



Centre for Inclusive Employment & Disability Employment Australia Lunch & Learn Session | Wednesday, 8 October 2025

Centre for Inclusive Employment - Your New Disability Employment Resource Hub

Speaker: Jenny Crosbie

Host: Sally Karandews (DEA)

SALLY KARANDREWS: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to our first lunch and learn in this series. My name is Sally, I am the policy manager at Disability Employment Australia and I will be your host for the series of Webinars that we will be hosting. To begin today I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which each of us are joining from. For me, that's the land of the Darkinjung people and I pay my respect to Elders past, present and emerging. Some housekeeping to begin with. If you would like to turn on the captions, please use the closed caption, the CC button at the bottom of your screen in your Zoom controls. We will also be posting a link in the chat and you can access the captions through there. If you have any issues accessing the captions, you can message us in the chat and we will work on addressing those for you.

If you have any other access needs also please pop them in the chat and we will work to address those as well while we can. The lunch and learn Webinars are being presented by Disability Employment Australia and the Centre for Inclusive Employment. Today there will be a series of Webinars that we will be hosting across the next four Wednesdays and we will each have a series of practical topics and be complete are resources and practical actions that you can undertake as we move into the new Inclusive Employment Australia contract. For today's Webinar I am joined by Jenny Crosbie. Jenny is the interim director at the Centre for Inclusive Employment at the Swinburne University. Jenny is not only an accomplished academic, but she also has a

history in employment services in both delivering and leading services, but also in systemic policy and advocacy matters and she was the first executive officer of Disability Employment Australia and has worked for a number of different providers as well. So please join with me in welcoming Jenny and she will be presenting our session today on the Centre for Inclusive Employment.

JENNY CROSBIE: Thank you very much Sally for that introduction. I will just share my screen so that everybody can see my slides. It is great to be here. Thank you for joining us today over your lunch break, or if you are in Western Australia or one of the other States, perhaps your brunch or morning tea break, we appreciate you joining us here today to hear a bit more about the Inclusive Employment Australia. I am joining here from the Wurundjeri land in Melbourne and acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us today and pay my respects to Elders past and present. Today's session to launch the lunch and learn series, what we decided to do was just give you a orientation to the new Centre for Inclusive Employment Online Hub. So what we are going to do today is just walk you through the hub and the different - the way it is structured and the different resources that are available to Inclusive Employment Australia providers now. The website has not gone live yet, it will be going live around the 1st of December, if you are not an Inclusive Employment Australia member you don't have access to the hub at the moment, but you will have in the next few weeks.

Some of you will have heard me present before or have some information about the centre. So just to give you a quick overview, the purpose of this Centre for Inclusive Employment is to collect, translate and share best practice information about what works in disability employment. So we know that there is lots of evidence out there, there is practice-based evidence, there is academic evidence and there is emerging evidence, but we don't have a central place where that evidence is collected, translated and shared with, particularly with people who are providing employment services. So the overarching aim of the centre is to do those things. Of course by collecting, translating and sharing that information the employment outcomes for people with disabilities will hopefully improve.

So there is many ways that providers will be able to intersect with the centre. The primary mechanism as I have said is the Centre for Inclusive online hub

available now to providers. The hub will host resources which are focused on disability awareness, employer engagement and the building blocks to employment and there will also be resources, training and toolkits and other resources. The online hub will be built out over time as new resources are added. We were funded in March, and we became operational in July, so the website, or the online hub is very much, we are at the starting line rather than the finishing line, so the architecture has been built, the design work has been done and now we will be building the hub out over time. We are also working with some engineers at Swinburne who are going to create a chatbot to enable online hub users to search what we call a bounded evidence set. As we build the evidence base for what works we will enable you to search that evidence base, so rather than it searching everything on the Internet it will search just what we have assessed as being good practice, good evidence.

