



**Advocacy** for  
**Disability**  
**Access** and  
**Inclusion** Inc.

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2016 - 2017**

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## **Chairperson Report**

### ***The Year in Review***

*I am pleased to provide the Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (ADAI) Annual Report for 2016-2017.*

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion provides independent advocacy across all of South Australia to all residents with a disability, irrespective of age. This in itself presents challenges in logistics and resource allocation. Therefore, our service delivery is flexible and innovative to ensure we assist all clients in the most effective way. Because of this innovation, the demand for our services continues to be very high.

The National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) was again funded on rollover for another 12 months for the 2016-2017 financial year. The uncertainty of short term funding requires that the Board must plan in a manner that is both effective for clients and staff but also with the knowledge that funding may cease. ADAI continues to support Disability Advocacy Network of Australia (DANA) in their efforts to lobby for extended funding periods.

On August 9<sup>th</sup> 2017, the Australian government announced that it will fund disability advocacy services until June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020. This is a positive for all organisations receiving National Disability Advocacy Programme (NDAP) funding. This announcement came after ADAI was included in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) appeals funding programme which started on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 and extends until 30 June 2020. The additional funding from the NDIS scheme has allowed ADAI to broaden its scope for clients and employ Mr Adrian Crowe as our Senior Advocate. His experience in assisting clients in appeals processes is a welcome addition to the team.

The Board has continued its collaborative relationship with the Catalyst Foundation and both organisations have signed a twelve-month extension to their MOU to have Ms Jenny Hughes as the ADAI CEO until the next annual review as at June 30<sup>th</sup> 2018. Ms Karen Field from the Catalyst Foundation, who was the ADAI Operations Manager, was required to return to her role within the Catalyst Foundation. The Board of ADAI extends our gratitude and thanks to Karen for all her efforts and input into ADAI and wish her well. As a consequence of this change the ADAI Board restructured operations management and appointed a Business Manager, Ms Laura Jenzen, who has an international finance and business management background. Laura began with ADAI on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 and on behalf of the Board, I welcome her to ADAI.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to thank our CEO, Ms Jenny Hughes, for her continuing work with the organisation and providing her perspective on the advocacy sector and mentoring new staff members.

There continues to be rapid change in the disability sector together with reviews of the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This contributes to the complex environment in which we are operating. ADAI has kept abreast of these changes and reviews and we have continued to offer an effective and positive advocacy service to clients. The Board is continually monitoring the environment and adjusting its model and service to ensure we are meeting the external environment demands. We also seek to position ADAI in the best way possible to take advantage of any opportunities that may occur to ensure our continued presence in the sector. One practical example of this is the updating and introduction of new software technology to ensure we not only provide our clients with up to date information but we are able to comply with the Department of Social Services (DSS) data requirements.

The Board continues to review its Strategic Plan to ensure we are delivering the requirements of the NDAP agreement. It seeks to remain current with any NDIS implementation and roll out requirements.

The Board endeavours to review what has occurred in a range of other national programmes to anticipate what might apply to independent advocacy services. It continues to liaise and work with our national body DANA and to interact effectively with DSS at State and Federal level.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Board members whose professional skills and commitment to ADAI have enabled us to achieve much during the year. Also, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Professor Annette Summers, AO, for her term on the Board and all her input. It has been greatly appreciated and we wish her well. The Board made two interim appointments this year to fill vacant Board positions. Ms Michelle Anderson and Ms Azmiri Mian are welcome additions to the Board with experience in both the education sector and NDIS (refer to each biography for more detail). Both Michelle and Azmiri have nominated to continue as board members at this AGM.

I also thank staff who worked with ADAI during the year and have now left our organisation. I welcome the new staff who have brought a wide range of professional skills and experience to support and assist ADAI in its work and its desire to continue the provision of independent advocacy services to those who need it. We also thank the Department of Social Services who fund our program and continue to work with us in an effective and collaboratively manner.

