



From The Executive Officer

Hello to everyone, and thank you for your warm welcome to the role of EO. When I accepted the position, I knew that I had big wheels to fill after the outstanding work over the years by Chris Sparks. I wish to pass on my sincere thanks to Chris for the great legacy he has provided not only to myself but to our members and the industry. Gratefully, Chris has agreed to continue to support ATSA in an advisory capacity, so we will be able to continue to draw on his depth of knowledge and wisdom.

From our recent EXPOs in Sydney and Brisbane, the number of positive responses I received and accolades is a credit to you, the exhibitors, attendees and Interpoint. It was a wonderful introduction for me in my new role to be thanked for delivering a first-class event, it is a credit to the industry. I look forward to Melbourne in 2018 in what we will achieve together to top this year.

With the signing of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (signed with UN Human Rights convention in 2008) the way Australia cares for those in need of support has changed forever. This in turn means the supply of AT has also changed with the true application of "person centred care" placing the consumer/participant in the position of control for their choice of AT supports.

We now have a national standard to align with UN signatory obligations. Three funding models with a common theme and principles.

The Australian constitution requires different paths for funding, dependent on the circumstance of the individual concerned i.e. My Aged Care for the over 65's, NDIS for the under 65's and for those who acquire a disability, they will be supported through each state's NIIS programme.

These major changes inevitably mean that the industry will also need to change and adapt. For some it is exciting but to others it may cause concern, Charles Darwin put it this way, "it is not the strongest, or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can manage change."

The ATSA Committee recognises the moving demands on the industry and is meeting in July to develop a 5-year plan to prepare the association to be an effective resource to its members. On behalf of the Committee, I wish to pass on our thanks to those who responded to the recent survey, as this information will assist greatly in the development of our plans and strategy for the future.

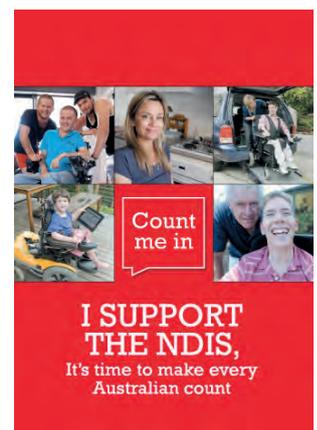
I look forward to working with you and trust this newsletter is informative.

Regards,

David Sinclair

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David's Bio

I was asked to give you an insight of who I am and where I came from.

I grew up in Sydney and left school to take up an apprenticeship as an electrician working in construction, maintenance and factories. At Rexona in North Rocks, I was involved in the shift to PLC controls along with the introduction of robotics to the production lines. This led me into the study of electronics, to enable me to adjust to the changing environment.

Over time I was given the opportunity to be part of the building of a new national business for Unilever, in the commercial chemicals industry, Lever Industrial. This was my start into management, leading a small team in the installation of chemical pumping systems and the sale of equipment including field service, educating people in how to wash dishes, clean floors and do the laundry in 'production' settings.

An opening came up with Canon Australia as the National Service Manager for photographic repairs and later this included the oversight of the photocopy remanufacture plant. This gave me many opportunities and experiences that included being directly involved in the Nagano and Sydney Olympic games. However, the greatest experience was leading the camera operation, from film to digital and the photocopier plant from analogue to digital, plus building a parts recovery business.

After taking a position as a Business Analyst, for the design of the service components on the Canon \$44M ERP business software system implementation, I went to Macquarie Graduate School of Management to gain my Masters of General Management. During my studies, I was encouraged to consider working for a Not for Profit. I took up this challenge and joined ParaQuad NSW in their business enterprise now known as BrightSky Australia. For the next 9 years I worked with my team to build what was a small state based business into a national operation.

Last year I decided that it was time for a change, so I took some time off. My wife, Liz and I took a long holiday to SA and Kangaroo Island and I followed my hobby of photography. The time also allowed for me to complete the camera course that I had always wanted to do but just could not fit in. Plus I also took on a major property project for the Church I attend.

During my time smelling the roses, I got a call from Chris Sparks and Sam Garland asking if I would be interested in working for ATSA. As I was fully aware of what ATSA stood for, there was no hesitation, the rest is history.

I have been very blessed with my 3 adult children who are now making their own way in life. This is giving Liz and I time to travel plus more time for my photography.



David Sinclair
Executive Officer, ATSA

Patient Handling (NSW)

Patient Lifters 101 – *lifter safety, sling selection and application*

- Wednesday 23rd August in Marrickville (Sydney)

Visit the [website](#) for information and registration

Ceiling Hoists in Your Home – *for NDIS Participants*

- Wednesday 6th September in Marrickville (Sydney)

Visit the [website](#) for information and registration

Fisher Lane Mobility

Fisher Lane are pleased to offer the 2017 Professional Training Program to all healthcare providers. Certificates of participation will be provided to ensure your accumulation of Continuing Professional Development hours.

- Various dates in locations in Victoria

Visit the [website](#) for information and registration

The Accessible Recruitment Guide: A practical resource for HR and recruiters



MEDIA ACCESS AUSTRALIA

Digital Accessibility and Recruitment: A guide to getting started and best practice

This resource is designed to assist HR managers, recruitment and hiring managers, along with diversity and equity teams, with what can be done to help make the hiring process fully accessible on the web and in digital environments.

The impact on people experiencing disabilities

In today's increasing digital world, it's impossible for any job seeker to find and apply for a job without some form of digital or online interaction. Online recruitment sites have replaced print media as the most up-to-date and popular method for job searching.

Imagine the experience for a person with disability. The process is made just that, more difficult.

- Users of assistive technology screen readers may be unable to read through a website and locate the page with the employment vacancies.
- Users may misunderstand the contents of a position description if it is poorly structured, there is a lot of jargon, or the sentences are long and difficult to read.

- Recruitment videos with no captions or transcripts mean that users with hearing loss, blindness or low vision may not understand the content and key messages.
- Information with poor colour contrast may not be able to be read by users with uncorrected or low vision.

With some consideration and application of inclusive and accessibility principles, the recruitment process can be opened up to a much wider talent pool.

