

WELCOME TO OUR LATEST MARILLAC NEWSLETTER



THIS NEWSLETTER IS ONE WAY TO LET PEOPLE WHO USE MARILLAC SERVICES, FAMILIES, FRIENDS AND PEOPLE WORKING AT MARILLAC MEET AND KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND OUR COMMUNITY. IT'S ALSO A CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT OUTSIDE ISSUES THAT MIGHT AFFECT US AND TO SHARE IDEAS FOR GETTING MORE MONEY AND RESOURCES FOR OUR SERVICES.

I hope you find it interesting and useful. Most of the stories have a contact person if you want to talk to them, and you can always call Marillac's office on 9591 6400 if you'd like to know more about anything you read here.

We put all our newsletters on our website (www.marillac.com.au) and we will also be sharing some of these stories and others on our intranet.

If you have ideas about what we can include in the next newsletter, please let me know by emailing johanna@marillac.com.au or calling 9591 6400.

Johanna Snelleman
CEO, Marillac

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION LAWS

THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT ASKED THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION TO LOOK AT OUR STATE'S GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION ACT AND REPORT BACK WITH SUGGESTED CHANGES THAT COULD IMPROVE THE LAW. THEY ARE TRYING TO MAKE SURE THE LAW BETTER PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

The final report will be given to the Government in December 2011. The Law Reform Commission has recently released a consultation paper with ideas for possible changes, so all of us in the community have chance to discuss them and make comments. This paper includes some suggestions Marillac gave them last year, based on how we and people we support had experienced the current law.

You can see the consultation paper and find out more about the review by checking the Law Reform Commission's website <http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/justlib/Law+Reform/Home/Current+Projects/Guardianship/>

or you can contact Anne Bavington to see a copy or find out more about what Marillac have said to the Commission so far.

Contact: anne@marillac.com.au or 9591 6400





WELCOMING GENEROUS SUPPORT

In the past few months we have been blessed to receive generous support from many wonderful people and organisations. They have come forward with cash, goods, time and other forms of support that have made it possible for us to improve the services we provide and given people we support some important new options.

We are a not-for-profit organisation so everything we receive is used to make important differences in the lives of people with disabilities, immediately and for the future.

If you know anyone else who is interested in contributing to our work or you have ideas for encouraging support, for a particular service or for Marillac generally, please get in touch with Johanna Snelleman by emailing johanna@marillac.com.au or phoning 9591 6400.

Marillac Casey Kidz Klub has been able to deliver better options for young people in our after school and holiday support program thanks to donations from Red Gem Growers, Kooweerup Masonic Lodge, Amstel Golf Club, Barbara Herbert, Krispy Kreme Australia and the Warren Opportunity Shop. We were especially grateful to the St George Foundation for a donation of \$15,420 which we put towards a vehicle for the service.

We are grateful to Mr Quin Scalzo, from Scalzo Food Industries, for his donation of ten refurbished computers. Mr Scalzo established contact with us through Sam Liston, and made this very generous and welcome contribution. It is hugely important for our staff to have computers to use as they develop and deliver services, and Mr Scalzo's support has saved us facing significant costs in getting this vital equipment.

We continue to receive welcome in-kind support from students at Kostka Hall and their families, and thank everyone at the school for this longstanding relationship.

In the last newsletter we mentioned our plans for the Marillac Sensory Garden, a private, beautiful and safe space for people we support to enjoy with their families.

Construction will begin shortly, and would not be possible without the generosity of the David Galt Trust (which gave \$35,000 towards this project), the Alice O'Brien Trust (\$30,000), the Collier Trust (\$10,000) and our neighbours at Brighton Toyota (\$1000) and Jefferson Ford (\$500).

For the past few years we have developed a wonderful relationship with the Helen McPherson Smith Trust, whose support has focused especially on increasing the availability of Keyring-style housing options for Victorians with disabilities. Most recently, the Trust provided \$75,000 to fund the appointment of a project worker to set up KeyRing as a service option for all people with disabilities in Victoria. Getting enough housing will be critical in making the option widely accessible, and the project will seek partnerships with the housing sector. This generous funding is essential to getting the project off the ground and we are extremely grateful.

Contact: johanna@marillac.com.au or 9591 6400





BUDGET NEWS

We've recently seen both the Federal and Victorian State Governments hand down their latest budgets. In both cases there were some important decisions affecting people with disabilities.



In the Federal Budget, the key points were:

- It's good to see the decision that people receiving the Disability Support Pension can work up to 30 hours a week and still keep their benefits
- Stricter requirements regarding work capacity, and the introduction of regular Centrelink interviews for people under 35 who are assessed as having the capacity to work, could cause issues for young people with disabilities, and we will watch carefully the impact of these changes
- The introduction of wage subsidy programs to encourage employers to employ people with a disability has the potential to deliver some benefits – again, we will watch with interest what impact this has, especially as it does not address greater investment in individualised support for job seekers and their transition to the workforce
- We also welcome the decision to create the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission, as recommended by recent inquiries, and hope it delivers improved regulatory arrangements which would in turn help us deliver better services to people in need
- In the area of support for children with disabilities, we welcome announcements of extra funding in several areas:
 - \$206 million over five years to provide more psychology and psychiatry services to children and young people at risk of mental illness, and their families
 - \$146.5 million over five years to the new Better Start for Children with Disabilities program to improve access to early intervention services for children with sight or hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome or Fragile X Syndrome
 - \$28.7 million over three years added to the Helping Children With Autism early intervention program
 - \$200 million more to provide support for school students with a disability, and their families, including speech and occupational therapy, special equipment in classes and additional hours of in-class support.

