

Blue Skies



**Talking about Blue Skies:
Responses to the vision**

*"The vision of **Blue Skies is clear**: that genuine 'inclusion' is, at its core, spirit and heart. It is centred in **valuing people** and investing in social capital. And, **it's like happiness**: if we try to measure it, control it and make it accountable, it will be crushed in the process."*

— Adrienne

Introduction

In the Blue Skies vision, wherever a person with a disability lives and whatever their choice of lifestyle, their experience is one of rich inclusion and sense of belonging.

Since June 2009, Blue Skies has been engaging Queenslanders in conversation about inclusive communities. To date, over 135 conversations have taken place, involving more than 1,000 people across Queensland exploring elements of the vision that have meaning for them.

People with disability, their families, their carers, their service providers, their teachers, their local and state politicians, their architects, their police officers, their public servants, their neighbours young and old, have shown they not only support the vision, but they are willing to be part of creating a better future for people with disability.

The following conversations took place around kitchen tables, in workplaces, in schools, in hotels, at McDonalds and under trees.

The material provided in this document represents the feedback *as it was provided* by conversation hosts and/or individuals. A number of people have contributed their time and expertise to analysing the key themes and ideas which have emerged from this raw material. A further report with recommendations for action will follow after the Christmas break.

The Blue Skies Group would like to acknowledge the contributions to this work from the many wonderful conversation hosts and participants across the state. The following data has been given freely and generously, and represents a shared commitment to a better future for people with disability.

About the Blue Skies Conversations

Conversations took place in:	People taking part included:	Questions explored during conversations included:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane • Aitkenvale • Beenleigh • Biloela • Boonah • Cairns • Gladstone • Gold Coast • Goondiwindi • Gympie • Mackay • Magnetic Island • Noosa • Rockhampton • Roma • Sunshine Coast • Toowoomba • Townsville • Victoria Point • Wide Bay <p>They were held in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplaces; • Community centres; • Libraries; • Hotels; • Homes; and • Around kitchen tables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with disability; • Volunteers; • Parents and siblings of people with disability; • Individual advocates; • Systems advocates; • Support workers; • Teachers, Principals; • Disability organisations; • Peak bodies; • Local Govt Association; • Architects; • Developers; • Local Councillors; • Members of Parliament; • Policy writers; • Ministerial advisors; • Board members; • Public servants from Dept of Communities, Housing, Queensland Health, Education Queensland; • Queensland Police Service; • Community Resource Centre; • Ageing in Place; • Health consumers network; • Queensland Disability Housing Coalition; • Queensland Council of Carers; and • Queenslanders with a Disability Network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would it take to create an inclusive community? • What action am I willing to take to make it happen? • How can everyone achieve a home of their own in the community? • How do we build support for a National Disability Insurance scheme? • How can we help others learn from our experiences as parents of children with disabilities attending main stream education? • How do we create a welcoming school community? • How can we turn our local Police Citizen's Youth Club into a creative and vibrantly productive place for young people with a disability? • What would it take to create a society where community is available to all young people? • How can we encourage local business to be more welcoming to people with disability? • What does local government do now towards building a more inclusive community and what would it take to do more? • How do we tackle the problem of homelessness and disability? • What would it take to reduce the number of people with disability in the criminal justice system? • How can we support families to achieve their potential, where one or both parents have a disability? • What must be done so that all jobseekers with a disability are meaningfully employed? • How can we create a bright future for people with a disability exiting the foster system? • How do we create more, disability friendly spaces and places in our local community? • What would it take to create a pathway into sport of people with disability? • How do we support capacity building?

Blue Skies Conversation #:
135

Where did the conversation take place?
Aitkenvale (at McDonalds)

Who took part in the conversation?
Youth, people with disability and workers in the sector

How many people participated in the conversation?
8

Question 1: What barriers do you see that young people face to being involved in youth community?

People with disability have their opportunities for social involvement and education limited. They need to be given the same opportunities as others.

Question 2: What would it take to create a society where community is available to all young people?

Awareness of disability and respect for all people was key — achieved through education.

Young people would like a youth convention that celebrates social, educational and work opportunities for all young people.

Additional information:

This group came up with great ideas driven by personal experiences.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
134

Where did the conversation take place?
Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Everyone to be valued the same
- Community Education as a whole
- Being bold and engaging the community
- Espousing the contribution people with disabilities give to community
- Mutual contribution
- Just ask
- People have a right to say no
- Lobbying for more opportunity
- Bombard Government with success stories
- Modelling of behaviours & Actions
- Employment of people with disabilities
- Community leaders sharing stories/conversations

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- Employing people with disabilities
- Public speaking opportunities for people with disabilities
- Educating businesses about missed business opportunities by not catering for people with disabilities, mums with prams etc
- Opportunities to participate in forums
- Inclusion of students in main stream school
- Educating the educators on inclusion
- Opportunities of N.G.O. to assist families in planning for their persons future
- Some training of essential service personal beginning to happen
- Families starting to initiate services that will include community

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Opportunities to participate in forums

- Educating the educators on inclusion
- Person Centred Practices
- Risk takers and leaders
- Continual/assist in empowerment of people with disabilities and families
- Sharing knowledge assisting with principals stand beside advocacy

Blue Skies Conversation #:
133

Where did the conversation take place?
Toowoomba

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Service Provision
- Education
- Transport – big issue – needs to be improved so that people with a disability can access the community, taxi's take forever – buses not so great, drivers need to be trained in disabilities, drivers don't logon, need to educate taxi companies, taxi cards and accounts some drivers not interested, want cash in hand, buses that are wheelchair accessible – route changes daily.

Push with transport dept; transport minister – need to lobby

- Need inspectors in Toowoomba to check drivers
- Waiting time for aids – equipment

Need to wait for funds be -----

ALOTOF equipment comes from overseas

Need to fundraise for funds as mass only ----- of equipments

Availability of soft wear programs

EDUCATION

- To schools (educate children, parents, teachers)
- Current numbers 1/3 classroom students have some disability (e.g. – learning, physical)
- Darcy – AVT Cath Ed – seeing lot more understanding by students
- Trish – family support worker CPL – educate peers, families, daycare, school expelion if the child has special needs – that is all the support they need – need to integrate school inclusion – support teachers, educators.
- Hospitals – need educating – Dr's, nurses etc. – don't know how to support people with a disability
- Pushed from pillar to post. Always end up at the start again. With no results.
- Recognise parents – we do know some things.

Educate staff – need to laugh otherwise would cry at some suggestions that are made to parents.

Carers care – companion card – both useless

Carers card – discount

Companion card - ???

Booklet that gives names but not worthwhile

Need discounts @ supermarkets, movies

Small communities support these cards better than TBA

Milne Bay has wheel chair access in pool. Need to ask about it as it is locked away.

Need community development officer – get out in community to try and make a difference, concentrate on disability (community dev. Officer).

Educate stores on isle width.

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Uni & TAFE – great support to their students with disabilities

- Shopping centres slowly improving facilities
- Toowoomba library not good
- Programs that are being developed (CPL, Clubhouse. Breakaway)
- Camille – written to Ministers re Halfway House, Drop In centre for people with disabilities
- Improve social inclusion for people with disabilities
- Milne Bay pool – ceiling hoist being repaired. CPL in negotiation with council re dressing room. Supply folding change table – doing design now. Also looking at hoist there
- Regional Council improving their support
- Council and Chamber of Commerce working well together

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Keep on lobbying local members, council etc
- Community support in altering council etc re problems with footpaths
- Community support group– also involve parents/carers in these groups. Broader community, Chamber of Commerce, Govt Depts

- Education Qld – new facilities in New Year focus on access for people with disabilities
- Blue Skies group – themes emerge – as group develops – start beginning of 2010
- Put dates on meetings – whats up in Disability, Chronicle etc
- Families have developed apathy – because things don't happen
- Blue Skies Group – assist families/clients with complex forms to access information, clients fall through the cracks, vision make a difference
- Issues are endless –group would help. Assist in many issues eg funding

Blue Skies Conversation #:
132

Where did the conversation take place?
Bowen

Who took part in the conversation?
Social Group Program participants

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

To be involved in the community through doing things to help and assist others

- * Volunteer work and / or working
- * Participation in activities & functions
- * Having a say and being part
- * Joining in with others and assisting with setting it up (activities & plans)

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Community involvement through:

- * Volunteer work
- * Being able to share with others and tell people about the things that are happening with us
- * Park areas and footpath access- people becoming aware
- * Social networks that can offer varies activities

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

To progress the vision

- * Respect each and every person for who they are
- * Being included in the setting
- * Sense of value and importance acknowledge of the role or task

Blue Skies Conversation #:

131

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

8

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

It makes sense that families are strong. Good ways to do this is by:

- Listening deeply to who they are and what they want.
- Getting to know them well
- Strong families can model what is possible for other families.
- Flexible support to assist families to have time to thrive, dream and plan.
- Supporting families to ask for more – to be courageous and confident.
- People learn in different ways at different times and have different capacities.

We need to go family by family. People change over time – nothing is static.

Families need:

- a positive hopeful attitude.
- to be smart, to learn new things and to be connected.
- Information coming in a number of ways so they can hear it when they are able to take it in and it is relevant to them.

The education system can make a huge difference to families. They can make them strong or they can diminish them. How the education system approaches the inclusion of people with disability will shape the next generation.

Sometimes, service gets in the way. When there is no service, often community can provide a local solution.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

130

Where did the conversation take place?

Cairns

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Attitude changes
- Acceptance – disability being seen as normal
- Don't focus on the charity model – focus on the people
- Government not putting people in boxes
- Government not giving mixed messages
- Educating children – making disability a part of the curriculum.
- Providing schools with the resources to allow children with a disability to be integrated into the classroom

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- Organisations like us
- Conversations like this one
- Companion Card
- Better access (although there is still room for improvement)
- Council is starting to listen

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Personally taking advantage of opportunities to create inclusive conversations
- Extend our social activities to a wider community
- Nurture other organisations to be our allies
- Staff training
- Help to increase awareness in the community with issues around disability



Blue Skies Conversation #:

129

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

See overleaf for details...

Intimacy

- rich relationships
- freely given & positive
- relationships with their children (parents)

The Support Needed

- relationships
- service
- other??

Role

A Good Life

Feeling Safe & Secure

- not hyper-vigilant

Money

- enough
- used well

Flexibility

- in systems

Belonging & Connection

- to place
- activity

Imagine

What would it take to 'turn things around' for people with an intellectual disability who come from backgrounds of significant disadvantage?

Equity

- based on human rights

Ordinary Life Path

- not separated

Joyful Moments

Recognition

- of gifts & contributions

Wellness

- physical
- mental

Freedom from

- abuse & exploitation
- negative self-image
- terror

Feel good about self

Opportunity to contribute

Sense of self-determination

Blue Skies Conversation #:

128

Where did the conversation take place?

Mt Isa

Who took part in the conversation?

Local Area Coordinators, Individual Community Members & Families

How many people participated in the conversation?

20

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Access was the major theme. Families want access to all things in the community increased for people with disabilities

Blue Skies Conversation #:
127

Where did the conversation take place?
Gladstone

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Theme 1:

Start Early

Support must be available from a much earlier age. Getting support and assistance is currently dependent on being informed about what is available, what needs to be provided, how to navigate the system, how to advocate for your child, and being connected into a network of parent and other supportive people. This is much too difficult and there is not equity across Queensland. Need to move to an entitlement system and a system where every person who needs support to participate in daily life has a “peer advocate”, “community navigator”.

See “Head Start” Program in Canada for concept idea -
<http://www.abcheadstart.org/>

Theme 2:

Community Mind shift

Stop using the word disability – use “extraordinary ability”. Community need to be more informed about the concept of “inclusive communities” – what is my part to play in creating an inclusive community and what’s in it for me to do this? Need to challenge community perception of people with a disability and focus on their strengths and assets. This needs to extend to the business sector to increase employment opportunities and also to address access issues for people with a disability.

Need to develop an engagement strategy with business rep bodies (e.g.. QCCI) and ask:

- What concerns you/ challenges you about employing a person with a disability?
- What information do you need?
- What’s in it for you? – How it will benefit businesses to have people with disability in the workplace.

Theme 3:

Universal Design in Public Spaces

Education and awareness with Local Government and Business around planning and design of buildings and public spaces.

Question 2: How can we increase job opportunities for people with a disability?

- More accessible to everyone. Expectations for positions of academic achievement and written testing of job capacity and suitability (aptitude test). Shift work – hours of work suitable for different people.
- Medical examinations not just written off previous medical conditions. Especially if condition controlled via medication or idiopathic.
- Acceptance into service positions (e.g. army) of people with diagnosed disability especially ASD, as this occupation of regimentation is most suitable for them.
- Diagnosis of disability not to be negative on application, positive shows can control, has greater personal ability to achieve and develop.

Question 3: How do we create more disability, friendly spaces and places in our local community?

We don't want specific disability spaces. All places need to be made disability accessible. All community buildings and offices

Question 4: How do we create a welcoming school community?

Inclusion with emphasis upon acceptance of everyone – race, colour, religion, dress, disability, appearance, difference.

Question 5: What would it take to build disability awareness into primary school curriculum?

Compulsory disability component in training, not current elective, not comprehensive enough and incorrect trainers. Part of practicum with special schools. Visits to and from parent groups. Also individual discussions about how to live with and handle specific types/individuals. Forums to train teachers and school staff

Question 6: How do we support the shift from deficit based assessment to strength based assessment of people with disability?

- Get rid of word "Disability"
- It is often an extraordinary capacity and ability in areas with limited capacity in others. The same as non-disability people.
- All of us are not great in some areas.
- Focus on what they can do and build around this to create a balanced life for the person. In need of extra support to increase ability.

Question 7: How can we encourage partnerships between housing developers, disability services and people with disability?

- Government standards to alter and regulations. Hallway widths, lifts capacity and size, accesses to upper floors to be main entrance not

back door through kitchen. Doorways all wide. Use slide doors and a privacy lock (child proof) type.

- All community buildings, private and commercial offices and areas to be accessible in planning, not an add-on – out the side or back.
- Planners, developers, tenants and building inspectors and approvers to progress through building and access in wheelchair. Visit toilet, wash hands, give presentation, access all facilities.

Question 8: What would it take to reduce the number of people with disability in the criminal justice system?

- Fairness and acknowledgement of disabilities.
- Knowledge and understanding by police, solicitors, judges etc.
- Jobs and improved finances for people dependent upon disability benefits, to be able to access and provide what they “need” in society. A lot of income is directed towards disability needs. If not in similar financial position can revert to criminal activities to obtain. Especially if not employed, or engaged in occupation activities, watch TV, subject and influenced by programs and advertisements. Also if not occupied will associate with criminal element and be conned, induced into illegal activities. Mixing with illegal drugs and alcohol with prescription medication. Stigma attached to being on medication.
- In jail associated with other criminal element. Taught other crime methods and exposed to greater diverse crimes etc.
- Not real rehabilitation, especially directed at people with disability. Don’t believe people in legal system – e.g. Community Justice & Corrections understand some, non-physical disabilities e.g. mental capacities etc.
- Community reluctance, including government agencies, to accept and employ, give credence for “time served” as past record.

Additional information:

Training for all in physically dealing with some disabilities. E.g.. Lifting of wheelchair bound people. Assistance to vision and hearing impaired. Assistance to people with mobility issues.

More acknowledgement of recognized great achievers that have “disability”
Public high profile achievers = people with disability can achieve greatness in their areas and become recognized superiors etc.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

123 — 126 (this facilitator held four conversations in one session)

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Members of the Health Consumers Network

How many people participated in the conversation?

21

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Feeling more included, welcome and safe could be improved by:

- Being connected to others who have experienced similar situations (restrictions of client confidentiality would need to be address)
- Community education through disability support organisations
- A support person being available to assist the person with a disability
- Establishing training/education programs for all practitioners (doctors, nurses and allied health practitioners) in understanding the need of people with different types of disability
- Developing a Resource/Information Kit
- Having access to appropriate communication tools as needed, e.g. Auslan, interpreters for people from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Awareness of the needs of people who are blind or have a visual impairment
- A Disability/patient Liaison person (with specific disability training) being available in each hospital /health care facility
- By nominating one person to take responsibility for informing all health practitioners/staff who are involved of the needs of the person with a disability
- Providing individual advocacy
- Establishing a process whereby health practitioners can determine if a person's situation is acute and may require particular action/support
- Preventative/early intervention measures to avoid acute episodes
- Providing person-centred treatment and duration to avoid prolonged admissions
- Encouragement to people with disability to skill or re-skill to enter/re-enter the workforce to reduce incidence of health care events
- Reviewing the health care system regularly in terms of broader social and economic issues

Feeling more included, welcome and safe could be improved by:

- Consistency of doctors – often patients don't see same GP especially in rural and remote areas as there is a high turnover of doctors
- Talking to the person with a disability, not to their support person

- Making hospital advocates available and/or indigenous health workers and/or CALD interpreters – all of whom would require medical training
- Engaging social workers who have a social/community context understanding and medical knowledge
- Closing the gaps in understanding of conditions that are not considered as a disease and also not considered as a disability – e.g. persistent pain
- Engaging medical staff who have empathy for people with disability
- Increasing health/medical/community services as without this, people with disability and others will often seek non-evidence based treatments
- Considering giving patients community support options as well as medical options

Feeling more included, welcome and safe could be improved by:

- Early diagnosis and intervention
- Participation in decision making where there is capacity
- Support groups
- Advising patient as well as carer of procedures
- Providing alternative formats other than print to people who are blind or vision impaired or unable to read
- Including access to alternative therapies – e.g. massage
- Keeping the patient/health care provider trust once established
- Having CHAPS style assessment freely available
- Keeping accurate data of people with disability who access the health care system
- Encouraging E-health implementation to ensure confidentiality
- Having access to mobility aids and hoists

Feeling more included, welcome and safe could be improved by:

- Meeting specific needs, e.g. longer appointment times in order to know the client/patient
- Talking to the person with disability, not the carer and in a way that is meaningful
- Providing choice about whether a carer is part of the medication consultation process – circle of support involvement
- Utilising signing as a universal way to communicate
- Health providers showing some common sense when dealing with people with disability
- Regular professional development which could be done by people with disability, not the 'experts'
- Continuous improvement and quality assurance
- Capacity of services to respond in a timely manner
- Health care outreach services to people who are homeless who may have mental health issues, alcoholism or other drugs

Question 2: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

All people at this table were committed to:

- Supporting and building on Blue Skies Scenario initiative and use it to lobby/advocate for the necessary systemic changes in health and in broader associated community and education arenas
- Encouraging education through advocacy on behalf of people with disability about their rights in the health system
- Contributing a review of education programs, e.g. CeAIU ???
- Advocating for all health centres to be accessible
- Advocating for facility features/equipment is disability friendly
- Encouraging non-government organisations to lobby government
- Contribute to the National Health Reform agenda
- Encouraging community groups to form linkages
- Raising awareness in broader community about disability issues
- Lobby peak bodies, e.g. Commerce Qld and medical specialist colleges about the conditions/disease and disability impact
- Telling our stories loud and clear
- Lobbying, particularly the media and through discussion
- Lobbying for a series of government funded T.V. advertisements
- Liaison through HCQ
- Placing disability higher on the agenda for discussion
- Empowering those people with disability who are known to me
- Speaking to members of State/Federal and Local government
- Seeking a review of medical cost
- Making and assisting in representation to Universities for inclusion of disability in training
- Encouraging more research into health care systems pertaining to disability
- Encouraging development of a register of providers to collaborate on decision making and contribute to inclusion
- Comprehensive service pre-admission planning and post discharge follow-up
- Advocate for change!

Question 3: Ways we can encourage better partnerships between health practitioners/providers and people with disability?