*Shane McDougall*  
*Chairperson, Board of Governance*

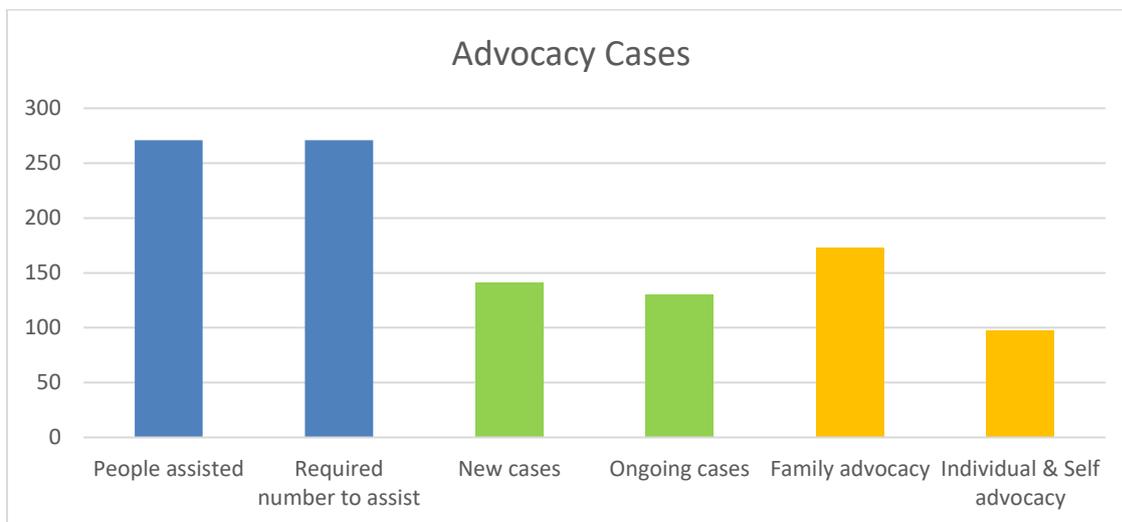
## About ADAI

### Service In Brief

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion is funded by the Australian Government to provide a free Advocacy service for people living with disability across South Australia. In 2016/17, we provided advocacy services to over 270 clients across South Australia.

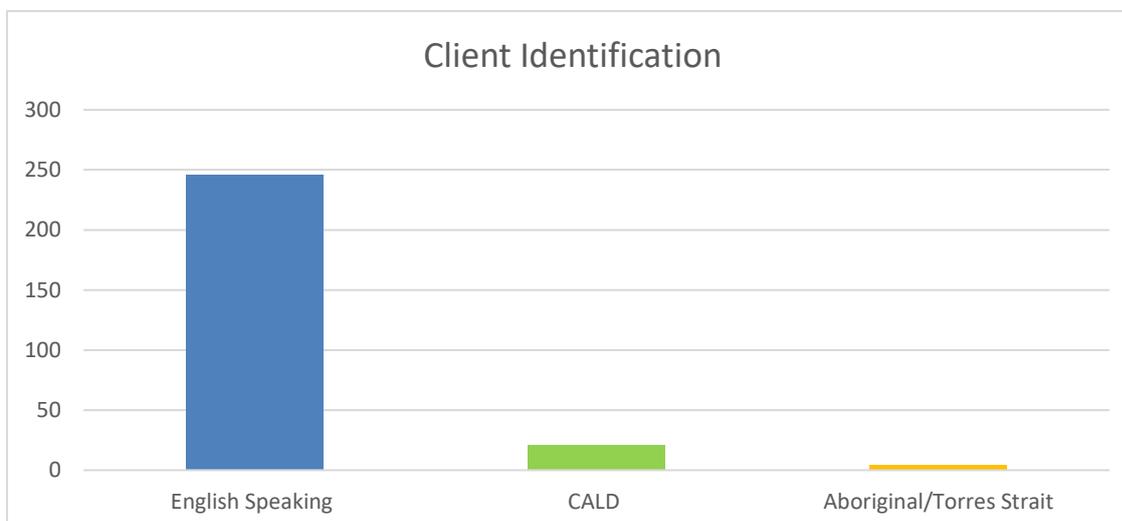
While demand for advocacy services is increasing, graph 1 highlights the number of advocacy cases managed in 2016/17 including those cases that had both individual and a family advocacy component.

**Graph 1: Advocacy Cases**



In 2016/17 our service inclusivity included servicing clients who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD). Our advocacy service is culturally appropriate and supportive of assisting individuals to address their needs.