The benefits of workplace diversity

Making the recruitment process fully accessible enables employers to reach more highly qualified applicants, it reduces the possibility of disability discrimination in the hiring process, portrays a positive and inclusive organisational culture, and helps diversify the workforce.

For some employers with a strong customer focus, having a diverse workforce that reflects their customers and the broader community means they can better understand their customer's experience and improve service delivery.

Nine Years On

By Chris Sparks

It was late 2007 and my wife Wendy and I were drifting around NSW, towing a camper-trailer and living the life of a then not-so-grey nomad. Twelve months earlier I had left my executive role at Invacare Asia and was enjoying the complete lack of responsibility after 20 years leading businesses of various sizes and complexity. Then my phone rang...

On the other end of the phone was none other than Terry Gallagher, past GM of Invacare Australia, who had gone on to head up Otto Bock. Apparently, a large consulting/accounting firm had been doing some work for NSW Health to review the PADP system in NSW. They had consulted widely on how to build a better system funding 'disability aids and equipment', however not a single assistive technology (AT) supplier was approached for their input. The resulting report and associated recommendations were a cause of real concern for NSW AT businesses who had been excluded from the consultation process.

Terry pitched to me the idea of breathing life back into the Independent Rehabilitation Suppliers Association of NSW (IRSA) to try to give AT suppliers a voice with government and others involved in the AT process. A small group of NSW AT retailers including SWC, GTK and Dejay supported by the likes of Invacare, Otto Bock, SDL and Sunrise Medical were prepared to kick the can financially to seed fund IRSA. So the question to me was, 'How would you like a day or twos work a month to head up IRSA...'.

Nine years on, IRSA is now ATSA, we have a talented new Executive Officer in David Sinclair and I owe a great debt to an industry I thoroughly respect and value, for all the opportunities I've enjoyed following that call back in 2007.

However, back then I completely underestimated the challenge ahead. IRSA had no formal structure or membership, no revenue stream, hardly any resources and was virtually unknown, other than for the successful expos run by volunteers some years back. We were considered 'unrepresentative' by some funders and bureaucrats, after all how could such a small group purport to represent an industry?

Then, thanks to the NSW Greens, an Upper House Parliamentary Inquiry was called into NSW PADP and the infamous consultant's review. We penned IRSA's [first formal submission to government](#) presenting the case for AT suppliers and were then invited to appear at the Inquiry's public hearings. Under questioning from the Senators about funding delays and the costly need to reassess clients we argued, 'Why would you go to the optometrist today, knowing you weren't going to buy your glasses for 2 years?'. It was a light bulb moment for the Senators and to IRSA's credit 3 of the Inquiry's 21 recommendations specifically related to AT suppliers and many of the other recommendations were heavily influenced by IRSA's arguments.

IRSA was now on the map, albeit as a very small dot.

We knew that for IRSA to be sustainable and have a genuine impact on public AT policy we had to become a national body. In December 2010 IRSA became ATSA (Assistive Technology Suppliers Australasia Inc) and our membership and influence steadily spread into all Australian states and territories.

ATSA worked to build strategic relationships with groups such as Spinal Cord Injuries Australia, NDS, NCOSS, MS Australia, Physical Disability Council NSW, ARATA and others, and it became apparent that when it comes to AT, we all shared a common agenda focused on quality AT outcomes for the end user. These relationships proved to be invaluable in raising the profile and importance of quality AT provision. Another key to ATSA's early success was how we continually consulted with the industry to find areas of common concern which then became the priorities that we focused our somewhat meagre resources on.

The support of the British Health Trades Association (BHTA) helped us to draft our first industry [Code of Practice](#), a consumer-focused document that has proved to be pivotal in preventing external over-regulation of the industry. The relationship with the BHTA continues today to the benefit of both associations.



ATSA's First Office

For a small organisation, ATSA accomplished a great deal over the ensuing years, always working to help build an Australian AT market that is competitive, efficient and viable. Some campaigns, such as combatting the over-regulation of motorised mobility devices, have run over many years whilst other actions have been very immediate. ATSA has helped businesses with crisis media management, overdue government payments, TGA compliance, training on consumer law and general business advice. Since 2008, ATSA has ensured AT suppliers are part of the Australian Standards process by being represented on Standards Australia's ME-067 subcommittee, *Assistive Technology Products for Persons with Disability*. However a great deal of ATSA's work is unseen; often it is what we have prevented that has been most important.



Dr Michael Summers

The [ATSA Expo](#) is now the preeminent event of its type, selling out quickly every year and attracting thousands of visitors including many people with disability. The Expo's success is due largely to the fact it is *'owned by the industry and, run by the industry for the industry'*. Put simply, the Expo belongs to the exhibitors and their ownership of the event has ensured its continued growth and success. However, with all our best endeavours, the Expo could never have flourished as it has without the fantastic team from Interpoint Events. Simon, Melanie, Allison and Laura have done an outstanding job to develop and professionalise the Expo and are great supporters and friends of ATSA.

Two major campaigns stand out in my mind. The NDIS is a scheme that has evolved over time, starting with the Productivity Commission's inquiry in 2010, the launch of trial sites in 2013 and then the staged rollout of the full scheme that commenced last year. ATSA has been part of the NDIS process from the outset, starting with our [submission to the Productivity Commission](#) in 2010 that led to us being asked to present at the Commission's public hearings. In conjunction with ARATA, ATSA co-authored an NDIA funded paper on [national credentialing of AT practitioners and suppliers](#). ATSA was then part of the NDIA's AT sector reference group and has continued to support the development of an effective and efficient AT strategy for the NDIS. This is the essence of why ATSA exists, to ensure AT suppliers' expertise and knowledge is taken into account throughout the process.

Then in 2013 the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) announced a wide ranging inquiry into the 'pricing of medical and disability aids and equipment in Queensland'. ATSA, supported by the industry, composed a [comprehensive response to the inquiry](#) which found that, *'when delivery costs were included, Australian prices were 24% lower compared to overseas prices'*. This is where I need to highlight the enormous contribution to ATSA, and our industry as a whole, by my erstwhile colleague and good friend, Dr Michael Summers. Michael started as ATSA's Senior Policy Advisor in April 2012 and for 3 very productive years did wonders to lift ATSA's profile, professionalism and influence. He led the development of ATSA's policy papers, authored many of our submissions to government and continues to support ATSA today.

