.
3. Select Breeze in the drop down box, and enter your 12-digit Trekker Breeze serial number. This number can be heard by navigating to Settings >About on your Trekker Breeze, and is also printed inside the battery compartment.
4. In the proceeding field, enter your current email address.
5. Click Log-in.
6. You will be asked to re-enter your email address for verification.

You are now able to choose your Australian/New Zealand map from the list of options. When you have selected your map, a link will be displayed and emailed to you. Depending on your browser configuration, you may be automatically forwarded to a download page where your map can be obtained.

Please contact a HumanWare consultant if you have any queries in relation to the above procedure.

Ph: (NSW) 02 8094 1257, (Qld) 07 3056 0255. Mob: 0420 805282

eml: sam.taylor@humanware.com

10. MEDIA ACCESS AUSTRALIA

www.mediaaccess.org.au

Accessible movies: help the industry get them right

It's an exciting time for accessible cinema, with 74 locations around the country showing movies with closed captions and audio description. As the government's Cinema Access Implementation Plan approaches its 2014 deadline, this number is going to start rising rapidly.

To help the movie makers get it right, we're gathering feedback from people who have experienced technical issues while trying to see a movie with closed captions or audio description.

By sharing your experience, you can help the cinema chains deliver access features that work, with customer service catered to those who need them.

Fill out our questionnaire today at

http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/922412/Closed-Caption-Cinema-Survey?utm_source=Media+Access+Australia+cap+that%21+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=fe14cf15d5-Cinema_questionnaire10_23_2012&utm_medium=email

11. DEAFBLIND INTERNATIONAL (DbI)

www.deafblindinternational.org

Elvira Edwards, Secretary Deafblind International, and Bronte Pyett, Secretariat Manager, attended Deafblind International Management Committee meetings on 5th and 6th November, 2012, in Lund, Sweden.

The 9th Conference of the DbI Acquired Deafblindness Network(ADBN)

Took place in Lund Sweden, November 07-10, 2012. The theme of this conference was "Living in Two Realities". A one day pre-conference focussing on seniors with hearing and vision loss was held on November 06. For additional information on the ADBN conference, check out the websites: www.adbn.org and www.skane.se. Further information on the seniors preconference is available on the website of the Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues www.nordicwelfare.org/dbkurser.

2nd Joint Asian Conference of ICEVI &DbI The First

Announcement for the 2nd Joint Asian Conference, sponsored by International Council for the Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and Deafblind International (Dbi) has been recently made. This event, hosted by Blind People's Association- India (BPA) and Sense International (India) is planned for Ahmedabad (Gujarat) India, April 05-07, 2013. The 1st Joint ICEVI & Dbi Conference, was hosted by BPA in Ahmedabad in 2000.

Keeping with the world wide focus on inclusion, the theme for this event is titled "Towards an Inclusive Tomorrow". Further details about abstracts and deadlines will appear in the second announcement to be released soon.

For further details about specific location, registration fees and accommodations are available on the website: www.bpaindia.org. For other inquiries contact Dr. Bhushan Punani at email:

blindabad1@sancharnet.in

8th Dbi European Conference on Deafblindness

Plans are well underway by ANPSA (Association National pour les Personnes Sourdeaveugle) for hosting the 8th Dbi European Conference in Lille, France, August 27-31, 2013.

The theme of this conference is Identities and Changes: Commonalities across deafblindness; Learning from each other.

For more information about abstracts, registration fees and accommodations, check out the conference website www.anpsa.fr/dbi2013 or contact: assoanpsa@gmail.com

10th Helen Keller World Conference and the 4th World Federation of the DeafBlind General Assembly

This will be held in the Manila area of the Philippines October/November 2013. Further information about a precise date, the venue, accommodations, conference fees and program for this world conference is expected soon. Check the website of WFDB www.wfdb.org for further announcements.

