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Message from the Acting Commissioner

Welcome to the July issue of our eNewsletter.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Code of Conduct webinars series over the last few months. We were thrilled to have over 370 people join the webinars live. I hope disability workers found the series informative and valuable in understanding your vital obligations to provide safe, quality care to people with disability. And if you missed them live you can now watch the recordings.

On 22 and 23 June I attended the VALID Advocacy in Action Conference in Preston alongside VDWC staff, where I took part in a panel discussion exploring regulation, safeguarding and advocacy by and for people with disability.

In the discussion, I spoke about how the Commission's work complements the

efforts of advocates, and the importance of working together across the disability sector to strengthen safeguards and support the safety and wellbeing of people with disability.

In other news, on 1 July we celebrated two important anniversaries. 6 years since the Commission commenced as Victoria's disability worker regulator, and started receiving complaints and notifications, with the Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct setting worker standards. It also marked 5 years since voluntary disability worker registration started in Victoria. In these five years, we have seen disability workers across Victoria sign up, demonstrating their skills, experience and commitment to quality disability work. If you are a disability worker or if you employ disability workers, I encourage you to apply for registration and promote registration in your workforce, to contribute to safer, high-quality services for people with disability. To find out more about registering as a disability worker read on below.

Kate Maddern, Acting Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner

Code of Conduct webinars: watch the recordings

We've wrapped up the first Code of Conduct webinar series!

These sessions are an excellent resource for helping disability workers understand how to apply the Code of Conduct in their daily practice.

The webinars covered key topics of the [Disability Service Safeguards Code of Conduct](#):

- Element 3: Providing supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill
- Element 5: Promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided to people with disability
- Element 6: Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against, and exploitation, neglect and abuse of, people with disability

Watch the recordings

If you missed any of the sessions or would like to rewatch them, you can [access the full series recordings on our webpage](#).

Continue your development

We encourage disability workers to keep building their skills. [Visit our website to explore our Training and development catalogue](#). It includes over 150 courses and learning opportunities, including ones that are free.

Out and about

VALID - Advocacy in Action conference

VDWC staff and Acting Commissioner Kate Maddern attended the VALID Advocacy in Action conference last week, sitting in on wonderful presentations about current work across the disability advocacy sector. It was a great opportunity to hear from dedicated and passionate disability advocates and self-advocates about the issues and opportunities they are seeing for people with disability in Victoria.

The Commission also took part in a panel on safeguarding by and for people with disability, and how our work at the Commission complements the work of advocacy and safeguarding roles. The discussion at this panel session highlighted how crucial it is for regulators and advocates to work together, and to continue to strengthen safeguards to ensure people with disability are protected from harm.



Image 1: VALID CEO Fionn Skiotis, VDWC Acting Commissioner Kate Maddern and Victoria's Public Advocate Dan Stubbs at the VALID Advocacy in Action conference. Image 2: Acting Commissioner Kate Maddern presenting during a panel discussion on safeguarding by and for people with disability during the VALID Advocacy in Action conference.

Sector news

Humanability report: Victoria's disability worker registration scheme featured as case study

Recent national research by Humanability highlights that registering disability workers is crucial for improving safety, strengthening professional standards, and enhancing career pathways.

We are proud to share that the Commission is featured as a best-practice case study in the report.

The report identifies a range of potential benefits associated with disability

worker registration and accreditation schemes, including strengthening safeguards, supporting workforce professionalisation, improving workforce data collection and enhancing worker mobility across sectors and jurisdictions.

You can learn more about the importance of regulation and the [full research report by Humanability on their website](#).

Regional disability worker scholarships – round 3 applications open on 21 July

The Victorian Government is helping more disability workers to deliver services in regional and rural Victoria. It is doing this by providing financial support to complete a course in disability.

Scholarships of \$3,500 will be available to students studying with an approved Victorian training provider. At the time of applications assessment, the applicant must be studying or recently graduated from:

- Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) (CHC33021), or
- Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121).

Students completing the dual Ageing and Disability specialisation of the Certificate III in Individual Support may also be eligible.

The scholarships are available for domestic students living in regional Victoria and there are a limited number available. Students with disability and students from First Nations communities are encouraged to apply and will be prioritised for a scholarship.

Applications open on Tuesday 21 July 2026 and close on Tuesday 15 September 2026. For more information and to see if you are eligible [visit the regional disability worker scholarships government webpage](#).

New website launched to reduce everyday harm

The Australian Research Council's *Working Together* project has launched a new website to help providers, workers, and participants prevent everyday harm to people with disability. The Commission was pleased to be able to feature a session from the researchers at our own Continuing Professional Development event for registered disability workers earlier this year.

"Everyday harm" includes subtle, repeated moments—like ignoring someone, speaking badly about them, or dismissing their choices—that deeply damage a person's wellbeing and sense of safety over time.

Stopping this harm is a shared responsibility. The new website offers research-based tools, videos, and training guides on:

- creating safe ways to share experiences of harm
- finding and fixing problems early
- including people with disability in decision-making
- making sure good practices happen all the time
- supporting staff through training and reflection.

[Visit the Preventing Everyday Harm website to find out more.](#)

Become a registered disability worker



Disability worker registration with the VDWC is an important step in strengthening safeguards for people with disability in Victoria.

Registration is currently free, voluntary, increases overall community confidence in the sector and ensures that people with disability can access safe and quality services – no matter how they are funded.

To simplify and speed up the registration process, you have the option to

provide your NDIS Worker Screening ID number when applying for worker registration. This means you can skip the requirement for an additional national police check.

A reminder that when applying for registration you need to:

- prove your identity*
- agree to a national police check**
- complete the application form
- provide relevant documents

*If you have stored your verified identity with Service Victoria then you won't need to prove your identity again.

**If you already have a NDIS Worker Screening ID number you can provide this when you apply and you won't need to undergo a national police check again.

To learn more about registration and to start your application [visit our registration page.](#)

Sector events

Explore these free events across the disability sector:

Disability Pride Celebration 2026 Melbourne

- Date and time: Friday, 31 July, 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
- Location: Fringe Common Rooms - Victoria Street, Carlton
- About: Celebrate Disability Pride Month with an inclusive community event featuring performances, activities and opportunities for connection, hosted by the Disability Rights and Culture.
- For more info, [visit the Disability Pride Celebration 2026 event page.](#)

Melbourne East Community Disability Expo

- Date and time: Thursday, 6 August, 10 am to 1 pm
 - Location: Dorset Gardens Hotel, Croydon VIC
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- About: This free community event is designed to connect people living with disabilities, their families, guardians, support workers and disability providers.
- For more info, [visit the Melbourne East Community Disability Expo event page](#).

Disability Support Pension Information Session Melbourne

- Date and time: Friday, 28 August, 10:30 am to 12 pm
- Location: Northcote Library - Northcote, VIC
- About: Presented by Services Australia, this session will explain the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Carer Payment.
- For more info, [visit the Disability Support Pension Information Session event page](#)

Have an event you'd like us to promote? Send us an email at info@vdwc.vic.gov.au

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