

Womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria  
empowering women

Annual Report  
2011-2012

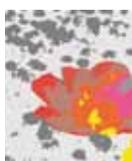


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## Poverty

In Australia, 45% of people with disabilities live in poverty or near poverty, a situation that has worsened since the mid-1990's



**Cover Graphic**  
Designed by Georgie Marks, 2011 intern at ARM Architecture.

**Facts**  
Factual statements made throughout this report have been taken from *Disability and health inequalities in Australia*, VicHealth 2012



# ABOUT US

## Our Vision

A world where all women are respected and can fully experience life

## Our Mission

Leading the way for Victorian women with disabilities and improving women's choices by:

- providing a voice for women with disabilities
- building partnerships
- providing information, and
- educating the community.

## Our Strategic Goals for 2011-2013

Women with Disabilities Victoria is an organisation of women with disabilities, for women with disabilities.

Women with Disabilities Victoria recognises that women with disabilities are amongst the most marginalised in our community and empowers women with disabilities to achieve their rights in Victoria.

We focus on those areas where gender inequity and/or disability inequity have the biggest impact on the capacity of women with disabilities to be respected and to fully experience life.

We have three clear goals for this strategic plan. We will:

1. Influence Government and the community to recognise and remove barriers to full participation by women with disabilities
2. Empower women with disabilities to influence their communities
3. Ensure Women with Disabilities Victoria is a strong, vibrant, sustainable organisation.

## Priority Areas

The current priorities of Women with Disabilities Victoria are:

- Violence against women with disabilities
- Access to health care

We also have a secondary focus on:

- Parenting rights of women with disabilities
- Access to employment.

# ABOUT US

## Our Board

### Chair

Tricia Malowney

### Treasurer

Binda Gokhale (co-opted)

### Directors

Margaret Bayly

Wendy Brooks

Daniela Fallanca

Angela Fitzpatrick

Sharon Granek

Marija Groen

Paula Hobley

Effie Meehan

Kumari Middleton

Delia Portlock

Simone Rutherford

Fiona Sanders

Margaret Stevens

## Our Staff



### Executive Director

Keran Howe



### Information and Administration Officer

Sarah Boyd

Women with Disabilities Victoria Board Meeting





**Policy Officer:  
Violence against  
women with  
disabilities**  
Jen Hargrave

**Advocacy and  
Membership  
Development  
Officer**  
Lauren Hayes

**Acting Executive  
Director  
(April - June) and  
Program Manager**  
Sue Finucane

**Casual  
Administrative  
Officer**  
Mili Viegas

**Not Pictured:**  
**Relieving Administrative Officer**  
Libby Zerna  
**Project Officer**  
Chris Jennings  
**Accountant**  
Wendy Marris

## Reproductive Rights

Despite legislation to protect people with disabilities from forced sterilisation, available data indicates the numbers of sterilisations far exceed those lawfully approved, with the majority of sterilisations being performed on females with an intellectual disability.

# 2011-2012: THE HIGHLIGHTS

## Creating an accessible workplace

A real highlight of the year was locating and moving to new offices that are fully accessible to our staff and members. Women with Disabilities Victoria has recognised the need to expand our office space as our organisation grows. Looking ahead we have a number of projects planned that require expansion. We were fortunate to secure our new space in the same building where we were co-located with Women's Health Victoria, with whom we have shared office space at different locations for the past 6 years. With support from the Ian Potter Foundation, the Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation, Department of Human Services and the Employment Assistance Program, we undertook a refurbishment to create a fully accessible workspace that models universal design principles.



Keran Howe and Lauren Hayes in the new office

## Social Media: YouTube channel and Exploring the Digital Divide

Video can be a powerful tool for advocacy. It allows people to share their own experiences and stories, in their own voice and with their own visual expression. YouTube is one of the most visited sites on the internet, with an estimated four billion video views globally every day. On 21 August 2011, Women with Disabilities Victoria stepped into this arena, adding a YouTube channel (WVDVchannel) to its social media portfolio.

We also recognise that for many women with disabilities the digital world is a growing divide, with many excluded from information technology. In conjunction with The Self Advocacy Resource Unit and Victorian Women's Trust we supported a series of workshops to consult with women with disabilities who are involved in self advocacy groups around their access and barriers to information communication technologies. This project exposed the depth of disadvantage incurred by women with disabilities when it comes to engaging and accessing information, communication and services online.