Deafblind International (Dbi) website

Keep up to date on international events through the Dbi website www.deafblindinternational.org

Professionals, educators and family members are urged to become individual members at a cost of 100 Euros for a 4 year period. For each of the four years, membership are entitled to receive two semi-annual editions of Dbi Review, the Journal of Deafblind International. The 49th

edition of Dbl Review was recently published in January of 2012. Dbl Review is also published in Spanish and is available on the Dbl website. Check out the Dbl website for past editions of Dbl Review.

The complete proceedings from the 15th Dbl World Conference held in Sao Paulo Brazil, September 27-October 01, 2011 is now available on the Dbl Website. World Conference Proceedings from 2003 (Canada) and 2007 are also available on the website.

FOUNDATION FUNDING USHER SYNDROME GENE THERAPY CLINICAL TRIAL IN PARIS

http://www.blindness.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3252:foundation-funding-usher-syndrome-gene-therapy-clinical-trial-in-paris&catid=67:usher-syndrome&Itemid=123

July 23, 2012 – The Foundation Fighting Blindness recently awarded \$125,000 to the Centre Hospitalier National d’Ophtalmologie des Quinze-Vingts, a clinical trial site for UshStat®, a gene therapy developed by Oxford BioMedica for people with Usher syndrome type 1B (USH1B). The funding level is the amount needed for the site, located in Paris, France, to take part in the study.

The Phase I/II, 18-person study began at Oregon Health & Science University in early 2012. Researchers at the Paris site plan to begin treating participants by early 2013. The study is scheduled to run through December 2014. Evaluating safety is the primary goal of the trial, though investigators will also be looking at the treatment’s effect on the retina and vision.

GRUNDTVIG Programme

www.noisyvision.com

This programme brings together individuals or small groups of learners from different European countries for an innovative multinational learning experience relevant for their personal development and learning needs, in which learners are also encouraged to share their competences and insights actively with other.

12. OFFICE BEARERS

Office-bearers 2012-13

The ADBC committee consists of Sven Topp (President), Stephen Hardy (Vice President), Carleeta Manser representing people with

deafblindness, Gail Staggs, parent representative; Carla Anderson, Elivra Edwards (Beacon Editor) representing professionals and organisational members, and Celestine Hare representing the Secretariat (Legal Officer).

ADBC Website, Blog and Brochure

ADBC's website is www.deafblind.org.au

An ADBC information brochure is available. Please email info@deafblind.org.au or call (03) 9882 8596 if you wish to receive a copy.

Email Addresses

Anyone interested in receiving news about ADBC through email should send a message to Alisa Wills at: info@deafblind.org.au asking to be put on the list. The committee would like to tell people what it is doing and it would also like you to send in your comments.

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13. ABOUT BEACON

Beacon is edited by Elvira Edwards (Senses Foundation WA) and published by

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We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Royal Society for the Blind (SA) for printing Beacon in Braille

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Reports, articles and news items are requested for the next issue of **ADBC Beacon**. The ADBC Beacon is a newsletter which presents articles and reports on **a wide variety of issues and topics related to children, youth and adults in Australia and overseas who are deafblind.**

The ADBC Beacon is a way of informing interested people, including Australians who are deafblind, researchers, teachers, health professionals, Commonwealth and State government personnel and service providers, as well as others in our community, about issues affecting people who are deafblind in Australia and overseas.

Please submit information to:

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General Manager Services
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Burswood WA 6100
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Fax: (08) 9473 5499

There are two publications of ADBC Beacon per year and articles may be submitted at any time.



Membership Form

Use this form to join ADBC. If you want to receive information in a special way, please circle the one you want.

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Braille

Large Print

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Country: _____

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Mobile: _____ email: _____

Tel/TTY: _____

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- A professional person (\$25)
- An organisation with turnover of less than \$50,000 (\$75)
- An organisation with turnover of \$50,000 or more a year (\$150)
- None of the above ie other (\$10)

Even if no payment is required please complete the above section of the form so that Beacon can be sent to you.

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