



Polio Australia Incorporated

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



www.polioaustralia.org.au

Reflections January 2013

Summer in Australia and another round of natural disasters spanning the country from top to bottom. Devastating floods in Queensland, and catastrophic bushfires in Tasmania, New South Wales, and Victoria. Many lives have been lost, homes destroyed, and businesses compromised. As always, our hearts and thoughts go out to everyone affected, especially members of our post-polio community. We can all make a difference by taking the extra step of donating to the [Red Cross](#) who are doing a wonderful job in supporting those communities to start again.

I'm sure we are all reeling from the shocking news of gunmen attacking two polio clinics, and killing 10 people in the northern Nigerian city of Kano in early February 2013. This is not only incredibly sad, but poses a serious setback in the eradication campaign in that country. Who can comprehend such a misguided and reprehensible act? In the face of such adversity, those who are brave enough to continue the job of polio vaccination deserve all our moral support and utmost respect.

In spite of this somber introduction, there is happier news in the following pages of "Reflections", so do read on . . .

"We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives...not looking for flaws, but for potential."

~ Ellen Goodman, American Journalist

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Beware of Scammers asking for NDIS Fees

Source: [Senator Jan McLucas Website](#)

People are being warned to beware of contact from anyone claiming to work for the Government who tries to make them pay an administration fee to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). These claims are false. There is no need for people to pay a fee to join the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The Gillard Government is investing \$1 billion to launch the first stage of the NDIS in five sites across the country from July this year. The NDIS Launch Transition Agency will deliver the first stage of the NDIS and in the lead up to launch will communicate with many people with disability in the launch sites. However, the Agency will not be seeking fees from anyone to participate in the scheme.

People should be very wary of anyone asking for payments for Government schemes, including the NDIS. If people are concerned that their privacy has been breached or they have provided personal details as a result of one of these calls, they should report it to the police.

People can also report a scam and get further information at the Government's Scamwatch website, www.scamwatch.gov.au, or call the hotline on 1300 795 995.

If you have any further enquiries about this scam email helpdesk.fraud@fahcsia.gov.au. This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.

If you want to know more about the facts of the NDIS please go to the Government's official web site at www.ndis.gov.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme Submission

Polio Australia was invited to make a submission to the Community Affairs Legislation Commission in relation to the NDIS, which has now been made public on the Committee's [webpage](#). Polio Australia's submission is number 637 (scroll towards the bottom of the page) and considering the very large number of submissions (still climbing), the Committee has a lot of reading, understanding and considering to get through. Many thanks go to Merle Thompson (Secretary, Polio NSW) for putting together the first draft of our submission, and to President John Tierney and Vice President Gillian Thomas for their considerable, subsequent input. Dr John Tierney will be attending one of the Canberra hearings being held on 4 and 5 March - [public hearing schedule](#).



The thrust of Polio Australia's submission can be read below:

The summary statement for Chapter 2 of the NDIS Explanatory Memorandum clearly states that *"Chapter 2 sets out the general supports and assistance, including funding, that the Agency can provide to all people with disability and other individuals and organisations to enable them to support people with disability"*.

Unfortunately for many polio survivors the concept of *all people with disability* is a misnomer as the eligibility requirements will rule out almost all people with LEOP for any assistance. A very serious concern for Polio Australia and the state-based Polio Networks is that polio survivors will not be eligible for NDIS provisions on the grounds of age. To be eligible for assistance during the launch phase a person has to be born by 1948, which will rule out most polio survivors. By 2021, three years after the proposed launch date of the NDIS, no one in Australia who survived the great polio epidemics of the 1930's, 1940's and early 1950's will be eligible for assistance as 2021 is the 65th anniversary of the introduction in Australia of the Salk Vaccine in 1956.

The only groups who will meet this restrictive eligibility requirement are the relatively small number who contracted polio during the epidemics in the mid-to-late 1950's, individual cases after the introduction of the polio vaccine in 1956, or the isolated cases of those who have migrated to Australia from countries where polio is still rife, or was so after it had been eliminated from Australia.

Additionally, only a relatively small percentage of polio survivors are in the geographical areas covered by the trial NDIS programs.