## Roundtable of women with disabilities meet with the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence against women

In conjunction with Women with Disabilities Australia and the Australian Human Rights Commission we were pleased to host women with disabilities from across Australia for a roundtable discussion on violence. We were joined by the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Ms. Rashida Manjoo and the Deputy Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Ms Andrea Durbach. The roundtable was designed to enable Ms Manjoo to hear about the key issues of violence against women with disabilities from a personal and advocacy perspective. Twenty women with disabilities from around Australia were invited to participate.

## The NDIS Campaign: Our DisabiliTEA

On 2nd August 2011 Women with Disabilities Victoria in partnership with Women's Health Victoria and Domestic Violence Victoria held a DisabiliTEA to promote the importance of a gender friendly National Disability Insurance Scheme. We invited representatives of the three major parties to speak to their commitment to a National Disability Insurance Scheme that recognises the particular needs of women with disabilities – safety from violence, support for parents with disability and recognition of women's sexual and reproductive health. The event was attended by over 100 women. Speakers included politicians Adam Bandt, Andrea Coote, Colleen Hartland and Danielle Green.



L-R: Keran Howe, Rita Butera, Fiona McCormack, Colleen Hartland, Adam Bandt and Louise Johnson

## Funding for the Family Violence Crisis Initiative

As a result of sustained advocacy by Women with Disabilities Victoria in partnership with Domestic Violence Victoria, Department of Human Services instigated a fund to provide disability support for women with disabilities escaping family violence. Supports such as attendant care, accessible transport and mobility equipment hire have been funded. This means that a woman with a disability who experiences violence is no longer forced to remain dependent on a perpetrator of violence; because she fears being left with no support if she leaves or chooses to remain in her home.

## Workforce development on Gender and Disability

As part of our Strategic Plan for 2011-2013 Women with Disabilities Victoria identified the need for a transformation of the way disability services are provided to women. We need services that recognize and respect the differences between men and women and that are both safe and dignified, in order to prevent violence and improve women's health and wellbeing. With funding from Portland House Foundation we developed a three stage approach to workforce and organizational development to improve gender sensitivity within disability services. We are delighted to have been funded by Department of Human Services for the first stage of this program, to develop a learning package on gender sensitivity. In the second stage the package will be trialed with women with disabilities co-facilitating the training.

## DVD Project: Healthy Services, Healthy Women

In November 2011, Women with Disabilities Victoria received funding from the Telematics Trust to produce a DVD focusing on improving access to health care for women with disabilities. The DVD will be used to complement training offered to health practitioners and students working with women with disabilities. A group of young women with disabilities have been actively involved in guiding and developing the project.

# CHAIRS REPORT

## Tricia Malowney

The Board of Women with Disabilities Victoria would like to thank Keran Howe and her staff for ensuring that we remain a vital and dynamic organisation, ensuring that the voice of women with disabilities is heard in development of policies which affect the lives of Victorians, and indeed Australians.

While every year is different, we can always be assured of the need to make a difference, and that we will be busy. This year, as well as continuing our core business of systemic advocacy on behalf of Victorian women with disabilities, we moved premises in March 2012. Although we are still located at 255 Bourke Street, we have moved to the 9th floor. We are currently looking for long term co-tenants, who share our philosophy.

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2011 our Guest speaker was Tony Staley, Chair of the Victorian Disability Advisory Committee. Tony reflected on his experience of disability and called on members to contribute to the upcoming development of the State Disability Plan. At the AGM we welcomed new Board members Angela Fitzpatrick and Marija Groen. We also thanked retiring Board members Effie Meehan and Simone Rutherford (Treasurer), for their dedication and service on the Board. The Board co-opted Binda Gokhale at the December Board Meeting, to fill the role of Treasurer. Wendy Brooks and I were elected to continue our joint roles as Co-Chairs - Governance and Representation - respectively. As Wendy took up a new position as a practicing solicitor, and stepped down from the role of co-chair, the Board decided to combine the two positions to one chair, a role which I have been happy to fill. Over the course of the year Paula Hoble and Daniela Fallanca resigned from the Board. We thank them for their contribution.

At the 2012 AGM, four long term members of the Board will finish their term, as required under our constitution. They are Margaret



Keran Howe, Tony Staley and Tricia Malowney at the 2011 AGM

Stevens, Margaret Bayly, Delia Portlock and myself. We have seen many changes over the last few years as we moved from a feminist collective model – where we undertook all of the tasks ourselves – to a more corporate structure. Our role has moved to governance, setting the strategic direction and supporting our Executive Director and her staff. Although we are sad to be leaving the Board, we know that we will remain connected to the organisation, and that this is a chance for other women with disabilities to bring forth new energy, which is always an opportunity we must take.

I would like to thank Keran and her staff, my fellow board directors, donors and all who have contributed to Women with Disabilities Victoria throughout the year.