Better partnerships would be developed by:

- Information about disability/diversity of needs being provided to health practitioners
- Education of practitioners on how to communicate with people with disability
- People with disability being supported to inform health practitioner of their needs

- Establishing a relationship (takes time) so that “real” knowledge is gained of individuals’ social support/networks etc
- Allocating more time to really understand the circumstances of each individual
- Establishing realistic timeframes to work with each client which is not restricted by policy guidelines – e.g. 18 hours in the Mental Health Plan) Addressing the issue of those people with mental health issues who reach their statutory annual limit of 18 hours per year, but who need more time
- Building trust between all parties
- Reducing patient isolation/social exclusion – reducing the ‘stigma’ or ‘labelling’ of people with disability would assist this
- GP’s allocating time to develop a health care plan for each person with a disability
- Including oral health as part of general health
- Increased interaction between various health care providers
- Implementation of the National Health and Hospitals Reform agenda
- Development of comprehensive primary health care centres
- Ensuring any changes can begin at the local level
- Greater sharing of information between health practitioners
- Overcoming prescribing problems
- Using examples from overseas, e.g. in the U.K. re registration
- Training and information provision of health care staff with on-going professional development
- Providing local health care and community services
- Providing timely and accessible services
- Better partnerships would be developed by:
- Compulsory training and education at tertiary level 1 for all health care providers including paramedics
- Compulsory culturally appropriate training/awareness
- Training for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) to overcome the stigma around disability
- Delivering health care in a more flexible way to maintain trust – e.g. the way pathology is provided could change
- Having more choice in health providers (this should not be cost driven)
- Acknowledgement of the role and the knowledge of carers in any forward planning around medical procedures, including dentistry
- Providing a specialist facility (recovery room) for people with disability, irrespective of a private or public facility
- Promoting awareness among persons from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and others to services available within community centres. These services should be available in appropriate languages or having access to an interpreter
- Allowing the person with a disability to choose the carer they would like while in hospital. If a paid person, this could be done using brokerage
- Recognition by medical providers of Statutory Health Attorneys
- Recognition of disability caused by brain tumours

- Education and awareness for health care consumers/providers of Charter of Health Care Rights
- Understanding demographics (current and future) through data collection (statistics)
- Health practitioners gaining a greater understanding/awareness of disability
- Inclusion of disability training in tertiary education modules
- Clarity around health services options available
- Consumer controlled E-health records, personal health identifier
- Equipping mainstream services to be able to ensure inclusion
- Building capacity and confidence of people with disability and their carers to question systems and to insist on being consulted. This would lead to better relationships and improve health outcomes
- Building in preventative maintenance, i.e. scheduled health/medical appointments

Additional information:

1. Disability to be made a compulsory component of health education and on-going professional development for health practitioners so they can effectively engage and communicate with people, their families and supporters.
2. People with disability, their families and supporters are recognised and valued as active decision- makers in their health care and the policies, planning and procedures that underpin that care.
3. People with disability have the right – as stated in the Australian Charter of Health Rights – to access health care services and have both their treatment and support needs met. This right includes:
 - Physical access to all health care facilities
 - Access to aids and equipment
 - Access to information which is provided in a format that is tailored to meet each individual's communication needs
 - Access to treatment and support services
 - Access to affordable health care

A relative of a person with a disability wrote to HCQ and asked that her story be included. This is her story.

"I was 12 years old when my sister was born with Down Syndrome and many medical problems. My parents were told that it would be best if she was put into care and for them to get on with their lives and forget about her. My mother, being the wonderful person she was, did not do what she was advised. She brought my sister home and she was treated like any other baby.

I will always remember the day that someone made a not too nice comment; my Mum replied "I was chosen to look after this special child". Throughout the years my sister was a very important part of our family. My older sister and I would take our sister with us on our bike to meet our friends. If our peers did

not like her, we were no longer their friends. My sister attended a mainstream kindy which was quite unheard of at the time.

As my sister got older and my mother could no longer cope, she came to live with me and my family until we found her a place of her own. As a family we are all very much involved in my sister's life and include her in all family events. She loves my children and now my grandchildren and this positive interaction has taught them lessons that other children do not get when they do not have a family member who is 'special'".

Blue Skies Conversation #:

122

Where did the conversation take place?

Victoria Point

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

8

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

To have better access to the community Transport is a major issue Public Transport required to be wheelchair friendly and a lot more cost effective. A person that has a disability cannot be included into the community if they can't get into the community!!!!

Education "The Unknown Is Scary" the community NEED to be educated about people with a disability. People have to understand that people with a disability have rights feelings. A marketing campaign would be a good way to start this process ,

More choice people with disabilities really have no choice in employment education councils or even in the policies that are written on behalf of them. Please ask people with a disability what they want not tell them what they can have.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
121

Where did the conversation take place?
Rockhampton

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?
7

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Community Understanding – how do I help?

Key comments:

- Faced with being “politically correct” and not knowing the “right language”, people generally avoid contact/ talking to marginalized groups, especially people with disabilities rather than risk getting it wrong – need to emphasise that as long as people are well intentioned, it doesn’t matter about the semantics.
- Do people know how to help? Often there is a fear of the unknown or a fear of being condescending, so there is often no help offered. For examples of practical helping schemes see:
 - the BBC-run Switchover Help Scheme’s ‘helping hand’ campaign;
 - Disability Pride awareness campaign (Toronto)

Theme 2:

Where do I start and who is listening?

Many parents do not know what support exists and how to access support. Generally the only option is to be “channelled through” Disability Services which means entering a system. People generally want the information/ knowledge and resources to do it themselves and be independent of a system. There needs to be in place independent community connectors/ early intervention facilitators.

At present, visioning of where families want to go gets narrowed by Special School – the only option – then the only pathway is to get funding and “run the gauntlet of the system”.

There also needs to be a capacity building component for parents to build confidence and skills to speak up.

Question 2: What will it take to keep parents energized to keep driving change?

Semi-paid support role to drive and facilitate change – this is provided as part of community connector/ early intervention facilitator

Help line for parents of person with a disability

Parent peer support programs – existing and new

Parents given recognition as being front and centre of representing their child's needs

Theme 3:

Involving the business community

Businesses are being called to demonstrate environmental responsibility, how can that be extended to social responsibility with a focus on disability?

Need to ask “what is the value of people with disability” and build on value/ contribution/ talents/ strengths and gifts – the same way as people respond to other valued items such as “baby friendly” and “environmentally friendly”

Also need to have recognition of disability friendly business as a community level – not just during awards in Disability Action Week.

Ask the question – who has responsibility for driving corporate social responsibility?

Need to partner with Building Services Authority to educate around universal design.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
120

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Depending on personality type among other factors, some people prefer to live alone, others to have other people around them. Choice of living arrangement should be in the hands of the individual. This gives control over their lives and increases self esteem. So, increase number of choices of living arrangements: clusters of [say, eight] individual rooms with common living space; clusters of individual units, with outside common space; single accessible units mixed with the general public. Accessible public transport. If general building regulations required accessibility: large lifts, ramps and wide enough doorways, there would be less segregation. More part time work (possibly mundane tasks currently done, reluctantly, by highly qualified staff). Availability of arts, crafts and practical occupations with tangible products at the end (painting, pottery, performances, cooking, woodwork).

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Accelerate the number of job opportunities in the general community (e.g. long term employee with Downs Syndrome at IGA, Carindale, Brisbane).

Flexibility in jobs, both in hours and tasks to be performed. Brisbane railway stations nearly all accessible now. Guards on trains very helpful. Most kerbs have ramps off them. Increasing number of bike paths improve access for motorised scooters. Taxi subsidy scheme puts more excursions within financial reach. Issue of companion cards allow more pensioners to attend performances, etc.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

119

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

7

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

1. Community Awareness - opportunities for public debates & profile of disabilities, media, school education.
2. Engage with corporate sector and outside sources of funding & partnerships.
3. Plan - where to from here. A planned approach to take it somewhere.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

118

Where did the conversation take place?

Mackay

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

38

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Education:

- Knowledge
- Awareness raising
- More understanding
- Start young
- Access and mobility
- All involved in whole community
- Funding and resources
- Persistence
- More respite opportunities
- More supportive communities – for families and parents.

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- Disability accessible fishing platform
- Memorial post and sling chair
- Sporting wheelies
- Lawn bowls
- Blind basketball
- Limited disability parking
- Walking tracks that are accessible – goose ponds, river walk
- Quality service providers – MDSIA, MDRCA, Blue Care, Ozcare, Pioneer employment, Ideal employment etc.
- Botanical gardens, Movie theatre
- Shopping centre (accessible bathrooms)
- Pedestrian crossings
- TAFE
- Library
- Suggestion for people that park in a disability car park when they don't need to - I see you have take my car park, would you like the disability to go with it?

- Access should not be seen as only about physical accessibility but social and emotional as well

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Committed to having the conversation with people about thinking about disability:
- Try to reduce stigma
- Try to improve social inclusion
- Mentors
- Increasing the linking with services and individuals and families.
- Follow through – if you say you will, do it
- Network
- Help organize to support each other about stressful situations – picnic
- Better publicity for disability support and information event.
- Fight for your rights
- Tell your story
- Listen and learn
- Treat the people around me like they are in my village.
- Don't wait for the government to create the community.
- Break down minorities
- Accept help from the people around me – all people.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
117

Where did the conversation take place?
Sunshine Coast

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: How do we support the shift from deficit based assessment to strength based assessment of people with disability?

1. People with disability given more authoritative roles in the sector, such as the funding panels which allocate funding should be a fully autonomous body run and managed by people who have disability or their family members.
2. People with disability who show interest in running their own service to provide supports both personally and to other individuals need to be supported by the dept to do so, not discouraged, and seen as rebels and trouble makers.
3. The medical aids subsidy scheme is archaic and a huge contributor to the isolation, and degradation of peoples quality of lives. It should be a fully subsidized, and people should not have to plead for equipment needed to live. One participant had lived interstate for a time, and believes Queensland could easily implement programs similar to that of PAPD (program of appliances for people with disability) in NSW where, once assessed on need, all equipment is fully funded. affording people, and families less financial burden of the cost of disability.
4. One participant is working on a project, to get a pilot national TV. show – where by two hosts (with disability, but lots of talent) and reporters would bring disability into mainstream media with innovative stories, interviews. Disability, has been the uncool for too long, we need to have some ‘in your face’ mainstream media exposure. As one participant said ‘ I am cool, but people don’t see how cool’. A major media campaign needs to begin to change the image of people with disability, we are cool, sexy, intelligent, we are all diverse, and we almost have to re-educate society on how to really SEE people.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
116

Where did the conversation take place?
Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What do families need to effectively plan and safeguard for the future for their sons/daughters/siblings?

1. The time and space to think and imagine and plan - some families have had this through longer, live-in workshops where they are away from the busyness of everyday and have time to actually talk with each other and to begin to imagine a bit more broadly
2. Support needed for the families who do not have the capacity to "think big" or to think in a framework needed for planning
3. A framework for planning that is person centred so that planning is around the person, not the problem
4. A framework and with people who believe that planning starts with the person and the family, not the service
5. Services who "know their place" in planning; families who can say: "I value your thinking and experience to be one of the sources I use to make my decisions and plans and now this is what I need you to do" ...rather than services running the process and saying first, this is what we do, now you fit in with this
6. A strong vision for a good life that directs planning and people around you who share that vision

Blue Skies Conversation #:
115

Where did the conversation take place?
Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?
Representatives from Local Government Association of Queensland, University of Queensland, State Government, Local Government, Local Government Community Development Workers of Queensland and the non-government sector

How many people participated in the conversation?
8

Question 1: What does local government do now towards building a more inclusive community and what would it take to do more?

The conversation resulted in the sharing of much experience and insight which collectively contributed to a greater understanding of both the issues, and opportunities awaiting.

Key Comments:

Amongst much conversation the following points arose in response to the further question of what are we most proud of when we consider the role of local government in the helping of building a more inclusive community.

- The importance of the right leadership at both the political and administrative levels of local government.
- The employment of the right Community Development Workers within local government who have a good understanding of the processes and opportunities for true community inclusion to occur.
- The encouragement and funding of opportunities at the local level that contribute directly to the building of a more inclusive community.
- The development and implementation of social policy around the principles of social inclusion and community engagement.
- The design, implementation and evaluation of projects at the local government level that result in benefits for all.
- The increasing presence of Local Government to its citizens.
- The increasing conversations that are occurring within Local Government around the principles and practices that are necessary for an increased sense and ongoing experience of community connectedness.
- The increasing number of individuals with a disability that are employed within Local Government.

- The leadership being shown through the recent release of the Qld Local Government Act (2009) whereby the principles of democratic representation, social inclusion, and meaningful community engagement provide a strong future framework for the building of a more inclusive community.
- The very nature of the diversity of local government throughout Queensland offers the gifts, talents and contributions that only such diversity brings.
- The pride that people hold for their community, its people, its history, its places and its events.

Key Recommendations:

“That the Blue Skies Project be informed of the following key thoughts:

1. *That the very foundation of inclusion rests with the building of strong **partnerships** both internal and external of Local Government and it is only when such partnerships develop and progress that inclusion is possible.*
2. *That there is an urgent need for the focus on community inclusion to be addressed across all sectors of the community, rather than taking yet another ‘silo’ approach of focusing only on ‘disability’. The question that needs to be asked is **“What would it take for our community to be truly inclusive of all people?”***
3. *That appropriate and relevant **education and awareness** (both internal and external of Local Government) be developed and implemented, backed up and enforced by effective and accountable **Policies and Procedures, offering helpful strategies and tools for inclusion.***

Additional information:

Today 8 leaders from the Local Government Association of Queensland, University of Queensland, State Government, Local Government, Local Government Community Development Workers of Queensland, and the non-government sector acknowledged the urgent need for partnerships to be developed via local government to help build a more inclusive community. For local government to address inclusion as a need for all citizens not just individuals with a disability and for this to be addressed by way of the right leadership and the offering of appropriate and relevant education and awareness (both internal and external of local government) backed up and enforced by effective and accountable Policies and Procedures and the offering of helpful strategies and tools.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

114

Where did the conversation take place?

Gold Coast

Who took part in the conversation?

Volunteers with FSG

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

People involved in the survey stated that local businesses could be encouraged to be more welcoming to people with disabilities by:

- By being more aware of peoples needs
- Communication
- Ensuring that local businesses are accessible to everyone
- Greater employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- An awareness / information day for people with disabilities
- Encouraging local business to fundraise for community supports

People responded to what is required to keep people with disabilities safe without limiting choices by:

- More support services within community
- Ensuring that all people are aware of risks involved in partaking in any activity and offering strategies in safe ways to participate in any activity
- People to volunteer more in the community to assist one another and 'share the love' (I am not joking)
- More funding for support staff to support people with disabilities in the community

Question 2: How do we create more disability, friendly spaces and places in our local community?

- More community awareness on people with disabilities needs
- More funds from government to build safer and more accessible environments
- Consultations with people with disabilities on meeting their needs
- Involvement from large corporations to improve local community access
- Education within the community on different needs of people
- Would all assist in creating a better environment.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

113

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

17

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Systemic advocacy for inclusive education
- We need to change the culture and the context of disability
- At the moment policy is a barrier. Policy is not being reflected in our practices.
- People with disabilities need to have exposure to social avenues through natural pathways as opposed to dual systems like mainstream vs. special school.
- Disability is an awful word!
- We need to focus on what the person can do, not on what they can't do
- If a parent treats a child the same as everyone else then there would be less separation in the school yard as a result
- The language surrounding disability in the media must be shifted

Question 2: How can we make better use of people's gifts and talents in developing a more inclusive community?

- Use a spokes person to speak to community groups (schools, teachers, parents and community)
- Peer mentoring

Question 3: How do we create a welcoming school community?

- From an early age teach all students about respect and individuality
- Educate all students around disability awareness
- Let the child with the disability and all students aware that they all have talents and that they are all accepted
- With younger less mature grades the use of games and diagrams may be used to help the children understand
- Make sure the teachers are all informed about all students in their class and any disabilities they may have.
- Having a no tolerance policy against bullying and making sure all students know about this
- Treating all students equal and try not to make students feel different

- Older students teaching younger students about bullying as this creates a good example and helps students from different grades bond.
- Support groups in high schools for kids who need to talk about their feelings of isolation.
- Take an occupational therapy approach: P.E.O. (Person, Environment, Occupation) and making sure that all three factors are taken into account when considering the individual and their school experience.
- Treat all students equally and try not to make anyone feel different unnecessarily.
- Teachers are having a tough time educating kids in the classroom because of a blurring of the lines of responsibility between themselves and the parents.

Question 4: What would it take to build disability awareness into primary school curriculum?

- Pastoral care sessions in each grade focussing on disability awareness - younger grades may be taught through pictures and games and older more mature students may be taught through more complex measures.
- Dedicating a day per term to focus on a certain disability and making that day all about awareness.

Additional information:

Key themes across all 3 conversations:

- A culture shift is necessary to change the context with which disability is projected out into society.
- There is an incongruency between policies and practices for disability service providers.
- People with disabilities need to be supported in exploring and discovering the world through real and meaningful experiences with peers.
- Communication between all parties (parent, teacher, carer, support person, friend) could be more fluent, consistent and concise.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
112

Where did the conversation take place?
Sunshine Coast

Who took part in the conversation?
People with disability, families and workers in the sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- PWD, family & Friends drive the vision forward.
- Legal system championing disabilities legislation in every social forum i.e. school, community, work.

Question 2: What would help in certain situations for inclusion to happen?

- Enough money and resources to be able to choose a good life and to be creative.
- Support from family, friends and carer to get out in the community, to help PWD link in with community.
- Good personalised support – A ‘roadmap’ for others to read, understand and get to know the PWD, or a good advocate who knows the PWD well– i.e.: A “Brodie interpreter”.
- Appropriate transport for wheelchair access.
- Individual vehicles modified to suit each individual and possible equipment needs
- Public transport and infrastructure to support access.
- For a significant other to introduce the PWD into the new situation.
- Set up/educating/advocating for the “creation of space” within an activity or event.
- Making people aware that PWD had a right to be there, to participate.
- For parents and care givers to get into the “uncomfortable territory” of advocating for their PWD to be included or welcomed.
- Building comfort with disability in the community
- People having the exposure to disability
- For parents and PWD to “Get out there and do it” – find a way through determination.
- For people other than parents to lend individualised support.
- Go into schools (this would involve strategic change) with a learning program at a very early stage. Let children and teaching staff learn through simulation (e.g.: experience what it is like to sit in a wheelchair

for a period of time, or try to talk with a ping pong ball in the mouth) to 'Walk in somebody else's shoes'

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Working Not Working:

- Some aspects of the built environment/ infrastructure support access One size fits all. Disability needs are not individualised
- People being present in the community, often with Mum's and Dad's assistance People's attitudes
- Noosa Surf club very welcoming. Encompassed with "a spirit of goodwill", and the club infrastructure supports access for people in wheelchairs. Taxi drivers in Noosa are not treating PWD like other paying customers. Often the Taxi driver will fill up with petrol, run errands or have a smoke on the trip, instead of a point to point trip that any one else would expect to receive.
- Cooperation/ collaboration between schools & sports groups (partnerships) with activities such as surfing, AFL, Soccer. Being "visible" from a very early age. For parents and children with a disability to be welcomed and included right from the very beginning through participation in Mother's group – playgroup – Kindy – Primary – High School...to build a common history with other families
- Noosa Hinterland "Marimba" music group holds school holiday programs. They included Sharn in the program after mum Rachel made it clear that Sharn had a right to be there and needed some accommodations made to be part of the group. People do not want to 'get their hands dirty' by active participation and inclusion with a PWD, they would rather write a cheque or make a donation to a charity to make a difference. "Disability is just not sexy".
- It's a good community People often have a fear of failure. "Would rather do nothing than something".
- Willingness in this area to know and understand. Others do not have the depth of understanding of the PWD, and often there is a need for an advocate. Most of the time (Brodie).
- Often just asking people in the community to include, welcome or invite PWD unearths the "spirit of goodwill" on a micro level. This is dependant on there being someone to do the asking and be willing to take a risk that they will be turned down Grouping PWD together when out and about in the Community – often based on resources.
- Society has learned that PWD belong in a "different place".
- Not keeping PWD local – we bus them off to "out of area" venues. i.e. if we live in Noosa, why bus to Nambour?
- Services have an expectation for families and individuals to fit in with their timetable, not the other way around.
- Lack of support and resources to step away from "parent/child" relationship.

- Who else can be there to assist an adult child to negotiate their life's experiences. I.e.; why is mum the support for a young man who is attending
- Tafe
- "Got to take what we get" with funding and services.

