



**BigDog**  
SUPPORT SERVICES

February 2019

Brendan Hall

Productivity  
Commission  
Report





# Newsletter

## Editors Note

Welcome to the Chinese Year of the Pig. This is certainly shaping up to be an exciting and challenging year with lots of new events and activities.

Look out for volunteering days at Highfields Heritage Village feeding the animals and learning about early Australian settlers and at WhatsUp in Disability. Where we will be meeting and interviewing local identities and attending events such as shows and movies and writing reviews about the experience.

At a recent meeting I was shown a picture of 2 dogs waiting for their dinner that perfectly reflects our new logo

Steven



## In This Issue

- Brendan Hall
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# News Hound Cover Story

## Brendan Hall

I must admit that Brendan Hall is one of my favourite inspirational people that I know. Brendan is the cousin of my Godchildren and I have known him since he was born.

As a six-year-old recovering in hospital after losing his leg due to complications from chicken pox, Brendan had 3 things on his mind.

He wondered whether he was still sitting next to his best mate in his grade two class, when he would be able to start swimming again, and whether anyone would bring him a McFlurry.

It's this passion – for swimming, not ice cream – and adaptability that has made Brendan one of the most decorated swimmers in the Australian team.

Brendan is a young man with a great sense of humour (just look at the cover page picture) as well as a determination to represent Australia and wear the green and gold.

He didn't have to wait long. Brendan was just 14 when he was selected to represent Australia at the Beijing 2008 Paralympics, the youngest member of the swimming team.

Having tasted success so many times over the previous 10 years, Brendan was hungry to make history on the Gold Coast in 2018.

***“People may look at me and say I have a disability, but when I'm in the water, I feel like I'm no different to anyone beside me if it's an able bodied counterpart.”***



Bronze medalist Brenden Hall poses during the medal ceremony for the Men's S9 100m Freestyle Final on day two of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games at Optus Aquatic Centre on April 6, 2018.



Brenden Hall celebrates victory in the Men's S9 100m Backstroke Final on day six of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.

## New NDIS Price Guide 1st February

### What's Changed?

A new NDIS Price Guide is in effect 1st February 2019 and the changes that have been made are not exactly what were expected

### Very High Intensity Pricing Tier

This was recommended by the Independent Pricing Review and announced in December of last year. While this change was expected, its execution is surprising.

It was recommended then that it be linked to the complexity of a Participant's support needs so that, for example, somebody with "severe behaviours of concern" would receive funding at the highest level. However, the actual implementation of the pricing tier is linked not to the Participant's support needs but the wage of the worker. The levels are listed below with the VIC/NSW/QLD/TAS price for Assistance With Self-Care Activities - Weekday Daytime for comparison:

Level 1 ("standard") – where a shift is undertaken by a worker who is classified at SCHADS Award 2.3 or below: \$48.14 / hr

Level 2 ("high intensity") – where a shift is undertaken by a worker who is classified at SCHADS Award 2.4 or 3.1: \$50.73 / hr

Level 3 ("very high intensity") – where a shift is undertaken by a worker who is classified at SCHADS Award 3.2 or above: \$52.98 / hr

The obvious benefit of this third tier is that it creates another step on the vocational pathway for Support Workers and recognises the skill they bring to their work. It also encourages providers to support Participants who they might otherwise not have.

Most troubling of all, the NDIA have made the confusing statement that "it is anticipated that in most cases the total cost of the mix of supports that participants can purchase will not increase as a result of the changes." For those of you playing along at home – yes, this means that the NDIA estimate that people with complex support needs will not spend more on support, despite the cost per hour increasing. This can only mean that they imagine people will purchase fewer hours of support.

The statement continues, "The number of plan



## FEBRUARY 2019 PRICING CHANGES

There are now **674** support items

**16** items removed

**34** new items

**39** items updated

# In the World of DisAbility

reviews is therefore expected to be limited” and advises that any review request will be subject to their standard prioritisation process (i.e. good luck getting one before your scheduled plan review!).