Together we have built an organisation which is well respected by the wider community. We use our combined skills to advocate using logic and common sense to make a real difference to the lives of Victorian women with disabilities.

*Tricia Malowney*

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

## Keran Howe

2011 has been another exhilarating year of growth and change for Women with Disabilities Victoria. We have been fortunate to receive funding from a range of philanthropic trusts and boards to undertake a number of exciting projects.

Our strategic direction is underpinned by the need for evidence to promote the status of women with disabilities. In conjunction with the Office of the Public Advocate we received research funding from the Legal Services Board to build the evidence base on violence against women with disabilities in Victoria over the next two years.

Community education and workforce development is another strategy we use to influence the way society views and relates to women with disabilities. With the support of the Telematics Trust we are developing a DVD on the issues women with disabilities face in accessing health services. We have had the involvement of young women with disabilities in this project who have provided their experiences of health services and have been actively involved in the development of the DVD.

In March we moved premises to accommodate our expanding staff. We have been privileged to have the support from the Ian Potter Foundation, Job Access and the Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation. We also received pro bono assistance from ARM Architecture, to assist us with plans for the new office space, and Holding Redlich for legal assistance. We now inhabit a bright orange space with floral feature walls!

The findings of the project on access to information and communication technology for women with disabilities are sobering. In an age where more and more social inclusion is dependent on effective access, significant groups within the community are being left behind. In December we completed a project partnership with the Self Advocacy Resource

Unit funded by the Victorian Women's Trust. The findings have given us a host of recommendations to address the digital divide women with disabilities face

The year has seen heightened media coverage of violence against women, including atrocious instances of violence against women with disabilities. We have worked closely with family violence and sexual assault services to advocate for strategies to prevent violence and better responses to violence against women with disabilities. Through submissions we have put recommendations on ways that government can serve to ensure justice for women with disabilities who experience violence.

In March this year I took 10 weeks personal leave and Sue Finucane acted in the role of Executive Director during this time. Sue's brought her great energy and wisdom to this position and her assistance has been greatly appreciated. My thanks to all the staff of Women with Disabilities Victoria for their wonderful commitment and enthusiasm. With each year we grow stronger and garner greater clarity from our experience working on behalf of women with disabilities. In the coming year we look forward to extending a suite of projects that are designed to raise the status of women with disabilities in Victoria.

*Keran Howe*



Rob Gordon, Keran Howe, Nicola Tuckwell and Lauren Hayes at Job Access, 2011

# GOAL 1 OUR WORK

Influence Government and the community to full participation by women with disabilities

## *Ensure our priority and secondary issues are recognised and reflected in the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)*

In August 2011, Every Australian Counts - a campaign to engage Australians to support the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) - promoted a day for a National morning tea, Disabili-Tea.

Women with Disabilities Victoria, in conjunction with Women's Health Victoria and Domestic Violence Victoria, hosted a morning tea at the Treetops Room in the Melbourne Museum. Around 100 members were joined by guest speakers, including Members of Parliament Adam Bandt, Colleen Hartland, Danielle Green, and Andrea Coote, with a performance by Women with Disabilities Victoria member and singer songwriter Heidi Everett. The event raised awareness of the need for gender to be considered in the development of the NDIS, and gave women a chance to celebrate together.

There was a great atmosphere as attendees listened to the various organisations and politicians speak about the importance of the proposed scheme and the need to understand the particular issues faced by women with disabilities. There was also a moving performance by musician and activist Heidi Everett, including a song she wrote just for the occasion (see far right).



To find out more about the campaign for an NDIS (and how you can support it) go to [www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au](http://www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au)



Speakers at the NDIS DisabiliTEA: Keran Howe, Rita Butera, Adam Bandt, Fiona McCormack, Andrea Coote



August 2011 DisabiliTEA

## PASS IT AROUND

by Heidi Everett

Imagine if disability was gold,  
or a shiny jewel in the ground,  
then would they fight over who  
gets the right  
to mine out the prize that they  
found.

*Chorus*

I'll never surrender myself,  
'cos I'm worth more than the  
money they sell,  
I'm living the answer right now,  
Here it is now pass it around.

It's possible that anyone  
can break,

This is not a love song  
you'll recover from,  
There's more to life than  
broken hearts & little faith,  
But I won't complain,  
I've been strong for too long!

*Chorus*

Oh, we know  
Our lives, our home,  
if you look behind  
you'll know which way to go.

*Chorus*

..sing it loud!



