



Update from ASENZ Board Meeting

ASENZ view from the Chair May 2009

Hello

The last board meeting was held in Christchurch in April. This was the 1st full board meeting following February's planning session. It was great to get down to business for the year. Thank you to Louise Deane for her co-ordination and for the great attendance by local CRAG members at the forum on the Friday.

Cindy Johns Resignation

Just prior to the meeting we received Cindy John's resignation to the board. Cindy has been an active board member and we are sorry to see her go. Due to changes within her organization Cindy is unable to continue on the board.

We would like to thank her for her commitment and input over the last 2 years and the work that she has achieved. During each of the past two years, Cindy has developed two "post-Conference" workshops for our conferences. These were focused on developing an increased consumer perspective within Supported Employment. They had certainly created a refreshed view and attracted a dedicated audience that grew each year. We will aim to continue with this focus in this year's conference, sadly without Cindy's guidance.

Standards review

It gives the board great pleasure in announcing that the review of the Supported Employment Standards is now complete. As you would have seen from the website a final draft has been up for everyone to view. The finishing touches have been made and they are currently being printed off for distribution. The Standards will form a central part to this year's conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the working party that undertook this process and the document they have produced. The board would also like to thank Les for guiding this process and ensuring it was accomplished on time and on budget.

Once again thank you to Les Gilsenan; Rob Warriner; Louise Deane; Rachel Jones; John Taylor; Roy Wilson and Joe Riley.

Conference

As you will know from the regular updates from Ian, the 2009 conference is on its way. As this is the focal point of our activities we are looking for it always to be bigger and better than previous years.

There have been some good responses so far to the call for papers and we encourage everyone to take part. If you are looking to present thank you and well done for stepping up.

May 2009



asenz
THE ASSOCIATION FOR SUPPORTED
EMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

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“Peak Body” / “Coalition of Disability providers”

Again there have been numerous discussions and debates around the Peak Body or Coalition of Disability providers since last September / October. ASENZ set out a position around this following our meeting in February and is currently canvassing members for their individual options.

It has come to a point in the discussion where the other initial members of the establishment group (SIL, NRID, VASS, IHC, CCS, Spectrum care) are asking for a call on if this moves forward are ASENZ “in” at this stage.

There have been consultation meetings around the country which have indicated strong support for the concept of one body to represent disability issues. ASENZ members have attended some of these forums.

Our members have flagged a number of issues that they would like some clarity around such as maintaining the principles of Supported Employment and the process in which members issues can be raised and heard.

A paper will be sent to members over which has more of an outline of what the peak may look like and some of the potential costs and process which may answer some of these questions.

At this stage it would be likely that Supported employed would be a special interest group within the Peak, which may give the scope to maintain the principles which are the foundation of Supported Employment in New Zealand.

Realistically the next phase of this process is to move into establishment of this new body. The question still remains; is ASENZ part of this or not, which ultimately comes down now to members choosing. We will continue to provide as much information as possible to support the decision you as members will need to make. Some members, who may be part of one of the “establishment” organisations, may have already made their decision.

There is a time line around this and we, ASENZ, will need to make a call by the next board meeting in July around our intent. So if you wish to make your opinion clear to us, send comments to Ian.

Research

There is an opportunity through the Lotteries commission to apply for funding for research. It is the Board’s intent to get some ideas together and make an application to this fund to undertake research into elements of Supported Employment in New Zealand.

If your organization is currently undertaking research or has research developed around Supported Employment in New Zealand please inform Ian. ASENZ can then either post this on our website or create a link to where the research is, so others can view it.



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Professional Development

As you would see from the regular updates in Ian's emails, the Supported Employment Certificate / Diploma modules are progressing well and 3 modules have been delivered so far.

The feedback from these have been generally good, and we are working hard to ensure that we sort out one or two problems that are inevitable with complex projects such as this. There are always areas to continually improve.

If your organization or your local network of agencies is keen on hosting or developing your own customized training do not hesitate to contact Ian.

With the MSD training fund being available to relevant people up to June 2010, now is the best time to organize your training for the coming year.

It is clear that an emphasis on professional development for Supported Employment practitioners and professionals is an area that is critical for the sustainability of the sector.

The way in which people practice can define organizations, results and reputation. In that respect ASENZ is beginning to look at how we evolve the current Standards of Supported Employment to have a practitioners as well as organizational focus.

We will be strongly exploring the development of a 'code of ethics' for Supported Employment practitioners as we move forward as this seems the logical next step.

Sector Meetings

We continue to be in process around securing meetings with the Ministry of Social Development at several levels. At this stage we have some appointments scheduled in June and hope that they do not get postponed!

The Board continues to represent and promote ASENZ at a range of meetings and activities. These included, but are not limited to:

Local ASENZ's sector meetings / ACC provider forums / Local Job summit's / Other relevant meetings and events

The board would also like to offer best wishes and safe travels to those members that are attending the European Union Supported Employment Conference in Prague. We look forward to hearing how Europe is coping in the current economic climate and the role supported employment is playing.

Stay well and keep working Hard.

Tyron Pini – ASENZ Chair