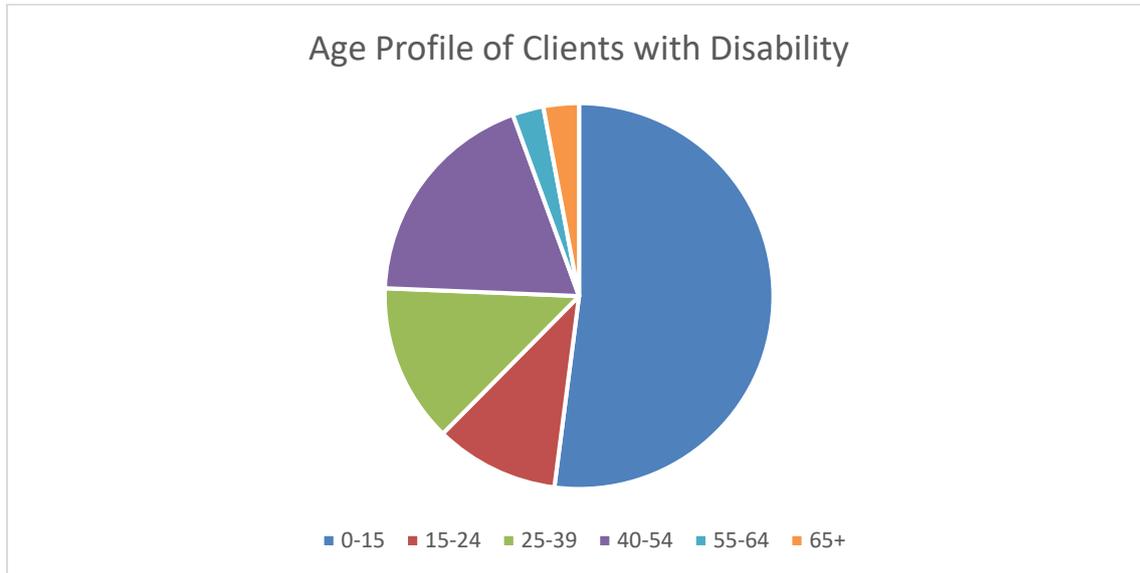
**Graph 2: Client Identification**



### Age Profile of Clients

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion supports clients from various cultural and social backgrounds and vulnerabilities. In 2016/17 our clients ranged from children to individuals 65 years and over in age.

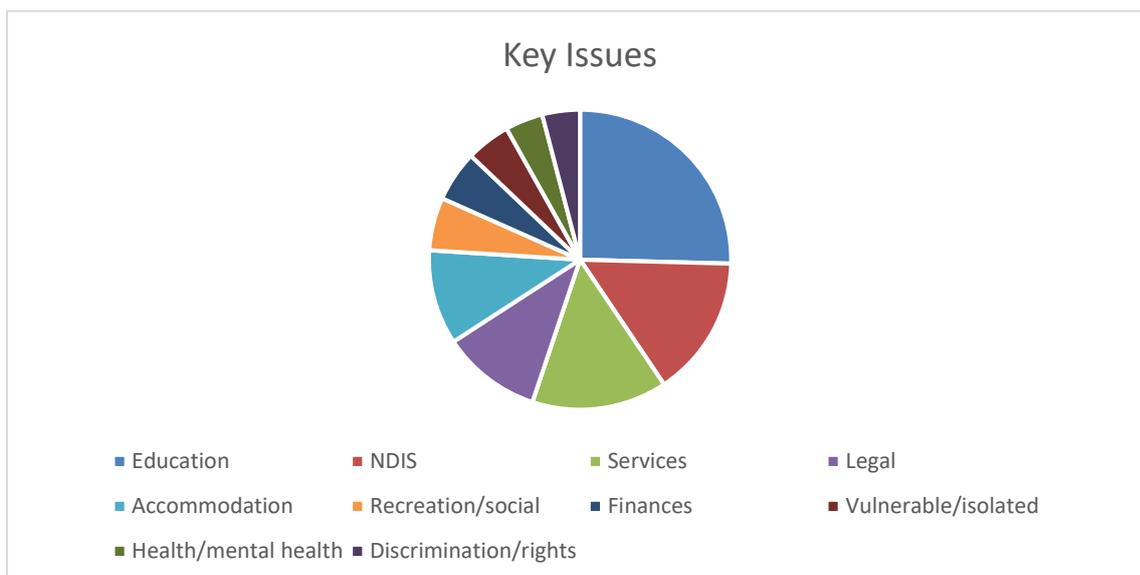
**Graph 3: Age Profile of Clients with Disability**



### Key Issues for our Clients

Client support was provided across a range of areas that impact on our client’s lives. Of most significance was education, NDIS, services offered including access to services, accommodation and legal support.