I have really enjoyed the relationships we have built with dedicated people like John Vasil (MASS), Jeni Burton (SWEP), Jackie Hiller-Broughton (EnableNSW), Matthew Massey-Westropp (DES), Michael Keen (ACTES) and the indefatigable Dr Lloyd Walker (NDIS). Although we may not always agree, no one can doubt the commitment, caring and energy they all invest in AT.

ATSA has been well served by the many industry volunteers who have provided governance and leadership as members of our management committee. In particular, I must recognise the contributions of Greg Kline, Terry Gallagher and Sam Garland in their roles as ATSA chairmen. Also a huge thank you to Ian Mortimer and Matt Butterworth for their dedicated work on the ME-067 Standards subcommittee.

So, nine years on from Terry's phone call, I look forward to David Sinclair taking ATSA forward. I must admit to being somewhat envious as he joins ATSA in a much stronger position than I did back in 2007.

This is a great industry that frequently achieves wonderful outcomes for people who need AT. As I have often said in presentations, 'we should be proud, as every time the right AT solution is properly supplied, someone's life improves; gaining more independence, greater dignity, enduring less pain, with reduced carer workload and a better everyday life'.



Chris Sparks

Are You Compliant With Your Obligations Under The Standard For Slings?

Sling safety is of paramount importance in the healthcare sector. Some clever new products on the market are helping facilities stay compliant with regulations, to help ensure every person can be lifted in confidence.

The International Standard, and local regulatory bodies, now have in place certain frameworks to help prevent accidents and ensure lifts are carried out as safely as possible. Sling maintenance and periodic inspection requirements also play a part.

The International Standard for slings and hoists, ISO 10353:2015, contains information about testing requirements for how sling and hoist manufacturers go about designing a new piece of equipment. Importantly, the Standard also contains certain periodic inspection requirements for both slings and hoists. Under the Standard in Australia, hoists must be inspected at least annually, or more often if directed by the manufacturer, and inspection records maintained. Similarly, slings must be inspected at least every 6 months, and they must also have inspection records maintained. These 6 monthly inspections are in addition to inspecting a sling before each use, which although not a requirement of the Standard, is a requirement made by manufacturers. Indeed, sling inspections before use are vital, as slings may be damaged at any time. The TGA also has certain labelling requirements which must be met, to ensure things such as sling/hoist compatibility, and Safe Working Load figures are shown on the label.

There have been hundreds of accidents all around the world, which are often not widely known about, and the inspection records are one of the first things investigators ask for.

Generally a hoist supplier will carry out the maintenance required for hoists, and the annual inspection. Hoist technology is constantly moving forward, incorporating more and more electronic features, which require technicians to have the required expertise. Hoist inspections should be completed by a competent person who is familiar with how hoists are used and maintained.

“There have been hundreds of accidents all around the world, which unfortunately are often not widely known about, and the Inspection Records are one of the first things investigators ask for.”

Likewise, sling inspections should be completed by a competent person who is familiar with how slings are used and maintained. This is usually the Physiotherapists, OTs, or even the Carers, who use slings day in and day out. Indeed, their competence should be confirmed by the fact that they are using slings all the time, and would have had training in how to use them from their employer.

A recent issue has been the legibility of a sling label. The TGA do have requirements that labels must be legible. Illegible labels can lead to carers guessing a Safe Working Load, or sling/hoist compatibility, which could very well lead to injury, to both carers and patients, and possibly even death. For most sling manufacturers, the label is the first thing to wear out, and generally fitting a new label (if safe to do so) can solve the problem. If your sling manufacturer does not replace their own labels, ask why, and consider changing to a supplier who can replace their own labels.

For any organisation with a large number of slings, the logistics of carrying out sling inspections can be a challenge. Some organisations may inspect all their slings in say January and July. Larger facilities will inspect only certain slings in January and July, then inspect others in say February and August, and some in March and September, etc., spreading the work across the year. Some organisations may struggle to even track down a sling they need to inspect, so coloured visual indication Tags, which are now available, help dramatically. Instead of looking for a needle in a haystack, the job can be made a lot simpler, for example, by just looking for all slings with a Red Tag, which indicates that the sling was inspected in January, and that the next inspection is due in July, and a Blue Tag must be fitted.

“Some organisations may struggle to even track down a sling they need to inspect, so coloured visual indication Tags, which are now available, help dramatically.”

Sling ID Barcode Tags are also now available on the market. These uniquely numbered tags can be fitted to any brand of sling, and the Code 39 type barcode can be read by compatible asset management scanners. The simple to fit Sling Barcode ID Tags can also be read by the SlingSpector app for sling inspections, on your smartphone.

“The simple to fit Sling Barcode ID Tags can also be read by the SlingSpector app for sling inspections, on your smartphone.”

Being involved in a sling accident is a horrible experience and changes people lives, not just for the person who has fallen and will forever have a genuine and understandable fear of being lifted, but also for their family, the carers, and other staff. The current inspection requirements do something to help reduce accidents, but carers must also be vigilant.

Tom Bromberger

For more information contact:
support@pelicanmanufacturing.com.au

Peer Reviewed Paper On Australian AT Pricing

Every so often the issue of assistive technology (AT) prices in Australia becomes a focus of governments and the media. In 2013 the Queensland Competition Authority undertook an inquiry into AT pricing which was the most detailed investigation into the Australian AT marketplace. The inquiry found that AT prices in Australia are very reasonable when compared to other world markets and when delivery costs are factored in, they are often cheaper.

A peer reviewed paper has now been published on the topic of AT pricing in Australia, co-authored by the highly respected economist George Verikios and, academic and AT expert Dr Michael Summers. Mr Verikios is an Adjunct Professor at Griffith University and Associate Director at KPMG Economics. Dr Summers is well known for his work within public disability policy development and is an expert in the Australian AT marketplace.