This comment begs the question, who decides which Participants should be supported by higher skilled workers? If it is the Participant, will the Planner then need to agree to put the required funding in the Plan or does the NDIA somehow expect that Participants who want more trained workers will find a way to pay for this within the same budget?

Providers and Participants both have some fairly significant work ahead of them now to understand how this change impacts existing plans. This includes rewriting service agreements, recalculating budgets, aligning rostering and invoicing systems so the correct rate is charged and having reliable mechanisms in place to make sure that unexpected shift changes don't have an adverse effect on a Participant's budget.

This means that for all supports delivered from 1st February, providers can charge the higher price. It is unclear if Participant Plans will be scaled up to account for this loading in the meantime so while this is good news for providers, it remains unclear who is really paying the price in the meantime.

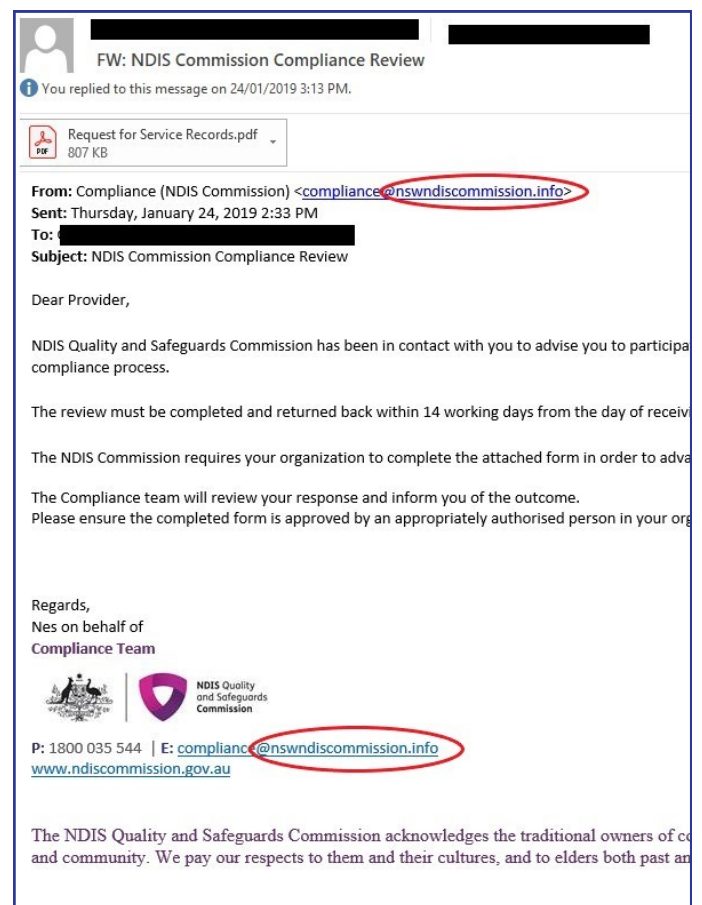
## Capacity Building Training

Minor changes to capacity building and training in plan and financial management, making the definitions and price consistent regardless of whether it is delivered by a Plan Manager or Support Coordinator.

## Commission email scam

Scammers sent fake NDIS Commission emails with the subject line 'NDIS Commission Compliance Review'. The email asks you to participate in a compliance review and attaches a 'Request for Service Records' form. It instructs the recipient to complete and return the information within 14 days of receipt. The email comes from a .info address but official NDIS Commission emails will always come from a ndiscommission.gov.au domain.

Do not open the attachment and do not disclose the information requested. If you have inadvertently released this information, please contact the Commission immediately.





## Productivity Commission Report 2019

**End the blame game, stop letting people with disability fall through the gaps and pull your finger out to ensure action on areas other than the NDIS.**

That's the short version of the Productivity Commission's report released this month.

The report confirms what people with disability and their families all around the country have known for years – that not enough is being done to improve the quality of life of all Australians with disability.

According to the report, finger pointing between levels of government, lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities and an all-consuming focus on the roll out National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has left many people with disability and their families to fall through the gaps, and has failed to lift the quality of life of all Australians with disability.