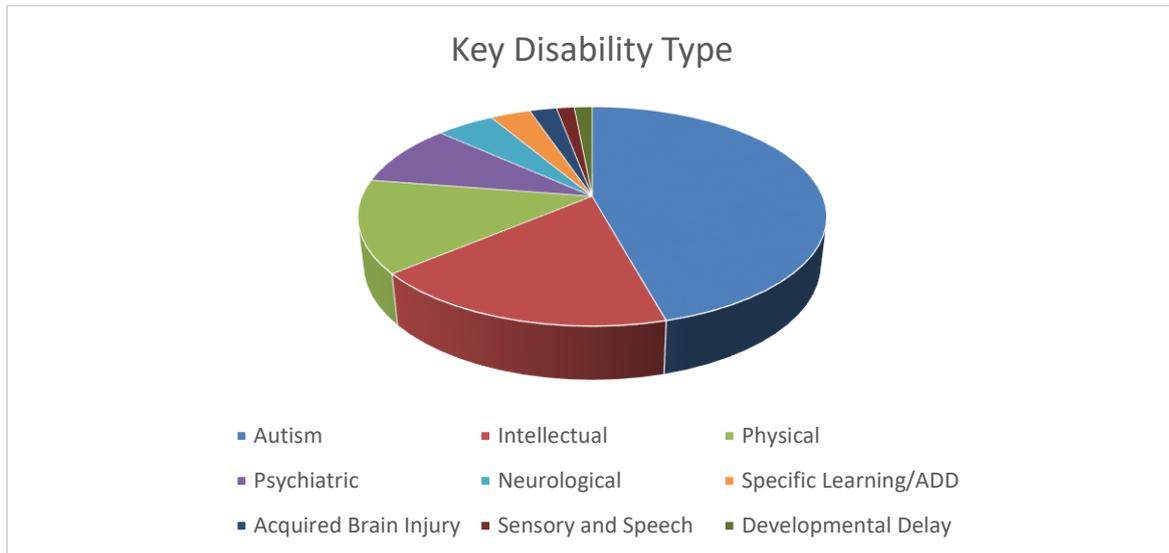
**Graph 4: Key Issues**



## Key Disability Type

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion supported clients who identified within the following disability type.

**Graph 5: Disability Type**



## Our History

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services to provide assistance, support and services for people with disability and carers to overcome barriers that impact on the individual with disability overcoming barriers that impact on their daily life and their ability to participate in the community. We are a small advocacy agency, with big aims and we service South Australia in a range of innovative ways.

The precursor organisations of Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion are Family Advocacy and prior to that Parent Advocacy. These organisations have collectively provided services to South Australian's with disability for over thirty years.

As well as assisting clients with disability, Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion also works collaboratively with other disability and social service agencies.

## What is advocacy?

Advocacy is supporting a person to speak up and be heard so that their rights are promoted, protected or defended. ADAI can support a person to speak up for themselves, to help them be heard by working with them to achieve the individual's goals or objectives.

We do this in a variety of ways including:

- Finding and providing information;
- Assisting with making contact with the service provider or organisation;
- Attending meetings as a support;
- Helping the person plan and practice for meetings, phone calls etc.;
- Helping the person draft letters or emails;
- Supporting the request for a review of a decision that has been made which affects the person.

**What is our Model of Advocacy?**

ADAI is funded by the Australian Government to provide Individual Advocacy services for people with disability. Individual Advocacy involves supporting individuals who are living with disability and those who are representing or supporting in a caring role a person who is living with disability.

When an ADAI Advocate works with a person or a person and their carer, they;

- stand alongside the person as a “partner” in the process;
- help to develop the person’s confidence and ability to discuss the outcomes they want to achieve;
- support the person to make informed decisions and pursue their rights;
- recognise that the person is the expert in their own life or the life of their child;
- focus on one or two key issues at a time;
- advocate only after they have the permission of the person to do so;
- keep the person informed and up to date on any new information or developments along the way;
- refer on to, or work with, other agencies that can provide assistance where appropriate;
- treat everyone they advocate for or to with respect, empathy, honesty and transparency;
- promote the rights of all people with a disability in the community.