The paper has been published in the [Australian Health Review](#), an international, peer-reviewed journal that publishes contributions on all aspects of health policy, management and governance; healthcare delivery systems; workforce; health financing; and other matters of interest to those working in health care.



Code Of Conduct

ATSA will be receiving copies of our “Code of Practise” for your show rooms shortly. These are to be given out to inform your customers your organisation operates under a “Code of Practise” and that your organisation respects its customers and their welfare.

This Newsletter Code Of Conduct Highlight:

2.3. The Code is intended to reflect a philosophy of care and support for consumers. ATSA Members are required under this Code to make themselves aware of pertinent legislation, to ensure they do not offer, stipulate, infer or imply anything in their terms and conditions of contract which provides the customer with less protection than that provided by law, and to ensure that the terms in their consumer contracts comply with all relevant state and federal consumer protection laws

Members who sell directly to the public and now the NDIA need to seriously consider their terms of trade or contract of sale. A participant of the NDIA, under ‘Choice and Control’ is now the buyer (consumer) of AT supports therefore their purchase

from you is covered by the local state Fair Trading laws and the ACCC, as it is not a sale to the Government. It is very important to be clear and transparent on what terms you are supplying your ‘Goods and Services’ to the participant. ATSA highly recommends that you seek legal advice on the wording of your contract of sale to ensure your terms of sale comply with the law. In addition, having well worded terms of sale contracts should be considered as an asset plus it is good business practise that assists in the reduction of misunderstandings on what is been sold along with its related indented use and limitations.

For example, you need to consider in your terms of sale how you will demonstrate/document:

- That what has been supplied matches the descriptions made by the salesperson/prescriber/interested party
- That what has been supplied matches any demonstration model or sample you supplied
- It is fit for the purpose based on what has been disclosed to you by the participant/prescriber/interested party.
- Are there any limitations of the AT support that requires documentation and made known to the participant?
- That it does not carry any hidden extra charges, e.g. ongoing adjustments, services, safety checks...
- How you plan to meet any extra promises made about performance, condition and quality, such as life time guarantees and money back offers
- The levels of post-sales support included/not included with the sale, e.g. spare parts, repair facilities available for a reasonable time after purchase, call out services

Useful links:

www.accc.gov.au

www.accc.gov.au/about-us/information-for/consumers-with-disability
www.business.gov.au/info/run/fair-trading/fair-trading-laws

Commissions & Rebates On AT Transactions To a Third Party Assistive Technology Suppliers Australasia

Introduction:

Assistive Technology Suppliers Australasia (ATSA) and its members are committed to the highest standard of product quality and business integrity in their dealings with customers, allied health practitioners (AHPs) and other stakeholders. ATSA, its members and employees are expected to conduct themselves with the highest standard of honesty, fairness and personal integrity.

Sales Commissions & Rebates – Guidelines:

AT suppliers, AHPs and funding package managers (Including but not limited to; Age Care providers, NDIS and third party service providers) should be open and transparent when entering into commission or rebate arrangements for the sale or supply of goods and services.

ATSA businesses should not enter into commission and rebate arrangements with a third party that are not known to the consumer, as they could breach state/territory laws and deemed to be 'corrupt' behaviour.

These laws prohibit a person from 'corruptly' giving inducements to a third party for giving advice to a consumer that encourages them to enter into a contract with the person who gave the inducement.

A potential consumer must be made aware, in advance, of any arrangements for commissions or rebates in place between AT suppliers, AHPs and funding managers.

At all times care must be taken to avoid any conflict of interest and to ensure that all parties work in the best interests of the consumer.

Enabling Continuity of Care in a New Era

The Whole of Australia's disability support sector is in the midst of major change, EnableNSW has focused on continuity of care – both for people transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), as well as those remaining with a broad range of EnableNSW programs.

Clinical advisors from EnableNSW recently presented at the ATSA Independent Living Expo held in Sydney during May, with attendees most interested in finding out about services and support offered by EnableNSW as the NDIS continues to roll out.

"While we are in the midst of helping eligible people transition to the NDIS, it was a great opportunity to clarify that many of our services remain unchanged and continue to be available to people of all ages," explained Jackie Hiller, Manager, EnableNSW.

This includes funding of respiratory consumables and equipment, such as ventilators or oxygen concentrators, prosthetic limb services for people aged over 65, as well as aids and equipment for people who do not meet the access requirements of the NDIS.

"If a person currently receives assistance from EnableNSW, but does not meet the NDIS criteria, nothing will change – their EnableNSW assistance continues," said Jackie.

For those who are eligible and will transition to the NDIS, EnableNSW provides continuity of care in a number of ways.

Firstly, people are still eligible for EnableNSW until the NDIS rolls out in their area and they have an NDIS Plan in place.

Secondly, EnableNSW is a registered NDIS provider and can continue to provide co-ordination of equipment supports approved in NDIS Plans (for example placing orders for new equipment, ordering consumable products or contacting suppliers to arrange repairs).

"We're excited about the future of EnableNSW," said Jackie. "Our programs are becoming more agile and responsive to people's needs as the sector continues to change – ultimately benefiting those in our community that need it most."

"For example, our innovative Equipment Allocation Program – which keeps standard equipment in stock to provide upon application – continues to grow in popularity and is now being piloted in regional NSW with a view to further expansion," she said.

For further information about EnableNSW, please call 1800 362 253, email enable@health.nsw.gov.au or visit our updated website at www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au



Jackie Hiller, Manager, EnableNSW

Business As Usual For South Australia's Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES)

Earlier this year the South Australian State Government announced its intention to transfer Domiciliary Care services and some disability services to non-government management. This was a response to national changes to disability and aged care, such as the NDIS. You may be wondering what this means for the Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES). While it is likely that in the future the management of DES will transition from government to non-government management, it continues to be business as usual for clients (including NDIS participants), clinicians, contractors and suppliers. DES will continue to support its clients and stakeholders through the changes and the South Australian Government is committed to keeping affected parties updated, and actively involved in the process.

For further information about these changes, please visit www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/futuredirection, or contact the Information Line on 1800 952 962.

