



side by side

The Newsletter of Side By Side Advocacy

Autumn 2021

www.sidebysideadvocacy.org.au

Autumn Update

Welcome to the autumn edition of Side By Side! Our team has again grown and everyone is busy providing advocacy to new and existing clients.

We hear from people who need assistance to uphold their rights, needs and interests every day. We also know there are many people experiencing significant issues who do not know they can access advocacy. We have been taking small steps to resume visits to local organisations so we can meet with people face to face and talk about what advocacy is and how we can assist.

We are keen to speak with people and organisations who would like us to visit and share information about the kind of advocacy Side By Side Advocacy can provide. We can visit face to face (Covid-19 restrictions permitting) or via Zoom. Give us a call or send us an email to discuss possibilities.

We would also love to hear from you if you just want an informal chat about the kind of support we provide.

Read on to:

- learn about what's happening with the Inclusive Governance Project
- receive a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Appeals update
- hear about some Easy Read resources about Covid-19 vaccinations
- get details for a website about employment
- learn some accessibility tips
- meet Side By Side Advocacy Chairperson, Coralie Jensen
- mark some dates in your calendar
- find our contact details so you can ask questions or give us feedback about our work.

I look forward to catching up with you again soon.

Kim Roots

Executive Officer - Side By Side Advocacy

Inclusive Governance Project – Nothing about us without us

A final year social work student is joining Bernadette, Katrina and Will in the Inclusive Governance Team. Her name is Naomi and she will be researching international literature about inclusive governance and learning about advocacy and the inclusion of people with intellectual disability in the decision-making of community organisations.

Naomi brings a keen interest in the subject matter. “I have worked in the disability sector and have a personal interest in advocacy as I have a brother who lives with disability. I am currently in my final year studying Social Work at Sydney University and I'm excited to learn more about the importance of inclusive research from Bernadette and everyone at Side By Side Advocacy. I hope to make a meaningful contribution to the Inclusive Governance Project and use what I learn in my social work education.”

We welcome Naomi to our team!

The project is now into the data collection stage. This means we want to talk to people, either with or without an intellectual disability, about their experience of being a Board or Management Committee member.

If you are interested in finding out more about this project, please contact Bernadette who is happy to talk to you. Her contact details are 0411 952 974 or igp@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au



From left to right - Will, Katrina and our new team member Naomi after a session exploring the way Boards work

NDIS Appeals Support News

2021 continues to be a challenging year with Covid-19 impacting on how NDIS Appeals Support is provided.

We are using technology more than ever as we strive to support as many clients as we can without any compromise in the effectiveness and professionalism of our advocacy.

Side By Side Advocacy can support you by:

- explaining the review process, including what is involved in appealing to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)
- helping to prepare documents
- providing advice and skills so you can better represent yourself
- attending AAT conferences and hearings to help you put your case to the AAT.

So, if you have a matter at the AAT and require an NDIS Appeals Advocate, please do not hesitate to contact us on info@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au

Nabil Mohammad

Appeals Support Officer



Nabil Mohammad - NDIS Appeals Support Officer

New Easy Read Resources about vaccination rollout

The Australian Government has developed Easy Read resources about the Pfizer vaccine and the rollout of vaccinations. There are 10 resources available online that include information on:

- what is the vaccine and is it safe?
- what the vaccine does
- who gets the vaccine and who gets it first?
- where you can get the vaccine
- preparing for it and what to expect
- giving your consent to have the vaccine
- what happens after the vaccine
- how else to stay safe.

You can find the resources on the [Department of Social Services website](#)

Have you thought about volunteering at Side By Side Advocacy?

Do you have a passion for advocacy and skills you want to share?

Side By Side Advocacy is small organisation striving to achieve a great deal.

We are currently seeking a volunteer with sophisticated IT skills who will be able to help out when things go wrong with technology. You will have an understanding of mobile phones, Microsoft programs and computer functionality. You will be able to provide support during work hours and be available to come to the office from time to time. Ideally, you will live in close proximity to our West Ryde office and be seeking an ongoing volunteer role.

If that sounds like you, we would love to hear from you!

New Employment website

Inclusion Australia has made a website about employment.

The website is for people with intellectual disability, their families and supporters.

It has information about:

- employment supports
- the lived experience of people with intellectual disability and families
- research about employment for people with intellectual disability.