One of the first things that we launched back in May was the Inclusive Employment Australia collection, so Australia policy online, APO are an independent website and they host website collections. We have worked with them to create this Australia inclusive collection, it is now live on APO and it will also be searchable through the online hub. There are now 212 resources available in there, mostly not academic articles, mostly resources and tools and reports that have been written. So we are curating that collection and making sure that all the information in there is topical and related to disability employment.

In terms of the design of the hub we did design workshop and some of you may have been part of those. The decision was taken to design the hub in a role agnostic way. That means that the evidence about what works is available to everybody, including people with disability, families, employers and employment service workforce. So rather than organising the hub by role type, for providers for people with disabilities, et cetera, the decision was made to make the information available to everybody. We are hoping that by making the evidence about what works widely available it will drive change in the sector through people with disabilities being more aware of what works and coming into providers and asking for the types of supports and services that they now know can lead to the employment outcomes for example.

So what we are going to do now is I am going to just step you through some

of the key pages of the website, the online hub so that you can hopefully after the Webinar you'll be able to go and have a look at the resources, we won't be deep diving into any of the resources today, really the purpose is to give you an orientation to the site so that you can find the resources you need. So this is the home page for the Centre for Inclusive Employment. You might recognise the design there, those of you who are Inclusive Employment Australia providers, the design and branding is very much in line to the new branding that you will have received from DSS as well. Also the images that you will see have all been supplied by DSS.

So we've got a welcome page there which outlines just some basic information about the purpose of the centre, the kind of work we'll be doing and how we will be supporting providers. We have a featured news section on the hub. Certainly this is one way to stay up-to-date quickly with what's changed on the hub. So we will be making sure that as we build out the hub over time we've got a few strategies around ensuring that we are aligning new resources, for example we might align resource releases with particular days of celebration or weeks where there is a focus at the moment for example it is Down Syndrome month, so we might be adding resources that relate to people with Down Syndrome or intellectual disability as part of co-ordinated drop of resources. So in the meantime come here to the featured news section and this is where you'll see the most recent and up-to-date information. You can see there that the lunch and learns are linked there. We also have the Employer Engagement and Capability page linked and also the Building Disability Awareness and Confidence page. I am going to talk to you about those a bit more in a minute.

So in terms of building out the website, the Department of Social Services had a very strong emphasis for our first few months of work on two particular topics. So the first is understanding disability, and the second is employer engagement. So as well as standing up the website, it was part of our remit was to build out resources and information under these two topics. So when you use the hub you'll see that these two sections of the website are more built out than other sections, and that's the reason why. Those other sections will be built out over the next few months.

So this section is called understanding disability. The reason that this has

been called out by the Department and others is because there was recommendations in the Disability Royal Commission reports about lifting up awareness of disability and understanding of particular disability types amongst the employment services workforce. So this particular topic has a direct link back to the Disability Royal Commission.

So on each page you will see that there is a landing page, which was the page I just showed you, then we go into the next level of page which has a menu down the side and you can see that understanding disability we've got a number of topics that we will be building out, including models of disability, types of disability, building disability awareness, identifying barriers to employment, and setting up conditions for success. So those five sections will be built out over time. So on the overview page you'll see we've put some quotes there from people with disabilities themselves, and we have come into building this online hub very much looking to bring the voice - raise up the voice of people with lived experience of disability themselves in the resources and information that's provided.

We have put a short video here that was produced last year for international Day of Persons With Disability and that man there is actually Dean and he used to be DEA's ambassador, he was our ambassador for probably five years, so it is ironic that that screenshot has him as one of the people that's featured in the video. It is just a nice video to hear the voices of people with disability.

Then on each page there will be key strategies for success which, as I just outlined they are in that menu on the left-hand side. You will be able to click on to each of these strategies and that will lead you to further information, resources and tools. So it is a layered approach. There is some information on the first page and then the information gets more complex and deeper as you move through the pages.

So in terms of what we've got on offer in the understanding disability section, we've also added under the training and resources section an online training module which has been written by ADCET who work in the higher education around disability inclusion and it is a short module on introduction to disability awareness that has a microcredential, so you are welcome to click on that link

and it will take you to the ADCET page and you are able to undertake that training and achieve that short microcredential.