For further information about the services that DES provides, please visit www.des.sa.gov.au

New World-Wide Product Sourcing Website Launches

Developed by BHTA Engage Ltd, the commercial arm of the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA), Global Healthcare Trader (GHT), is a new tool for companies looking to find distributors around the world and for distributors to find suppliers looking for representatives in their country.

BHTA is celebrating its 100 year anniversary this year, having started life in 1917 as SIMA (Surgical Instrument Manufacturers Association). Over the years it has had a strong influence on the development of the healthcare marketplace in the UK and now has around 500 company members, representing over 17,000 employees.

BHTA Engage produces a monthly trade magazine that has been published since 1999 and the new export initiative has a simple search facility enabling companies looking to import new products the ability to find businesses looking to sell into their own country in just a couple of clicks.

BHTA Engage Director, David Russell, says that the reaction to the site has been overwhelmingly positive. "I have been involved with a lot of product and service launches over the past 30 years in this industry, but GHT has really caught people's imagination very quickly. Everyone likes the simplicity and believes it has great potential."

"The easiest way to see how powerful GHT is, will be to use the search facility and select a country such as Australia – you will then see all the companies looking for a distributor in that country. "It's that simple and that quick" David explains.

Companies interested in being on GHT can enquire through the 'Become Listed' section.

The website is at www.globalhealthcaretrader.com



BHTA Engage Director, David Russell

Participants And Providers Work With NDIS To Improve Processes

The Board and Executive Management team of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) wish to provide information to the Scheme's existing and potential participants, their families, carers and providers regarding major work that is underway to deliver a significantly upgraded quality of participant and provider experience in a way that remains consistent with maintaining the Scheme's financial sustainability.

An improved participant and provider experience will be grounded in the NDIS's aspiration to facilitate improved economic and social outcomes for participants. As was always the original intent of the NDIS, better outcomes for participants, based on the Scheme's insurance approach are intended to produce a long term economic and social dividend for Australia. That was the vision on which the NDIS was founded. That is what the disability community supports. That is what we, our staff and community partners are committed to delivering.

Participants in the initial Trials, which started in 2013, are already reaping the benefits of their involvement with the NDIS. A survey of 23,400 NDIS participants, families and carers demonstrates these results. Participants who have been longer in the Scheme are becoming more independent; they are able to exercise greater choice and control; they are experiencing stronger social, educational and employment outcomes; children's development has improved; and students are more able to attend mainstream classes.

Notwithstanding these positive results, it is now well recognised that before the commencement of transition to full scheme in July 2016, the quality of the NDIA's internal preparation warranted significant improvement. The NDIA's processes and systems have not resulted in a participant and provider experience during Transition that is of the consistently high standards that the NDIA expects. While the need to improve processes is not entirely unexpected given the ground breaking nature of the reform, the NDIA recognises the important need to learn from these early experiences and improve and adapt its processes as quickly as possible. The Board, management and staff of the NDIA are unequivocally committed to delivering a much better experience for participants and providers based on an outcomes driven approach.

To that end, since early April 2017, the NDIA has been working individually and in workshops with more than 200 participants, providers, peak disability bodies and other stakeholders from all States and Territories to identify what needs to improve and how that might occur. Productivity Commission submissions outlining improvement opportunities have also been recognised, as has feedback from the Independent Advisory Council and views expressed at the Joint Standing Committee.

From that process, 400 specific improvement ideas and 200 solution concepts have been generated. Detailed work is currently underway to incorporate participants' and providers' insights to ensure the NDIA delivers a high quality, outcomes focussed participant and provider experience that is simple, clear and accessible, at the same time as ensuring the Scheme's financial

sustainability. While a new integrated end to end approach has yet to be finally tested with participants and providers, the proposal is likely to include a greater outcomes focus throughout a participant's life; more active involvement with communities; more face to face (rather than telephone) communications; fewer participant transfers; an easier to navigate portal; a more responsive call centre experience; and significantly improved interactions with providers and disability organisations. Having learned from the past, the final proposal will be tested with participants and providers before it goes live.

The NDIA is acting expeditiously to implement this revised and more integrated end to end approach for participants and providers. Many standalone improvements that are consistent with the proposed longer term approach will be put in place as soon as possible while we continue to bring new participants into the Scheme.

The NDIA is committed to getting the proposed approach right. As a result, full implementation, which will be dealt with as a matter of priority, may take somewhat longer because of the need to retrain staff; implement systems changes; and significantly improve communications.

The NDIA also wishes to assure participants, that despite misleading press reports, there is no policy directive to cut the amount of supports in plan packages. At all times the level of supports provided in a participant's plan will be based on what is determined reasonable and necessary under the NDIS Act. During the interim period, until the full proposal can be implemented, the NDIA will work hard to actively engage with stakeholders and to provide information on progress. In turn, we ask for your ongoing goodwill and patience.

Yours sincerely

David Bowen

Chief Executive Officer
National Disability Insurance Agency

Gift Policy And Statement Of Ethics Assistive Technology Suppliers Australasia

Introduction:

Assistive Technology Suppliers Australasia (ATSA) and its members are committed to the highest standard of product quality and business integrity in their dealings with customers, allied health practitioners (AHPs) and other stakeholders. ATSA, its members and employees are expected to conduct themselves with the highest standard of honesty, fairness and personal integrity.

Gifts and Hospitality Policy – Guidelines:

ATSA members and their employees will not offer, promise or provide a gift, favour, hospitality and or entertainment for the purpose of obtaining favourable treatment from customers including AT funders and AHPs.

Gifts and hospitality may be provided in certain circumstances as long as the gift or benefit is not intended to obtain favourable treatment and does not create the appearance of a payment, inducement or create the perception of a conflict of interest. Any gifts or benefits provided in these circumstances are permissible provided they also conform with the following guidelines:

- The total value of the gift or benefit, including hospitality is no more than \$100 per year;
- The disclosure of the gift or benefit would not compromise the business or the beneficiary of the gift/benefit and would not be of concern to ATSA;
- The gift/benefit is reasonable and appropriate and consistent with ATSA's industry Code of Practice.