There is also a section to help people learn about work so they can think and plan for life after school.

[Here is a link to the Everyone Can Work website](#)

Meet the People of Side By Side Advocacy

Each edition we will get to know someone from the Side By Side Advocacy community. This month, Kim talks to the Chair of Side By Side Advocacy, Coralie Jensen.

Kim: What is your role at Side By Side Advocacy?

Coralie: I'm the Chairperson of the Side By Side Advocacy Board.

Kim: What does your role involve?

Coralie: There are a few strings to that bow. As the Chair, part of my role is to ensure the Board meets and fulfils its legal obligations but I have no more authority than any other Board member. You could think of my role as a pivot point. I need to know the strengths, skills and circumstances of other Board members and ensure we work well together as a team. Strong, trusting, respectful relationships are a great foundation for an effective and productive Board. When we all come together, we can achieve so much more than as separate individuals.

Kim: Have you had other roles at Side By Side Advocacy?

Coralie: I was a volunteer for several years when my children were small and I had less time. My major role was to identify and recommend grant opportunities.

I became a member of the Board in 2003 and was Deputy Chair before becoming Chair.

Kim: What do you find satisfying about your role?

Coralie: Lots of things! From a big picture perspective, I can see the difference that Side By Side Advocacy makes and I'm proud to play a role in that work. I also find my role personally satisfying. I spend my time with people I admire and participate in events and community happenings that would otherwise be unavailable to me. I enjoy the opportunities to influence social change that flow from having a prominent role in a respected organisation.

My role has also facilitated my personal growth. As a full time carer I was out of the workforce for many years. Being part of an active Board afforded me the chance to learn, keep abreast of changes in the sector and be heard.

I particularly enjoy working cooperatively and respectfully with other Board members to think through issues that emerge.

Kim: How did you first find out about Side By Side Advocacy?

Coralie: It was via the Citizen Advocacy Program. Over morning coffee I was introduced to the movement of Citizen Advocacy and there was a discussion about linking my son Finley with a Citizen Advocate. Finley had a loving family and was very young - 2 or 3 years old - and we decided it wasn't for us at that time. However I could see that there was real value in what Citizen Advocacy offered, and it was a good fit with our family's values and beliefs. It linked isolated people to others in their local area. It helped keep people safe. It facilitated people having a good life as valued members of their community.

Like most parents, I was already asking myself the nagging question about what would happen to my son when I died. I decided that by volunteering with Side By Side Advocacy, I could play a part in ensuring that Side By Side Advocacy's Citizen Advocacy program would continue to flourish and be available as a possibility in the future.

Kim: You were recently recognised for your contribution to the City of Ryde. Could you tell me more about that?

Coralie: I was lucky to be born into a family that had a strong focus on social justice and community involvement. My parents had many and varied volunteer roles in the areas of sport, education and the arts. I was able to observe and appreciate that volunteers don't just give - they also gain a great deal.

I think we all sleep better when we act to change the things that do not sit well with our ethics and morals. We feel better when we are working to make a positive difference.

When I was recognised by the City of Ryde it was the contribution of the entire Board that was being acknowledged. Whatever we do, we do it together as a Board. I'm proud to be part of such a great team that strives to make a difference about things that matter.



Coralie Jensen celebrating her Citizen of the Year Nomination

If you would like to become more involved with Side By Side Advocacy, let us know and we can explore possibilities!

Dates for your calendar

31 March, 14 April, 10 May: Networking and training opportunities for Citizen Advocates

2 - 5 April: Easter Public Holidays

19 - 23 March: Seniors Week

25 April: Anzac Day

Have your say!

Do you have any suggestions about how we could do things better or differently at Side By Side Advocacy?

If you do, we would love to hear from you! You can use the contact information below to tell us.

Contact details for Side By Side Advocacy

Phone: (02) 9808 5500

Email: info@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au

Website: www.sidebysideadvocacy.org.au

Address: Shop 1, 30-32 Herbert Street, West Ryde, NSW 2114

Office hours: 9am to 5pm

Side By Side Advocacy is a short distance from West Ryde Railway Station.

There is a bus stop at both ends of Herbert Street.

There is time limited on street parking.

Side By Side Advocacy promotes and upholds the rights, needs and interests of people with intellectual disability to enable full and meaningful participation in the community.



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