

2020 President's Speech

Happy new year to all of the guests and members and colleagues. This year in 2020 has been a special year to remember. We welcomed 2020 with a shadow of virus thread to our health and to our computer systems. Now the world is still embracing COVID-19 pandemic and Australia is certainly not out of woods yet.

With many lives lost with COVID-19 in caring industry, Government has introduced many tough rules to raise the quality of care. Therefore the cost for support providers like DAPA will be raised to hire more staff to cover extra procedures in risk management and reporting. Only yesterday and the day before, I was questioned on those areas by someone from NDIS Commission Quality Control department to ensure for those changes to be carried out.

That is why we have just increased ten trainees who will understand our caring procedures and help us in improving our work and also to produce all necessary reports which may have to upload to our provider portal for quality checking. It will force providers to have more managers to oversee the quality of our services and workers and wants direct feedback from the people we serve.

Although DAPA was officially formed in January 2013, yet work was already carried out in 2011 when we (a couple of families who have children with disabilities) decided to use data entry as a living skill for participants to improve their living conditions and self confidence in lives. Yu's family set aside \$1m to support this idea to help our children. Payng some participants and staff without any income was very hard for the first few years till we saw the idea of NDIS coming to Sydney in 2016 when DAPA became one of the first few organisations to be recognised as a NDIS service provider. We started to see income from staff and volunteering family members as they were support our participants whom we tried hard to be awarded with NDIS packages. It took us till 2020 to have a balanced income versus outgoings and a huge debt from Yu's family. However our reasons to endorse NDIS is more than income as NDIS respects all people with disabilities should live with their choices and controls fulfilled with NDIS support.

DAPA chose data entry as a tool for all participants to know their addresses and information of all the places around them. These are the basic knowledge people should learn in their primary schools among other things. It offers a sense of time management and worthwhile rewards to improve their daily lives that they can buy DVD's or video games and their own computers and mobile phones. We notice that two hours of work in the morning streamline their thoughts for the day and

communicates more with their peers by discussions and playing together. DAPA will offer people all kinds of activities to see participants having opportunities to discover their hobbies and ability to excel in some activities they have never thought possible. DAPA should be a family of happy differently abled people. With this aim, we encourage everyone to know how to help oneself and how to assist others. By doing a course of certificate III, one can prove that one can help others as well.

NDIS has been criticised by many service providers as it only pay support work but not does not pay managers who oversee work being carried out. This bring us back to the early days that managers are frontline support workers and vice versa to ensure all areas of care are well serviced. Another words, everyone whether manager or worker must be alert when some accidents or conflicts or misconduct might occur. In such events, one should take action to correct wrongdoings and report incidents to management. We are not paying people simply to sit in front of computers to do data entry work, but to join with each other to do things together.

DAPA has produced many Apps that are accessible to people with different kinds of impairments such as language, vision and hearing. The major application is ManyMindsLink or its new name MMLink App which has now contain over 97,000 useful places for daily living such as all shopping centres, food stores, schools, police stations, banks and atm's, government offices, service providers for aging and disabilities, public toilets and parks, barber shops, petrol stations and maintenance professionals, public events and places of attractions etc. The other app is the Logbook App that everyone has to touch the iPad as you entered here. This App will register everyone coming here as visitor or worker. It will assist our payroll system in every DAPA offices which may include people working in our participants' accommodation or elsewhere in the future as it links with MMLink App which has capability for location tracking for participants using this App. We think that they will be ready to push to the public market after more than seven years in the making by a few number of people with disabilities. We need everyone here to download our app and advise others to finding it useful everyday.

Every year we see participants, volunteers and workers coming and leaving DAPA. We hope they will feel proud as being a friend of DAPA and place trust in us to serve the people with all wisdoms and disabilities. We should remember that there is no disability but only differently abled people.