Heidi Everett  
performing  
To hear Heidi play  
'Pass it around',  
go to [www.  
reverbnation.com/  
heideverett/songs](http://www.reverbnation.com/heideverett/songs)



## *Provide evidence-based information to support advocacy and professional and community education.*

### **eNews**

Twelve eNews publications were distributed throughout the year, promoting initiatives in the community, information on the organisation's activities and opportunities for involvement. With the completion of a new Strategic Plan, these areas expanded to include access to employment, social inclusion around information and communication technology and publicity of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Women with Disabilities Victoria eNews is our key communication resource to members, the broader sector and other constituents. We are encouraged by the regular requests we receive from professionals in the community, wishing to be included on this distribution list.

### **Website**

Our website is another way people can engage with our organisation. As such, we seek to make all of our key documents, publications and resources readily available to the public through this means.

Our web development project continued in 2011-12 with the assistance of Catherine Grey (ANZ Bank corporate volunteer). We are in the process of changing our 'information architecture' to enhance usability, changing the design and navigation structure, as well as updating and revising all of our content.

### **Social Media**

The organisation expanded its social media reach in August 2011 with the creation of our very own YouTube Channel - 'WDVchannel' ([www.youtube.com/WDVchannel](http://www.youtube.com/WDVchannel)). During the year, Women with Disabilities Victoria added four videos to the channel – on issues of violence and access to health services and employment.

Women with Disabilities Victoria also have a facebook page. You can 'Like' the page and get connected to our top news, upcoming events, photos and more.

[www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria](http://www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria)



## WDV CHANNEL

Sarah is passionate about the use of alternative media and the internet to inform and educate the community on issues of significance to women with disabilities. Her highlight of the year was the introduction of a Women with Disabilities Victoria YouTube channel in August 2011. 'WDVchannel' gave the organisation a hosted platform on which to share videos, both locally and globally. Four videos were added during this reporting period, attracting 7 subscribers and a total of 2335 views - across 61 counties!

Also during the year, as part of her Master of Multimedia Technology degree (Digital Video & Audio unit), Sarah produced a short advocacy video on 'violence against women with disabilities' - seeing it as a way to reach a different audience in relation to this serious issue. The video involved interviews with members, statistics and sought to give a fleeting overview of the particular incidence of this issue for women with disabilities. The video had over 2000 views, since it was shared, in the 4 months prior to the end of the financial year. On request, Sarah added closed captioning (subtitles) to the video for greater accessibility for deaf viewers.

### **'Your Say, Yours Rights' Project – Women with disabilities and access to information communication technology (ICT)**

The Victorian Women's Trust funded a project aimed at exploring barriers to ICT use by women with disabilities.

Project Worker, Chris Jennings, completed the consultation phase and drafting of the report during the year, which is now undergoing its final edit prior to distribution. What was discovered from the project was the multitude and depth of disadvantage incurred by women with disabilities, when it comes to engaging and accessing information, communication and services online. In addition to what is traditionally seen as issues of accessibility, are barriers of poverty, education, employment, dependence and gender stereotypes. We are all very pleased with the outcomes of this project and the opportunities and recommendations for further action.

### **2011 Disability Sport & Recreation Festival**

Friday 2nd December 2011

Women with Disabilities Victoria ran a stall at the 2011 Disability Sport and Recreation Festival, as part of its community exhibition. The theme for the festival was 'Diversity in Disability' and the festival offered an opportunity for the organisation to broaden its profile, outside of the advocacy sector. Sarah Boyd and Marg Stevens represented the organisation at the event, which took place at Federation Square. Sarah reported that it was a positive experience, resulting in greater community awareness of the organisation and its work, dissemination of a range of our information publications and resources, helpful networking, and further facilitated a number of membership applications and signups to our enews.

## *Advocate to prevent and reduce violence against women with disabilities*

### Research to build the evidence base

#### Voices against Violence

Women with Disabilities Victoria in conjunction with Office of the Public Advocate (OPA), have been funded to investigate the circumstances of women with disabilities of any kind (including physical disabilities, mental illnesses and cognitive impairments) who have experienced violence.

The project, titled 'Voices against Violence', is funded by a \$216,000 research grant from the Legal Services Board. The funding enables us to undertake a two-year fact finding mission relating to the nature and incidence of violence against women with disabilities in Victoria. This research is the first of its kind in Victoria. It will make a much-needed contribution to the evidence relating to violence against women with disabilities. Findings will be used by the project to devise evidence-based strategies for legal, policy and service sector reform.

Work has commenced on the project activities which include:

- An audit of OPA files
- Interviews with OPA staff and volunteers
- In-depth interviews with women with disabilities who have experienced violence
- Consultation with women with disabilities
- Engagement with the disability, domestic violence, legal and service sectors
- Discussion with critical friends for advice on research methodology and participation
- A review of the relevant legal, policy and service sector initiatives in Victoria and beyond.