It is acknowledged that in the design of the NDIS it was considered that aged care programs would meet the needs of those aged 65 and over. It can also be assumed that it was considered that disabilities, which are specifically related to ageing, might be more appropriately provided for under aged care programs. Polio Australia has been told that after 65 years of age, people with the LEOP can then access services in the aged care sector. The problem with this is that currently there are no specialist LEOP services in the aged care sector for polio survivors aged 65 and over.

The NDIS aims to prevent people experiencing the problems and deprivations that these people have either endured or overcome to the best extent they could with little or no assistance. The NDIS should enable people with a disability from now on to have a greater chance of a fulfilling life.

Polio survivors meet the eligibility requirements in that their disability is permanent and their support needs are *"likely to continue for the person's lifetime"*.

Polio Australia's position is that those with polio-derived disability (being long-standing and permanent) which pre-dates the introduction of the NDIS should not be excluded from participation in the NDIS on the grounds of age because aged care programs demonstrably cannot meet their special needs.



Disability Commissioner Resigns From Airline Working Party

Source: [Pro Bono Australia](#) - 12 February 2013

Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Graeme Innes has resigned from the Federal Government's Accessible Airlines Working Group citing a lack of preparedness by both government and airline operators to act on access for people with disability.

In an open letter to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, Innes says his main reason for tendering his resignation is that the group has achieved little of significance since its establishment three or four years ago.

"This is partly due to a lack of preparedness by airlines and airport operators to accept the gaps in the current provision of access, and take any significant action to improve in those areas. It is mainly due to the government's lack of preparedness to regulate for, or actively encourage improvement in, areas where access is lacking," he wrote. *"There has been much talking at the group, but little else."*

Innes cited two areas of particular concern where, he says, despite numerous requests and proposed initiatives, no action has been taken.

"The first area is the 'two wheelchair' policy. This is a policy administered by some airlines in Australia, whereby if two people using wheelchairs are booked to travel on a particular flight a third person wishing to travel is refused, and directed to another flight. This policy – found to be discriminatory by the Federal Court – has a negative impact on individuals when more than two people using wheelchairs wish to travel on the same flight. But it also sends a message to the broader disability sector that it is ok to treat people with disability as second class citizens. Government could initiate a process to carry out such an assessment. I note – as a point of comparison – that the limit for parents travelling with prams on airlines is twenty," he said in the resignation letter.

Read full article [here](#).

Flying Wheelies

Flying Wheelies has been formed to make travelling, dining, shopping and services as accessible and stress free as possible for the aged and disabled. Their goal is to ensure that your individual needs will be met regardless of disabilities.

Their support is based on their research of businesses providing, accommodation, dining, entertainment, conference facilities, shopping and general services including medical and dental. Flying Wheelies rates the business's ability to cater for people with a disability of any kind. If a business passes their rating system it will be a recommended partner of Flying Wheelies and will be linked to their website so clients can access those services.

Flying Wheelies can also arrange for travel discounts for carers, mobility equipment hire, transport assistance, travel passes, companion cards, care support, nursing services, medical equipment and wheel chair repairs. This leaves partners free to focus on their services knowing shared clients have equitable dignified access and feel 'looked after'.

Everyone working with Flying Wheelies is either disabled themselves, lives with or is friends with someone who has a disability. All others have completed our Disability Empathy Program.

For more information about Flying Wheelies, check their website [here](#).

Do you know about ECHO?

Source: [Elderly Citizens Help Organisation Inc.](#) (Victoria, Australia)

ECHO – Elderly Citizens Help Organisation Inc. – was established in 1978 by legendary race caller, the late Bill Collins OAM and close friend Jack O'Hanlon OAM. ECHO's aim is and always has been . . . *"To make life happier for our disadvantaged citizens."*