Evidence of community education in Noosa:

- This community tends to be "More welcoming of people who are different".
- Television campaign of child with Tourette's.
- Hear and Say Centre and Butterfly Kids do a lot for the visibility of PWD, however they are a Charity... a sympathy model has limitations.
- Sharn drops in at Skate Park. Skate bowl is a great place for Sharn to be included just cos "that's just how the kids are"
- Local man in a wheelchair who busks and sings
- Book of Sharn – Rachel has made a book for various situations such as a book for Sharn's peers and teenagers, a book for carers, a book for family members, a book for the community, a book for carers, etc. Some things do not need to be known by everyone.
- Brody's instruction manual, has been very helpful to have a comprehensive document that outlines the way things work for Brody.
- North Shore neighbourhood is welcoming of Brody.
- The publication of editorials in local papers with stories about Community welcoming PWD.... Small victories.

Question 3: What makes the difference in a supportive community?

Often people are:

- Open.
- Included.
- Intentional community.
- "Thinking, aware" people.
- Have a strong social awareness
- Willing to do what ever it takes
- Know your neighbours
- Have a strong representation of creative minds, artists, out of the box thinkers, alternative points of view

There is an "Adopt a Pensioner" model, which uses the time of volunteers who have been matched and linked up due to common geography and interests.

Can there be a similar thing for PWD? Where are the volunteers? Is there capacity for mentors to have a role. Not just older mentors, but peer mentors for youth and young people. Is there a role for youth groups, Girl Guides, Noosa Sea Scouts, Noosa Hinterland Scouts, Cooroy Lions youth members etc?

Blue Skies Conversation #:

111

Where did the conversation take place?

Rockhampton

Who took part in the conversation?**How many people participated in the conversation?**

28

Question 1: What keeps you awake at night?

People with disability are not made to feel enough a part of the community. Not enough wheel chair access in most venues. Disabled kids need to be made to feel like they have as much to offer as others.

How can the young people when they leave school contribute to the community and we as a community how can we support them?

I really want to go to university and study for a new career. I'm worried about what I'll do with my son when he finishes school. Who will look after him during the day when I work? I feel it will all be a waste of time, money and a lot of study if I can't get him cared for. Is it worth the stress if I can't work?

The focus on difference when considering young people with a disability – not focus on mainstream supports. Believe in need for “disability” services. Young people with a disability being discouraged from reaching their full potential.

How do we encourage the wider community to value young people? How do we counteract the negativity of the wider community for example media?

For our Region to have appropriate and suitable resources, programs and facilities for our next generation – our up and comings!!!

Not having: an adequate day service for people (young) to attend – post school. Most service providers with clients who have a disability do not have trained staff to carry on life skills taught at school. My concern is these clients are merely ‘babysat’ during community access.

Transport! It's good having lots of activities for young people ‘but’ if they are unable to get there, what's the point. & money

Concerns over future opportunities for kids leaving school transition programs: skill development; employment program; supported accommodation; community inclusion; skilled staff/agencies.

Level of violence in community: high drug usage; lack of good roles models at home; low % of youth exercising

What happens to those young people who the system has somehow missed, those not connected to any support with no plan, no guidance?

Lack of a coordinated pathway for young people with disabilities when they leave school. It is now December, parents are asking 'what is my child going to do next year?', they don't know.

How can I get my daughter to a state of independence when she will be able to live independently, or perhaps with some assistance be able to live a fulfilling life, instead of existing in front of the TV or computer screen? I need to know she will be able to cope when I'm not around. She needs a lot more in her life than 4 hours respite per week.

All youth in our region to have the opportunities to lead an inclusive, fulfilling life. What is there for young people with disabilities to do when they leave school?

What keeps me awake at night? – my son. No educational opportunities for him post school. No DSQ care models available for families to share care children like my son so they can remain in their family homes to adulthood – i.e. for families who are prepared to give their all and have a history of doing so but do not wish to relinquish their child to state care when they are physically unable to meet all support needs of their child.

Career paths; transition from schooling to a purposeful life with a value and role.

If parents don't feel as though they have a 'life' how can they assist their young people to build one of their own?

Equality for youth with disabilities and our youth that are disengaged from the wider population in this age bracket.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

110

Where did the conversation take place?

Biloela

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

6

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Parents supported to have a positive vision for the future for their child with special needs?

Lifelong learning opportunities for people with special needs.
Educational opportunities –volunteer tutor programs to develop relationship skills, literacy and numeracy etc after school age.

The ability to streamline the process of volunteer induction and recruitment.
Maximize organizational links in the community

Develop a good understanding of others roles and objectives.

Collaborative projects with an abilities focus and inclusion.

Inclusion in all aspects of community e.g. sport, arts, voluntary work, work place...

The Community Resource Centre be a HUB and conduit to inclusion in our community.

Parent and individual driven initiatives,

Empowerment and skills development [rather than providing aid]

Traineeships in high school in areas of special needs via TAFE to Endeavour ,CRC...

Sound networking and participation in combined events is a positive step for inclusion to occur.

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Some networking and communication between people and organizations

The Community Resource Centre is community driven

We now have a drought counsellor visiting to assist the local community in areas of counselling and community support.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Work collaboratively with other people and organizations to make best use of funding, resources, personal skills...

Provide more opportunities to connect with others in the community.

Educating others by our actions

Have more conversations with other focus groups [e.g. via Callide Dawson steering group] and bring our answers to a full community forum.

Centacare would be willing to be part of a committed network to work together with the same goal of the clients and community in mind i.e. well-being of the whole person/community

Blue Skies Conversation #:

109

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Cerebral Palsy League stakeholders

How many people participated in the conversation?

15

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Theme: that came out of yesterday's discussion was that people with a disability need to take more ownership of the driving of community attitudes. For too long people with a disability have had things done for them by services providers etc and the time has come for people with a disability to band together and do things off their own backs to effect change in the community.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

108

Where did the conversation take place?

Cairns

Who took part in the conversation?

People with disability, town planners, developers, private sector and local government representatives

How many people participated in the conversation?

22

Question 1: How do we create more disability, friendly spaces and places in our local community?

There needs to be greater awareness, education and a determined effort to change the general negative mindset related to creating accessible spaces.

Accessibility needs to concentrate on all disabilities. There is a prevalent attitude that once a space is wheelchair accessible it is accessible to all. This is not the case.

Legislation needs to enforce the DDA and maximum standards should be introduced with no room for non compliance.

There should be greater enforcement of the legislative requirements concerning access to buildings.

There needs to be a shift in attitudes in the building industry about the inclusion of accessible space. A prestige needs to be assigned to achieving good accessibility results in building projects. Prestigious and highly promoted competitions rewarding good accessible design could be one way of achieving this.

Research needs to be promoted and conducted continuously into seamlessly and cost effectively incorporating accessible design into the community. Innovation needs to be rewarded.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
107

Where did the conversation take place?
Roma

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?
37

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Increase community connectedness e.g. establish PCYC Club, create Community Newsletter or website

Education, awareness, appropriate use of language, values

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Active Roma, Community Gardens, Interagency meetings, good news stories in local paper, interagency collaboration

Some education occurring at Play Group level, volunteering, some integration into the wider community – school and employment

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

A meeting has been scheduled for January 6th to hold further discussions leading on from Blue Skies conversations

Blue Skies Conversation #:

106

Where did the conversation take place?

Doonan

Who took part in the conversation?

People engaged with House With No Steps

How many people participated in the conversation?

12

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Main Themes:

- Flexibility with future funding models including self directed funding (even though there is still limited knowledge of how it would work)
- Bridging the gaps between schools and future services - there are currently no safety nets for people to get PSS package, not proactive needs to be targeted to make the most of their abilities
- House with No Steps runs transition to work program (only 1 in state) - targeting those areas to gain employment but no safety nets again if it doesn't work out.
- Future funding for supported accommodation

Blue Skies Conversation #:
105

Where did the conversation take place?
Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?
7

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Some of the main points expressed:

- The need for a major cultural shift in creating an inclusive community – the need to alleviate the “fear of the unknown” with disability
- The need for a change of ATTITUDE – in all human service professions when dealing with a person with a disability, and also increased education around disability for teachers, principles, Doctors, etc...
- The need for the involvement of the media in promoting disability in a much more positive, accepting light – and the point that disability can happen to anyone
- Education at school as a starting point for the awareness and acceptance of people with a disability
- Special Schools only serve to further segregate young people with a disability
- Buddy system in mainstream schools – pupils supporting a young person with a disability to access the playground and mingle with their peers – a way of teaching acceptance from a young age
- The benefits of individualised funding – families can have their own workers that they are comfortable with, the funding can be used in a flexible way with no restrictions such as policies and procedures for workers

Blue Skies Conversation #:

104

Where did the conversation take place?

Gold Coast

Who took part in the conversation?

Members of the public, people with mental health concerns, non-government service providers

How many people participated in the conversation?

40

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?**INTERIM RESULTS EMAIL POLL FSG AUSTRALIA STAFF**

This are the interim responses from an email polls end to approximately 40 staff members of FSGA in a broad range of role including hands on, clerical and management. We are expecting more.

What would it take to create an inclusive, welcoming community for people with a disability?

All people would need to walk in the shoes of a person who has a disability for one month to experience the negativity and not being accepted within society.

This may give people who are fortunate to not have a disability to understand what it is like and the barriers that society put up for a person with a disability. On the Gold Coast there are visible Youth/adult Drop-in Centres but few Drop-in centres for people living with a disability. This is not to say that people living with a disability are not able to access the existing services, but some of these locations are not wheelchair accessible. It would be great if existing community centres could offer a space for people living with disability and their carers to come for a coffee and chat, clothes swap, DVD/music swap, have play stations and computers available to use, resource centre, music/chill out area. There are some fabulous disability focused services that use structured programs so to have a more informal setting where people could drop by for a chat may be beneficial.

I think by speaking at schools and with better education in schools about people (all ages) with disabilities and hearing the stories of achievements and goals would be a good start it and hopefully filter through to families and friends and make people more aware. I also feel that not all schools are set up to assist young people with disabilities they should all have the same opportunities as other kids and not be disadvantaged. Even if the school does have some facilities the kids are still divided.

In my opinion the most important thing to facilitate change is education. Mental Health issues and the lack of understanding ,to not say widespread

ignorance and shame/guilt that surrounds and stigmatizes us creates a situation that can only ever be altered with education and better understanding. Hence it needs to be a part of the education system, but I do believe that this education needs to be delivered in a better way that includes people with lived experience. QBE (Qualified By Experience) As an organisation we need to create more opportunities for QBE's to gain employment that is creative and flexible, We need to lead the way. On a personal level I also think that as long as we ourselves don't have a forum or human resource office/position whose job it is to care for staff how can we expect business and the general population to shift their attitude?

Unfortunately I don't think people out there in the community think about people with a disability unless they know some-one in that situation. We need to be advocates and really assist others in the community to see what we see and believe what we believe. I don't think there is a quick solution, it is about sharing our beliefs and values with other people. Holding events and inviting the local businesses, sharing their achievements with others. I know myself that I have shared my beliefs with my hairdresser and other businesses that I go to and they are amazed by certain things I tell them.

The newsletter that we produce could maybe be sent to local businesses? I feel the best way is word of mouth and we and other people who hold this passion need to be the driving force.

Incentives and community events that bring both communities together i.e.: mainstream school and special schools together doing things in the community- brings families together. Capture these moments via image for visual recognition- supporting that inclusion brings joy and success for every individual.

More media that communicates we're all individuals before our disabilities- show and capture integrated participation as being important. More employment opportunities and spaces made available for people with a disability.

Media to ask community to ask themselves the question- we all have human rights and the right to a quality life- enriched with opportunity! How can we all ensure this happens- what would this look like!

My immediate thought is to make greater use of the media and lobby governments to provide funds and run extended advertising campaigns to educate the general community how they can also have a greater impact by making room for people with M.H / disabilities.

A theme could be People are not their illness they are Fathers, Mothers Brothers Sisters, uncles and aunties, they still have value despite their disability and you can help to make room for them as valued members of your /our community

Firstly for the general public to be more educated and aware of how people with disabilities manage to deal with the issues and discriminations that they are labelled with.

The public and government need to be made aware of how they manage their life and lifestyle. I think that the general public, local and ministerial government's don't think that deeply. People seem to be absorbed with their own issues they don't give consideration to people in other situations that are worse off.

The Government needs to have an inside look at these issues that people with disabilities have to contend with. The government needs to actually see what families with a member who has a disability also go through and make more services available automatically they can be accessed without the difficulty of waiting lists that go on forever.

There needs to be funds available for them to be able to access services to make their lives easier from the minute they are diagnosed.

There needs to be a pathway of steps and services that they can access without the stress and difficulty that exists at the moment.

For the people who cannot work either due to a disability or because they are a carer they need to have a pension that is above the poverty line not beneath it.

We as service providers are just as frustrated that people with disabilities do not have straightforward and easy access to the services that they need at an affordable cost.

That they have to fight for everything is not conducive to respect, consideration and self esteem of people with disabilities.

Service providers can only do so much and with out funding from the state and federal government things will not improve they will get worse. There is also a lack of services for people with certain disabilities such as Vision impaired there are only two services they can access on the Gold Coast.

It has been proved that schools such as Barinya work for children with ASD so why is the government not supporting and advocating for more of them. It doesn't matter which government is in office the end result is always the same, people with disabilities get left behind.

If communities were more aware then government would have to sit up, take notice and do something positive to help people with disabilities have a life that they can be proud of.

Community awareness, of the things that could be done practically to allow inclusiveness re planning shopping centres, convenience of transport, building

plans to have better access for people with disabilities, and better pathways more shading, park access, access to libraries and other public places, restaurants, social places all need to look at how they can be more inclusive for people with disabilities.

There is only so much that can be done without funding.

We would probably need to start being “inclusive” from an early age. Our primary schools are not inclusive. Children with a disability are set apart from an early age by having “special schools” for them. Surely from the onset we are sending the message that children with a disability are “different” and we separate them from the school community. I only know personally of two “special schools” and they sit right beside the mainstream primary. Why not pull down the fences and combine the schools so that at least the children could mingle in the school yard. It would be a start!

Question 2: How could we create more disability friendly spaces and places?

People with a disability to access the main stream community spaces and places, and educating the general public that they have the same needs, desires and dreams as so called ‘normal’ people.

Have a more tactile environment, clear signage, accessible doorways, rooms, toilets etc.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

103

Where did the conversation take place?

Goondiwindi

Who took part in the conversation?

How many people participated in the conversation?

15

Additional information:

Key Themes -

Getting information in schools to parents about different disabilities to help and equip them to better understand the disability. Make parents more aware

In the new regional plans that council need to fill in they have a new opportunity to promote and be thinking about how to be more inclusive of all people in the community. Council can also welcome people into community and that way know who is in the community

Local Government need to be inclusive of seniors who have a physical disability or demetia etc

In our Monthly Magazine we will feature and kick off having stories about people with disabilities/good news stories to promote to broader community

Blue Skies Conversation #:

102

Where did the conversation take place?

Gympie

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants

How many people participated in the conversation?

5

Question 1: How do we create 'connectedness' within our community?

1. Community Connectedness comes through building relationships
2. A need for small achievable steps to encourage success
3. Clarity about the outcomes desired
4. The need for people with disabilities and their families to have more control and be encouraged to lead

Additional information:

To extend the conversation to a broader group in the community

Blue Skies Conversation #:
101

Where did the conversation take place?
Townsville

Who took part in the conversation?
Various workers from the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?
23

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?
THE MAIN THEME WAS — IT HAS TO START WITH THE FAMILY

- Education
- Currently, Bunningisation, community has changed. Perhaps, nostalgic but, instead of buying a tool from Bunnings I could, ask my neighbor for the tool.
- We need to remove urban fences and break down barriers.
- Integration removes isolation
- Enabling.
- Volunteerism
- We need to focus on the gifts and talents of people, not the deficits
- We don't want an institutional model.
- It starts with the family
- Make volunteering mainstream
- Schools aren't accessible for children with disabilities
- Interaction
- Earn or learn-Volunteering looks at interaction
- Volunteering is about building social capital
- Education of community and people with disability
- Investment in family
- We need to have different attitudes
- Good news stories
- Awareness raising of what's available out there. Introduces people to working with people with disability.
- Community places need to be accessible places;
- Schools need to be more accessible for children and families with disability
- We need to focus on the gifts and talents of people, not their deficits
- An institutional model won't work, isn't working now
- We need to invest in the family
- Early intervention
- Acceptance needs to happen
- Awareness raising is so important

- Get people with disability out, this will normalize them, people will see them and start to accept, to not be frightened of what they might not understand.
- Need to have different attitudes, this starts with the family and needs to be a prime emphasis within our schools and education system
- A no fault insurance scheme
- Bring it back to grass roots

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- Advertising, we are seeing people with disability on the TV
- There is more exposure
- Blue Skies
- People are coming together more, look at today, Govt, community, advocacy, people with disability
- We are starting to sing the same tune
- We are spreading the word
- DS standards are about individual choice and valued status

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- I will join with others and share today's stories
- I will empower people with disability and people without
- I will build relationships
- I will talk to my family more about the work I do with people with disability. This will expose them
- I will ensure that I am on the lookout for what is accessible and what is not accessible for people with disability
- Aspiration pushing is how I will contribute at an organizational level
- Legislation is what I will work on
- I will listen more
- I will join again with some people from today and look at how we as a collective can progress an inclusive vision together
- I will tell others about today and direct them to the Blue Skies website
- In my wheel chair, I will continue to enter schools and answer children's questions about 'why I'm in a wheel chair'.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

100

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

11

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

Local neighbourhood, building relationships NGO's should work together - partnerships as funding forces NGO's to be in competition broadening the focus - e.g childcare looking at the diversity of disability

peer support & mental health

place for special education for peer support/specialist education

establish a statewide cross sector public speakers agency to speak to schools / staff / parents / kids / organisations / the public / employers re: their stories, dreams & capacity

Blue Skies Conversation #:

99

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. More community navigators /LAC's
2. Enabling visible participation in everyday activities
3. Choice (Real Choice) over their lives & portability of funds
4. Compatibility of living arrangements
5. Importance of family circles, family collectives in building family and community resilience
6. Excellent planning - really knowing the person

Blue Skies Conversation #:

98

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

11

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

Kits for people who are willing to share stories (positive stories) to enable them to know how to reach out, who to contact to get story out e.g ordinary people - Courier Mail.

Reeducation of carers, health workers etc. so that they are not re-enforcing negatives & can'ts but focus.

What works well? Has to come from the community. Having flexible policy/sharing stories - positives peer workers/mentors. Answer is in the people and not necessarily money.

Having a pool of people available to go out into broader community & share their stories - in media/as speakers to groups

Building on Community Navigators - reaching out into community to offer & make people in need aware of options/choices to meet their individual needs.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

97

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

11

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. Set the tone from the beginning in schools/education. Ensure inclusion from start - Community navigators
2. Education cultural/attitude shift/change starting from principle, parents, teachers, pupils. Use of real role models (not just para-olympians) employer groups.
3. Housing - Choice - Person Centred REAL choice form people to live how and where & with whom they choose and to be appropriately resourced to do so (flexibility) structured program of disability education to promote awareness engage government to progress beyond close-minded segregation in education - make them aware of individual, person centred approach.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

96

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. Gift of failure - risk taking & learning from failure /failure builds resilience
2. confronting our own prejudices - whether disability, culture, language, sexuality, gender
3. Cultural change in policy and services - e.g be enablers not blockers
4. recognising relationships based on interdependence and reciprocity
5. Bring communities together - partnerships not competition/division
6. People w disability representing their interests - facilitating & supporting this
7. Build capacity by linking into existing structures e/g education & health
8. Need a commitment from Gov't Business & community to Inclusive Community - then policy & action plans
9. 'Pushing the 6 foot high fence down' - inclusive community is built by everyone from neighbours up.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

95

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. Takes people to build community - put ourselves out there - e.g sharing my work with neighbours/others in the community
2. relationships - the right ones
3. timely & relevant & nature of services & government that know their place. Naturally occurring communities, some complex questions - raised more/ hardship clauses in legislation makes it hard to navigate - need legislative 'teeth' to bring about change - does that build capacity or build a barrier? 'not special' participating in the community as ordinary citizens. seems sometimes services are competing for the same dollar\$ /media need to grab stories - this opens doors.