'Voices against Violence' will build on previous work undertaken by the researching organisations. The project aims to address the significant gaps in knowledge that were highlighted by Women with Disabilities Victoria in the 'Building the Evidence' report. It will also significantly build on the work undertaken by OPA in its report 'Violence against People with Cognitive Impairments'.



## Sexual Abuse

**A Victorian study found that more than a quarter of people reporting sexual assault were identified as having a disability. Other statistics indicate that 90 per cent of women with intellectual disabilities have been sexually abused.**

## Representation and Communication

### Forums

We were pleased to support three significant forums for women with disabilities to address violence against women:

- Women with disabilities from across Victoria met to provide input to the State's draft Violence Against Women Action Plan.
- Women with disabilities from across Australia met to discuss gender violence with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.
- The Sowing the Seeds of Change Forum addressed violence against women with disabilities. Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) organised the event in conjunction with a group of community members, including members of Women with Disabilities Victoria. To see presentations and details from the forum visit: [www.dvrcv.org.au/sowing-the-seeds-of-change-forum-summary/](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/sowing-the-seeds-of-change-forum-summary/)

### Presentations

With our wonderful member representatives we were able to present the issue of violence against women with disabilities in forums around the state.

Tricia Malowney travelled many kilometres to reach regional areas. In the metropolitan area we joined discussions with Masters students at the University of Melbourne and workers at a National Disability Services professional development day.

### Newsletters

Our quarterly Newsletter On Violence And Disability continues to develop, and circulation continues to grow.

In addition to the distribution list, the newsletter is further circulated throughout Victoria Police, violence prevention networks and disability rights groups.



Sowing the Seeds of Change Forum  
(photos care of DVRCV)



## Roundtable of women with disabilities meet with the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence against women

We were pleased to host women with disabilities from across Australia in April for a roundtable discussion on violence. We were joined by the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Ms. Rashida Manjoo and Deputy Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Ms Andrea Durbach. The roundtable was designed to enable Ms Manjoo to hear about the key issues of violence against women with disabilities from a personal and advocacy perspective. Women with Disabilities Victoria co-hosted the event with Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) and the Australian Human Rights Commission. Thank you to Fiona McCormack, Domestic Violence Victoria, for facilitating the roundtable.

Key issues for women with disability identified by roundtable participants and by participants in other general community roundtables can be found in the Special Rapporteurs Report. [http://humanrights.gov.au/about/media/news/2012/92\\_12.html](http://humanrights.gov.au/about/media/news/2012/92_12.html)

Pictured above: attendees at the roundtable discussion of violence against women with disabilities (18 April 2012)

## Partnerships in advocacy

Women with Disabilities Victoria enjoyed strong collaborative relationships with an array of family violence advocacy organisations including Domestic Violence Victoria and The Federation of Community Legal Centres. Their member services, such as Women's Legal Service, Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service and Safe Futures Foundation provided us with invaluable practice learnings. Strong partnerships made it possible for women with disabilities to be represented to government in a broad array of ways, summarised here.

*"The Special Rapporteur has asked that I convey her deepest appreciation to all the study tour participants and her admiration and support for the work being done to prevent and reduce violence against women and girls across Australia and internationally. Thank you so much for all your assistance in convening one of the most powerful roundtables of the study tour."*

Letter from Andrea Durbach,  
Deputy Sex Discrimination Commissioner  
(9 May 2012)



## Submissions and Consultation

- A joint submission to the Parliamentary Law Reform Committee's Inquiry into access to justice for people with intellectual disabilities
- Consultations on state and national disability standards reviews
- Consultation with women with disabilities to input to the State Violence Against Women Action Plan

## High level advocacy

- Meetings with ministers including the Attorney General, the Deputy Premier, Peter Ryan and the Minister for Community Services, Mary Wooldridge.
- Presentation to DHS Deputy Regional Directors (with Domestic Violence Victoria)
- Participation in committees such as the Family Violence Statewide Advisory Committee
- The institution of quarterly Disability and Family Violence meeting enables topical discussions with Disability Service Division and representatives from Office of Women's Policy and Housing and Community Building. This has been a productive forum for drawing policy and inter-departmental links, and exploring responses to service gaps.



## DHS Disability and Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative

A positive outcome from this advocacy is a DHS crisis response pilot which can fund disability supports for up to 12 weeks for eligible women with disabilities escaping family violence. Supports such as attendant care, accessible transport and mobility equipment hire have been funded. The Initiative is primarily accessed through family violence services. Women with Disabilities worked with partners to launch the initiative at a forum of around 50 cross sectoral workers in November.