*No surprises here.*

In releasing the report Professor Robert Fitzgerald could not have said it better:

“With so much focus on the NDIS, limited attention has been placed on achieving better outcomes for the many people with disability who are not supported through the NDIS. There's about 3.8 million people with disability in Australia who are not supported by the NDIS. Most people with disabilities are not and never will be covered by the NDIS yet their rights, needs and aspirations matter.”

*They sure do, Professor Fitzgerald, they sure do.*

**So what does this report mean?**

Last year the Productivity Commission conducted a review into the National Disability Agreement (NDA). The NDA is one of a series of agreements between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments which cover major areas like health, education and housing.

The goal of the NDA is to “enhance the quality of life for people with disability, their families and carers”. In theory it is supposed to ensure co-operation between governments, clarify roles and responsibilities and hold governments accountable for what they are (and are not) doing.

But in their report the PC found that in reality the NDA was outdated, had a weak influence on policy and as a result had done little to improve life outcomes for people with disability.

*Nothing new here.*

In particular the PC found that in focusing on the roll out of the NDIS, governments had let many, many other important things fall by the wayside.

“There has been very little progress in meeting previously agreed goals such as raising labour force participation rates for people with disability or improving the wellbeing of carers. We have identified key gaps in the areas of advocacy services, support for carers, and supports for people with disabilities arising from mental health conditions, as well as access to community and inclusion programs,” Commissioner Fitzgerald said.



# Community Partnerships

## Commission's Findings

The Productivity Commission's findings are exactly the same as what they told us at Make it Work forums all around the country last year – that in rolling out the NDIS governments appeared to have downed their tools on all other areas that affect the lives of people with disability – really important things like education, health and transport.

These areas are critical to the lives of all four million Australians with disability – way beyond the 460,000 people who will eventually be supported by the NDIS.

But downing tools was only the half of it. You also told us that programs and services that helped people who were not eligible for the NDIS were also being wound down, leaving people and their families without critical support.

The Commission's report concludes that a new, reinvigorated NDA could be a strong positive force to guide future disability policy, to promote better access to mainstream and disability services and to improve outcomes for people with disability.

A copy of the Review is available at:

<https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/disability-agreement/report>

## Jan/Feb Magazine

### WhatsUp in Disability

Stories in this issue include:

- New Laws in 2019
- A Beautiful Year
- NDIS Updates
- NDS State of the Disability Sector in 2018
- Advocates Remembered
- Accessibility
- On the Doorstep of their Dreams

**Steven Paull** President

Next edition stories by 20th February

To obtain a copy of WhatsUp in Disability magazine or to be an advertiser, please contact WhatsUp via:

Office 4/33 Bell Street, Toowoomba

Email [admin@whatsupindisability.org](mailto:admin@whatsupindisability.org)

Phone 4632 6678

Online [www.whatsupindisability.org](http://www.whatsupindisability.org)



# What's happening at



## Medication Training



BigDog has a commitment to the maintenance of safe and effective practices in assisting participants in the management of their individual medication regimes to the level of support they require.

BigDog will only assist with medication where a participant is not able to take medication themselves unsupervised and a pharmacist has dispensed medication into a Webster-Pak.

One of the recommendations to reduce medication errors and harm is to use the “five rights” when assisting a participant to take their medication. Even though the role of the support worker is to assist the participant only, there is still a duty of care to ensure that the five rights are followed:

1. The Right Medication
2. The Right Patient
3. The Right Dosage
4. The Right Route
5. The Right Time
6. The Right Reason
7. The Right Documentation

Training dates will be shown on Sling

## Disability Support Guide

DPS is Australia's leading independent multi-platform media company providing vital resources for senior Australians and people living with a disability.

Our innovative approach is changing the way Australians make decisions about their care and lifestyle by delivering the power of informed choice.

We provide the gateway to connect Australians living with a disability, their families and carers with disability support providers through our industry-leading suite of resources including the DPS Guide to Disability Support, [DisabilitySupportGuide.com.au](http://DisabilitySupportGuide.com.au) and [TalkingDisability.com.au](http://TalkingDisability.com.au).