Question 2: What action am I willing to take to progress the vision?

Community awareness / responsive training

Blue Skies Conversation #:

94

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability, carers and workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

11

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. Deep listening to the needs & dreams of the person with disability.
2. Respond to that dream in small practical ways that make a difference. Build on strengths, capacities & gifts & ameliorate their differences.
3. 1st point of contact - to encourage people & their families to hold their inherent dream - this may be helping people to find their dream again or holding the dream for them until they can hold it themselves.
4. The very presence of people educates the community - the community is everybody. However there are people who have power to influence & change people's lives - doctors, teachers, journalists. It is critical we assist them to hold the dream - not destroy it.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

93

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Public servants, people with disability and non-government workers from the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

11

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

1. Awareness - showing people have ability/ generating new attitudes/what people bring/learn from each other/segregation/change community perspective/already different/create limited capacity/from point of diagnosis/what a person can't do/language that used./Central Themes : social isolation 2. To create a choice driven service model /flexibility - incentives to offer choice/person centred focus/Central Issue: - 3. need for relationship, freely given relationship, comes from sense of self/not pudicated by paid uses, unpaid relationships - have same value Comments: what are fundamental barriers , people more open to respond to 1 person rather than group. Notion: at the heart is relationship , have a whole generation coming through that have a social conscience. There is no one size that fits all, rather than being a charity it is part of our society. Has to be CHOICE - saying that you have to jump through looking at consumers and what they want /shop front - community navigators focuses on 'customer' rather than charity model. If only people in services need to change/change the nature of relationships/uniforms / encourage service provision- dependency needs to change & /support to live their lives . accessibility/critical role for paid support, role of facilitating community connections/rise beyond/workforce recognition of very skilled workforce/recruitment of skilled people & services move/tighter labour pool. / Homelife - community connectors- find someone they have a connection with . differing roles - exists for workers./ The 'exclusion' of disability sector - create opportunity for people not to be fearful/society needs to be forced to change - put mechanisms to force connections from early age. Connection Work/listening to actively listen, you are valuable/what sort of accommodation options would be is a group home - is it a choice? individual or group - facilitate about different stages of life, young people leave home - developmental milestones, succession planning, future planning. Range of services that supports for families and young children different things at different stages/ Plan as a family, future is not necessarily- not relying that public housing/not relying 100% on services/constraint. Ongoing support (expenditure of resources)

Blue Skies Conversation #:

92

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

People with disability, public servants and non-government workers in the disability sector

How many people participated in the conversation?

8

Question 1: What do we know works well in building capacity of people and community, and what will it take to do it better?

Base on reports (Shut Out, National Disability Strategy Consultation) there are two key issues for people with a disability; the economic and social gap between people with a disability and people without.

- **Flexible choice driven service delivery**
 - Incentives (i.e. extra money) or funding for service models that do deliver a “flexible, choice driven model”. For example: client and or family have choice in support worker, choice in hours and have choice in decision-making within their environment (rather than told). Cut funding for services not using the flexible client driven model
 - Costing models based on flexible choice driven financial models
 - Reinforce change in services through policy and funding
- **Commercial Consumer Driven Model**
 - Build a more commercially focused delivery of service where the person with the disability is the consumer i.e. profile consumer needs and market and ensure available. The consumer in any environment would have a choice if a service is not delivering at expected level to take their needs to another provider. Don’t lock people in based on funding.
 - Build stronger brand and profile for services within communities
 - Market and influence based on return on investment; employment, reduction in medical support,
- **Blockages & Beauracracy**
 - Rather than just changing reporting model (output reporting) also incorporate consumer/client satisfaction with overall service as the key performance indicator It would be recommended that time, effort and money be spent of ascertaining service satisfaction from all people with a disability as a means to

determine whether a service is achieving results. This could be based on key needs and requirements of individual profiles.

- Introduced Government shared service/administration/overhead percentages for measurement. For example: 12% of Funding provided spent of government agencies (administration/overheads) and 88% delivered to service providers and clients/consumers direct.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility**
 - Raised the issue of further investment by Corporate Businesses for CSR. Given profitability and exemptions for Corporate business there is opportunity to add to funding options in the future. For example: tax deductions are provided base on giving donations – should exemptions and deductions also aligned to employment of people with disabilities, profit **investments in social/community development (triple bottom line reporting), penalties donated to social/community organisations with further tax benefits for organisations that do more for communities**

It was discussed that there needs to be a significant change to social attitudes in order to achieve change. This would be required to be multi-faceted and running parallel to each other to significantly impact attitudinal change. Long-term, on-going attitudinal change required. Discussions focused on the need for a range of initiatives in order to change long-term beliefs and attitudes. People needed to make contact and be involved with people with a disability as part of every day life which would in turn allow for greater relationships in the future and community acceptance and inclusiveness long term.

- **Society Attitudinal Change**
 - Education and Awareness
 - Up skilling teachers in providing learning to people with a disability as prerequisite to teaching for all teaches of any age
 - Engage and influence high school students by adding inclusive communities as core subject whereby practical work is based on engaging, supporting and building relationships with people with a disability (can broaden to other cultural issues)
 - Build dignity through focusing on People with Abilities rather than disabilities.
 - Build into the education system capacity to provide learning to ALL
 - Build within all university unions the needs to have social inclusion/CSR information core component for all subjects
 - Increased penalties for businesses/individuals based on decimation

and link that to investment in community services

- **Influence for Change**
 - Utilise savings in reducing administration and or corporate investment into major Australia wide campaigning; All mediums (TV/Media outlets - radio, paper, magazines, online) - CHANGE IS HAPPENING IN SOCIETY - climate change/stolen children/lost generation
 - Generational specific campaigning and influencing. Generation Y are coming with a social conscience. They are may aware of social issues – target this generation for change. Baby Boomers will be impacted by community service provision – start targeting with a different campaign that get motivation for changing the way disability is perceived. Gen X will be supporting Baby Boomers in the future – targeting the impact on them, their lives, their families if no major reform.
 - Build political party for reform based on approximately 6-million people impacted by disability in one form or another.
- **Stronger Community Integration**
 - Build network of Community Development/Relations roles that focus on embedding change for ALL aspects of inclusive communities. Stronger infrastructure, resources and support so that other Associations/providers/Organisations can tap into and use as advocates. The inclusive communities strategy can be coordinated at that level with other services have a link to this region - reduce individual Association advocacy and linking costs - ONE UNITED VOICE ON INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES - Specific roles on engagement and influence and change in regions.
 - Whole of government approach - reduce the need for specific disability departments and integrate, up skill and improve other departments for provision of services (Education/Health/Housing)
 - Implement on overall change strategy that increases urgency in communities, sets vision, has team of drivers, embeds initiatives and then looks for improvement. This would have to run along side - campaigns, education, awareness, change in service provision, reducing overheads and National Insurance scheme

Blue Skies Conversation #:

91

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Members of the Xavier Children's Support Network

How many people participated in the conversation?

13

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Access & safety - facilities not suitable, toileting areas unclean, footpaths not wide enough, centered to an angle, door hard. Lack of choices - parents have no choice of schools, no childcare or OSHC; adults do not choose who lives with them. Awareness - building code and standards not inclusive, community has an unrealistic view of disabilities.

Among the many issues discussed, one seemed to be mentioned the most; that was choice. Parents expressed their lack of choice with regards to sending their child with a disability to the same daycare, kindy, pre-school and school as their siblings. People with a disability in supported accommodation have no choice about who they live with. They have less opportunity to create informal relationships and this can enhance isolation. This creates a feeling of exclusion. Parents expressed their wish for their child to have the same opportunities as their peers but to be fully supported to do so.

1. Access opportunities within the community and safety

- Facilities such as shopping centres, schools, parks, pubs, clubs and sporting venues were found lacking – no appropriate areas to change older children or adults such as a change bench with a hoist to enable those with some self-sufficiency to manage their needs independently and those with higher needs to be able to access appropriate toileting support. Hence no choice to access supportive toileting facilities which their peers automatically have access to.
- The toilet areas were hygienically unclean much of the time putting people who were independently mobile at greater risk of diseases, infections and bacteria as they wheel themselves through excrement.
- Community access opportunities were very limited. Parents expressed a vision where their child with a disability could have the same opportunity as their peers to be fully active participants in scouts, swim club or sports clubs irrespective of their disability needs. This is also just as relevant for adults to access clubs, pubs, pools and daily activities such as their peers attend.
- For many, a simple “walk” to the shops presented many hazards including curb access or footpaths which are uneven or not wide enough to cater to wheelchairs, twin prams, jogging strollers and those who needed the use of walking aids or scooters. Many times people with a disability are forced to wheel themselves on the road thus putting them at greater risk of harm and once again having to maneuver through whatever may lay on the street.

- Pathways which did not offer access at the end of the footpath apart from bouncing over the edge of the gutter.
- Pathways and footpaths which were cambered on an angle which offered rain water to drain easily but made the pathway dangerous for those using wheelchairs, prams, strollers, walking aids, scooters or those who were unstable on their feet. Many people with a disability are thus offered no choice but to use the roadway which places them at great personal risk.
- Doors in different areas of the community have been identified as problematic in that they may have difficult handles, or be heavy or there is often not enough room to open the door, move the wheelchair, scooter or walking aid around the opening door independently thus the choice to use doors independently is impaired or taken away completely. This is degrading to those who are mobile and independent. All building should have electronic doors to enable those with mobility issues or those with prams or strollers to automatically have the access they require such as their peers without disabilities have.
- Car parks were found lacking in many areas. Many people with a disability have accessible vans. The height of many car parking facilities does not offer access as their height is too low thus forcing people with vans outside into car parks which are in the sun. Some people with a disability have temperature regulation difficulties and the added heat of a hot van can put them at risk of seizures or other health concerns. All car parks should have heights sufficient to support vans. All people with a disability should automatically have access to undercover car parking such as their peers do.
- Car parks are not long enough to enable people with a disability, especially those in wheelchairs or scooters to unload safely; many people unload into oncoming traffic thus placing them at greater risk of vehicle accidents. There is no choice for their safety.
- Travelling on aircraft was also noted as not inclusive. Many airlines have a policy regarding wheelchairs being packed into the hold and this forces people with a disability to be transferred to inadequate, insecure, unsupported and inappropriate wheelchairs to access their flight.
- The installation of supported seating in aircrafts is limited thus denying many people the choice to travel on aircraft which their peers automatically have access to.

2. Lack of life choices

- Adults in supported accommodation do not have the opportunity to choose who they live with. People with “matched” disabilities are placed together despite the differences which may exist in personality etc. This can potentially put a person with a physical disability at risk from a person with behavioural challenges with no thought to either individual’s wishes. Choice to live with whom they want is not afforded to them unlike their peers.
- There are no appropriate supports for families to access the same childcare centres as their peers or siblings. Many child care centres have young, untrained staff who have no experience or understanding of what is required to support a child with a disability thus placing the child at risk and offering the parents no choice but to remove their child. All child care centres should have appropriately trained staff to enable any child irrespective of disability to attend safely.

- No outside school hours care (OSHC), vacation or after-school care is available to families who have a child with a disability, particularly those with higher care needs. Parents have no choice in accessing OSHC. All schools should be provided sufficient funding to build, staff and maintain outside school hours and vacation care for children of all needs and abilities.
- Many children with a disability are sent to “special” schools as parents have no opportunity to send their child to the same school as their peers or siblings. Schools should be funded to cater to all children irrespective of needs. By having children grow up together, all children have the opportunity to form informal supports, friendships and learn from one another while being supported and safe.

3. Awareness

- New homes can be built to accommodate many needs. Developers and builders can build homes which are open plan, with wider doorways and simple design changes to assist many people with differing abilities including those with acquired brain injury, aged persons who may require wheelchairs or walkers, parents who have twins in prams or those needing high levels of care. This would minimise the additional modifications made when life changes from one of independence to one of requiring more support. Building codes and standards should be amended and enforced to cater to the needs of all consumers. Builders and developers will automatically abide by standards and codes which are inclusive of all needs.
- The general public can be hurtful, hateful and ignorant about what people with disabilities can achieve. An awareness campaign in the mass media should portray people with differing needs at work, in the community and living life the same as their peers to enable the general public to gain information on disabilities, an understanding of how to include everyone in life and an awareness that all people are people first, disability or not.
- By making everyone more aware and informed that people with a disability are not “special”, then opportunities for inclusion and acceptance into the community will be enhanced.
- The discourse of language is as much an isolating factor as physical barriers are. We are people who want to live our lives and who want our children to live their lives...But be supported to do so.
- Human services and social work is not an industry, we are not “special”, and we do not want to be cases which are managed or have “respite” provided. We do not want support workers or case workers or key workers, we want people to walk beside us, to assist us only in those areas where we ask for help and cannot do things due to our disability. We want the same opportunities that others automatically have; these are our rights of birth.
- We are children, friends, lovers, Mums, Dads, sisters, brothers, cousins, Grandmas and Grandpas who want respect, dignity and a life we can call our own, the same as our peers do.

One parent said,” We are all special, not just those of us with disabilities, we do not want special schools or special services, what we want is to be heard, to be accepted for who we are irrespective of capabilities, to have the opportunity to make our own choices and to live like anyone else in the

community...we just need the appropriate supports in place to enable us to do that. We want a voice, we want a choice and we want it now.”

Additional information:

Building codes to reflect inclusion of all needs - no special builds government to increase support to mainstream schools. Can Blue Skies please follow up with us in 6 months time to see what we have progressed.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

90

Where did the conversation take place?

Townsville

Who took part in the conversation?

Residents of Magnetic Island

How many people participated in the conversation?

9

Question 1: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

As a small community, the opportunity to be known and included is heightened.

Transport is a key factor in assisting or hindering social inclusion. The Magnetic Island Bus service was identified as providing a key service which facilitated social inclusion as it allowed people with disabilities to access and therefore be present at events. Furthermore, it was recognised that bus drivers were particularly aware of the needs of particular individuals and provided additional assistance where required. Examples include: (1) Being flexible with regards to the pick up and drop off points for passengers who had difficulties in accessing or finding the bus stop. (2) Assisting passengers with heavy items when disembarking the bus. Buses for example need to be flexible with pick up points.

Social spaces also play a key role in inclusion as they permit & encourage the community to meet together.

Participants were enthused by the discussion. The conversation itself became a place for people to connect and share ideas and have these affirmed by others. Summary: 1. Magnetic Island, by nature of being a small community already has many of the characteristics of a small community. This includes community care, accessible transport. The community also enjoys a variety of festivals catering to different interests and a great community spirit (most evident when adverse weather becomes threatening) 2. Opportunities to facilitate greater inclusion for people with disabilities are likely to come about (1) through greater education, particularly for school children, but also through information sheets made available to community residents, (2) through the acknowledgement of businesses who are already doing a great job in being inclusive and, (3) by encouraging people to volunteer to assist those who require it at festivals and events. Festival & events are diverse in their themes, catering for different interests of residents. There are lots of places and spaces for people to meet including the Country Club, Cafes, the RSL, Churches, Ferries, Buses, Medical Centre, etc. These are for the most part inclusive as people who attend often come from all walks of life but are united by their experience of the Island. Technology has been used to facilitate inclusion. George's Magnetic Island Community Newspaper is a great way of keeping residents informed of the latest news and upcoming events.

Community spirit. On the whole it was recognised that as a small community, magnetic Island is characterised by strong levels of community care. On the whole, residents know one another and keep in touch as they run into one another around the Island.

Question 2: How can we create further opportunities to involve people with a disability as valued members of the Magnetic Island Community?

Access to information - different individuals experience different social needs. People with Vision impairment have difficulty in accessing information due to the printed format in which information about social events on the Island. The creation of a community radio whose purpose would be to advertise upcoming local events could assist in disseminating information in a format accessible to all residents. Question and answer style Brochures or A4 sheets could be compiled and made available at identified businesses such as the ferry or Chemist. This could also be included in the New Residents Kit. A similar kit could be provided for new businesses. Access to Transport - there was a general recognition of the role Ferrys plays in the community as a place where community members interact. Some community members come across difficulties when accessing this service. The group recommends: (1) That Ferry departure times be announced over a speaker for those with vision impairment (2) Priority access be offered to those who otherwise find it difficult fighting through crowds. This includes for parents with young children, elderly people and people with disabilities. Access to events - individuals who have difficulties with mobility or with sight impairment at times find events such as the Friday Night Markets difficult to move around in. it would be helpful if these residents were able to gain assistance from other residents and volunteers to move around the events. Formal recognition - this may include recognitions through Awards or letters of thanks of organisations and individuals who facilitate social inclusion. The M1 Bus Service was singled out as deserving such recognition. Education - a session on disability awareness could be offered at the primary school. This could include participation from Island residents who live with a disability.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

89

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Various disability service sector staff

How many people participated in the conversation?

5

Question 1: How can we make better use of people's gifts and talents in developing a more inclusive community?

Effective communication, exposure, modelling & culture

Acceptance, extraordinary - who we are, opportunities, facilitation.

Skills & training on social community awareness (acceptance) knowing what are the gifts and talents of people - how do we find out, storing the info,

Community - being open, exposure & familiarisation by others, deficit of society, labels.

Get rid of the fear/expose people to those with special needs/shared experiences/education */normalise special needs - we all have them. Focus on identifying gifts & talents with the same intensity we give to diagnosing difference & disability.

Celebrate being extraordinary.

It makes me feel positive and excited about the future after being surrounded by people who GET IT. It is lovely not to feel like I need to convince those around me of the worth of people with disabilities and simply talk about the positives and the joys



Blue Skies Conversation #:

88

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

A state-wide change of heart that understood that inclusion was not just being there, but feeling like you belonged there and being missed if you were not there. this was the definition for inclusion we used in our Better Together Inclusion strategy in Caboolture. I also desire an acceptance that segregated and institutionalised living has no place in any vision for the future. Everyone has a right to live in a home that looks like other people's in a street that looks like everyone else's street. I am sick and tired of people and governments accepting models that can never achieve our goal.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that is already occurring?

I am delighted to see every day that our community: in public places, and businesses are accepting. The right people have to be there and are trying hard to make everyone feel like they belong there.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Anything in my power and much that is not.

Additional information:

Currently not working in the field but still very passionate

Blue Skies Conversation #:

87

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Mamre staff

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: What action am I willing to take to progress the vision?

Mamre will do best when it models inclusion in everything it does, that is, does not endorse segregated and congregated solutions. Everywhere Mamre meets; it will be inclusive and accessible. Mamre does best when they have people with disability amongst us – like the Mamre Community retreat. Mamre will open up to the wider community – not just be comfortable preaching to the converted. Mamre will have a presence beyond the usual places

The way forward is through the families.

Mamre will not forget the power of children who accept their friends with disability. Inclusion of children with disability in regular schools is a very important strategy towards the global acceptance of difference and inclusion of all people. This all starts with children!

When families worry that inclusion will be more work, Mamre will assist them to see that people with disability can have good inclusive lives and that when working in a positive framework, things are easier. It may at times seem like more work but there are compensations with the positive outcomes. Inclusion creates an energy and a life of its own.

Families need to want their family members included. The world does not come to people – the family will need to reach out.

Mamre will run programs that are congruent with its values. It is important that Kedron House, currently run as a congregated respite facility, is closed, for this reason alone.

People with disability deserve a good life – Mamre will set examples of what is possible.

Many families do not believe until they see it. Mamre can show the way.

Mamre will assist families through workshops like Creating Meaningful Lives (regular Mamre event).

While we have focused on building the capacity of the families, the capacity of the support workers must not be forgotten. They can make a real difference.

When support workers are affected they can be change agents for the rest of their lives. They become Champions in their own lives.

It is important for Mamre to align with other marginalised groups and stand with them in their struggle to be accepted and included.

Mamre will continue to speak out in a positive way (encourage, embolden and inspire!). It is important to share the stories and people's dreams for a good life. It is important to get it out to the mainstream.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

86

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

Members of the Disability Housing Coalition

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: How can everyone achieve a house of their own in the community?

Having a home of your own is non-negotiable - this is our starting point. Perhaps we need to define a “home of your own” though there are some pretty good indicators in the UN declaration of Human Rights for People with Disabilities.

What is a home?