Pictured above: Women with Disabilities Victoria hosts a discussion on violence prevention strategies. We were joined by representatives of Sweden's "Double Exposure" Development Center, Ewa Fransson and Kerstin Kristensen, and heard about their work with local government services across Sweden (Feb 2012).

## *Improve the access of women with disabilities to health services for women across the spectrum, from health promotion to health care*



### **Royal Women's Hospital Grand Round: Women with Disabilities representing their issues**

In August the Royal Women's Hospital conducted a grand round for staff about improving access to healthcare for women with disabilities.

Women with Disabilities Victoria's Advocacy and membership Development officer, Lauren Hayes, convened and supported a panel of members of women with disabilities to speak about their experience of health care. Lauren also presented, and Women with Disabilities Victoria Chair, Tricia Malowney, chaired the session with an audience of around 80 doctors, nurses and clerical staff. The panellists shared their experiences in accessing the health system, recommendations for improvements, and the need for data collection. The presentations were well-received by staff and the involvement of the women themselves, speaking of their experience, was seen as a key success factor. Grand rounds relating to disability and gender are being planned for 2012 and beyond.



### **DVD Project: healthy Services, healthy Women**

In November 2011, Women with Disabilities Victoria received funding from the Telematics Trust to produce a DVD focusing on improving access to health care for women with disabilities.

The DVD will be used to compliment training offered to health practitioners and students on working with women with disabilities, and looks at disability using the social model, rather than the traditional medical model. Filming and editing has been undertaken co-jointly by Fertile Films and Grit Media, with Sarah Barton directing the filming process. A reference group consisting of women with disabilities was formed in January to assist in guiding the project.

Throughout April and May, Sarah Barton and Lauren ran a series of focus groups to plan the script and content for the health DVD. Three focus groups specifically for women with disabilities were held, including

## Health

In Victoria, fewer women aged 20–69 years with an intellectual disability were screened for cervical cancer than women in the general population (14% compared with 71%)

a teleconference for women living in rural Victoria. Two focus groups were held at the Royal Women's Hospital for health practitioners and students. Most groups were well-attended and feedback was extremely positive and constructive. From this feedback Sarah drafted a script which was reviewed by Lauren, Women with Disabilities Victoria staff and the DVD reference group. Once the final draft was approved, roles were cast and filming took place in late June at the Royal Women's Hospital. The reference group, along with RWVH staff, will view the DVD once it has been edited and offer feedback before a final cut is produced. The DVD will be launched at our AGM in November



### Personal Highlight - Lauren

The DVD project has been a personal highlight for Lauren throughout this year. The energy and enthusiasm that has surrounded the project since the idea for it came about has been fantastic to see.

One of the aspects of the project Lauren has particularly enjoyed was running the focus groups to plan the DVD script and content. The feedback from women with disabilities and health practitioners alike clearly showed that there is a need for this resource.

When Lauren runs forums and focus groups, she is privileged to hear some remarkable stories from women. Some women are sharing their stories for the first time, and for many it can be a daunting experience, but at the same time it is also very empowering. It is wonderful to see the essence of these stories captured in the creation of the DVD and how they influence our advocacy

## GOAL 1 OUR WORK

### *Increase opportunities for participation in the workforce for women with disabilities*

Women with Disabilities Victoria advocates for increasing the rate of employment of women with disabilities through submissions, presentations and participation in employment promotions.

Employment for women with disabilities is a secondary priority area for Women with Disabilities Victoria. The social and economic advantages of being employed are well recorded – such as security, self-determination, financial resources and a sense of purpose. Yet women with disabilities encounter innumerable barriers to obtaining paid employment. These barriers include discriminatory attitudes, accessibility, lack of support, poor education and training and inaccessible transport.

Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) data highlights the disparity between the employment of women and men with disabilities - 60% of men with disabilities are being assisted into employment compared to 40% of women with disabilities. The unemployment rate for men with disabilities has dropped significantly since 1998, but has changed little for women with disabilities.

These issues were raised by Women with Disabilities Victoria and Women With Disabilities Australia in a joint Submission in Response to the Productivity Commission's Disability Care and Support Draft Report (May 2011).

### **Women with Disabilities Victoria model an accessible workplace**

As an organisation, we model an accessible workplace for women with disabilities.

We do this by:

- prioritising employment of women with disabilities
- engaging in accessible work practices
- ensuring an accessible environment
- learning about accessibility and disability practice from each other.