We help you compare, choose and connect with your preferred provider and are relied upon daily by NDIS participants, their family and carers, allied health professionals and a host of government agencies.

Backed by Australia's leading independent aged care information provider [DisabilitySupportGuide.com.au](http://DisabilitySupportGuide.com.au) is Australia's first multiplatform disability information resource empowering people with a disability and their families to make informed support decisions.

Learn about the different services available, understand the NDIS, find out how funding works and what costs are involved.

Prepare for your planning meeting and consider the questions you should ask.

**BigDog Support Services is on page 137**



# What's happening in Australia

## Townsville in record breaking flood



## Toowoomba closes 3 dams due to low levels



## Fires devastate Tasmania





# Photograph Gallery



Lunch with Rugby League legend Kevin Walters



Rahim, Dane and Robert in their new work shirts



# Fun and laughter at CUA Hub



cuah



# Day Service with Sharon



**WEAR RED  
TO KEEP  
HEARTS  
BEATING**

NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

WEAR RED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR LIFE-SAVING RESEARCH TO KEEP HEARTS BEATING.

heartresearch.com.au/WRD

Heart Research Australia

The poster features three white t-shirts: the top one has a red bow tie, the middle one is solid red, and the bottom one has a red necktie. A red heart icon is at the bottom right.

## Fundraising events in 2019

Look out for our monthly fundraising activity with this month focusing on wearing red for heart research. Please support these great organisations in their efforts to make life better for all of us.

### BigDog Day Service Toowoomba

Paul Myatt Community Centre  
11-15 Alexander Street  
North Toowoomba 4350

#### Coordinator

Sharon Price  
Phone: 4512 6020  
dayservice@bigdogsupport.com.au



**Cooking with Hesty**

Fridays  
12:30pm – 2:30pm

The ultimate cooking experience for anyone with NDIS funding under Capacity Building Support Category 09\_007 Skills Development in a Group. Bookings are essential.

BigDog

The poster is a collage of food items including a burger, a sandwich, a slice of pizza, french fries, a chili pepper, mushrooms, and a pea. A woman's face is visible at the bottom center, partially obscured by the food illustrations. The BigDog logo is at the bottom left.

## February Activities

### Cooking with Hesty

Tuesday and Friday 12:30pm - 2:30pm

### Wear Red Morning Tea

Wednesday 2th 10am - noon

### BigDog Day Service Rockhampton

1/105 Denham Street,  
Allentown, Rockhampton 4701

#### Coordinators

Suzanne Smith or Sarah Long  
Phone: 4573 4611  
ssmith@bigdogsupport.com.au  
slong@bigdogsupport.com.au

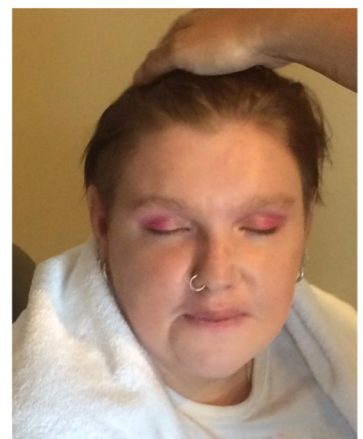
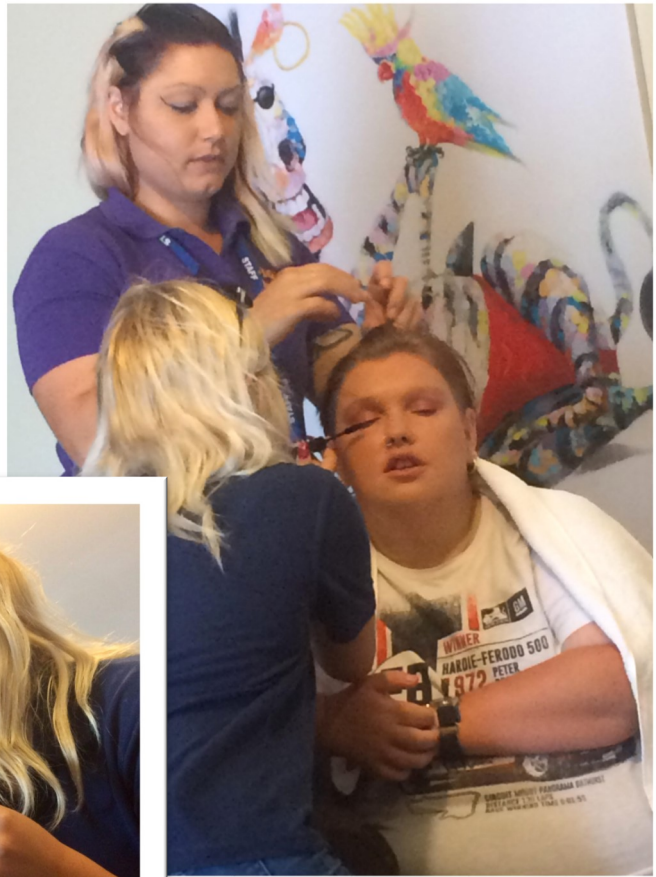
# Beauty Basics