- Feeling safe

- Surrounded by love

- Being able to rest and renew

- Being able to express yourself and your individuality

- It is the foundation for other things to happen in your life.

It is important to spread the stories of what is possible, particularly for young families.

In having a disability we are tired of ‘tolerance’ and ‘acceptance’ and ‘gratitude’. We do not want to be ‘lucky to be placed’. Our housing issues are tied up with other issues such as unemployment and poverty. If we were helped with these then we could use mainstream housing services such as private rental.

It is important in our homes to have a place where visitors can stay.

Hospitality is important in anyone’s life.

Universal access is also important. “I have not been able to visit my friends because they live in an inaccessible home.”

Housing is much more for people these days. It isn’t just where we have a home, it is a wealth creation strategy. This has made access to home ownership impossible for many people with disability.

Let us have a better benchmark than homelessness. Most social housing services have homelessness as their benchmark for service.

Housing should be able to be adapted for ages and stages. Everyone moves on at some stage. Housing should allow that to happen for people with disability – so that they are not stuck there for ever.

There are cultural issues to be considered including those of ATSI and Non-English speaking people.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

85

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

National Disability Services staff

How many people participated in the conversation?

10

Question 1: What is Community capacity building?

- People and organisations working together to share resources; collaborate on funding submissions to achieve better value and outcomes for their effort
- Supporting champions to get inspired and get people together around an issue
- Knowing and supporting key influences – formal and informal
- Get people involved in WEB2 (interactive web use)
- Showcase and share what works (keeping everything in public domain)
- Encourage the use of appreciative inquiry as a framework
- Participative leadership rather than command and control
- All effort builds on current capacity rather than duplicates
- Starts with education system at young age
- Be prepared to work with and support those who step forward to act
- Bring people together around common purpose (including helping them articulate their purpose and decide how they will work together)
- Hanging in for the long term
- Supporting local ownership is critical
- Create spaces that invite people to trust each other and stay connected
- Facilitate meaningful conversations

Question 2: What is Service capacity building?

- Working with others to share and get better leverage from their assets
- Make sure services know who they are and what they contribute as a sector to local social and economic infrastructure); to build confidence in role and negotiating power
- Willing to take risks and ask for help and more information
- Stay true to core purpose/calling while remaining responsive
- Commitment to reflection and acting in response
- Courage to let go of what doesn't work
- Funding and other resources that let services do their work
- Invest in human capacity (training, supervision, mentoring, and systems that assume the best in people)
- Asking what inspires people "What do you believe?"

- Recognition that people support what they create (engage staff well)
- Clear missions
- Identify and address barriers/constraints
- Create learning communities
- Visioning and dreaming that is expansive – create spaces for people to think beyond their limitations
- Make sure support is timely, relevant, and works with where people are at
- Good quality data and research that helps with planning and performance management

Blue Skies Conversation #:

84

Where did the conversation take place?

Townsville

Who took part in the conversation?

Lifeline Community Centre Sport and Recreation workers

How many people participated in the conversation?

3

Question 1: What would it take to create pathways into sport for people with disabilities?

Commitment by Sport, Recreation workers to look at opportunities for further discussions with Sporting Associations

Appropriate funding to provide training workshops around Inclusive Sport

Identify individual sports who are interested in becoming more accessible to the community in general

Blue Skies Conversation #:

83

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

QDN members

How many people participated in the conversation?

8

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Attitude shift - everyone has diverse needs - which would require conversations like these; and which would result in all actions flowing out of a mindfulness of others diverse needs
- Representational imagery
- Accessible environment
- Block due to 'ownership' - services exclude because they want to hold on to their market
- lack of consultation with consumers
- getting stories heard
- begin in schools
- accessible transport
- much more education and integration of people
- children with and without disabilities in schools
far more opportunity for young people with & without disabilities to interact and engage in cyber & technological settings/
- more politicians, TV presenters, actors, models, criminals, ratbags & general attention seekers who have disabilities

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- access plans where individuals get to know the people
- lack of awareness of difficulties faced until you become socially connected,
- individualism & social cliques cause problems for inclusion because it reduces opportunities for expanding social networks
- empowered consumers are needed financially
- Informed - one has to be the worst off in order to get any assistance; the minimum amount for the greatest number.
- Some accessibility of public areas; champions like Frent Simon;
- possibilities of grassroots communities e.g Blue Skies; use CrikeyDot com for regular or occassional blogging about disability issues
create affirmative employment policy again

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Campaign - 'this is happening in your backyard'
- confront local member
- something like 'Get Up', using the media
need a specific focus in order to achieve things - accessible focus
- make it a social issue - system that supports individual needs rather than a specific sector of services
- Affirmative action employment policy
- Working with job placement agencies
- Blue Skies could sell an approval/certification to employers - employment agencies, hairdressers, dentists get the 'Blue tick' for physical accessibility; welcoming culture etc
- Desleigh will assist with work rehabilitation
- Need a long term investment in people

Additional information:

Ideas for an Inclusive society:

- Initiate inclusive attitude i.e from early childhood, inclusiveness is a common part of education system & this attitude of acceptance to be carried through everyone's stages of life - university, workplace, community.
- Accessible environments & transport
- Welcoming services/empowered consumers - informed & financial
- Respect for diversity
- Number of people served rather than quality of service
- People working in government need knowledge & experience - this doesn't happen because of high turnover.
- Community to make its own decisions
- Networking whilst progressing Blue Skies - clear vision
- Blue Skies align with what QDN means to me - Like rowing - attuned to work together/
- Blue Skies - essential - need to engage
- Technological help services need to change and respond to people not numbers
- Individual - not disabled - words are important
- Education - not all the same
- people need to take on the responsibility of thinking and acting
- accept criticism
- everyone wants the same - accessible toilets/empowerment and social change/real jobs, real work, real home
- airlines should respond to everyone

Blue Skies Conversation #:

82

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

People with disability, local community members, Fassifern Community Centre staff and National Disability Services staff

How many people participated in the conversation?

25

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- One participant would like to be treated as an individual and have the opportunity to buy/rent a house when they want to, rather than have it told to them;
- One participant said they would be treated like everyone else
- That people realize one day they too might have a disability;
- People should be treated with love and kindness and this comes in many forms;
- There should be accessible activities available that aren't in hot weather, and wheelchair dancing is enjoyable;
- There should be more long term accommodation options available;
- Working with all levels of government;
- There will be suitable jobs for people with a disability in whatever they want to do;
- Literacy/numeracy is needed to create a better life and people should be able to pursue this when needed not when it is offered;
- Access needs to be easy and not noticeable in the community – filling in forms doesn't work; information technology could be accessible to people who need it all the time, people in the community would know how to use aids for people with disabilities because if they know how to use it, they can teach others on a broader scale – they could be mentors;
- Individuals would have a choice of activities when they want to do it, "I won't be out in the sun doing an activity if I don't want to".
- There would be a place to go in Boonah, where literacy and numeracy is available so people can learn to read and write when they want it not when they are told to do it;
- Someone would be able to catch a bus or a train to where they want to go;
- People have a right to be educated and to read and write and to have opportunities.

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

- The Friday BBQ's at Fassifern that bring everybody together for a free meal
- Meeting place where everyone is valued and encouraged;
- Place where people can talk and eat,
- People can discuss individual needs openly;
- People can share personal opinions without prejudice;
- Everyone can celebrate everyone's celebrations;
- Some local businesses have purchased ramps for people in wheelchairs so they have access too;
- There has been some work completed for wheelchair access from footpath to road – the point was made however that a lot more work needs to be done;
- Council could possibly provide subsidies services for ramps into local business;
- Everyone helps everyone in Boonah and there is a strong community spirit;
- Community places need to be accessible places;
- The outside seating is great in Boonah but no buses stop in front of them – public transport is an issue as there currently is none;
- Greater access to computer literacy would be good;

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- People will contact the council if they are not happy about something;
- There is an important part to play for government bodies;
- Volunteers are important and people will volunteer to help in the community;
- As a group, people will help people who need help;
- People will share chocolate cake with friends, share with others and share in the community.

Additional information:

There was a young person who attended the conversation, who had no access to his interests such as computing as well as limited access to aids for the blind because of the unavailability of these in the community. If he had had access to these tools he truly believes that the outcome of his life may have been different.

There was also another person who attended with a degenerative condition and spoke to the host after the conversation. She said how difficult it was to obtain treatment when she needed it, she currently was given two hours in respite a week but is unable to receive help especially in relation to personal care when she needs it. The degenerative disease slows down all of her system and this in turn makes it difficult to function. The difficulty with her funding is that the people that the person lives with, are expected by the

funding body to help her in her times of need and at the worst times of her disease but this person emphasized the importance being treated as a separate entity and just because someone lives with her – doesn't mean they can provide the assistance she needs.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

81

Where did the conversation take place?

Brisbane

Who took part in the conversation?

QDN members

How many people participated in the conversation?

12

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Entire community involvement Alan: working together as a community, people with disability need as much input as possible to these issues Rachel: Network of people is key. Sharron: Getting behind Blue Skies. John: Clear purpose, teamwork. Emma: Finding positive ways of moving forward. Matt: Being valued for abilities, not disabilities. Larissa: Making better lives for people with disabilities. Frances: Making a difference - advocacy, respect for rights. Wendy: Blue Skies has power of conviction because it has come from those who are most important. Willy: Breaking down barriers. getting on with the future. Acceptance as a person - not as a person with a disability. Recognition, approval, acknowledgement, acquiescence (begrudging) - synonyms for inclusion. Energy - to sustain. Patience - the best changes usually happen slowly. Tenacity - keep going. Confidence - learning curve. Communication - voice, networking. Support - knowing you're not alone reduces the feeling selfish because one knows one is speaking for others. Activity - active approach. Approaching a tipping point. Persistence & collaboration Impress on society the need to help. Rowing Analogy - working together/pulling in time. We have to take on the first step & show that we are people who can think, act & move. New perspectives, new paradigms. We can change what we see before us. We have to create a social movement. Everyone has a role and a way to contribute. Make the issues relevant to EVERYBODY. Blue Skies gives a unified voice to a diverse group of people in a professional manner. Putting the issues in front of the right people. Being seen as active, outspoken, intelligent/ People will give you respect if you act in a respectful manner. Breaking the ice. being seen. real work, real money, real presence. Society is indirectly moving towards institutionalisation. getting personal " get the helmet off" Most NB place to start is in schools - invest in the future. Those students will take the inclusive attitude into their workplaces. Learning Auslan in schools. All new houses would have to have a level of access.

Question 2: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Actions - putting issues to the people who can change them (eg. talking to manager at supermarket about accessibility) Access: assistance where needed - acceptance - physical access. Individuals trying to educate those around us. Emma: wanted to see Adam Hill Brisbane Powerhouse would not provide signing interpreter. Adam Hill ended up providing the signing interpreter. During a similar incident Emma took it up with BCC who are now putting pressure on Powerhouse. They pass the buck, take it up with someone else. Francis put forward an issue about tactile indicators to Southbank TAFE with a positive outcome. Her class wrote the letter in conjunction with her. Integrated response. Collective voice (LD has more sway) Well written letters under official banner/Turning rhetoric into action/Cath Ed & Public schools/Ecosystems analogy. Taking Blue Skies to those who don't have a disability.

Additional information:

QDN must be strong in pushing this because once the momentum is gone, it's lost. Goose Logo - V formation/using each other's energy/constantly shifting. Pyramid effect leads to tipping point. Issues are long overdue to be addressed. Frances talked about discussing with her Head of Faculty introducing subjects about working with people who come from culturally diverse backgrounds and who have a disability. Many education facilities don't have a clear pathway on how to make inclusion happen. Work at the grassroots. Today you can do what you can do today. If you concentrate on others life gets better for you.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

80

Where did the conversation take place?

Newmarket

Who took part in the conversation?

Mamre staff and clients

How many people participated in the conversation?

15

Question 1: How can Mamre best work with families so that they can envision, plan and build rich, meaningful and inclusive lives for their family member?

Mamre has the task first to keep families on an even keel – then they can envision, plan and build a good life for their family member with a disability. Families need to plan not only for now but also for the future. The building of informal networks around people with a disability is a community issue. There are lots of ways that local government and others can develop communities to be responsive to people with disability. There are four important words: Listening, empowerment, friendship and partnership. Mamre does best when with supports the person with the disability as well as supporting the family and walking with the family through good and bad times. There is a role for the mamre community to help build relationships and networks of support. Mamre could show the community at large that people with disability need not be seen as burdens rather people who contribute and enrich our communities. Mamre could open people's thinking. What is community? It is different for everyone - not necessarily the people in your immediate vicinity.

Additional information:

Most NB Mamre works one family at a time - following them in their journey p being open and listening to them.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

79

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Changes in community attitudes from the present dysfunctional model based on hierarchy of how people are valued. From the wealthy self proclaimed VIP's to the homeless, people are divided into a 'us and them' mentality, with 'them' being allotted less value than 'us'. Parliamentarians either respond to the wishes of their voters or lose office in Western democracies such as Australia, so I believe that community attitudes need to be inclusive for all.

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

People's attitudes are changing. There are far more venues that I can access with my power chair. Strangers are friendly and helpful where I need help with opening doors or obtaining items from a supermarket shelf etc. Years ago strangers appeared embarrassed to see my polio limp and tremors refusing to make eye contact. Australia has come a long way.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Whatever I can do, and have, ever since I learnt not to be embarrassed about being a bit different.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

78

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Awareness raising and tolerance - Ask people in our community, not just people living with a disability, their families, people in the disability sector but other people who live in the community who don't live with a disability. Arrange for people who live with a disability to be key speakers at Focus Groups specific to raise awareness. We need to reach the ordinary person - I believe many people would like the opportunity to meet and get to know a person with a disability but are waiting 'to be asked'. Not everyone will step forward it's no good teaching to the converted - same people, same venues - be creative, use initiative think outside the square! That is my vision!

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

As a person who works in the Disability sector, I see small steps towards tolerance and acceptance of people who live with a disability through children at schools. However, I would like to see this awareness start at home and continue and be reinforced at schools. Let's not just celebrate disabilities once a year for a week, let's raise the awareness everyday of the year.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Be involved in any way that I can be involved in Focus Groups, community engagement and participation.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
77

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worker in the sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

I believe ALL young people have the right to a post school education

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Create a proposal for post school learning centre's for 18-25 years old operating from special schools

Blue Skies Conversation #:
76

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

Introduction of a Human/Civil Rights Act that makes it mandatory for people with high-level disabilities to have adequate access to Lifestyle Support Funding, Housing, Built environment. Empowerment, Learning & Resource centre

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

Access to environment is a little better but that's only due to people who choose to abide by the current legislation

Question 3: What action am I willing to take to progress the vision?

I am prepared to protest and go to jail

Blue Skies Conversation #:
75

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

We feel part of things at the moment, transport options on the gold coast could be improved. to get anywhere after dark it is taxi and that is very expensive

Question 2: What are the elements of an inclusive community already happening here?

we are getting friendships and having our Hot Topics Group at Southport is also helping us to feel comfortable with being with others. we would love to have a disco where we feel comfortable as well

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Well we were invited to join in an environmental project and we were made to feel very welcome. so if anything new happens it is important to make us feel welcome, and maybe you have ring us up and send us some information so we know what is going on.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

74

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Lots of people positive answer & question.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Positive actions.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

We will help sunshine coast if we can.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

73

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Nurse Unit Manager

My son has Cerebral Palsey and is captain of the Australian para

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is that a community is not just a physical structure, group of people; community is the mindset of the people who live in a group together. And it's about to make it a more inclusive community changing that mind set so that people don't see colour, race, disability. Instead they see the personality of the person by looking inside and seeing what is really there not just seeing the physical exterior. That's what we teach here with the staff. They are asked to look at the resident, not the disability, not the communication difficulty. Look at how we can communicate on different levels. Birraby is not about restrictions it is about their home. You will notice that as you go through the colours the residents chose their own colours for their rooms. With the rec room I chose a vibrant colour, I wanted the room to be vibrant so I chose yellow. Much to the staff's horror! Our sensory rooms cater to everybody. It even has a hydro acoustic bed because a couple of our residents are both deaf and blind so they feel the music through the heated music bed which is wonderful. So yeah, we try and cater for all senses, stimulations, life skills.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

We have gone on a big journey. We used the accreditation as the catalyst for change to meet the DSQ standards which was wonderful because it is hard to get change into a group of people who have worked in the same way for a long time. So having the standards as a catalyst we have now looked at how we can do things differently. We asked ourselves what can we improve. And we have gone from a clinical model even though we are still Queensland department nurses too. We now have a lifestyle model and we are using person centered approach where we have gone from these big individual support plans which were clinical to a person centered plan. It is all about what they like and what they prefer. What stimulation that get from this, what enjoyment they get from that. If they don't like this then we don't do that. It was hard to do. There isn't a lot on disabilities in Australia. We found we did a lot of research into the English systems for disabilities. They seem to be a long way ahead of everybody. When we bought out stuff for the sensory room we bought it from space craft in England and had it shipped over. We read up on their community care and their models.

Our vision for Birraby that we have all developed together is to be more noticed in the community because so many people didn't know we existed or they just thought of it as some institution. And so we have a lot of sponsorship. The sports club has been very helpful. And we go out in our bus and we go to community activities. Some other community groups that support us are the sports club, the rotary, and the lions. We have a lot of community support by raising our profile in the community. We are selling ourselves to the community, as well as the residents, as an alternative for respite for people with really high needs. We have the staff and the equipment to help people with really high needs. We do lots of things like fishing and sailing, we go to the Christmas ball. We go to the movies. We went to play the pokies and have a meal at the sports club. We have sound circles and do drumming and percussion and karaoke but we get in trouble for being too loud. Too bad so sad. Hahaha!

I would like to see more wheelchair friendly footpaths. The council are doing really well with their waterfront parks along the river. We go and use the wheelchair pontoons to do our fishing off which is great and really nice. I would like to see more activities. We have the disability ball once a year. More socials would be good. We love letting our hair down. We get all dressed up in suits and long dresses. We put our dancing shoes on.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

We've got a lot of staff here who are really passionate about disability and we would be quite happy to help out and offer the facility to other groups. We are happy to be involved in anything. We have joined the community garden, Sailability, and we are about getting into the community as much as we can. Most of the staff are really committed to making it a better place for our residence.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

72

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

I haven't had the time to read the document, but to be honest I haven't given it an awful lot of thought. But I suppose in relation to ur families, and we work with children who are under 6 and have a diagnosis of autism and their families, so to create an inclusive community for those families and children – the first thing that would probably need to happen would be to recognize the strengths and potential of those children and for governments to be prepared to fund long term to support those children within the community because it is a lifelong disability that never goes away. It never goes away for families either so rather than funding just the children I would really like to see it from a family based funding because the reality is that people that bring about most change for the children at their families. So, that is number one – money. And some sort of commitment long term from government. I also think there needs to be more opportunity for the families to speak in terms of educating the broader community about their struggles. At the moment there are quite a lot of programs on the television about autism. They do seem to focus on the more extreme and unfortunate children so it doesn't really give a clear picture of the struggles of people across the spectrum. And often higher functioning children are assumed to be able to fit in and not need the support when in fact they often need more support than the lower functioning children. I guess if we are wanting to have an inclusive community, including inclusive education, access to services, access to social events – sport and things like that – again there needs to be a commitment on some level to actually make that humanly possible and that means putting people, having bodies, to support those children within those environments and certainly in the education environment at the moment that is not occurring. I think the new way they have to apply for funding is really going to be detrimental to the children that we work with in terms of the applications have to go in now for next year to say what supports those children are currently getting in the classroom and that's what the funding will be based on next year and that so much depends on how competent a teacher you have; how well the child's coping this year (and that doesn't necessarily mean they will cope the same next year) although they may not need a lot of support this year because they have a teacher who has lots of strategies that work. Next year they might go to a teacher who has no idea, they [the child] might not have no supports, and they can't reapply for a whole year. Those sorts of things I suppose – I would like to see children realistically supported in the school environment. Not just a cost saving way of not having particular schools for them. I think the community, and I am not sure how it would be achieved, I would really like to see families who don't have children with more autism being more accepting of families that do and I

think the only way that can come about is if they have opportunities to meet and come to understand what that means. So that in shopping centres and public places people are supported rather than judged when a child is having a total meltdown. A lot of families experience that stigmatism of being judged. I would really like to see that broken down a little bit. I guess having leaders in the community that would drive the commitment to include children and families in the social activities that everyone else has access to. And there are some of those individuals out there that are willing to do that but there is also a lot of people who are not prepared to go that extra mile to make sure the child can play soccer, or, even if they just sit and pick at the grass for the time or chase the ball all the time.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

I think one of the things that is happening locally and it has taken a large number of years, is that services (the key services that work without families) are actually beginning to look at how we can more fully meet the needs of the families across the services rather than having this silo approach. This really is moving forward for the families and I think having the support and intervention will increase their capacity of participate in broader activities. Seeing some of our families in terms of the families in particular who have been in our programs this year and seeing their confidence increase and their ability to advocate for their child and themselves I think that's really encouraging. I really think that families are the ones that are inevitably going to move things forward. They are the people that people listen to. I think our service. Ahaha. Our service, only two and a bit years old. We are the first regionally based service for autism qld. There is now one in Cairns but in terms of providing support to specific families we are the first autism service that there has been in the region. I guess the publicity that that accrues in terms of awareness building. We have also had contact with some wonderful community organizations who put up our fences, funded the electric gate, having trivia nights for us. I think that that's great and the more of that that occurs then the more we will move towards an inclusive community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I am really passionate about these children and families so on an ongoing basis I suppose I would like to get out and about and talk about it as much as I can and represent the children and families at events and conferences. In terms of projects – what I would like to do even though it is out of our age range at the moment – is to utilize this building more fully to ex families and groups with whom we have worked with and I would really love to do some training and skill building for kids leaving school and moving into work. That is one of the things that I would like to do.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

71

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Blue Skies Scenario Feedback

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Blue Skies Scenario.