## Employment

**In Australia, people with disabilities are half as likely to be employed as people without disabilities compared with the OECD average of 60%...**

**Within the population of people with a disability, women are less likely to be in the workforce, with a participation rate of 49% compared with 60% for men.**

***Empower women with disabilities to advocate and have a voice within their own communities***

**Leadership Development Program**

In developing Women with Disabilities Victoria's new strategic plan, Lauren met with members to discuss continuance of supporting and training members in their leadership roles.

The outcome from the strategic planning process was for Women with Disabilities Victoria to research what opportunities there might be to partner with a regional Women's Health Service in order to hold skills training for women with disabilities in regional centres. In doing so women with disabilities could be better linked to their local communities for ongoing involvement in community activities and as representatives of women with disabilities within community organisations. This addresses one of the critical issues of social exclusion that women with disabilities face and gives women increased confidence in networking to increase opportunities for employment.

It was also agreed that a formal learning package for leadership skills training with women with disabilities be developed and published to guide both facilitators and participants, which could be applied to a number of local settings for women with disabilities.

In November 2011, Women with Disabilities Victoria contracted Debra Holder and Jitka Jillich from Community Concepts to develop

a leadership training package which would be used to assist the running of advocacy and leadership skills programs for women with disabilities. The development of this package grew from the pilot peer mentoring program we ran in 2010.

In order to expand our membership and increase our engagement in rural and regional areas, it was decided to develop and trial the material for the training package in the Ballarat region. Local women with disabilities, and women who worked in the disability and education sectors were brought together to form a reference group to guide Deb and Jitka's work. The package is still being written and the material has not yet been trialled.

Through developing an advocacy and leadership skills resource to empower women with disabilities, it is hoped that Women with Disabilities Victoria can form partnerships with mainstream women's organisations and service providers around the state to deliver the program locally. This will increase our membership base and capacity, and strengthen and empower women with disabilities to have a voice, and be advocates in their local communities.

### *Strengthen the financial position of the organisation*

2011 has been another exciting year of growth and change for Women with Disabilities Victoria. We have been fortunate to receive over \$300,000 in funding from a range of philanthropic trusts, boards and government to undertake specific projects:

- Leadership Project: \$65,000 p.a. for 3 years from Portland House Foundation
- Women's Health DVD – for Health Professionals: \$30,000 from Telematics Trust
- Gender and Disability Professional Development Package: \$50,000 from Disability Services (DHS)
- Voices Against Violence Research Project: \$216,188 over two years from the Legal Services Board
- Organisational Capacity Building: \$25,000 from The Trust Company (M K A Bell Memorial Fund)
- Creating an Accessible Workplace: \$20,000 from the Ian Potter Foundation
- Creating an Accessible Workplace: \$5,000 from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- Creating an Accessible Workplace: \$25,000 from Job Access
- Disability Advocacy Conference funding: \$900 from the SPA Trust, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

### *Move to new offices that showcase best practice employment and communication practices for women with disabilities*

Due to our growth, Women with Disabilities Victoria moved offices in mid-March 2012 - relocating from the 8th floor (where we had been co-locating with Women's Health Victoria) to newly refurbished offices on the 9th floor, 255 Bourke St.

The move necessitated the establishment of new services and systems, to support the infrastructure of our operations.



As a result of the move,  
our phone numbers  
have changed.

Our new main  
telephone number is  
**03 9286 7800**



Far Left: Work begins on the new  
office space.

Left: The finished reception area

Above: Keran tries out the new  
appliances

Top: Board Director Sharon Granek  
and Keran sign the new lease to  
Level 9, 255 Bourke Street.

# THANK YOU

## Our Donors and Contributors

We sincerely acknowledge and thank the contribution of donors, funding bodies, sponsors and volunteers who have been so vital to making this year such a successful one for Women with Disabilities Victoria:

### Donors

Women's Information, Support and Housing in the North (WISHIN)

Mary Owen

Angela Palmer

Simone Rutherford

Sue Nisbet

### Funders and Grant makers

Department of Human Services

Job Access (Employment Assistance Scheme)

Portland House Foundation

The Trust Company

Legal Services Board

Telematics Trust

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

The Ian Potter Foundation

### Pro Bono contributors

ARM Architecture

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu: Auditor

Holding Redlich: Legal Advice

Catherine Grey, ANZ Staff Volunteer:  
website development



Legal Services BOARD  
Funded through the Legal Services Board Grants Program



# SUPPORT OUR WORK

## Become a member

Our members contribute to Women with Disabilities Victoria in the following ways:

- Being involved in focus groups, representing women with disabilities on boards, committees and forums.
- Contributing to government submissions, representations to government and organisations, and presentation of conference papers.

Full membership is available to women with disabilities in Victoria and is free.