**What we do**

As advocates our work includes helping with the resolution of issues and problems with:

- abuse and neglect;
- accessing services or support;
- discrimination and rights;
- legal and financial matters;
- negotiating service goals and outcomes;
- participating in community life;
- receiving fair treatment.

The issues or problems that our Advocates have supported in 2016/17 include:

- Accommodation;
- Centrelink;
- Education and Training;
- Employment;
- Health care and/or treatment;
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS);
- NDIS Appeals;
- Social and Recreational;
- Transport.

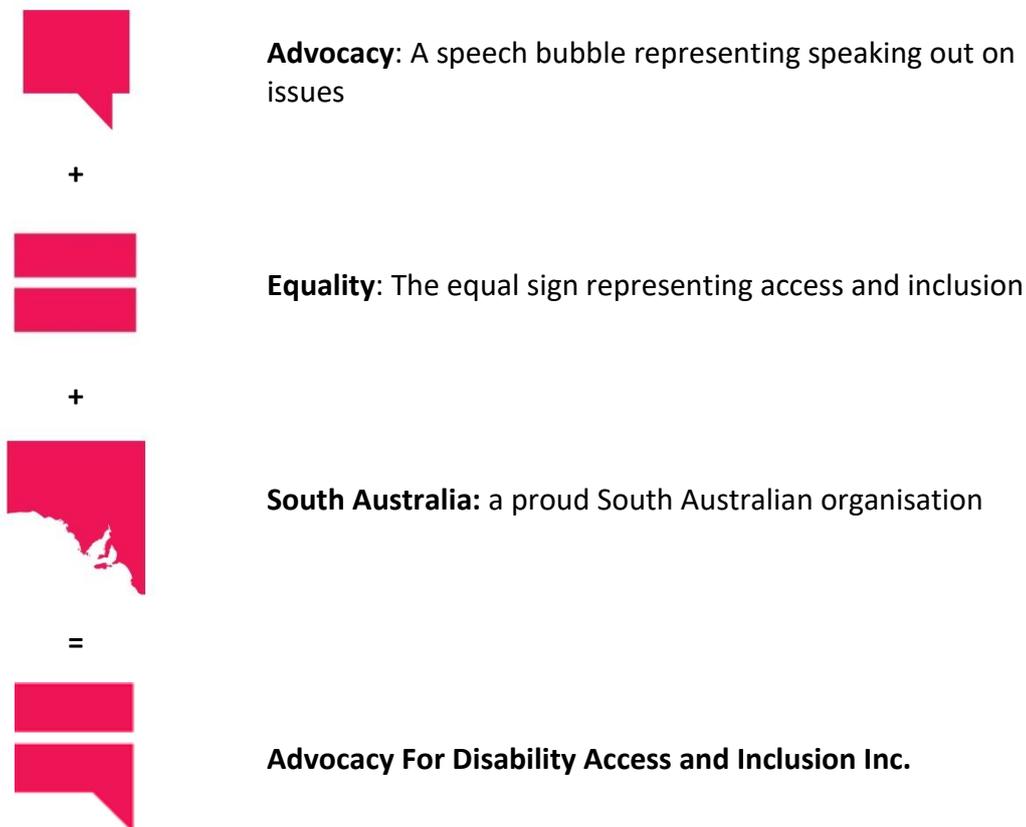
Through the additional funding we received, Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion commenced work within the Appeal Framework of the NDIS and became deeply involved in a range of NDIS review/appeal issues during 2016/17.

In addition, we experienced a significant and growing demand for advocacy support as plans were reviewed and clients sought additional support for increasing or maintaining services.

As a consequence of the work and support we undertook, the demand for our Advocacy services increased and the understanding of what Advocacy organisations increased in part due to the education and promotion we delivered through a range of forums and expos we attended.

### ***Our Logo***

The Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion SA Inc. logo represents what we believe in and stand for:



### ***Our clients***

Our Clients live in South Australia and there is no age limit to access our services.