Standards Up Date From ATSA Committee

Technical specification involving Austroads for access of power wheelchairs and mobility scooters on to Public transport and road related areas. This will be marketed by Austroads to the public as an awareness program for purchasers of new product to be informed on the suitability of the particular device onto public transport or road related areas. Classification will be in two categories a blue label- able to access bus, train and suitable road related areas or a white label suitable for road related areas.

Public comment has been received and reviewed by the committee.

Another draft will be published soon for final public comment and then the final review will be in June 2017.

ASTA Committee

President:	Geoff Purtill (Invacare)
Treasurer:	Sam Garland (Aidacare)
Secretary:	Ian Rothall (Scooter World)
Committee:	Owen Dawes (Permobil) Chris Jones (Peak Care) David Fagan (Paragon Mobility) Jill Barnett (Magic Mobility)

The State-Wide Equipment Program... And You

More usually known by the acronym, SWEPE, the *State-Wide Equipment Program* is a branch of *Ballarat Health Services*.

The established, core role is to provide Victorians who are frail aged or have a disability with access to subsidised aids and equipment through the Victorian Government's *Aids & Equipment Program*. This is a traditional, block-funded government program with eligibility requirements. There are defined subsidy amounts for defined types and classes of equipment.

This has been the core of SWEPE's operation since 2011. With the inception of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), SWEPE extended its services to NDIS participants, this time on a *fee-for-service basis*. Like many ATSA members, SWEPE is a service provider to NDIS and over its journey has continually adapted, building its systems and expertise both in response to, and in anticipation of the changing landscape the NDIS brings.

The NDIS focus on what is *reasonable* and *necessary* for support has opened up the scope of equipment and services a participant might be eligible for, certainly beyond that available under the *Aids & Equipment Program*.

All in all, a lot of equipment gets to a lot of people and, most importantly from SWEPE's perspective, the right equipment gets to those who need it most.

SWEPE has a competitive spirit: as the NDIS expands and develops, be prepared to see SWEPE taking opportunities, extending relationships and seeking new partners.

SWEPE.bhs.org.au



ATSA Independent Living Expo Data results wrap up - 2107

The attendance data to the ATSA Independent Living Expos demonstrates an increasing level of trust for the Expo with visitors more comprehensively answering our registration questions reducing the "Non-identified" responses by two thirds (down from 41% Sydney 2013 to 9.3% in Brisbane 2017). This level of openness suggests the use of contact data by the Expo exhibitors has been appropriate and respectful.

Visitor numbers attending the Expos continue to grow for each venue compared with previous years;

Sydney

- 2013 to 2015 – 79.5% growth
- 2015 to 2017 – 22% growth
- 2013 to 2017 – 119% growth

Brisbane

- 2015 to 2017 – 56.4% growth

Melbourne

- 2014 to 2016 – 56% growth

Historically the level of data collected has only targeted where a person heard about the event and where they live. In recent years, we have expanded our registration questions to identify their background and this year we asked if they had a disability. As we analyse the gathered data over the past 4 years, we need to keep in mind the level of 'non-identified' responses were historically high, therefore providing accurate trends is not possible.

Despite these issues a shift in the mix of attendees to the event is emerging when you combine the figures with the anecdotal feedback from several exhibitors, i.e. commented on the higher consumer numbers engaging at the stand than in the past. The data registers an increase in the percentage of attendees with Sydney Consumer group up from 2.6% in 2015 to 7.6% in 2017 which is also up on Melbourne in 2016, 3.3%. Brisbane demonstrated comparable results, 2015 3.1% to 6.9% in 2017.

ATSA only commenced recording the number of AT suppliers staff attending since 2016. This group in Sydney recorded growth against Melbourne from 8.1% to 14% of attendees with Brisbane also hosting 9.7% of attendees.

The recording of numbers of Occupational Therapist commenced in 2015 which also demonstrates growth however the numbers between Sydney and Melbourne are flat. Brisbane numbers show a substantial growth, but may reflect the high reduction of non-identified responses in Brisbane from 31.1% in 2015 to just 9.3% in 2017.

Sydney

- 2015 to 2017 – 33% growth

Sydney verse Melbourne

- 2016 to 2017 - flat

Brisbane

- 2015 to 2017 – 79.2% growth

It is clear to say the ATSA Expo is growing and attracting the correct audience and there is increasing demand from the end-user. This will need to be considered in context of the changing landscape of the NDIS and My Aged Care as we plan the future Expos.

The demand from industry over the past number of years to exhibit at the ATSA Expo remains high with stands being sold out well before the event resulting in waiting lists. This establishes the Expo as an event that provides value to the AT industry as a key contact point to present their offerings.

Welcome to Our New ATSA Members



Motum

3/224 Cambridge Street, Wembley WA 6014
ph: (08) 9381-2087 web: www.motum.com.au email: hello@motum.com.au

Everyone has the right to sit comfortably and having a disability doesn't mean forgoing a sense of adventure in life.

Motum is a Western Australian business owned and run by therapists and postural specialists. We stock an extensive range of clever, off-the-shelf seating and mobility equipment for infants, children and adults.



Comfort Discovered

511 Pacific Highway, Mount Colah NSW 2079
ph: (02) 9987-4500 web: www.comfortdiscovered.com.au email: info@comfortdiscovered.com.au

Open 7 days a week, Comfort Discovered offers a large range of equipment for people with disability and seniors through both an online portal and a 'bricks and mortar' business. Their mission is to enhance independence and to empower people to live their lives with dignity.



Simivita

ph: 1300 746 736 web: www.simavita.com email: customerservice@simavita.com

Simivita has developed an innovative medical device for urinary incontinence assessment and management. The smart wearable device eases the workload that assessment and care plan development places on caregivers, and reduces the high costs of incontinence management.



Astley Mobility

cnr Mamre Road and Great Western Highway, St Mary NSW 2760
ph: (02) 9673-2212 web: www.astleymobility.com.au email: astleymobility@gmail.com

Astley Mobility operates outlets in both St Marys and Pennant Hills servicing Sydney's north-west. As well as sales, they also offer an extensive hire service and specialise in mobility scooter and wheelchair repairs.



