

# SCIP MEETING NOTES

DATE: THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2017, 4.00 – 6.00PM

Attendees: John Koumourou, Martin Heng, Raelene West, Marty Korytowski, Charles Heery, Sandra South, Matthew Schweitzer, Emma Bloom (Spire, Project Officer), Pallavi Singal (Spire, Project Support Officer)

Apologies: Alex Coombs, Shane Brand, Paul Mariager, Dean Richards, Trevor Carroll, Justin Andrews, Susana Valdes, Lachlan McLeod, Sharyn Craven, Gerard Stevenson, Malcolm Harding, Sean Burke, Linda Barclay, Harin Corea, Nazim Erdem (Team Leader, Spire)

## **AGENDA ITEMS:**

### **Information Session by Ruth Stewart, Royal Talbot Vocational Consultant**

Ruth gave an informative educational session on [Job Access](#) (JA), while group members shared personal stories and experiences using Job Access.

- Job Access is an organisation outsourced by the government (Department Social Services). Their primary aim is to get people back to work, upgrade or expand workplace skills.
- First point of contact is generally by telephone; straightforward and personalised. After first contact the process is usually smooth, quick and easy.
- Cases have to be relevant to a person's work/work environment, e.g. not transport to work unless driving is a part of your role.
- An Occupational Therapist will assess each case onsite, free of charge, and generally within a short timeframe.
- Anything portable that is funded by JA is owned by the individual (you can take it with you to other jobs).
- Physical workplace adjustments and building modifications are capped at \$30,000.
- Ongoing maintenance or repairs are not covered by JA.
- Eligibility includes: Australian citizen or permanent resident, minimum 8 hours work per week, ongoing disability, currently employed in a role that is expected to continue 13+ weeks (refer to [website](#) for full details).
- While there is an expectation that TAC/Workcover clients would get workplace modifications etc. paid by them, people have had success going through JA instead.
- The individual or organisation must pay up front and then JA reimburses within a fortnight. They also have payment plans often suitable for smaller businesses etc.
- JA will fund working from home requirements, e.g. adjustable desks, temperature controls.
- JA also works with Disability Employment Services (DES) to fund professional development and training opportunities to help someone get back to work/maintain work, e.g. funding courses. There is eligibility criteria for this (refer for [website](#) for more details).

- Aging with a disability; still worth considering JA even if you are content in your work and environment as technology is always changing.
- SCIP member example: Martin's role requires him to do quite a bit of travel. He received a fully funded foldable electric wheelchair that fits into plane carriages. His experience with JA was quick service, straight forward, and no loops to jump through.

Would be worthwhile considering ways in which we can advertise and promote Job Access:

- Majority of in-patients in the spinal ward are made aware of their services.
- Request Disability Liaison Officers at universities to inform students as they graduate.
- Look to asking JA themselves if we could help advertise and how.

While location in WA, Job Access have offered to run a Webinar for the group; will take them up on this offer in 2018.

For more information: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

### **How to boost member attendance and bring new people into the group**

- Continue to host guest speakers and sessions with various organisations and individuals. This has proven to be of interest to group members and new people considering joining.
- Continue to advertise through Spire website, Newslink, Facebook, individuals share within their networks.

### **Meeting logistics**

- The group discussed whether a CBD location is still suitable to the majority of members. It was decided that central was the best option for the foreseeable future, as was a 4pm start time so that those working can still work the majority of the day.

### **SCIP website:**

- ACTION: All group members to send their profile photos and bios to Emma so she can update the [website](#).
- ACTION: Provide Maurice Blackburn with a short brief so they can put together a fact sheet.

### **General discussion:**

- Consider where we could house a central hub of disability employment related information. While there is great information out there it is fairly scattered.
- IDEAS is a great resource: Information of Disability Education and Awareness Services: <http://www.ideas.org.au/>
- Mobility allowance is being replaced by the NDIS. It will be capped but will still be part of your package.
- [Dragon](#) and [Voice X](#) are two voice activation programs that assist with computer navigation, and digital dictation. Many members have used and recommend both.

### **NDIS:**

- Preplanning is very imperative, very important to know what you need to ask for to get a thorough and comprehensive plan.

- Be upfront and ask for more, rather than less.
- It is not just about maintaining your life, can also include supporting and funding hobbies, aspirations, relationships and travel etc.
- SWEF will cover the 65+ age group; however, as time progresses will see how this links in with aged care.

**Future meetings:**

November 9<sup>th</sup> 2017:

- Gill Hilton to present on PhD findings (Employment post-SCI) and her presentation and involvement with the ANZSCOS Conference:  
<http://www.dcconferences.com.au/anzscos2017/home>

2018 ideas:

- Maurice Blackburn session/s: NDIS, Workcover/TAC, Public Liability
- Centrelink - Disability Support Pension
- Linda Barkley to present on PhD (social & community participation after SCI - including employment)