Learning about applying makeup for beginners is really fun.

Makeup may do magical things, but it doesn't have to be a mystery. Applying a basic, natural look doesn't require a lot of skill or tools. So have no fear: enjoy the process and your fresh, glowing face!

Includes: Apply your makeup, make up removal and basic skin care.

Don't miss out!





# Safety matters with Steve

## Occupational Violence and Aggression



the face). The nurse was unable to reach a wall-mounted duress alarm and had to scream for help. The nurse was later admitted to hospital with concussion, bruising to the eye and scratches.

The assault followed several incidents in which the patient aggressively grabbed employees.

**An alert about providing information, instruction and training for the prevention of occupational violence and aggression (OVA).**

A Melbourne health service has been fined \$25,000 without conviction after a nurse was assaulted by a patient with aggressive and violent behavioural issues.

In December 2018 the service pleaded guilty to 1 contravention of section 21 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) for failing to provide the information, instruction and training necessary to allow workers to perform their work safely and without risks to health.

The contravention related to an incident in 2015. A nurse was attending to a patient when she was physically assaulted (hair pulled, pushed, punched, head butted and kneed in

Employers must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. This duty requires employers to control risks to health and safety; employers should eliminate risks where possible. This duty includes providing employees with enough information, instruction, training or supervision to do their work safely and to maintain safe systems of work.

Employers also have a duty to ensure that workplace activities don't endanger other people, such as visitors, clients or the public.

# Never OK



# Staff information with Ann

## Special Events

### Compulsory Medication Training

We will be running this valuable 2 hour training module on Saturday 9th, Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th commencing at 3pm at the Paul Myatt Community Centre 11-15 Alexander Street North Toowoomba.

An additional session will be undertaken for Rockhampton support staff later in the month.

### Easy Employer

The transition to the new rostering and payroll system is well under way and Phill will be providing additional training in using this software and app on your phones and how to record your work times.

### Whitsunday Cruise

BigDog will be undertaking a number of supported respite cruises in 2019.

Bookings are now closed for the April Cruise and No-elle and Juliette have been chosen to provide support for the cruise 9th - 13th April. Details of the rooms and schedule will be posted next week.

Steven and Ann will also be going as additional backup if they are needed.

All participants will be required to have Travel Insurance paid before departure due to Government Laws.