The Victorian Government also addressed support for children with disabilities in its first Budget since the election, committing \$156 million over the next four years so the Program for Students with Disabilities can better meet growing demand and deliver services to students and families, as well as extra funding for other initiatives.

We are pleased to welcome budget announcements including:

- \$82 million to rebuild or upgrade 11 schools for children with autism or special needs
- \$64 million to provide teaching aides, equipment and IT support for students with disabilities
- \$10 million to help children with significant disabilities attend local kindergartens
- \$8 million for early childhood intervention services such as special education, therapies and counselling
- Additional funding for programs through DHS including aids and equipment subsidies, school holiday respite and extra individual support packages
- New supported accommodation places, and new accommodation models, for people with disabilities and mental illnesses.

We were also pleased that the new Minister for Community Services took the opportunity to commit the Government to leading the development and implementation of a National Disability Insurance Scheme.





NEW SOFTWARE FOR BETTER INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

We have been in the process of implementing TCM7, the latest generation of our information software The Care Manager. It has been a major project, to upgrade the software and especially to make sure all our staff are trained to use it and take advantage of all its features.

TCM7 helps us better support people with individual support packages by giving us the capability report individually from a financial and support perspective about every person who uses our services. The software reports directly to our finance system, so we can provide individualised billing, and also enables us to create special survey reports recording changes in the number of people we support who have individualised outcomes.

This is an import upgrade, and we've made it in response to the significant growth in numbers of people we support who have individualised packages.

Contact: kristian@marillac.com.au or 9591 6400



PROGRESS ON ACCESSIBLE MENUS

Late last year we joined with a group of Swinburne University students to launch an accessible menu project. Marillac provided funding to help start the project, which encourages cafes and restaurants to provide a user-friendly alternative to their standard menu. An accessible menu uses larger font, pictures and Braille, for example, to make it easier for people with disabilities to feel welcome and choose what they want to eat and drink.

"Jam on Glenhantly" cafe on Glenhantly Road was the first place to join the project. Since then we've talked to a number of other cafes and restaurants and are currently working with Taco Bill's which has expressed an interest in adopting an accessible menu option.

The other important development with this project has been the introduction of Scope's Communication Resource Centre. We work with the CRC on many projects and their experience and expertise will be a real asset in monitoring the project, developing materials and getting the accessible menu adopted more widely.

Contact: greg@marillac.com.au or 9591 6400





STAFF SUPPORT FOR PROJECT COMPASSION



Many of you will know that Project Compassion is Australia's largest aid and development fundraising appeal. Caritas Australia gathers donations and support throughout the six weeks of Lent each year from parishes, schools and the community, to contribute to long-term development projects in 35 countries worldwide. It helps the poorest of the poor, regardless of race, religion or political beliefs. Marillac staff donated generously to Project Compassion 2011 – well done to everyone involved.

To find out more about Project Compassion, check the website http://www.caritas.org.au/project_compassion_11/index.html or call toll free on 1800 024 413.

TRAINING FOR MARILLAC STAFF

It's important for the quality of the services we deliver, and for the enjoyment and satisfaction our staff experience being part of Marillac, that we offer plenty of good, relevant training. Promoting Certificate 4 training as an advantage for our staff is just one of many elements of our training program.

In 2011 we again have a full calendar of courses, which our staff can find out more about through Maranet or by talking to relevant managers. Marillac also records staff competencies on an up to date database to make sure we keep developing and recognising the skills of our staff.

Contact: Maureen@marillac.com.au or 9591 6400





MARILLAC WELCOMES INTERNATIONAL VISITOR

In April we were delighted to receive a visit from Sr Eveline Franc, Superioress Generale of The Daughters of Charity, who was here from Paris with Sr Kathleen Appeler. She visited several Marillac services and was delighted to see firsthand the quality of the support, accommodation and advanced equipment we offer to the people we support.



Sr Margaret Armstrong with Sr Kathleen Appeler.



Johanna Snelleman CEO with SR Eveline Franc and Sr Kathleen Appeler blessing the statue of ST Louise DE Marillac.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will include more information about our services. Between now and then, you can access news and information in other ways, including through conversations and meetings, in emails, on Maranet, our intranet site, and on our website. Everyone who works at Marillac or uses Marillac services can access Maranet any time for up to date information and a range of helpful resources.

If there's anything you want to tell people about, or want to hear more about, please contact Johanna by email at johanna@marillac.com.au or phone on 9591 6400.

If you have questions about any of our services, or about working at Marillac, please talk to us on 9591 6400 or by email on mail@marillac.com.au.



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