Disability Studies: Every Body In

Inaugural Conference
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New Zealand

Slide 1.
The Evolution of Disability Rights in Australia: where have we been, where are we now, where are we going?

Dr Rhonda Galbally A.O.
Chair National People with Disability and Carers Council Australia

Slide 2.
In the nineteenth and early part of the 20th Century people with disabilities in Australia were viewed as poor helpless cripples, blind beggars, dumb idiots begging from the guilty passer-by.

Slide 3.
People with disabilities were denied the right to participate in society – school, work, housing, transport, recreation, sport and social groups

Slide 4.
The Development of Institutions

In the mid twentieth century people with disabilities were taken off the streets and put into institutions

Slide 5.
Late 60s - the start of the Disability Rights Movement in the USA

Vietnam veterans returning from war in the USA

- Adult
- Refused to accept institutions
- Independent living movement

Disability Rights Movement began in mid-70s in Australia

Slide 6.
Work of disability rights movement in early 80’s was deinstitutionalisation

Institutions

- Out of sight out of mind
- Life sentence – from birth to death
Institutional walls contained disability – kept them away from community where they were seen as repulsive, loathsome, feared

Systemic institutional abuse

Created systemic discrimination – never seen in the outside worlds of school, jobs

Slide 7.

Institutions

- People with disabilities - objects of pity for fundraising
- Experts Knowing what’s best
- People with disabilities (and their families) voiceless
- Split into different disabilities – deaf, blind, physical, intellectual
- Denial of external handicaps e.g. buildings – locating handicap inside the person

Slide 8.

- Challenging the medical domination of disability and construct social model of disability
- Body first – education second (work and life came third)
- Disability is placed the body rather than in the external environment – which would then have to be made accessible
- Sheltered employment – sweatshop wages
- Lack of participation in mainstream education, jobs, community meant that society keeps discriminating due to fear of difference
- Attempting to create risk free lives - leading to major risk of not being able to live a life

Slide 9.

The Evolution of Disability Rights

Achievements of Disability Rights Movement in Australia in the 80s

- Deinstitutionalisation
- Self-help, mutual support and advocacy
- Commonwealth State Disability agreement

Slide 10.

Decline of the Disability Rights Movement in the 90s

Slide 11.

Carers Rights Movement grows in 90s

Slide 12.

Split between people with disabilities, carers and services

Slide 13.

December 2007 - The Election of the Labor government

Bill Shorten – former union leader now parliamentary secretary for disability said:
“I make no apologies for seeing disability as an issue … of basic civil rights.”
He went onto say …

“I believe it is the last frontier of practical civil rights in this country.”

Minister Jenny Macklin – Families, Housing, Community, Social and Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA) authorised change and reform.

**Slide 14.**

2008

- 1 in 5 people in Australia (20 per cent) report having a disability
- Approximately 410,000 have a severe or profound disability.
- The total number of people with a severe or profound disability has risen by 137% since the 1980’s and the number will continue to rise

**Slide 15.**

2008

- Nearly 800,000 Australians receiving Disability Support Pension (DSP) – most on DSP for life
- This goes up by 10,000 a year for under 30 year olds

**Slide 16.**

2008

Informal carers / family members

- Approximately 550,000 fulltime informal carers
- Primary carers are likely to be in the poorest two-fifths of all households
- 70% are women
- Over half depressed

**Slide 17.**

Expenditure

- Approximately $6.5 billion for payments to community care and support providers
- Almost $11 billion for income support through the Disability Support Pension for 800,000 Australians

**Slide 18.**

The National People with Disabilities and Carers Council: Advises Government

- In 2008 the Australian Government established the National People with Disabilities and Carers Council
- Upgraded the seniority of membership
- business, unions, services, people with disabilities and carers

**Slide 19.**

The Council Consulted to Develop the National Disability Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing
- Personal and Community Support
- Economic Security
- Learning and Skills
- Rights, Protection, Justice and Legislation
- Inclusive and Accessible Communities

**Slide 20.**
Shut Out – Consultation

A nationwide consultation asking people with disabilities and their families two important questions:

- What is your life like now?
- What would you like your life to be like?

No Australian Government had ever asked people with disabilities those questions before.

**Slide 21.**
The Shut Out consultation

- More than 760 individuals and organisations made written submissions.
- More than 2,500 attended public consultations across the country.

**Slide 22.**
The Shut Out Consultation found for example:

- Early intervention – failure to get enough at the right time in the right way
- Education – failure of mainstream
  - Only half as many people with disabilities have completed Year 12, compared to people without a disability.
  - And as a result they are far less likely to go on to higher education or further training.
  - Only half as many people with a disability have completed a diploma or higher qualification, compared to people without a disability.

**Slide 23.**
Shut Out and Employment

- Jobs – discrimination; unemployment rate
- 53.2 per cent of people with disabilities participated in the labour force as compared to 80.6 per cent of those without a disability.
- Since 1993, the labour force participation rate of people with disabilities has fallen, while the rate for people without disabilities has risen

**Slide 24.**
Shut Out and Disability Services

- A miserable drip feed of services
- Service system broken
• Projections show that over the next 70 years the growth in the group of people with a severe disability will be between two and three times population growth as a whole.
• At the same time the number of unpaid carers is expected to decline markedly – ageing, working

Slide 25.
The Shut Out consultation calls for:
• A No Fault National Disability Insurance Scheme –
  November 2009 the Government announces a Productivity Commission Enquiry

Slide 26.
• Productivity Commission reports to Government August 2011
• 9 days later Government announces its intention to implement
• Bipartisan support

Slide 27.
National Disability Insurance Scheme
• A National Disability Insurance Scheme will provide funding for early intervention, essential care, support, therapy, aids and equipment, home modifications and training
• Insurance provides an incentive to load up early support to get best results – people being educated, working and contributing back to pool of funds

Slide 28.
National Disability Insurance Scheme
• The scheme will provide assistance to all people with a disability no matter how they become disabled
• It will put an end to the current inequities that see people receiving different levels of support depending on how their disability is acquired

Slide 29
National Disability Insurance Scheme – Transformative
• Individualized funding
• All disability
• Double the current funding – an additional $6.5Bill
• Completely reformed system
• Starts rolling out in 2013
• Fully implemented 2017

Slide 30.
Alliance between Carers, People with Disabilities and Service Providers
- An alliance of Carers Australia, the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations and National Disability Services
- The National Disability and Carers Alliance
- Joint Vision - Joint Agenda – Joint Action
- Every Australian counts Campaign - 100,000

**Slide 31.**
How has commitment to major reform been won?

- A willing Government committed to social justice
- A strong Advisory Council bringing together people with disabilities, carers and services
- A formal Alliance outside government between carers, people with disabilities and service organisations
- A professionally run campaign

**Slide 32.**
Key Resources

- [Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs](#)
- [National People with Disabilities and Carer Council](#)
- [Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia](#)
- [National Disability Strategy](#)
- [Disability Care and Support – Inquiry report](#)
- [National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)
- [National Disability and Carer Alliance](#)