My background

I am the mother of moderately intellectually disabled 28 year old young women who works in an Endeavour Business Service. Alison is one of the very many who are not in receipt of a funding package and as such have limited choices and no hope of supported accommodation. I have been involved with disability groups for over 20 years in both Queensland and New South Wales.

The Scenario

After reading through the document I came to the conclusion that there is nothing new being offered, just put in a different format. The different segments of this scenario have been put to State and Federal Governments for many years. I have attended many meetings over the past 20 years putting forward the very things you are proposing, with no results. While I understand and appreciate the need for new approaches to change the process and the way in which we are trying to get better results for people with a disability with regards to Government money and community involvement, I find this scenario somewhat 'pie in the sky'. I agree we need a united front to approach these issues but at present there are far too many groups representing the disability sector. These groups are un-jointed, fragmented and diverse. The cynical might suggest the various governments prefer it that way – 'divide and conquer'. I have not answered the questions outlined in the pamphlet as there was insufficient space but have given my overall impression of the contents and the proposed scenario.

The role of the person with disability was clear

I am assuming you must be talking about people with physical disabilities, as many with intellectual disabilities would not be able to complete these tasks, nor would they be able to respond to this survey.

The role of the faithful family and enduring friends was clear

I found the word 'faithful' patronising. While it is wonderful for a person with a disability to having loving family and friends the reality is that this is not the case in a vast majority of situations. Where is the scenario for the mother who has to give up her child through lack of support, the struggling single mothers, of which there are many. Where does this cover the aged parents who have had to give a lifetime of support to their disabled children because there was no other alternative?

The role of the community was clear

The wording to this segment was 'waffly' and unclear. After my 28 years of being heavily involved in disabilities, experience has shown me that while there are certain wonderful groups in the community only too willing to help, unfortunately they are far and 'few between' especially when it requires 'hands on'. Corporate involvement is one area that has not been included in this scenario and should definitely be considered. The disability community needs to make the initiatives and drag the community with them, not the other way around.

The role of services was clear

This segment outlines what it is all about; this is the 'dream', this is what we want. It requires huge amounts of money and commitment but unfortunately there are few votes in it.

The role of government was clear

In 2006 the Queensland Council of Social Service reported 14,178 people living with a disability on the State Government's register of need for support, 6,233 (44%) receive no support or funding. Queensland's per capita spending on support for a person with disabilities is lower than any other state or territory (\$2,867 compared with an average of \$4,090). Will our State Government be prepared to bridge the gap? The list of unmet needs grows and grows.

Summary:

Instead of going over old ground let's look at proven and successful models that are working overseas. Australia is very good at taking up overseas programs and making them work e.g. Neighbourhood Watch. There are elements of community and government services that work in different parts of the world that could work here e.g. Laws that compel Government and Corporations to employ a set % of people with a disability. Involve the siblings and their generation, not their weary parents, use their energy, their new ideas etc to force the changes needed so that your 10 year plan is achievable, after all if nothing improves the responsibility will eventually fall on them, willing or not.



Blue Skies Conversation #:

70

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A working in the disability sector

Thank you for the work and the vision of Blue Skies. It fits well within what my vision for people with disabilities has always been, but I always have one major concern. I work with over 500 people with a disability, many of those need advocacy and support for them to reach their life vision. The difficulty always is that it works when they have families and advocates to support them to that vision, the majority of the people we work for don't. It is very difficult to have access to external advocates in these cases – the Adult Guardian makes it clear to us that it is up to us to “present them with options and we will chose the one that we feel is in the best interests of the person”, advocacy organisations don't have the resources to provide advocates for those who need them (government often sees them as an “extra” not a need. So in the Blue Skies Scenario – who talks for those who are currently at the whim of Government and Service providers because they have no-one to support them? How do we safeguard their interests, needs and wants under self managed funding?

Blue Skies Conversation #:

69

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision for an inclusive community is whereby all people with a disability are welcomed, authentically valued, and participate in the varied aspects of community life. Whereby people with a disability are viewed as enriching and strengthening citizens of our community.

It would take all levels of government, non-government and community to rethink and reshape traditional service responses, introduce a National Disability Insurance scheme, share ideas and nontraditional/creative responses that have worked, & have deeper levels of conversation about how to achieve an alternate future that enables a community development approach.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that is already occurring?

Some people with a disability are more welcomed & included in community life more than others. There are some children receiving early intervention supports who have ASD, some children are attending mainstream schools & well supported to do so, some people with disabilities complete school & gain a tertiary qualification, are employed, live in flats, shared housing with persons that are non-disabled, participate in recreation, church & clubs that fosters friendships, outside the "service system". Host families & different types of "natural respite" in the community do exist, just few & far between & often dependant on where a person/family live. There are many examples of people with a disability being included, it's just not widely known about, advertised or acknowledged.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Engage in conversations with others who believe change is needed & explore different ways/possibilities & be challenged to consider possibilities I may have not thought about! I'm willing to write letters etc.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
68

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

To have an Inclusive community, all would have to be willing to except all and to understand their best. All places be accessible. Doctors to stop trying to be God, never giving up of what is wanted, being positive! Having a go in whatever you want! This is my vision

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Whatever it takes.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
67

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worked in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

I believe that it would take the community to create inclusion; I believe that this is an opportunity for the blue skies scenario to emphasis "community" as an entity not to segregate the need only for people with a disability. I believe that a paradigm shift is needed for all. As we make the world smaller and as work tirelessly to include people with a disability in community life we need to be clear about what community is, what it offers, how to celebrate it and maybe even how to use the communities assets to improve community as a whole to be inclusive and moral for all, to focus on the Human rights for all people. Maybe this is the strength and Asset that the disability Community has to offer all.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

I believe that elements of strength based and individualised focus is occurring more often and in a meaningful manner that empowers individuals and educates people who support and love them.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

My action would be to develop the knowledge to be able to contribute to the scenario and lead by example to encourage others. I will educate my children about the elements of human rights for all people and to focus on living without prejudice.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
66

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Question 1: What do you like about this scenario?

I question the value of the scenario process. I believe it may attract considerable enthusiasm for covering old ground and falling short of tackling in a concrete way the inherent difficulties face by many with disability of living alongside those with disability.

Question 2: How can this scenario be improved?

Its timeframes reflect in congruencies in the collating information from your three scenarios. Use of abstract concepts and metaphor will alienate many from its content. Too many words – where are the visual supports.

Question 3: What don't you like about this scenario?

It reassures me that there are people committed to change – but who will take the role of “visionary leader” – to be a catalyst for political change to enable the community strategies to unfold?

*Visionary Leader = One who champions a cause and inspired others to act in support of the vision – our new Minister? Premier? You are talking about a significant political, economic, social and philosophical change – who will be the leader that has the ability to question the status quo?

Question 4: What would you like in its place?

More from the given common aspects of the vision – ask the respondents to engage in problem solving and brainstorming how the strategies can be enacted.

Question 5: What impact would this scenario have on your life?

NONE – It is a vision! To direct actions that may then have an impact on my life we need more. Let's have scenarios about what can be done to engage the strategies!!

Blue Skies Conversation #:
65

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Question 1: What do you like about this scenario?

I like the proposed idea of support within the education system. At the moment, there is insufficient support within this area. As the young person with a developmental, psychological or physical disability spends a high proportion of his formative years being assisted to overcome the accompanying difficulties in the educational setting, it is fitting that this deficit be addressed. This would definitely come under the banner of proactive support versus crisis management.

Question 2: How can this scenario be improved?

It would be useful to know the makeup of the contributors to the scenario. There is a need to clarify whether the “movement from infrastructure capital investment to community and social capital investment” is simply buck passing or not. For example, will the Local Area Coordinators be paid positions?

The community involvement is extremely blue sky. Governments cannot rely on a population which largely subscribes to the NIMBY credo. It would be most encouraging if the document described some practical examples of how community involvement could be achieved, or had this as one of the mini scenarios mentioned below.

Question 3: What don't you like about this scenario?

This is not an inclusive document. It excludes a high proportion of the stakeholders which it wishes to assist. The format gives no structure to guide participants who are not academics. There is a lack of diagrammatic and/or schematic illustrations. These could replace the photographs which appear to serve little purpose except to pretty up the document.

Despite my academic and practical experience in the field of disability, I found it quite “heavy going”, on the verge of boring because of its lack of structure. There was a blur between where the process ended and the scenario began.

Question 4: What would you like in its place?

A series of questions related to mini scenarios would make the document more accessible. In some situations a return to the felt pens, blutak and butcher's paper would cater for a higher proportion of stakeholders.

Question 5: What impact would this scenario have on your life?

In a former life, I would have had to spend hours reformatting the scenario to cater for my clients.

Overall, I think parents in particular have seen this all before. I'm sure they feel the money which was spent on producing the document could have been better spent implementing similar ideas which have come up in previous think tanks.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

64

Who is responding to the Scenario?

An individual

I have read and researched the document and feel very enlightened and can only live in hope that this is not just rhetoric once again

I would also like to draw your attention to the following Media Release and the attached; there are also a number of initiatives in the National Disability Agenda and Agreement that have not been addressed in 'Blue Skies'.

Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, welcomed the passage of the Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2008 through Parliament. The Bill will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our anti discrimination system and clarifies the obligation of employers, service providers and other parties to remove discriminatory barriers for people with disabilities.

“These reforms will contribute to ensuring that our laws continue to promote greater equality, equal opportunity and a fair go for people with disabilities” said Mr McClelland. The Attorney-General has also signed a declaration under the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986 to enable the Australian Human Rights Commission to conciliate complaints based on breaches of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Mr Shorten said the declaration gives the Commission power to consider disability rights under the Convention and enables it to report to Government on how the Convention is being implemented. “People with disabilities will welcome these further steps in recognising their human rights and contribution to the Australian community,” said Mr Shorten. These steps are a further demonstration of the Rudd Government’s commitment to enhancing human rights for all Australians.

I would also like to draw your attention to my situation, I arrived from Victoria some 4 years ago. In Victoria I had service and support as a person with a disability across the width and breadth of need which was similar to that of South Australia in 1996-07- when I was permanently placed in a wheelchair. Having contracted polio in 1949, I began walking with calipers in 1956 and wore them with adjustments until 2005 when the orthotic Health Care Professionals decreed that they were of no use to me in the wheelchair.

Arriving in Queensland (reluctantly for my health and by medical intervention) I was assured of reciprocal rights from my service provider (Linkages) Polio Services Victoria, Department of Human Services and Health care professionals all of whom had been in contact with the services in Queensland primarily 'Disability Services Qld'.

Of course what followed was the most devastating and psychological damaging situations (no such thing as reciprocal rights), my physical well being has taken a nose dive. I had numerous assessments with DSQ which were appalling to say the least.

Two months ago after continual ill health and administration and management of my life needs by my attendant career (full time) his health began to breakdown and the desperate need for respite and my care was paramount. We could never have managed for the previous years if it had not been for two exceptional friends who are both nurse managers and educators becoming a support mechanism. It was at this time as I had turned 63 years of age that the health care professionals attending my medical needs recommended a HACC assessment which was completed and approved, I am currently on a waiting list for an EACH program, however the HACC service I am receiving from 'Spiritus' (the service provider) has given much relief.

The contempt, arrogance and disregard for any well being by administrative staff and assessors with DSQ caused a great deal of distress to myself, attendant career, family and friends trying to meet life needs. I pray that no one will ever have to endure what I have through DSQ and that 'Blue Skies' will provide a mechanism and protocol to enhance the lives of people with a disability with authentic and valid management of 'Inclusivity' and the right to take part in the community without the judgment of so called 'able bodied' personnel such as demonstrated by DSQ.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

63

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A world with empathy, without pity, a willingness to listen and learn, without preconceived disrespect, would help society become aware they are equal. My vision is a society that cares.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

From a Government view the Carer's Allowance/Payment begins to compensate the role those that 'relieve' the tax dollar expenditure by taking on a caring role. Agencies, such as BIAQ, help educate those willing to listen. UQ has already profiled people to help their future psychological students understand and tailor treatment for brain injury.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

As a brain injured person my ability to progress my vision would appear limited. However contacting people in a position to do so is possible.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

62

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Educate all people as to the difficulties endured on a day to day basis for people with disabilities, especially accessibility, to local shops where some disabled live not just large shopping centers etc. educate people that disabled people like to interact in all forms of society, be it a cheerful hello or an invitation to just have a coffee or such and get to know them, acquired brain injury people have difficulty understanding why their friends don't invite them to parties or get together anymore and this can only come from educating people that it is ok to do so.

Learning early in childhood that someone different should be included then stays for life, a lot of prejudice comes from older thinking people, because when they were young, the disabled were put into institutions, this is very hard to unlearn.

Also a lot more services for support workers so that it not just family taking their child/adult places because there comes a time when you don't want to be with your mother/father, so lots more available funds for respite as well, so that this can happen.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

As a small town, we have a lot of support from local people because my son has been born and bred here and the locals have accepted him into our community, but in the larger cities and towns it doesn't happen that way because not everyone knows you, but in a small community they do. our experience has been one of lots of challenges though, the government could not keep up with his needs, the ramp for the preschool was put in after he left to go to school, and the ramp for the primary school was put in after he left to go to high school but luckily the disabled bathroom, toilet facilities were put in the high school before he left, these facilities were all approved before he got there but just took time to become a reality, so proper funding for kindys, schools, cafes, universities so that modifications can be done as quickly as possible, the positive is that other disabled children that have followed have not had to wait for some of the infrastructure to happen. When it is needed it is needed now, if a building was built with no stairs for normal people to walk up what would happen???

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I am available to help in any way possible, be it a committee member, or an advocate for the disabled, been there done that and have learnt a heap along the way, something needs also to be done about the communication between services, so that parents, careers know what is available, it is like a minefield out there trying to find out what is and isn't available, sometimes it gets so frustrating that I just give up and do without, the same as health care products, there should be a central place that parents can ring and it is all done for you, I spend at least 3-4 hours a month ring different services for supplies, and there is one scheme MAAS that we no longer use because it is just too much drama to access my vision would be a huge warehouse somewhere that distributes supplies to everyone instead of the 3 or 4 we use now, more funding for this would be good as well because we never make it to the end of the year without having to supply a heap of stuff out of our own pocket.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
61

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worker in the sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Less beauracracy. Streamlined services within generic programs.
Development/facilitation of natural links between people with a disability and individual's community.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Focus on ability. Staff have flexible approaches and innovative ideas.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Review service model. Community education programs.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
59-60

Who is responding to the Scenario?
Two respondents — Educators

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Resources, increased community knowledge about disabilities (to deal with stereotypical thinking and prejudice)

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

We are in a school that has a special education unit that operates under a full inclusion model – based on individual needs and provides alternate learning options where required.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Availability for consultation. Reflecting/futures planning for inclusivity in my own school environment. Liaison with broader community in clarifying determining roll of schools.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
58

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Disability power in cairns.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

To telling everyone lives around.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I take disability story office.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
57

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

- All buses should be fitted with a wheelchair ramp.
- All bus stops should be accessible for wheelchairs.
- School buses should be fitted with a wheelchair ramp if they have a disabled student attending.
- There should be more wheelchair friendly schools. (Qld is very hilly).
- There should be better resources (not centrelink) for disabled people to enjoy the same employment opportunities as able-bodied people.
- Funding for housing when catering for people with disabilities, buying establish V's building new?
- People with disabilities should have the same + equal entitlements as indigenous Australians (eg people with disabilities pay full uni fees, an indigenous pays nothing).
- More driving schools accessible for wheelchair people.
- Carers should be entitled to the same if not more dollar value as a "Single mothers Pension". (carers aren't out having coffee with the latest designer wheelchairs, they are attending medical appointments.)

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

ZERO

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

What action is required? As it comes down to the Government they will only do the bare minimal to cover there policy requirement.

Additional Information:

I have tried for 4 years to get the bus from home to school to be wheelchair accessible, as there is not many available I have been told these are required for the peak hour work run.

I have enquired at the school in regards to modifying 1 of the buses for a

ramp and this fell on deaf ears to the point no-one responded to my email sent back in April after Brooke felt violated that a male teacher had to lift her onto the bus so she could attend camp. To this day no-one has responded and I have also spoken to the headmistress secretary .

Integrating students into class activities (P.E.) when they have been granted funding for an integration aid. School lacks sports teachers so the art teacher takes sport and Brooke bounces a ball every lesson.

Brooke was denied disability support pension because our combined income is too high. As you can appreciate she is at an age where her friends are all working part time jobs, earning money, buying clothes and going out. Finding a part time job is very challenging as there are not many you sit down for, saving for a car, modifying a car which you need before you can start your lessons on driving, this all requires large amounts of money. The government says your parents should support you. How is she able to learn to stand on her own two feet in the community and society if the government want her to "SUCK" off us. They miss the whole point Disability Support Pension, which I'm sure you would agree financially supports a person with a disability.

We have been investigating a new wheelchair for her, a half arsed piece of crap from a certain supplier not custom made is about \$1500 and we would receive a little bit of funding, from memory \$500-800. A proper wheelchair custom made for her which would last her many years and enable her to be independent, \$3000-4000 receives no funding as we are ordering it from an individual.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
56

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Everyone accepted and included in this community. This would involve lots of people working together.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Being caring and co-operative.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Share my story with others.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
55

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A greater understanding in the community of what inclusive means. Education I guess.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

When my son visits the bank, hairdresser, local shop he is recognised. People ask him how's he going and what he's been up to. The very ordinariness of day to day ventures into the community. It just need to extend further ie workplaces

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I'm already doing so.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

54

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

The notion of disability itself is flawed. By its very nature it creates a class distinction between those who do not have needs (because they're not disabled), and those who do. We as a community need to accept that every person has strengths, and every person has needs. It is irrelevant what the needs are, but every person has the right to expect that those needs will be fulfilled. It should also be believed by the community as a whole that every person can and does contribute in a unique way. Basically, we need to see every individual as a whole person, with both strengths and needs.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

We live in a privileged society; a society full of resources. Given the right level of support, (and some people do get it), people with disabilities as we understand the term today, have contributed amazing things to society. They write, perform, fill important roles in our community etc. There is the potential already to view people with disabilities as I described in the previous question. The problem is that not everybody is viewed that way, (particularly people with intellectual impairments as we define them, and people with the added barrier of coming from disadvantaged backgrounds). The foundational concept that EVERY PERSON is an equal member in every way is not instilled into our community. There are people in the community who daily provide examples of how a life with a disability can be lived in full, and how admiration for that person as a unique individual can be present. We just need to work on instilling the more foundational concepts into our community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I am willing to educate people about attitudes that are really the symptoms of an underpinning philosophy, (that being the toxic notion of individualism). Individualism has caused greater division and isolation in society than anybody could have imagined. Materialism, capitalism and self centeredness are all driven by individualism. I am willing to campaign against it. I see its presence even within the disability community's attitude towards certain subjects, and it is of great concern I believe. Until we adopt the attitude that as a community, we have a responsibility to do everything we can for each other, and that we should avoid blatant self promotion and excessive self

indulgence, we cannot hope to create a better society, or a more inclusive one. My own life and that of my family is an example of how life can be for others, and it has all come about because of the attitudes displayed by those around us in our church and in our local community. We have always been willing to talk to people in whatever forum is available, about how this came to be.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
53

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worked in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

An inclusive community is one that enables individuals with a disability to be known by name, and know of others by name and their gifts, talents and contributions are valued, acknowledged, encouraged, supported and rewarded.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

For many individuals with a disability they are "in" community but not "of" community. The shift is possible with some conscious planning, community connecting and in the case of Human Services displaying leadership by "stepping back" and in so doing allow others to "step forward". The shift is from services, to clients, to supports for citizens.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

1. To continue to be part of the Blue Skies Group.
2. To help facilitate further discussion around known networks.
3. To instigate and in partnership with others have conversations around how the concepts of "Community Navigator" and "Community Builder" can be further developed and designed calling upon the design tool of Model Coherency Construction

Blue Skies Conversation #:
52

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A family member of someone with a disability

Dear Blue Skies Team,

Thank you for the motivating idealism in your Blue Skies Vision.