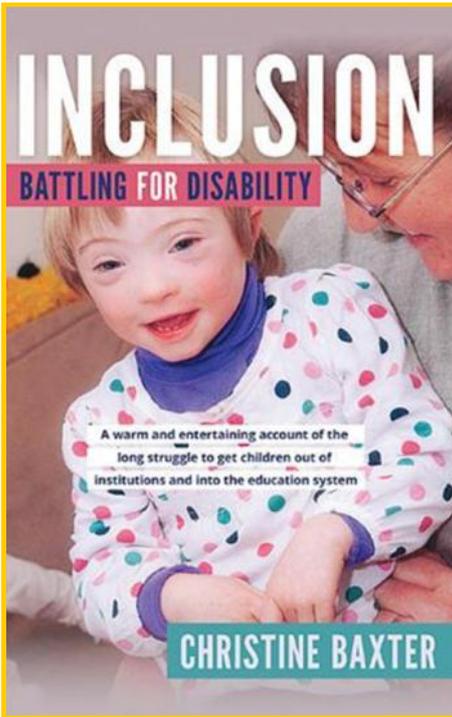
As part of the "new vision" for ECHO, assistance for our aged citizens is now given in other forms of assistance such as motorised wheel chairs, home help, medical alarm systems, etc. This service is given to genuine cases who are in no financial position to afford such items. Our vision also extends to all members in the community who are deemed at risk or in need.

It is the Committee's objective to work closely with welfare groups within Victoria, and be guided and advised by these experienced people.



Inclusion: Battling for Disability

A book by Christine Baxter



A few months after her arrival in Australia, eighteen year old Chris Baxter reads a letter addressed to her boyfriend's mother that sets the course for the rest of her life. She becomes a teacher of children with disability and fights for their inclusion in the community, and in the education system from which they have been barred. Together with Rosemary Crossley and Anne McDonald she becomes embroiled in the infamous St Nicholas hospital controversy and takes up the cause of Ethel Temby, the mother of a tiny baby with Down syndrome shed seen in the nursery at Kew Cottages. Chris is angered by the injustice of what she sees. She knows Kenny would be able to walk, if he had the opportunity to do so, and that Annie and her friends would be able to learn, if allowed to go to school. She wages a struggle with bureaucrats and politicians but falls back into frustrated despondency when successive governments fail to act.

The media comes to the rescue, and with a bit of help from Ethel, pushes the local campaign along. When the battle to close the institutions goes global, Chris continues her work; pushing for inclusion in Australia and abroad. Finally, the transformation they want happens. The stark reality of the situation turns intensely personal when a family member is diagnosed with autism. Chris gets a shock! Undeterred, she maintains the course set by that chance letter so many years ago and the story ends with a very good reason to hope. As her rollercoaster story unfolds, Chris captures all the drama, politics and in-fighting of a sad and neglected aspect of Australia's recent

social history. Her insider's view is told with all the urgency, intensity and feeling of a front-line fighter who knows that the war is not yet fully won.

Available for purchase online at [Booktopia](#) (and other online bookstores).

Vaccine switch urged for polio endgame

by Ewen Callaway

Source: [Nature/News](#) - 14 January 2013

By sunrise on a warm December morning, Janila Shulu's team are out in the dirt roads and alleyways of Ungwan Rimi, a poor neighbourhood in a predominantly Muslim section of Kaduna city in northern Nigeria. Three female health workers, accompanied by a community leader, dart from house to house, squeezing a few drops of polio vaccine into the mouths of all the young children they can find, even those who pass by on the street. By 1 p.m., after giving hundreds of doses, they stop for the day — the first of a national five-day effort.

Such campaigns are the backbone of the global push to eradicate polio, but this month the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland, proposed a shift in vaccination strategy from oral vaccines to injected ones that may have to be administered in clinics. The change is needed to mop up the last remaining pockets of polio, but experts say that it poses challenges in places such as Kaduna city, which have poor access to health care.



The new policy is an important step towards eradication, says Nicholas Grassly, an epidemiologist at Imperial College London, but implementing it will be difficult. "There are some big ifs as to whether it can happen," he says.

Read full article [here](#).