Associate membership is open to individuals (\$20) and/or organisations (\$50) supportive of our aims, and enables exchange of knowledge, and participation with WDV and its members.

More information on how to become a member is available on our website at

[www.wdv.org.au/membership.htm](http://www.wdv.org.au/membership.htm) or by calling 03 9286 7800.

## Make a Donation



## Make a financial donation

We gratefully accept donations to support our work. Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible. Please visit our "Give Now" donations page ([www.ourcommunity.com.au/wdv](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/wdv)) to donate online.



## Donate your experience

We welcome any pro bono support that can help us to realise our goals.

## Contribute to our newsletters

We welcome and encourage your contributions to our newsletters. Please email [wdv@wdv.org.au](mailto:wdv@wdv.org.au) with any suggestions and items for inclusion.



## Find us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria](http://www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria)

You can access up to date news and engage with us through our Facebook page. Please "like" our page to receive our updates (and feel free to say 'hi' by posting a note!).



## Check out YouTube Channel

[www.youtube.com/WDVchannel](http://www.youtube.com/WDVchannel)

Check out and share our videos at 'WDVchannel' and suggest other videos that we might like to see. Our videos are a great way to get informed about issues affecting women with disabilities. Hear our staff and other women with disabilities tell their stories!

## SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<u>Continuing operations</u>		
Revenue	612,598	338,095
Employee benefits expense	(275,570)	(240,280)
Depreciation expense	(4,352)	(2,594)
Other expenses	(104,601)	(114,990)
(Deficit)/Surplus before tax	228,075	(19,769)
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for the year</b>	<b>228,075</b>	<b>(19,769)</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive surplus for the year</b>	<b>228,075</b>	<b>(19,769)</b>

### Statement of financial position at 30 June 2012

<u>Current assets</u>	418,418	204,063
Cash and cash equivalents	8,415	795
Trade and other receivables	-	1,142
Other Assets	426,833	206,000
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>50,585</b>	<b>2,601</b>
<u>Non-current assets</u>	50,585	2,601
Plant and equipment	50,585	2,601
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>477,418</b>	<b>208,601</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>41,202</b>	<b>11,898</b>
<u>Current &amp; Non Current liabilities</u>	27,706	24,417
Trade and other payables	68,908	36,315
Provisions	20,349	12,200
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>89,257</b>	<b>48,515</b>
<b>Total Non current liabilities</b>	<b>388,161</b>	<b>160,086</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>388,161</b>	<b>160,086</b>
<u>Equity</u>		
Retained earnings	388,161	160,086
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>388,161</b>	<b>160,086</b>

Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2012

	Accumulated Surplus	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2010	179,855	179,855
Surplus for the year	(19,769)	(19,769)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2011</b>	<b>160,086</b>	<b>160,086</b>
Balance at 1 July 2011	160,086	160,086
Deficit for the year	228,075	228,075
<b>Balance at 30 June 2012</b>	<b>388,161</b>	<b>388,161</b>

### Statement of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<u>Cash flows from operating activities</u>		
Receipts from operating activities	624,512	361,031
Payments to suppliers and employees	(370,970)	(376,343)
Interest received	13,149	10,477
Net cash generated (used in)/ by operating activities	266,691	(4,835)
<u>Cash flows from investing activities</u>		
Payments for plant and equipment	(52,336)	-
Net cash used in investing activities	(52,336)	-
<b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>214,355</b>	<b>(4,835)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>204,063</b>	<b>208,898</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<b>418,418</b>	<b>204,063</b>

## **Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Report to the Members of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc**

The accompanying summary financial report prepared by Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc, which comprises the summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2012, the summary statement of comprehensive income, the summary statement of cash flows and the summary statement of changes in equity for the year then ended, is derived from the audited special purpose financial report of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc for the year ended 30 June 2012. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on that financial report in our report dated 24 October 2012. The financial report and the summary financial report do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on that financial report.

The summary financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 2 of the financial report of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc. Reading the summary financial report, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc.

### *Directors' Responsibility for the Summary Financial Report*

The directors are responsible for the preparation of the summary financial report.

### *Auditor's Responsibility*

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

### *Opinion*

In our opinion, the summary financial report derived from the audited financial report of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc for the year ended 30 June 2012 is consistent, in all material respects, with that audited financial report.

### *Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Use*

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to the "Directors' Responsibility for the Summary Financial Report" paragraph above. The summary financial report has been prepared to assist Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc to meet the financial reporting requirements to its members. As a result, the summary financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the members of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the member of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc.

DELOITTE TOUCHE TOHMATSU

Rachel Smith  
Partner  
Chartered Accountants  
Melbourne, October 2012

Member of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

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