The concern I have for our son Claudis' future permanent accommodation restricts my view to practical problems and solutions. The following possible ideal accommodation arrangement may naturally lead to qualities of inclusion friendship and fulfillment.

Parallel placement of Intellectually Handicapped and Aged Care facilities could be very complimentary. They would be sovereign communities with a recognized border between them; but border crossing would be encouraged.

More importantly the handicapped resigned could volunteer with assistance they were able to: home care for the Aged, ground maintenance, laundry, kitchen etc. (some kind of pay scale would be organized). Organising and supervising the work would be a big overhead but this two could be done by volunteers or Aged resident help.

From this active interaction social interacting would develop.

With both communities the range of abilities and participation (or lack thereof) would be expected. The 2 communities would have various arrangement of independent, staged and supported/high care accommodation.

The dual community would have shared management, administration, medical and service infrastructure. Efficiency required with an aging population economy.

The "crunch" comes to money, but if the presented idea results in the best use there-of (the most positive outcomes all-round) it would be viable.

Thank you again for motivating me to off my 2 cents worth.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
51

Who is responding to the Scenario?
An individual

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A world where all human disability is treated as a normal human quality to be expected and tolerated with dignity.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Some improvement in my own understanding of 'disability'. Some improvement in community acceptance of disability as worthy of inclusion. Increase in number of peak bodies involved in disability services.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Unsure what is useful/effective?? Perhaps time in probono legal work (criminal law) one I am admitted?? (September 7th 2009)

Blue Skies Conversation #:
50

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Breaking down the barriers and make us as one.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Should come together as one and not be divided

Question 3:
What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

To unite everyone as one and not as individuals.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

49

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A world where all human disability is treated as a normal human quality to be expected and tolerated with dignity.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

As disabilities become more public, activities, help, training and general public respect for those in need will progressively improve.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Make more recreation and sports available to the disabled. I encourage these interested in sailing through "Sailability".

Blue Skies Conversation #:

48

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community?

At present I am studying a subject at university based around the idea of Community. Before beginning this subject I was under the impression that a community was simply where a person lived and therefore they were apart of that community. However, now that I am more than half way through the course of my study I have begun to realise that community is more than that. Community can mean different things to different people and what may appear to be a community to one could have a totally different impact upon someone else. However, no matter the different take on community, the understanding that I gain everyday whilst studying this is that everyone wants to be in one. Everyone wants to be a part of some community and to have that sense of belonging. I believe this is the same for people living their life with a disability. They strive to be accepted into the inclusive community as any other person would have. This is my vision. A community in which strives to include not those people with a disability but those who may not be as fortunate as me, those who are homeless, who are a different race to me and who may come from a different class. That truly, is an inclusive community.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

I think upon reflection that some elements of my vision for an inclusive community are already occurring. This could include some simply things such as providing access around the community for people with a disability.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

In order for my inclusive community to exist, I believe people need to be informed. They need to be informed about the everyday life of a disabled person, they need to be told how it is like to live as an Indigenous person in a white/anglo country, they need to understand what it is like to be poor and also what it is like to be in a class different to their own. These things, will only begin to happen when each person from the two sides sits down and really takes an interest in the other persons life. Hear their stories, listen to their opinions, and accept difference. It is only then when the inclusive community has been created.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
47

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A Legal Aid Lawyer

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Long term funding commitment – beyond electoral term cycle; representation of all in government decision making' support from and within private sector in financial, educational and social senses.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Representation in government decision making.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

46

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

In order, to create an inclusive community, a huge amount of education and awareness raising has to take place.

I believe, an awareness raising strategy needs to be developed and implemented for the whole community around the importance of an inclusive community for the whole community-not just for people with disabilities. Key stakeholders in the community need to be especially targeted. For example, teachers, police, community care teams, church or spiritual leaders, policy makers, government officials. In addition, there needs to be a movement towards integrated education for all.

My Vision, is a community, where diversity is welcomed, embraced and valued. It is a community, where people with disabilities participation in all areas of the community, is no longer a remarkable event.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

In relation to people with disabilities, some people are already accessing their community in an inclusive way, for example, by being an employee locally, being part of a local sports club etc. However, this has mainly been orchestrated by the family or a service, it does not happen organically, as it would for a person without a disability. In an inclusive community, people with disabilities would naturally be included in their community and the intentional work currently done by families or services to achieve this, would no longer have to happen.

Question 3:

What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I would be willing to take part in developing an awareness strategy around the importance of an inclusive community.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
45

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

That the whole community respond to meet the needs of people with a disability. Entitlement and inclusion are accepted as a given.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

There are elements with the community that are responding to people needs around entitlement and inclusion. The work needs to keep progressing.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Time, commitment and resources.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
44

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Funding support for new models of service that implement the inclusive community vision.

In short we need correct legislation and disability action plans in place to make inclusive community work and programs which incorporate elements of disability awareness and discrimination to the public etc

All buildings, houses etc should be built with hand rails in bathroom, toilets and to be able to become fully accessible if needed.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Apply for a leadership position in any new programs arising.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

43

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Blue Skies Founding Team Member

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is that people with disability like anyone else can have rich, inclusive and meaningful lives in the community of their choice. Families and friends play an important role in assisting them to do this. Services, families and community can work together to assist people with disability to take their rightful place in society. Everyone contributes to society and we are poorer for everyone that is excluded, limited or discriminated against.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Elements of my vision are already occurring when:

- The fundamental needs of people with disability are met.
- Services, families and the broader community are working in right relationship to achieve this.
- The natural authority of people with disability and their families and enduring friends is respected.
- People with disability are living ordinary lives, living in their own homes, have a job, enough money and have meaningful and freely given relationships.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I am willing to share with people with disability and their families the importance of understanding their natural authority, having a strong vision, a plan and strategies to achieve that vision. I can assist people to do this as a way of thinking throughout their lives

Blue Skies Conversation #:

42

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

All avenues of local, state, federal government working together – same ideals etc. Community groups working with families- provide support for disabled persons. Need to be resourced properly, have skilled persons to provide appropriate resources for disabled person find education, housing requirements, transport adjustments etc.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Kenmore State High School provides inclusion through giving access to all individuals to the curriculum and aspects of school life. Provides transition into real world – job, tafe, university etc. Community groups – etc s.p.a.c.e, Scouts, Guides etc. willing to include people with disabilities.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Anything you feel me capable of.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

41

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is to see people with disabilities met where they are at. Programs to help children understand differences in people and the good all people can bring. Social understanding of peoples differences. Children/ Adults to be supported and be able to get what they need even if they are diagnosed at an older age. Programs on tv for people to watch on the realities of disability. More community awareness.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Hmmmm some programs are slowly becoming more available.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Volunteer time and services when available.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

40

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A change in attitudes, values by all in society to accept and tolerate and include diversity.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

There are a few good person controlled services in the community that go a small way to make the _____ community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Talk to people in Cairns about Blue Skies.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
39

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Awareness, acceptance, and inclusion in my personal experience has to start from birth, and must continue through one's life. For me as a person with physical disabilities, being educated in a mainstream school where I was both student, and informally a teacher to thousands of students and teachers. I grew up in the 80's and 90's before you had to be assessed and placed. I merely attended the same school as my siblings. I feel this gave me the greatest start and grounding in life above any therapy or respite we were offered as it set me up to deal with the real world.

I don't see my needs as 'special needs' I have human needs, I think if we can break down the perception that has been built up over centuries that people different to the average person is special (not in a good way), we wouldn't have such a hard time being accepted as equal. The only thing special about me, is me, not the additional support I need to meet my human needs.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

The fact people are now being funded individually (although there is a shift back to block, group, and congregate care funding) allows people flexibility, choice and a little more autonomy in their homes and lives. Although service providers still have too much control over many people's lives who cannot or fear to speak out.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Writing, networking, educating, and sharing my experiences. I think the government needs to tap into the huge resource that is the adults with disability who are now living full independent lives in their communities. This resource could mentor and support young people and families trying to navigate their way through the maze that is the various govt. depts. and agencies whom one has to be in contact with just have human needs met.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

38

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A commitment by government to move away from economic outcomes to quality of life outcomes. WA does this well.

Need to build a layer of expertise in human service workers around genuine community living that can sit alongside the existing expertise the sector has around traditional service delivery models.

Creation of a culture amongst human service workers that community has the capacity to include, if asked. That services are not the answer in and of themselves.

Education of communities (geographical, interest based etc) that people with disabilities have much to offer and have an inherent right to be included. Many people I speak to in community still believe it is appropriate to segregate those who are different.

Greater levels of support for families to 'imagine better' and take the steps involved in moving forward.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Local Area Coordination (better in some areas of Australia than others)
Community Development workers in some local government areas

Commitment to strengths based and person centred approaches by some workers in the sector.

Some opportunities for communities to learn of the value of inclusion. Particularly the business community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Be part of a 'learning community' with a focus on encouraging govt/ services/programs to think differently and therefore respond differently to the needs of individuals & families who experience disability.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
37

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

I have given this a lot of thought over the years but as yet do not have a good clear vision.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I would like some suggestions regarding what useful action a family member could take to progress this vision.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

36

Who is responding to the Scenario?

An individual

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is that all people with all types of disabilities should not be discriminated against and that we are not second class citizens. We need inclusive and non-discriminatory requirements and legislation and policies by the Qld Government.

We need a good Disability Action Plan to make sure everything is covered by the Government. My vision that every Queenslanders, regardless of ability, should have access to the products and services provided to our communities by different Gov. Health organizations and the rights and dignity of people with disabilities should be respected. We need the society to move towards the development of altruistic, safe, just, borderless, inclusive communities also opportunities, at the new ways of thinking and doing and creating, of new pathways towards true social inclusion.

Agencies will need to manage change by reviewing the way they do business, in order to reach existing and potential clients with disabilities.

We need education and training for public, we need to be able to involve people with disabilities perhaps to help do training and try help others needing to be educated.

In short we need correct legislation and disability action plans in place to make inclusive community work and programs which incorporate elements of disability awareness and discrimination to the public etc

All buildings, houses etc should be built with hand rails in bathroom, toilets and to be able to become fully accessible if needed.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
35

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is that the community would include and support people with disabilities in all aspects of their lives, education, social and employment.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

The community supports and includes people with disabilities throughout their education teaching them social skills employment skills but after they leave school the local employers do not want to employ them.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I would tell the employers that everyone has a right to employment.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

34

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

For people with a disability to be WELCOMED into all parts of life and the community and to be able to live the life that THEY choose.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

My son is 29 (has no speech, has significant behavioral challenges) but is living in his own home. He has a car that his careers drive so that he can be out there and do the activities that he chooses. He has travelled to New York and Canada and this would have been thought to be impossible when he was young and if his supporters had not thought outside the square he would have been out of control and living a life that was so lonely and sad.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Anything barring murder.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
33

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

- Community education awareness.
- General alternative education for all children and adults.
- Educating to peoples individual needs on a consistent basis.
Welcoming support staff to assist with teaching people.
- Employment opportunities for all.
- Promoting peoples skills and knowledge to the community for employment options and challenges.
- Sharing of Stories.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

- Some education institutions are approaching inclusive opportunities for all people.
- Employment agencies have been operating with success in the community.
- Working partnerships have collaborated to share inclusive community visions. Eg The disability, health, government services, and communities.
- Working in creative and responsive partnerships with service providers and Corporate Business leaders.
- Involving community in education and information sessions working towards inclusive communities.
- Sharing of Stories.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Sharing stories with the community as a whole.
- Working in creative and responsive partnerships with community stakeholders/powerbrokers.
- Working in creative and responsive partnerships with service providers and Corporate Business leaders.
- Involving community in education and information sessions working towards inclusive communities.
- Working on projects with school students.

- Workshops on Asset Based Community Development opportunities for all people in the Townsville community.
- Sharing of Stories.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
32

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

I feel that people with disability and their families are not being treated with respect in ones communities and public places such as hospitals in or visiting Dr's as the members of one's community is shown respected set showed us we disabilities we are human beings as well.

Question 2: What do you like about the scenario?

I feel this is the greatest. I thank each and every one who has put in time. Many long hours and very wise input to get it to the minster for disabilities getting any help much from one's government all we can do is keep pushing our rights in government areas or till they listen to us and give us the help we so badly need to live in one community as one in years to come.

Question 3: How can this scenario be improved?

There's always areas for improvement in anything as time goes by. People input to blue skies will help to improve the rights of families, caring for their loved ones with disabilities or stand by them in communities living homes.

I feel on behalf of my family question 3 should be wiped our as anyone who thinks this scenario be all right to let go under the carpet is totally nuts and needs there hear x-rayed to see if they had brains.

Question 4: What would you like in its place?

Nothing at all.

Question 5: What impact would this scenario have on your life?

Heaps. To live with the knowledge we would have the rights of people without disabilities I know how hard to fight the rights of myself and daughter shairlee.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
31

Who is responding to the Scenario?
Secondary School Teacher

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A change in what it is that is valued – a focus on individual worth.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Community group, design, changes to the education system BUT there is a lack of support for day to day work of helping people.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Real government funding and support for people in this field.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
30

Who is responding to the Scenario?
Legal Aid Lawyer

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A supportive and inclusive community. Education of people to better understand what disability services are out there and how people can get involved. A better understanding of what it means to have a disability. More funding from government and private sectors.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

There are programs offered but need to be better funded and more widely supported within community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Volunteer work and fundraising.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
29

Who is responding to the Scenario?
Solicitor

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

My vision is for people with disability to live as valued and contributing members of their local community, with the support they need to do so.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

There are some people living independently in the community with support but at great cost to themselves and their families.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Supporting political candidates who support inclusive policies particularly in the areas of housing and education which will support people with disabilities to live as part of their local communities.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

28

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Worker in the sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A great deal more work devoted to breaking down the stereotypes & stigma which surrounds disability and tackling discrimination and exclusion. Wide reaching community educational campaigns (beginning with young children in schools & extending into every facet of the community) are needed to educate and inform people about Mental Illness, Intellectual & Physical Disability and Acquired Brain Injury etc. Only when diversity and difference amongst the population is acknowledged, accepted and championed will a community truly be inclusive.

There should be clear distinction between the role the government and not-for-profit sector play in relation to the provision of disability support services. The government should retain the role of contract/funds administrator and the not-for-profit community agencies take on the service delivery role. At the state level, the government shouldn't take on a dual role (funder and service provider).

Government funding for NFP disability service providers needs be based on the fair and true cost of service delivery. Heavily prescriptive guidelines on how funds can be utilized only serve to limit the benefits to be gained by the individuals receiving support. The government and NFP sector also need to develop programs to suit ever changing community needs and evaluate and respond to these changes.

Inclusive communities are those in which the entire community takes responsibility for ensuring people with a disability or mental illness are included in all aspects of community life. This can be achieved by promoting the use of an Asset Based Community Development approach to enhance the capacity of the community to include people with a disability. It is vital to appreciate and use existing individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs). It is important that projects aimed at promoting inclusion are community-driven rather than owned by external agencies.

Inclusive communities require inclusive housing initiatives where each individual's preference and choice for housing is taken into account. People who have a disability should have the opportunity of living in homes that are free from the potential conflicting relationship of landlord and service provider. Support services should be provided by separate organisations to those that

directly provide accommodation, so that an individual's home is not jeopardized by a change in their relationship with a service provider.

While people with mental illness may not identify (nor should be labeled) as having a disability, the high & complex support needs of some individuals with severe mental illness must be recognized and appropriately funded by the government in the same way that other disability groups are recognized & supported.

Training should be made more freely available to non-disability organizations and businesses in developing disability inclusive practices within the workplace and the community.

Services and supports should be provided in such a way as to maintain or strengthen the personal relationships and social networks of people who have a disability or have a mental illness. When government and service providers become involved in the lives of people with disability, they should not disrupt existing networks and connections, but seek to support and strengthen relationships and help build connections with the community.

It is vital people with a disability have an active & influential role in all levels of the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the services aimed at supporting people with disability.

An inclusive community would support the development of social firms/enterprises. The community would support viable and profitable businesses set up specifically to create employment for people with a disability those who would otherwise be severely disadvantaged in, or excluded from, the labour market.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

The asset based community development approach is slowly getting some traction in some areas the Queensland Disability Services utilises this approach for the pilot of the Lifelong Planning Support Program (LPSO).

There are a growing number of anti-stigma and educational campaigns currently running, such as those run by SANE and Beyondblue in the area of mental health.

Consumer involvement in the development of disability support programs is slowly becoming more common. Within mental health services, the introduction of Peer Workers (people with a lived personal experience of mental illness) within organizations is becoming more commonplace. At Open Minds we are continually evaluating and reviewing the input our consumers and Peer Workers have in the delivery of our services to ensure they have a say in the services they receive.

Research and support for social enterprise initiatives is gaining traction within the disability sector in Australia.

The government is beginning to recognize the need for innovative approaches to disability housing.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

At Open Minds we believe in the right of people with a disability to receive equal access and opportunity within the community. This is at the heart of all our communications. We will continue to work to raise awareness among the general public and in the community about why this is so vital.

Open Minds has a mission to continually and actively engage our clients, partners, stakeholders, supporters, funders and the wider community in order to evaluate and respond to changing needs of people with a disability.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
27

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A community with equal access to resources and a patient/ caring culture with no prejudice. Where everyone has decent housing and food no matter what their circumstance.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Housing within communities instead of institutions. Greater recreation and personal career roles supporting families with relatives who have disabilities.

Charities are assisting many families and individuals with greater Government assistance rather than creating Government departments

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I work for a not for profit and see discrimination and uncaring attitudes aimed at exclusion of people with disabilities rather than inclusion. Education, empathy and parental guidance I think are the keys to future tolerance.

Additional information:

We need education and training for public, we need to be able to involve people with disabilities perhaps to help do training and try help others needing to be educated.

In short we need correct legislation and disability action plans in place to make inclusive community work and programs which incorporate elements of disability awareness and discrimination to the public etc

All buildings, houses etc should be built with hand rails in bathroom, toilets and to be able to become fully accessible if needed.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

26

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Recognition that people with disability have the same entitlements that everyone else has - education, employment, social networks, home ownership, travel, in essence support to achieve their dreams. Easy access to equipment and support without having to beg.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

High quality accommodation that is designed for people with disability rather than modified.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Advocate for outcome measures that ensure all government services and service providers are collaborating to make a real difference to a person's life.

Modifying services offered to ensure dreams become a reality.

Using networks to lobby government for change - National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

25

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A family member of someone with a disability?

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

This is something that people have talked and talked and talked about for many years with no great inroads being made. We NEED to spend money on generating permanent accommodation for the disabled as their parents age and NOT leave it until the CRISIS/CATASTROPHY stage before anything is done.