Polio This Week

Source: [Polio Global Eradication Initiative](#) - as of Wednesday 6 February 2013

Wild Poliovirus (WPV) cases

Total cases	Year-to-date 2013	Year-to-date 2012	Total in 2012
Globally	1	12	222
- in endemic countries	1	11	216
- in non-endemic countries	0	1	6

Case breakdown by country

Countries	Year-to-date 2013				Year-to-date 2012				Total in 2012	Date of most recent case
	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total		
Pakistan	1			1	7			7	58	14-Jan-13
Afghanistan					3			3	37	20-Dec-12
Nigeria						1		1	121	03-Dec-12
Chad					1			1	5	14-Jun-12
Niger									1	15-Nov-12
Total	1	0	0	1	11	1	0	12	222	14-Jan-13
Total in endemic countries	1	0	0	1	10	1	0	11	216	
Total outbreak	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	

Data in WHO as of 07 February 2012 for 2012 data and 05 February 2013 for 2013 data.

The Polio Propaganda

Source: [The End of Polio website](#)



Fatima Riaz, General Secretary of the [NUST BioReach Society](#) in Islamabad, Pakistan, wrote this blog in response to some of the rumours circulating in her country and beyond about the polio vaccine.

In the short time since our "Polio Ends Here" campaign began in February of 2012, I have come to the conclusion that the Harry Potter books have more basis in fact than the myths surrounding the polio vaccines do. The conspiracy theories, ranging from covert CIA operations to the vaccine causing sterility and AIDs, are believed by the educated and illiterate alike. When polio in Pakistan has been pushed to a precipice and cases reduced by 70%, this unawareness is most unwelcome because it has the potential to reverse the present (and halt all future) success.

Paralysis is too steep a price to pay for ignorance, hence, I am putting together this blog in the hopes to dispel and debunk some of the most popular myths surrounding the polio vaccine. These are the most common misconceptions that have surfaced during my one year of active campaigning in Pakistan and I would like to kick start them with a quote by Harlan Ellison:

"You are not entitled to your opinion. You are entitled to your informed opinion. No one is entitled to be ignorant."

2013 SA Polio Health and Wellness Retreat – Body / Mind / Spirit



STAMFORD GRAND, GLENELG, SOUTH AUSTRALIA Thursday 18, Friday 19, Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 April 2013

This year, Polio Australia is delighted to be running our 4th Health and Wellness Retreat in the lovely seaside suburb of Glenelg, South Australia. We have done our best to keep the cost of this Retreat as affordable as possible by applying to various philanthropic trusts to subsidise the cost. The total cost will vary according to room selections but includes three nights' accommodation, all meals (including morning and afternoon tea), guest speakers, entertainment, sessions, and most activities.

This is a fully residential program and commences with Registration from 2.00pm onwards on Thursday 18th April, with check out at approximately 2.00pm on Sunday 21st April 2013.

To ensure that the Retreat environment is conducive to friendly networking, **numbers have been restricted to 70 people**. Preference will be given to South Australian's and those interstate people who have not attended previous Retreats.

This does not preclude previous participants from registering and paying. Bookings are only confirmed when payment is received and places allocated. Once we reach capacity, people will be contacted and asked if they wish to be placed on a waiting list. If we exceed the quota, once places have been allocated, there will be an immediate refund of payment.

The Program is still a 'work in progress' and there will be changes/additions made in the lead up to the Retreat, so check Polio Australia's [website](#) regularly for the latest information.

[2013 Registration Form in PDF](#) / [2013 Registration Form in Word](#)
[2013 Program in PDF](#) / [2013 Program in Word](#)
[2013 Presenters List in PDF](#)

We would like to recognise and thank the following supporters of this Retreat:

[The Marian & EH Flack Trust](#) and [GlaxoSmithKline Australia](#)

– for their generous donations which substantially help to subsidise the cost for participants.

[The Stamford Grand](#) – for their significant sponsorship package, thereby further reducing the total cost of the Retreat.

[Polio SA](#) – which has provided funding for two lucky members to attend the Retreat, and donated a good sum of money that will go towards paying for the entertainment and the bathroom aids required.

The session facilitators – our heartfelt thanks go to all the people who have agreed to facilitate sessions, most of whom are providing their time, knowledge and skills on a pro-bono basis. We would simply not be able to run the Retreat without them.

Please pass this e-Bulletin on to friends and colleagues who have an interest in the late effects of polio

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- ◆ If you do not wish to receive any further communication from Polio Australia, please email us [here](#).

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