People living with all types of disability and their carers are eligible to access our advocacy services, including people with:

- physical disability
- acquired brain injury
- sensory disability
- intellectual or mental illness

## **Client Comments**

Client feedback is central to the way we offer and improve our service. We are committed to continually seeking client feedback and listening to our client's needs through regular client surveys and evaluation.

In 2016/17, we received some wonderful and heartfelt feedback on our service from clients and their carers and families through letters, Facebook, and telephone calls.

### **From our Facebook page:**

*Hello, I have recently made contact with your awesome people and you have made yourselves available to come and advocate for my children this coming Monday at our school...Thankyou...I thought I would share the humble beginnings of the support group I have started for the Barossa and northern region for ADHD and other LDs...If you would like to share the page you are MORE than welcome.*

### **By telephone:**

#### **From a client:**

*I have been advised that I have secured a brand new two-bedroom home at Edwardstown – I would not have been able to do this without the advocate's support.*

#### **From a mother**

*Thanks ADAI for listening, for your words of support when I became upset about not being a good enough mother to my daughter, I was so exhausted. Thank you for providing direction as I just cannot think for myself anymore. I feel better now that there is something I can do.*

### **By Letter:**

#### **From a client with whom we have worked with**

*Our daughter is now a different child. We got her into a 6/7 class and she has some beautiful children that are great year 7 role models. She is happy, her anxiety has decreased significantly and she is enjoying school again. She is having trouble with one teacher that does another subject but we are addressing that and it's really minor in the scheme of things. She is away from many of the kids that were nasty to her last year or caused some friendship issues.*

*Her teacher this year is just amazing, always helping her and supporting her correcting which of course flows through. She is getting D level support and I can see it being put into place and when I have asked for examples, it has been immediately presented to me. Our daughter has told us that she is a lot happier, she tells us that her teacher this year sits with her until she understands the work before moving away. She is getting the SSO support and that helps her a lot. Our daughter also keeps telling us that her new teacher does not yell and the teacher last year would yell a lot. She is a kid that does not handle teachers yelling or hand clapping. What a difference that makes. I guess teachers all have their ways of controlling students and some do it better than others.*

*My husband and I are very happy, we are very grateful and the hard work of advocating for her last year has certainly paid off.*

### ***Overview of Strategic Plan***

**Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion** aims to enable people with disability to access their community and achieve better education, service provision and employment opportunities. We advocate with the person and/or their family/carers to fully participate in decision making and to work together with professionals as true partners.

Our aim is to achieve better opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers through advocacy, to continue providing our services and address the evolving needs of our clientele. Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion has refocused its service provision to ensure it can meet its strategic goals and objectives that includes:

- Providing advocacy and support for people with disability and their families/carers;
- Promoting Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. as the recognised disability association for individuals and their families/carers;
- Working collaboratively with other disability and community services to maximise benefits for people with disability and their families/carers;
- Enabling individuals with disability, their families/carers to access and attain their rights and entitlements under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability;
- Operating according to best practice.

## **Our Board**

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Incorporated is governed by a volunteer Board of Management. It is responsible for the effective governance of the organisation, its policies, procedures, financial management and accountability and to ensure the organisation operates in accordance with its funding agreement requirements.

### **Mr Shane McDougall, Chairperson**

Shane McDougall is a senior Group Financial Controller with experience in a range of manufacturing industries and the accounting service sector. This has included the construction industry, the food industry, the flexible packaging printing sector, airport management and accounting service provider. Experience has been gained in both financial and operational management roles to group Finance Controller level for an ASX listed company. Shane has family experience with disability. He holds a CPA. Shane is also the Treasurer of DANA, the national Disability Advocacy Network of Australia, based in Canberra ACT. DANA represents advocacy agencies at the national level.

### **Ms Leonie Challans, Deputy Chair**

Leonie Challans has worked extensively in the tertiary sector the areas of human resources management, equity and diversity and workplace relations. She also worked in the disability area with focus on employment for people with disabilities and their transition from school to post-secondary education. Leonie has worked on national projects, state level committees, and has had previous Board experience. She is very keen to see people with disabilities be able to access all avenues of life. Advanced Diploma of Human Resources Management and a part complete Bachelor of Management.

### **Ms Sandra Deakin, Treasurer**

Sandra Deakin retired from the position of Senior Human Resources Officer at the University of South Australia in 2005. With a Graduate Diploma in Business Studies (Accounting) and a Bachelor of Labour Studies (specializing in Industrial Law) Sandra provides the Board with expertise in the areas of finance, human resources and industrial law.