Mac & PC Doctors

421 Ipswich Road, Annerley QLD 4103
ph: (07) 3848 9438 web: www.macandpcdoctors.com.au email: brisbane@macandpcdoctors.com.au

Mac & PC Doctors specialise in individualised accessible assistive technology utilising Apple® devices. They provide consultancy and training, and can design custom made packages with ongoing support. If your device needs service or repair, they also have a pickup and loan service.



Access Health

Unit 1 – 194 Whitehorse Road, Blackburn VIC, 3130
ph: (03) 9878-1399 web: www.accesshealth.com.au email: sales@accesshealth.com.au

Established in 1978, Access Health is now a major supplier of a wide range of rehabilitation equipment, allied health products, medical trolleys and continence supplies. Their experienced team have expertise in myotherapy, gait analysis, biomechanics, orthotics and nursing.



Independent Mobility & Rehab

144 Lambton Road, Broadmeadow NSW 2292
ph: (02) 4952-2264 web: www.imr.net.au email: info@imr.net.au

With more than 30 years combined experience, Independent Mobility & Rehab provides an extensive range of mobility equipment throughout the Newcastle and greater Hunter area. They offer in-home product trials and repairs and provide loan equipment when required.



Livigy

2 – 505 Sandgate Road, Clayfield QLD 4011
ph: 1300 737 497 web: www.livigy.com.au email: sales@livigy.com.au

Livigy are a national Smart Assistive Technology (SAT) integration company who specialise in designing, supplying and installing SAT for people with disability and seniors across Australia. They are part of the BMR Group and provide comprehensive 24/7 support and assistance.



GMobility

11 Hazel Drive, Warragul VIC 3820
ph: (03) 5623-6966 web: www.gmobility.com.au email: info@gmobility.com.au

GMobility offers a wide range of products and services designed to improve the quality of life for seniors, people with disability and those with injuries. They aim to support a more 'Active and Mobile' lifestyle, helping to provide independence and achieve positive health outcomes.



Zytec

ph: (03) 9696-2944 web: www.zytec.com.au email: info@zytec.com.au

Zytec is a company that specialises in speech generating devices and is owned, managed and staffed by qualified speech pathologists. Their passion for effective communication by whatever means, has led them to offer a wide range of technology, systems and software sourced from Europe, USA, UK and New Zealand.



Pelican Manufacturing

5 Ruse Street, Osborne Park WA 6108
ph: 1800 641 577 web: www.pelicanmanufacturing.com.au email: support@pelicanmanufacturing.com.au

Pelican Manufacturing was established in 1987 to provide pressure care items for geriatric patients in nursing homes and hospitals. They have grown to now offer a wide range of products covering manual handling, pressure care, hoist slings, theatre/post-operative care and much more.