So then we move into types of disability, and so we debated how to present this information, but the design work, we resolved in the end that we did need to dive into different types of disability given the different supports needs people have, the different workplace adjustments, people with different disability types have, and through the design process we heard that this is the kind of information that the frontline workforce really need when they are meeting a new person for the first time or they have got a few different people with a few different disability types, having this really practical information was really important. There is the landing page, so types of disability and there is again another image supplied by DSS there of a person with their guide dog.

So again we go into the overview page. So there is some information on this page. We have tried to put a quote in each page so again we can call out that lived experience voice. So on each overview page there is some basic information or brief information to lead you through to the next section.

So once you click through we have listed disability types in alphabetical order, and they are not all built out as yet. So what we have done for this section is we have reached out to the disability representative organisations who are funded by the Department of Social Services and have their own resources that they have created. Where possible we have called on those disability representative organisations and brought their information over. We weren't able to do that all the time, so you'll see there is a mix of resources there from the Australian Human Rights Commission, from Job Access and from some other disability-led organisations as well. You'll see that it says autism and neurodivergence there and you can click there and it will take you to some information about autism and neurodivergence which has come from the autism alliance, the disability organisations and under each section is going to be guides. For this particular section the guide is about how to support a neurodivergent workforce. What we have found in reviewing the information is there is a lot of guides and resources that have actually been written for employers, not so much has been written for employment service providers. You'll sometimes see that these resources are written in the language for an employer, but in terms of how providers can use it, providers are the broker or

the bridge between people with disabilities and employers, so we are hoping that those resources will be useful in supporting the providers to speak to employers and advocate for people with disabilities in the workforce.

So you can also see there blind and vision impaired is another category and the resource there, the guide there is called an eye to the future, unlocking the potential of employing people who are blind or vision impaired and we'll go into that in a bit more detail in a minute.

Cognitive and intellectual disability we don't have any guides there at the moment, but there is a link there that you can read more information from one of the advocacy organisations, communication disability, deaf and hard of hearing is there and we've got two resources there around building competency for supporting people who are deaf or hard of hearing and also some everyday communication tips for supporting people with deafness and hearing loss. They are nice practical resources that can help build understanding how to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing people and provide you with some good tips.

We've also got some language guides. So there is a video and transcript there and also some text there about why language matters, why inclusive language is important and how we can really understand how language can really impact on the way we support people with disabilities and the way we talk about people with disabilities, so there is a good knowledge there for people who have lived experience as well. If we jump back to blind and vision impaired, this is the one I thought we'd do the deep dive into, this guide, an eye to the future unlocking the potential of employing people who are blind or vision impaired, it was created by Blind Citizens Australia who are a disability-led organisation and they had funding from the Department of Social Services to create this resource. We thought that rather than replicating or duplicating this was a nice resource that we could bring over and make available.

As we move through once we click on to the resource heading, you can see there that it brings up a page with some of the links there. So we are trying to categorise all of the resources that are available to make them more easily searchable. So if you search the word "accessibility", then this guide would be

one of the resources that appeared in your search. Then there is of course a link at the bottom there that you can click on to to get access to the resource.

So if we click through, it is a Word document this one, a 19 page step by step guide that contains information about supporting people who are blind or vision impaired into employment. It has been very well written. It has got sections on technology, on common types of vision impairment, mobility, so really a lot of key issues that employment service support staff would need to understand to support a person who is blind or vision impaired who is looking for employment.

So as I said, over time each of these sections will be built out. When you go on the hub you might see that some links are not clicking yet and that's because we haven't built out those sections of the hub yet, but we are working on it as we speak and we've got a second round of content going live in about six weeks' time, so keep coming back and checking those sections because we will be building out those resources between now and the end of the year.

Also you'll find that there is not as many practical tools, day-to-day use tools at the moment, but that's a strong focus for our work at the moment is to really link the evidence to practice by providing tools and checklists and language guides and other things that people can use day-to-day as they are delivering services.