## Birthdays



### February

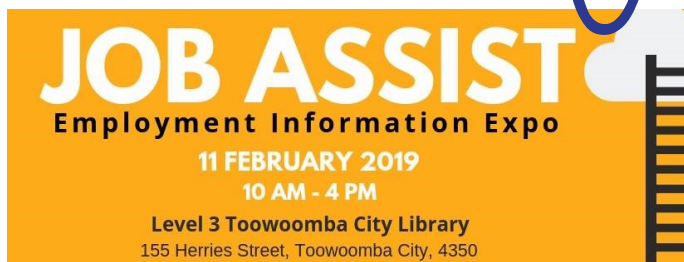
1st	Rahim Z
6th	David G
9th	Sharman P
19th	Daniel H
	Lesley T
	Matty F
27th	Warwick B

**Have a great day!**

**THE DOG House**



# What's happening in February



## **Monday 11th February 2019 10am—4pm** **Level 3 Toowoomba Library**

The Job Assist Expo is an event for Job Seekers in the following industries:

Construction, Trades, Laborer, Retail, Hospitality, Disability Care, Aged Care, Agriculture, Meat Works, Farming, Accounting, Fire Brigade, Emergency Services, Police  
Job seekers will learn more about:

- The recruiting process for a variety of jobs in the listed industries
- To connect with a range of recruiting companies that operate for specialist jobs/professions
- To get their resumes reviewed
- To connect with agencies and services that would be useful in pursuing their career aspirations and potential jobs options.

There will also be a workshop for skills recognition of overseas qualifications and experience.

Employers will get the opportunity to meet potential employees.



## **Monday 18th February 2019 6pm-9pm** **USQ West Street Toowoomba**

See the very best of USQ. The Night Markets - presented by The Hive

## **Thursday 14th February 2019** **City Golf Club 254 South Street**

Join East Creek Community Centre and QCOSS to find out how to reduce your electricity bills through the Energy Savvy Families program. It's free, it's fun and you'll be in the running to win rewards, such as one of 10 x \$1,500 energy efficient appliance vouchers.

Come along to learn more about:

- Energy saving tips and advice
- Ergon Energy Retail support
- Energy concessions and rebates
- Payment plans and hardship programs
- Online education tools, Reduce Your Juice app and HomeSmart
- Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme (HEEAS)

Don't forget to bring your electricity bill on the day.

You'll be able to talk to your local Energy Savvy Champion to find out if you can take part in the Energy Savvy Families program.

There'll also be representatives there who can show you how to read your electricity bill, give you information about energy concessions and rebates and tell you more about payment plans and Ergon Energy's Customer Assist program for customers who are struggling to pay their bills.

This free event is open to members of the public and community services organisations. Light refreshments will be provided.

Tickets are available at:

<https://www.qcoss.org.au/qcoss-event-energy-savvy-families-bring-your-bill-day-toowoomba>



# CHINCHILLA MELON FESTIVAL



CHINCHILLA  
MELON  
FESTIVAL

14-17 February 2019

[www.melonfest.com.au](http://www.melonfest.com.au)

*Coca-Cola*

QUEENSLAND  
**PGA**  
CHAMPIONSHIP



February 18th - 24th February

City Golf Club 254 South Street

City Golf Club Toowoomba is proud to be hosting the 2019 Coca-Cola QLD PGA Championship, Presented by Toowoomba Regional Council.

Don't miss this free event, open to the public. Come watch the Pros battle it out for their name on the Charles Bonham Trophy!



123Greetings.com

## BigDog

### Contact Us

#### BigDog Support Services

232 Ruthven Street  
Toowoomba QLD 4350

PO Box 234  
Harlaxton QLD 4350

**(07) 4632 9559**

**1800 22 44 32**

0427 408 698 (On Call)

[www.bigdogsupport.com](http://www.bigdogsupport.com)





Join us for  
**Wear Red Day**  
Wednesday  
20th February

**10am 11-15 Alexander Street Toowoomba**



Register at [admin@bigdogsupport.com](mailto:admin@bigdogsupport.com)

## CHOOSE *your* CRUISE

Liner	Destination	Departure	Days
P&O (Closed)	Whitsundays	9/04/2019	5
Sea Princess	New Zealand	3/11/2019	14

Group Holidays

BigDog Support Services run an extensive range of group holidays catering for travellers with different interests, skills and abilities.

We keep our groups small to provide the personal service, support and individualised attention that our travellers deserve. Smaller groups mean we can also respond to special interests or changing weather by altering our daily activities to suit the group