ATSA Members Registered

Ability in Motion

ph: 1800 994 408
www.abilityinmotion.com.au

Access Health

ph: (03) 9878-1399
www.accesshealth.com.au

AC Mobility

ph: (08) 9209-1777
www.acmobility.com.au

Age Prepcare

ph: (03) 9796-5156
www.ageprepcare.com.au

Aidacare Pty Ltd

ph: 1300 133 120
www.aidacare.com.au

Astec Equipment Services

ph: (03) 5336-3900
www.astecservices.net.au

Astley Mobility

ph: (02) 9673-2212
www.astleymobility.com.au

Austech Medical

ph: (07) 5495-8663
www.austechmedical.com

Australian Comfort Living

ph: 0401 666 688

Automobility

ph: 1800 662 454
www.automobility.com.au

Autoslide

ph: 1300 288 675
www.autoslide.com

Better Living Care Pty Ltd

ph: (02) 8853-1100
www.betterlivingcare.com.au

Blue Badge Insurance

ph: 1300 304 802
www.BlueBadgeInsurance.com.au

BrightSky Australia

ph: 1300 799 243 (DVA)
or 1300 886 601 (non-DVA)
www.brightsky.com.au

Canterbury Concepts

ph: (03) 9580-1744
www.canterburyconcepts.com.au

Capital Special Vehicles

ph: (03) 9794-8888
www.csv.com.au

Central Queensland Mobility

ph: 1800 201 070 or (07) 4926-1071
www.cqmobility.com.au

Comfort Discovered

ph: (02) 9987-4500
www.comfortdiscovered.com.au

Complete Mobility and Rehab

ph: (07) 4032-1140
www.completemobility.com.au

Country Care Group

ph: 1800 727382
www.countrycaregroup.com.au

Dejay Medical

ph: (02) 9838-8869
www.dejay.com.au

Deutscher Healthcare

ph: (03) 5339-5708
www.deutscherhealthcare.com.au

Disability Hire Vehicles

ph: (02) 4577-2225
www.disabilityhire.com.au

Drive Medical Pty Ltd

ph: (03) 9551-1548
www.drive-medical.com.au

DRP International Healthcare

ph: (03) 5975-4153
www.drpinternational.com.au

Durable Medical Equipment Ltd

ph: (02) 9674-8904
www.dmedirect.com.au

Eden Healthcare Solutions

ph: (02) 6041-9700
www.edenhcs.com.au

Elite Mobility Scooters

ph: (07) 5561-1427
www.elitemobilityscooters.com.au

Emprise Mobility

ph: 1300 761 196
www.emprise.com.au

Everyday Mobility

ph: (02) 4454-5454
www.everydaymobility.com.au

FAS Therapeutic Equipment

ph: (03) 9587-6766
www.fasequipment.com

Fisher Lane Mobility

ph: 1800 702 026
www.fisherlane.com.au

Freedom Healthcare

ph: (07) 3801-3910
www.freedomhc.com.au

Freedom Motors Australia & Freedom Access Vehicles

ph: 1800 672 437
www.freedommotorsaustralia.com.au

Geelong Wheelchair Services Pty Ltd

ph: (03) 5244-0844
www.geelongwheelchairs.com.au

GMobility

ph: (03) 5623-6966
www.gmobility.com.au

GMS Rehabilitation

ph: 1300 734 223
www.gmsrehab.com.au

GTK

ph: 1300 485 485
www.gtk.com.au

Handi-Rehab

ph: (08) 8276-1300
www.equip4living.com.au

Healthcare Innovations Australia

ph: 1300 499 282
www.hiaus.net.au

Hospital at Home

ph: (02) 9601-7757
www.hospitalathome.com.au

Independent Home Care Supplies

ph: (02) 4227-4315
www.ihcss.com.au

Independent Mobility & Rehab

ph: (02) 4952-2264
www.imr.net.au

InterPoint Events

ph: (02) 9660-2113
www.intermedia.com.au

Invacare Australia Pty Ltd

ph: 1800 460 460
www.invacare.com.au

Juel Health Services

ph: 0402 242 193
www.juelhealthservices.com.au

K Care Healthcare Equipment

ph: (08) 9248-4444
www.kcare.com.au

Keep Moving Pty Ltd
ph: (08) 8947-5122
www.Keepmoving.net.au

Liberty Healthcare
ph: 1300 885 853
www.libertyhealthcare.com.au

Life Mobility
ph: (03) 9726-2000
www.lifemobility.com.au

Livigy
ph: 1300 737 497
www.livigy.com.au

Local Mobility
ph: (02) 4956 9993
www.localmobility.com.au

Lodgesons (UK)
ph: +44 (0)29 2043-6980
www.lodgesons.co.uk

Mac & PC Doctors
ph: (07) 3848 9438
www.macandpcdoctors.com.au

Magic Mobility Pty Ltd
ph: (03) 8791-5600
www.magicmobility.com.au

Medi-Repair Services
ph: (03) 6334-8844
www.medirepairservices.com.au

Medistore
ph: 1300 882 194
www.medistore.com.au

Medix21 Australia
ph: (03) 9041-7507
www.medix21australia.com.au

Megalong Positioning Service
ph: (02) 4759-2800
www.megalongpositioning.com.au

Melrose Wheelchairs Pty Ltd
ph: 0407 502 729
www.melrosewheelchairs.com.au

Merits Australia
ph: (08) 8340-8344
www.meritsaustralia.com

Mobility Aids Australia
ph: (03) 9546-7700
www.mobilityaids.com.au

MobilityCare
ph: (03) 9568-8383
www.mobilitycare.net.au

Mobility Engineering
ph: (02) 9482-4572
www.mobilityengineering.com.au

Mobility Matters
ph: (02) 6280-7244
www.mobilitymatters.com.au

Mobility Options
ph: (02) 8834-1213
www.mobilityoptions.com.au

Mobility2You
ph: (02) 4367-5751
www.mobility2you.com.au

Motum
ph: (08) 9381-2087
www.motum.com.au

Northcott Equipment Solutions
ph: (02) 9890-0186
www.northcott.com.au

Novis Healthcare
ph: 1300 738 885
www.novis.com.au

Omni Healthcare
ph: (03) 5333-4006
www.omnihealthcare.com.au

Otto Bock Australia
ph: (02) 8818-2800
www.ottobock.com.au

Para Mobility
ph: (02) 9651-4446
www.paramobility.com.au

Paragon Mobility
ph: 1300 652 382
www.paragonmobility.com.au

Patient Care Products
ph: (03) 9786-3092
www.patientcareproducts.com.au

Patient Handling
ph: 1300 734 862
www.patienthandling.com.au

Peak Care Equipment
ph: (02) 4272-2688
www.peak-care.com.au

Pelican Manufacturing
ph: 1800 641 577
www.pelicanmanufacturing.com.au

Peninsula Home Health Care
ph: (03) 9786-7004
www.phhc.com.au

Permobil Australia
ph: 1300 845 483
www.permobil.com.au

PersonalIndependenceProviders
ph: 1300 65 7016
www.haleberry.com.au

Power Mobility
ph: (07) 3265-4663
www.powermobility.com.au

Pride Mobility Products Australia
ph: (03) 8770-9600
www.pridemobility.com.au

Problem Management Engineering
ph: (02) 9482-2808
www.pmeautoconversions.com.au

Professional Assistance for Living (PAL)
ph: (08) 8449-5462 or 0434 339 910
pal_info@iprimus.com.au

Push Mobility
ph: 1300 721 328
www.pushmobility.com.au

Qld Rehab Equipment
ph: 1300 743 710
www.qldrehab.com.au

R82 Australia
ph: (02) 8213-6666
www.r82.com.au

Rehab & Mobility Wholesalers
ph: 1300 368085
www.rehabandmobility.com.au

Scooters & Mobility
ph: 1800 726 000
www.scootersandmobility.com.au

Scooters Australia
ph: (03) 9799-6622
www.scootersaus.com.au

Shoprider
ph: (08) 9248-4180
www.shoprider.com.au

Simivita
ph: 1300 746 736
www.simavita.com

Special Needs Solutions
ph: (07) 5597-4321
www.specialneedssolutions.com.au

Specialised Wheelchair Company
ph: (02) 9905-5333
www.swco.com.au

Statewide Home Health Care

ph: (03) 9591-6234

www.shhc.com.au

Sunrise Medical

ph: (02) 9678-6600

www.sunrisemedical.com.au

Think Mobility

ph: 1300 88 1968

www.thinkmobility.com.au

Total Ability

ph: 1300 858 410

www.totalability.com.au

Total Mobility Solutions

ph: 1300 868 662

www.totalmobility.com.au

Tunstall Australasia

ph: (07) 3637-2200

www.tunstallhealthcare.com.au

Tyrex Solutions

ph: (02) 4956-6860

www.tyrex.com.au

Uccello Designs

ph: 1300 721 327

www.uccelodesigns.com

Victorian Home Health Equipment

ph: (03) 9725-6577

www.vhhe.com.au

Vital Living

ph: 1300 761 630

www.vital.net.au

Walk on Wheels Australia

ph: 1300 766 266

www.walkonwheels.com.au

Watercomfort Company

ph: (02) 9531-1699

www.watercomfort.com.au

Wheelchairs & Stuff

ph: (02) 4577-2225

www.wheelchairs.com.au

Wheelchair Sales Indesign

ph: (02) 9607-3355

www.wheelchairsales.com.au

Wicked Wheelchairs

ph: (07) 5500-0882

www.wickedwheelchairs.com.au

Zytec

ph: (03) 9696-2944

www.zytec.com.au



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