So let's jump over to the other major section on the website which is called building blocks to employment. Again we worked with a number of design groups to try to understand how is the best way to present information about what works in relation to disability employment, and we landed on this building blocks language because it is not necessarily linear, but each of these building blocks contains a lot of the practice and the supports that really lead to good outcomes for people.

So you can see up the top there that's where you find the building blocks to employment menu, so you can access this part of the website by going to the menu across the top and clicking on "building blocks to employment." Once again it has a landing page and some brief information about what you'll find in

this section. Then we go into the key strategies for success. So for this section of the website there are 6 key strategies for success and each one of them will be built out across those various layers so there is access to information, evidence, and also those practical tools and resources. So the strategies for success for the building blocks, the first one is laying foundations for work, so this is about getting ready for work and transition from school to work, returning to work, those kinds of topics will be featured here. Getting to know the Job Seeker is the second key strategy and this relates to vocational assessments and vocational plans, workplace adjustments, conditions for success which is this language we are leaning into, into making sure environments are well set up for people. Strengths-based approaches, that kind of thing.

In the third section in the key stat geez we have skills development, and this section will be built out around both accredited training and courses that people with do, but also how people with learn while they earn, but also undertake internships and other skills development programs in the workplace.

The fourth section is employer engagement and capability, and that one we will have a look at in a minute. This is the most built out one of those building blocks when you are on the page. The 5th one is job development and matching. This is really focusing attention on how we can support employers to adjust the way that work is designed so that people with disabilities can take up work roles. Then the last one is ongoing support and career progression. So this one is - this section will also cover on-site support as well as ongoing support, but we want to have a strong focus on career progression, because like everybody, people with disabilities want to move through across time and keep developing their skills and move into different jobs or more senior jobs, that kind of thing.

So now we are going to do a little deep dive into employment engagement and capability building. Remembering this was one of the sections that the Department of Social Services did call out for us in the tender. So again as we move through the layers we have got four main headings here that you can orient to, the first one understanding your local labour market. The second connecting with employers. The third building effective relationships with employers. The fourth one, building employer capability to offer inclusive

employment opportunities. So these four, all four of these have been built out and once you are on the website you can go in and have a look at some of the information and resources in all the sections. But for now we are just going to have a quick look at understanding your local labour market.

So now we go into the overview page for understanding your local labour market and there is a nice image there of a young man standing against a fence, and I think he looks to me like somebody working in the renewable energy sector or some type of sector like that. Again you can see there is an overview there and a little bit of information just to orient the reader to what's in this section.

So inside this section we have a number of resource that is we wanted to let you know about. So the first is for those of you who have been to the disability employment Australia conference over the last few years you'll probably recognise Callum there from Indeed who comes and gives a labour market overview at each conference. We have asked him to do one each quarter for us. Each quarter we'll add Australian of these labour market insights videos and they are informative about where job growth is, which industries are growing, unemployment rate, he is an economist by training, so lots of economic data there, but it helps to get an overview of what's happening in the labour market at a broad level. That's live on the hub now and I think it goes for about 30 minutes.

We also have added the jobs and skills atlas. This is a new database that's been developed by the Department of industry of some sort. They launched this in the middle of the year. It is a really great resource where you can search in real time in your local ESA, local suburbs, the data becomes quite granular, but it can help you understand where there is growth industries in your area. So while Callum has got a National focus on his piece, this jobs and skills atlas really lets providers get down into the weeds, if you like, of what's going on in their local labour market.

There is also occupational and industry profiles there, so that gives you up-to-date friends and insights into Australia's job market by occupation and industry. Again, leaning on from Callum's piece about where the growth

industries are, these two tools allow providers to dive much more deeply into their local area.

Once you click on to it you'll get to the jobs and skills atlas page and you can see again those orange words and phrases, and that's how we have set it up so that you can search for these tools. You'll see there is different tags for these ones. We have got labour supply, labour force, occupations, those kinds of things.