### **Ms Jennifer Cousins, Secretary**

Jen Cousins has extensive experience and qualifications as a developmental educator, disability advocate, and as a VET trainer in the Disability and Community Services sector. Jen has been a Lecturer in the Disability and Advocacy Programs of Community Services and Health Program in TAFE SA since 2005 and was Principal Lecturer from 2009 -2012, and National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) for the Adelaide Metropolitan Region from 2012 – 2016.

Jen holds a Masters of Adult, Vocational and Workplace Education, a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies) and is currently the Principal Lecturer in Community Services and Health – Individual Client Support at TAFE SA. Jen has extensive personal experience as a carer of family members with disability and is very passionate about creating accessible and inclusive communities.

**Ms Meredith Norton**

Meredith Norton has been a board member for approximately five years. Her background is in supporting students with disabilities to access education. She has been a high school counsellor, a welfare manager, a university disability liaison officer and manager of disability services at university and TAFE. She also has family experience of disability. She has recently retired from the position as Manager, Student Services for TAFESA. Meredith holds a Bachelor of Arts; Graduate Diploma of Education; Graduate Diploma of Language & Literature and a Graduate Diploma of Educational Counselling.

**Ms Narelle Schubert**

Narelle Schubert has an Advanced Certificate in Accounting and has worked for many years in the Health and Education sectors in South Australia, in various accounting and administration roles within Finance, Payroll, Community Services and Health and Student Services. Narelle has lived with disability most of her life and has personal experience utilising services to support disability, access and inclusion.

**Mr Brian Smith**

During an extensive career in the SA Police Force Brian served in a wide range of areas. He has management level experience where he was responsible for the development, health, safety and welfare of all staff under management, maintaining discrimination and harassment free workplace and service deliver environment. He was responsible for ensuring the planning and management of all activities within the workplace were consistent with SAPOL's core functions to provide an effective and integrated police service responsive to community needs.

Brian has been awarded three police good conduct service medals. Brian has a Master of Public Policy, Charles Sturt University; Bachelor of Business (HRD), University of South Australia; Grad Cert in Applied Management, Australian Institute of Police Management.

**Ms Azmiri Mian**

Azmiri (Azi) Mian has an ongoing interest and advocacy for good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, with a focus on diversity. Azi is a Branch Committee Member of the Australian Association of Social Workers – SA Branch, and Convenor of the Mental Health Practice Group. She represents the Branch on the SA Mental Health Commission Community Advisory Committee.

Azmiri is currently working in the tertiary education sector and has extensive leadership and management experience in both the government and non-government sectors. Azi has worked in health, mental health, Indigenous health, education, aged care quality and compliance and disability employment sectors, and still runs her own consultancy.

Azmiri is currently completing her PhD at the University of South Australia Business School with her interest being human rights and social justice discourse in HRM practices in all sectors. She has a Bachelor and Master of Social Work, a GradDip in Public Health, and a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology & Women's Studies).

**Ms Michelle Anderson**

Michelle has over 27 years' experience in the non-profit disability and social services sector, from hands-on service delivery roles through to executive management positions. Throughout her career Michelle has been approached to take up key management roles due to her ability to think strategically, influence stakeholders and manage change in complex environments. She has worked extensively in the disability employment sector, focusing on maintaining ethical, person-centred service provision within a competitive target-driven environment.

Prior to her current role as Manager, Inclusion with UniSA, Michelle spent two and a half years as Assistant Director with the NDIA and a further ten years with The Multiple Sclerosis Society of SA & NT. Michelle has a Diploma in Applied Science (Developmental Disabilities) and her career choices have been influenced by a genuine desire to shape a society that truly values inclusion and diversity.

Michelle also brings with her a combination of lived and family experience of Anxiety, Depression, OCD, Tourette Syndrome, Autism and complex physical disability. Combined with her professional experience, this has enabled Michelle to develop an intimate understanding of the barriers and challenges that people with a disability, families and carers may face at both an individual and systemic level throughout their lifespan.

***Board members farewelled during 2016-2017***

The Board farewelled Professor Annette Summers, AO DFD, during the 2016/17 financial year.