More committees, consultative agencies and pen pushers are not needed, just some common sense and a notion of what the disabled would possibly want, not what our pipedream would look like. Communal living with quality of life is not too much to aspire to, IS IT?

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Some disabled people live in homes and units within the community and if they are not cared for totally, they tend to lose a sense of belonging within their immediate community setting. This leads to isolation other than going to some social events that all stakeholders agree to go to.

It is very hard for the disabled to assimilate without the willingness of generous families, individuals and community groups helping them to socialise and feel part of the broader community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

My vision does not sit with certain government and lobby groups. Over recent years we have seen a wave of retirement villages and aged people centres being built to cater for older people as they become frailer and less able to care for themselves. DO PEOPLE GO TO/BUY these places because they will feel unhappy??? DO THE AUTHORITIES NOT SEE SOME SIMILARITIES between the disabled and the elderly as they try to engage in their everyday lives. A communal typesetting with 24/7 care, a communal bus and other on site facilities is surely more ideal for those who cannot look after

themselves. SOME PEOPLE IN HIGHER AUTHORITY NEED to get out there and see when these people are at their happiest. IT IS when they are with their peers, just like YOU and I.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
24

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A person with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Education/advertising to break down barriers/ stigmatization /prejudice –
Acceptance (this was very prominent for Allan)

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Access to the community – job opportunities / employer flexibility and
knowledge

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Possibly be involved in school promotional workshops.

NOTE: Allan feels that he has accepted his limitations on a personal basis and this can flow through to community acceptance. “When the community can accept people with difference, then we’ve achieved a great thing”

Blue Skies Conversation #:
23

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Does focus on family change chain of command? Seems to be a problem with supporting an individual through their lives when parents pass on, they may move etc.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

We need constant, unflinching, individual support, with least amount of stress to individual and their family.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Blue Skies Conversation #:
22

Who is responding to the Scenario?
A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Commonwealth vision – student verified with a disability across all states.
Community connectors – protect, skill and resource people with disabilities to be involved in classroom community (resource people). A National Framework. Greater funding. Empower communities.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

The recognition that action is needed. A hope/inspiration for the future.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Further input – discussion – education.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
21

Who is responding to the Scenario?
Secondary Teacher

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Natural vision and policies in place to ensure all members of a community have access to acquiring skills, resources and the protection of these skills. It needs commonwealth support and enough resources to access this support.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Connecting people with a disability to resources. Communication between all relevant parties. Recognition and basic understanding of disabilities and needs.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Share within the community. Follow procedures and practices set in place.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

20

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Teacher secondary

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Consistency in moving between communities. Empowering, educating, resourcing, properly skilling and protection g the “community”. Properly education and equipping those directly involved. Giving clear places of context and support. Clear responsibilities. Clear channels to go through. Specific clear support and education when including in the classroom. Clear expectations. Support for the education/teachers.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Assists in the classroom connected to specific students who know how to best help those students get the most out of class. Disabled toilets. Lefts and ramps throughout the community.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Attend workshop and specific clear information session to better help us to cope in the classroom and best assist ALL students.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

19

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Educate the community starting from the ground level – use out schools to inform and influence – have stronger integration where children help other children whether they have a disability or not.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Integrating students with a disability into mainstream classrooms. There needs to be more focus on what these children can do for each other, how they can gain from the experience.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Talk with teacher and members of the department of education to educate them and share experiences and stories.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

18

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector and a family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Education, exposure, stories, personal connections.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Some exposure and personal connections.

Question 3:

What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Blue Skies Conversation #:

17

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Office of the Public Advocate, Brisbane City

I think the idea of the vision, of the scenario rather, is excellent. I think it does need to be a vision that people feel they are working towards otherwise I think there's a tendency for. People feel like they are chipping away at tiny little bits without necessarily always thinking of the overarching vision but what might be achievable so I think the idea in principle is excellent. I really like most of the content. I have some specific comments to make and then we can go to the questions at the end of the book if you would like.

But I think I will have addressed some of those questions on the way through. So just perhaps naming the particular sections to which the comments relate. Or perhaps as an overall comment I can say that I just wondered whether there could be more focus or more attention to the development of generic services and the role that they should have in this scenario. Because I think that if generic services, government and non government, were more accessible that would also address a lot of issues. I think there is a lot of focus on disability specific service development. There is also quite a bit of focus upon what government could go. But I think we're talking broader than government here. We're not just talking NGO disability specific services providers either. What we want is an entire community that is inclusive and I think there could be some more around that and I will identify a couple of particular areas where it think that could be included.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

16

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Office of the Public Advocate, Brisbane City

Question 1: What do you like about this scenario?

The vision agrees with what I have thought for sometime about the role that everyone in community has as community members to all other community members including those with disability. That there is no other document that I am aware of that actually sets out that principle and also a framework to move towards that and that is what I mentioned before in that in this document there is a structure that builds and is very clear and has practical steps for the sectors that make up this dynamic from people with disabilities themselves, their families, to community through to services providers through to government. Um, and there are real tangible, um, visions I guess, that set out a framework for practical strategies and there are some practice strategies in there about the community networkers and builders, because central to this is that building of community capacity and by that I mean the capacity of community to have different attitudes and therefore to respond to people with disability. I think I would like to just add to that one of the things, and it hadn't occurred to me till this moment so thank you for getting me to keep talking. Um. It does touch on it but I am just wondering if this is one of the points that needs fine tuning. It talks about people having their own space their own home as a basis for independent living and therefore being part of a community. I think one of the main barriers to that, right now and there are many, but one of the significant ones. And I know people are concerned about this and they talk about it all the time. Is the whole issue of group living. Shared tenancies. While that was a solution to institutionalisation, it is one of the, or lets say it was one of the solutions that was developed in response to de- institutionalisation. But I think it has also set up one of the main barrier to general social inclusion and its that marriage of the fact that you don't expect anyone, or everyone in community to visit spend time having a cup of tea or doing activities. It's about the fact that people in community might just wave across the fence and say hello. That someone in the shop will recognize someone who comes in regularly and just, you know, greet them. That might be all it is. But groups inhibit activities even at that level. I think groups inhibit the capacity most people in the community have to respond in some way because it is much more difficult to respond to a group than an individual. And um, so, it's not that I don't like that about the scenario I just think that that is one of the points that could be reinforced a bit about, um, some of the meanings of what it means to live independently in community. That's not teased out. And it could be teased out a little bit.

Question 2: How can this scenario be improved?

For me its more a matter of fine tuning. If I were to go back to what I like about it I like the structure and how it is set up so that it builds through laying the foundation but also targets different stakeholders with laying out expectations. So for me the improvement is more about fine tuning. Some of the words and maybe just a couple of concepts that's more about fine tuning than changing substantially.

Question 3: What don't you like about this scenario?

I don't really have any comment there.

Question 4: What would you like in its place?

Not comment. This is a piece of work which is quiet sophisticated and well developed. Certainly I haven't achieved this so I am not in a position to say what is something in it's place.

Question 5: What impact would this scenario have on your life?

I think there's two aspects to that. One is um, work, the impact would be very exciting work wise because we here in the office do systems advocacy and this is about significant systems reform. I mean this is systems reform on a level which is way beyond I think um, no I won't say way beyond, but I think it's significant. Whereas a lot of the work that we do is looking at specific issues, this is systems change on a broad scale so. On a personal level, um, what impact, well, it would again be significant as a person with a daughter with an intellectual disability, um, and jjust understanding the limitations that are there without any paid support, any funding for paid support so reliance on us as family and friends to form the support network is just a constant factor and so living in a different society that was more genuinely inclusive, um, would not only, um, I guess shift the dynamic personally so that there would be more personal freedom if you like it would also be inspiring in terms of seeing some of those needs in our daughter that we cannot meet. You know. Doing things with peers and friends rather than always going out with mum and dad when she is 27. Um, you know, less iscolation, less rejection, these are the cancers really in terms of what you experience as a parent and family member and anything that would mean that those weren't really daily realities; you've reached this point where it is very difficult to solve that stuff. You just learn to live with it as a factor. Um, to have a different experience of life you know you cease to dare to dream that both for yourself as well as for your family member who has a disability.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

15

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Parent of a child with a disability

Question 1: What do you like about this scenario?

The thought that these being a 'range of inclusive and sustainable housing alternatives' where more _____ exist.

Question 2: How can this scenario be improved?

By improving the language so that more people can understand it?
"Programmatic specificity" etc. etc – the language is similar!

Question 3: What don't you like about this scenario?

That it may take too long to achieve when the need is NOW!

Question 4: What would you like in its place?

Need more money to be spent on workshops/research – not just funding to go towards the programs.

Question 5: What impact would this scenario have on your life?

Not unless funding is available to achieve this "scenario".



Blue Skies Conversation #:

14

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

My positive message about Blue Skies:

The vision of Blue Skies is clear: that genuine 'inclusion' is, at its core, spirit and heart. It is centered in valuing people and investing in social capital. And, it's like happiness: if we try to measure it, control it and make it accountable, it will be crushed in the process.

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

To develop an inclusive community, it will take people who live inclusivity. In other words, each of us has people with a disability at the core of our lives. Not on the periphery, at the core.

Just recently I lost a very dear friend with a disability. She spent most of the past 40 years of her life in an institution and lived, in the fullest sense of the word, the last ten years of her life in community. She was a woman without equal in energy, humour, speed of action, ingenuity, creativity and emotion. It was only when she passed on that I realised how much she had given me, and how much I needed her in my life. As a result, I have recommitted to my friends with a disability with a passion I haven't had for several years. Unfortunately it took the death of a very special woman to shake me out of my complacency.

For 'inclusive community' to be more than rhetoric, it will take each and every one of us knowing, in the deepest sense, that we cannot live richly without people with a disability in our lives. That without them, our lives are so much poorer. That they make our lives rich in ways that cannot be replicated through any other means, and that the fight for their full inclusion gives our lives passion and purpose. This knowledge will fuel us when the vision is rejected by those who don't understand that authentic inclusion is what makes a society truly great.

It will also take educating our communities. We have assumed for a long time that the community understands how to be inclusive. Deinstitutionalisation in the 1990s and the subsequent explosion in people who are chronically homeless has shown us that we don't actually know how to include vulnerable people. Or, that heaven forbid, we don't

want to. We need to be taught and encouraged. If our communities have lost what it means to be community, we may have to teach people in the most formal of ways – through our education system. If that's what it takes to reignite the spark and reinforce the vision on a broad scale, then let's not shy away from this approach.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Often times in our fight to secure the rights of people with a disability, we forget that we are all on the same side. Instead of pooling our efforts and patiently nurturing and leading each other to a more mature outlook, we look for the flaws in the way services deliver responses, or we criticise families for having a limited vision of what is possible for their family members.

In January I began work with a service provider that has, more recently, not been viewed positively within the disability sector. I saw it as a challenge to situate myself within the organisation and contribute rather than criticize. I have been humbled by the commitment, energy and advocacy of dedicated workers whose passion for people is no less than mine, in fact is greater. Many work far in excess of their paid hours to make sure that people have a better life than the funding provides for. In essence I had to recognise that these people work within the same constraints that we all do – a stifling reliance on limited government funding and a broader culture of risk management. I have learned that I don't have a right to criticize if I'm not willing to support change. So, what is already happening is that we have an enormously dedicated and caring core of workers who pour themselves into their work. We have an even more passionate group of family members, advocates and allies who pour their lives into their family members. We need to honour these gifts despite the lack of perfection that we see. Let's support the good and encourage even better practice with honest, yet supportive, feedback... alongside an offer to help.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

I work in the disability sector, I'm doing post-graduate studies in human services/disability studies, many of my friends work with vulnerable groups of people, and I have friends with a disability or mental health issues whom I support or advocate for. There is little time for much else! However, I would love to be a part of the thinking around Blue Skies, particularly in assessing how my own work can fit within this framework and progress it. I would also like to be involved in discussions that anchor the vision in reality, that is, the development of actual, on-the-ground responses to people. A vision is only as useful as the manifestation of it in people's lives.

And finally, I would only be willing to participate in Blue Skies as an inclusive culture that rejects criticism of well-meaning attempts to improve the lives of people with a disability. This includes the way we talk about, and interact with, government. I want to be part of a vision that lives inclusivity, not just preaches it, and there is no room for perfectionism in truly inclusive thinking.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

13

Who is responding to the Scenario?

I work in the disability sector and also am the mother of a 22 year old son who has a disability.

Question 1:

What would it take to create an inclusive community?

- Greater opportunities need to be created for people with disability to develop relationships with individuals who share common interests in their local communities that can be sustained over time
- People with disability need to be able to form relationships with people who are not paid to spend time with them.
- That the general public understands and welcomes diversity. People without disability need to have more opportunities to interact with people with disability so that they can gain this understanding and realize that their fears around the unknown are unfounded.
- People with disability need adequate supports to enable them to participate more fully within the community. The public needs to realize that it is a basic human right to be included.
- We need more people in our society who care about people with disability and who are willing to challenge unacceptable practices and to push boundaries.
- Families need support to help them to vision and plan for a normal and typical life for their family member with disability. Families need to realize that they should not accept second best just because this is all that has been offered to them.
- Families of people with disability need to become proactive but need support to be able to do this.
- People in a position of power need to be educated about the importance of an inclusive community
- The resources that are currently being used to support Special Schools should be channeled into mainstream schools so that children with disability can be adequately supported next to children without disability.
- Local neighbourhoods should be places where people with disability are accepted, known and valued.
- The work that community members do with people with disability is valued and their wage reflects this.
- People with disability need to have far greater opportunities to enter the workplace.

- Resources need to be put towards building capacity in the community

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

- There are now legislative safeguards in place.
- Families and people with disability have greater expectations than in the past.
- People with disability are starting to get their own voice
- There are good examples of family governed services where people with disability are living typical lives within their local community
- Belief that families have the natural authority and should be respected, is now more widespread
- Large institutions have diminished

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

- Work towards changing the current terminology of “Community Access” to “Community Inclusion” (writing articles, talking people about it)
- Work with families on developing a vision and a plan in which they aim towards their son/daughter living an independent adult life within their local community.
- Work with others to lobby people in positions of power to make changes to current policy and funding decisions

Question 4: What do you like about this scenario?

- It puts practical strategies in place and states it in positive terms. i.e that is how it is going to be rather than that is what we would like it to be.
- It looks at how all sectors of our society can work in collaboration for a better future for people with disability than they can currently look forward to.
- it takes the onus off families to do all the work and gives them support with people in roles designed specifically to do this – community builders and navigators.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

12

Who is responding to the Scenario?

Worker in the sector

Additional information:

The Blue Skies scenario made for very interesting reading.

It is very broad, and a lot of the principles put forward are ones that many of us are doing our best to uphold already, and indeed are principles that are outlined in current legislation. The scenario became more engaging as more specific ideas came to light, but it would be even more thought-provoking to hear exactly how the group see some of the ideas actually working - will that type of information come out of the future sessions?

The Community Navigator is a great idea. So often people are simply not aware of what is out there for them (as far as services go), and what they could achieve by joining forces with other individuals and families in similar situations. How, in practice, would it be ensured the Community Navigator reaches *everyone*?

The idea of using the Commonwealth Government to fund individual support needs, and with a consistent assessment process, is a great idea too. We have a person who uses our accommodation support service, who moved to Queensland from another State. It has been a bit of a headache regarding her funding - even though she was eligible for funding in her previous State, she probably won't be receiving any funds from the Queensland Government. That's a ringing endorsement for the group's recognition that a more consistent system is needed.

In the opening couple of paragraphs of the scenario, in relation to schooling, there is mention of children with a disability having "full access to the standard curriculum with supports as required". Again, it would be interesting to hear how the group sees this actually working, but there is certainly plenty of debate around how the education system should operate for children with disabilities. Would it not be worthwhile for someone with an education background to be in your group? - Education Queensland being such a huge and very important provider of services to people with disabilities.

Thanks for the opportunity to offer some feedback.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

11

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Stereotypes to be dispelled – working together.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Community Living Association at Nundah are a great organization.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Incorporate strategies into our organizational business plan.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

10

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Education to commence from school education or earlier. I like the idea of community builders, this would be great to educate and set up opportunities for awareness of disability in the community.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

LAC's – but only selected area so far. Engagement of community in existing joint relationship with clients. Community be invited to be involved in project of the organization.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Anything that my skills would be an asset towards progressing this vision.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

9

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

For all people, agencies and employees to treat and include all people equally regardless of their abilities, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. Everyone to be education about inclusion.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Strong networks with other agencies and employers. Strong advocacy and information sessions to education community members who need this.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Continue advocacy for inclusion for all and educating people.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

8

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

A family member of someone with a disability

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Conversations about an inclusive community in all areas of our lives and communities. A space to engage on such matters. Enforcement of legislation in part around accessible infrastructure, human rights and citizenship models. Leaders. A community that cares. An asset based and strengths based approach. A focus on community development and capacity building. Education and training around key elements. Community and individual driven policies, activities, agenda's etc.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

The inclusive community workshop – not just disability concerned. The use of 'inclusive communities' language in sectors outside of disability.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Host inclusive communities' workshops at a local level across all of the community. Whatever it takes be visible, accessible and available to work on or deliver projects that matter.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

7

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A community that starts at the early education years. All schools should have a community curriculum.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Educational process throughout a lifetime. Teach kids to understand a lifetime of diverse abilities.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Advocate for it. Assist with the decision to promote it.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

6

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Breaking down the barriers through education and exposure. Sharing stories.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Respecting the individual as an individual to make his own choice of lifestyle.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Participation in educative programs for all community consumers and service providers.

Blue Skies Conversation #:
5

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Vision: - All people are accepted and valued as members of the community. That all people can contribute to community – all have a voice.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that is already occurring?

Community is beginning to see people with disability as accepted and not seen as images of pity. The more awareness and positive stories that appear the more community will be accepting.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Continue to provide positive support to people with disability. Contribute to portray positive images in my local community and provide them with valued roles.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

4

Who is responding to the Scenario?

An employment service provider

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

An inclusive community is one where special compensations do not need to be made. Physical access is the same for all. People are accepted no matter 'what' they are.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Education system is slowly being tailored to meet multiple needs – had particularly become apparent as more of the younger generations move into management positions – more likely to give a person with a disability a go.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Current – within job role – advocacy of ability, continued 'education' to employee's/businesses in the community – focus on flexibility – to find what a person does well and tailor a job that fits and meets employer needs.

I am writing from an employment focus – as a manager of an agency funded to find employment for persons with a disability in open labour market. I have been in the industry for fifteen years so have been well placed to see change. Sometimes it seems that nothing changes but when you take time to reflect on what was 5, 10, 20 years ago, that's when you realize that changes are happening and things are getting better. That there is hope for the future.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

3

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

Education. Teaching inclusion from a young age. Involvement within out organization e.t. work collaboratively and in partnership in the community garden, drama and arts programs; movie premiers. Employment opportunities for person with a disability. Accessible community. Accommodation. Affordable housing to live independently. Transportation. No bus service available and it's to hot to walk.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Accommodation support. Alternative accommodation options and affordable housing. Day service. Community inclusion in community garden. Rotary. Employment opportunities for person with a disability. Transition from school to work place. New re development of the CBD; access issues addressed, shelter. Disability services increase in services that reflect inclusion.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Continue working collaboratively within the community. Being involved in sporting arts and drama, employment opportunities for students. Partnerships with corporate company's. Develop the day service from three days to five or seven days per week. Develop social groups that participate in general community activities. Continue to lobby local government.

Blue Skies Conversation #:

2

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

That all people begin at the same place – education, school room, playground, learning, sharing, growing, building, understanding, compromising, accepting.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Community members stepping into the lives of people to try to 'even the ground', people recognizing that they can be, could be, should be involved.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Talking to and with people sharing stories, showing examples of how people's lives can be changed in simple ways. If you want to change, you need to be a part of making it happen!

Blue Skies Conversation #:

1

Who is responding to the Scenario?

A worker in the disability sector

Question 1: What would it take to create an inclusive community? What is your vision?

A community that welcomes and supports diversity. Working with people to move their knowledge forward.

Question 2: Please describe the elements of your vision for an inclusive community that are already occurring?

Some of the Post School activities on the S.S.C.

Question 3: What action would you be willing to take to progress this vision?

Continue dialogue and building bridges across communities and sections of the community.