Annette was an invaluable member of the Board bringing significant knowledge and experience in Health and Nursing and a very personal knowledge and experience of living with and caring for a family member with disability. We thank Annette for her service and wish her well.

***Our Staff*****Ralph Brew, Advocate**

Ralph has a longstanding commitment and experience in disability and human rights and has a specific interest in Sexuality and Disability. Ralph previously worked in training and development, education, consultancy and advocacy. Ralph has a Diploma of Counselling (Australian Institute of Social Relations); Graduate Diploma in Adolescent Health and Welfare (University of Melbourne), a Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies (Flinders University) and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAFE SA).

**Kate Erne, Advocate**

Kate has over 22 years' experience working in the fields of Mental Health, Disability Employment Services, Tertiary Education, Training and Community Services. Kate has a Master's in Education, a Diploma in Training and Assessment and is an accredited Mental Health First Aid Trainer (Mental Health First Aid Australia). Kate is also currently studying for a Certificate IV in Disability with Barkuma.

**Linda Mee, Advocate**

Linda is a qualified social worker. Linda worked in the vocational education sector for twenty-five years as an educator, a counsellor and a support person for people with disability. Linda has qualifications in AUSLAN as well as Training and Development. Linda re-joins the Advocacy team, having previously provided hourly paid services. Linda has a

Diploma in Technology (Social Work), SA Institute of Technology (now University of South Australia).

### **Natalie Berg, Advocate**

Natalie has over twenty-five years' experience working with people from diverse backgrounds and needs with a strong skillset in disability. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Human Services Counselling, Diploma of Counselling, a Certificate IV in Disability Work and a Certificate IV in Family Support Work. Natalie has experience and a sound knowledge base in social inclusion, education including vocational training, employment, accommodation, and family support.

### **Adrian Crowe, Senior Advocate**

Adrian holds a degree of Bachelor of Laws and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice. He worked as in-house advocate for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), representing the Repatriation Commission in matters before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) in all States and Territories. He also instructed counsel at the Federal Court. Adrian joined ADAI in May 2017 and manages NDIS Appeals and reviews at ADAI.

### **Laura Jenzen, Business Manager**

Laura has worked in Australia and overseas in finance, HR and management roles. Laura holds an MBA with the University of South Australia, an Advanced Certificate of Accounting with Victoria University, and is currently studying a Certificate IV in Disability with Barkuma.

### **Jenny Hughes, Chief Executive**

Jenny has over 35 years' experience in management, community services, community engagement and social planning fields across all tiers of Government as well as working in the private sector. Jenny's work includes a strong focus on programs and projects which foster social cohesion within a community development framework and supporting and increasing community engagement across a wide range of sectors and issues. Jenny has significant experience in advocating for the community at a systemic level and has family experience of living with disability. Jenny sits on a number of government and non-government Boards and committees and has a Bachelor of Arts (Public Administration) and is currently studying Law.

### ***Staff farewelled during 2016-2017***

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc. farewelled Ilona Schultz, Advocate and Karen Rodger, Receptionist during the 2016/17 financial year. We recognise and thank them for their service to Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion (and its precursor organisations) and we wish them well in their new endeavours.



Left to Right: Ralph Brew, Diana Calle, Linda Mee, Adrian Crowe, Kate Erne, Jenny Hughes, Natalie Berg and Laura Jenzen



## **Financial Report 2016/2017**

The grant funding received from Department of Social Services (DSS) for 2016/2017 was similar to 2015/16 funding level.

In December 2016 ADAI was awarded NDIS appeals funding to join other advocacy organisations in South Australia to offer the service. The inclusion of ADAI into this program meant additional funding was provided to enablement employment of an additional Advocate qualified to assist clients with the NDIS appeals process.

In March 2017 DSS advised the Minister had granted a small amount of additional funds to all NDAP funded organisations. This additional funding enabled ADAI to continue to ensure that our services to clients were maintained.

The Financial Acquittal for 2016/2017 was:

Total grant funding:	\$523,518
Total expenses:	\$522,960
Surplus / (Deficit):	\$558

The financial accounts and acquittal statement were audited by Mr Ian McDonald FCA. Mr McDonald's letter of external audited is included in this report.

The ADAI Board of Directors have approved the Financial Statements in accordance with the findings of the Auditor, Mr Ian McDonald.