So click there, click on the words there and that will take you to the resource. Here is the resource itself. So this is an external page and actually it is funded out of the jobs and skills council. They do run Webinars teaching people how to use this particular tool. So if you haven't been to one, that might be worthwhile doing. There is lots of information there, as I said, on your particular region.

The training and resources page is up in the main menu as well. This is where we will be building out the opportunities for attending training, live training Webinars, but also online training, self-paced training, they will be all under this training and resources section. This is also the section where the resources, I talked before about the searchable database, the searchable collection, so this is how you'll access that as well.

So you can see there that we have got the lunch and learns are there so that people with register for these. We have also got a lovely free online training module that's been developed by the Human Rights Commission, and that's called building a culture of accessibility and inclusion. So that's free to use. Then the introduction to disability awareness online, self-paced module that I referred to earlier is also available here.

So this is one section that will grow considerably over time. That's the end of the sort of quick orientation to the website. So hopefully it will encourage you all to go and have a look at the website and also there is a page on the website if you come across any broken links or something is not working for you, please let us know. You can also use the info@centreforinclusiveemployment.au email address. So if you've got a

suggestion or there is something you like or don't like about the website, something that you'd like to see added please feel free to send us an email. We are in what's called beta mode at the moment, so that means we are in a testing mode at the moment. We have made the hub available just to Inclusive Employment Australia people at the moment and later to the general audience, but we will stay in beta mode for quite a few months while people use the resources and site and give us feedback about how it is working from a usability perspective. For now we encourage you to sign - follow us on LinkedIn, it went live last week. If you search for Centre for employment link you will see that. We will have a newsletter coming up soon that will be available on the hub and we'll also send that out to people through other channels and on the LinkedIn, so we are waiting for a few final steps and we will send that out monthly with lots of information about what's happening. We encourage you to utilise the resource that is are created. We have got a strong emphasis on practice change with the resources we are developing, so we'd like you to use them and tell us whether they are working, whether you like them and also to create feedback so we can develop resource that is meet the needs of the sector.

Engage in activities, so into next year we will be developing communities of practice and other ways to engage with the centre to help embed good practice. Again we encourage you to keep an eye out for those and engage in those and we'll give you more information next year about that. As I said, providing that feedback to us is really important while we are in this beta mode. That's the end of the presentation about the online hub. I did just want to take a couple of minutes just to let people know, or give an update about the fundamentals for Inclusive Employment Training program. Hopefully most of you know there are going to be funded places available in this program. So it is a sector-led training program that's been developed. It used to be called DES fundamentals, so it has been rewritten and reworked for the new guidelines. The funded places are hopefully going to start to be available next week. Stay tuned, you'll get more information hopefully in the next couple of days about that. We are running a bit close to the wire with this one, but there has been a few changes which many of you would be aware of to parts of the program. We have just been waiting for those to be finalised before the training is available. It is an online self-paced training program and it is microcredentialed and also 50 CDP points are available on completion via the DEA program.

The primary aim of the training is to support Inclusive Employment Australia staff to deliver the employment services aligned with the new guidelines. It is very much drawing from the guidelines and the changes in how the program will be delivered and supporting staff to really sort of make those come alive. So hopefully we'll have some more information, either late this week or early next week about how you enrol in that.

This is the first of our lunch and learn sessions as Sally said, so please sign up for the next one. We've got Georgia from Job Access presenting about workplace modifications, so that should be an interesting one and she'll also be orienting new providers, so come along at the same time next week. Thank you very much for listening.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Thanks so much Jenny. We have had a number of questions come through. If anyone has any other questions that they would like to ask pop them in the chat and we'll do our best to get around to everyone. I have tried to group them together into some things so we can cover off on as much as possible. Jenny, to begin with, there has been a lot of questions about accessing the website. Who has access at the moment? When will people who work for organisations that don't have Inclusive Employment Australia contracts have access, and can you provide any insights on where people could access user names and passwords as people seem to be asking for them as well?

JENNY CROSBIE: Originally we did think it was going live on the 1st of September and that's what we worked towards, but there was a slight change in focus internally within the Department. So right now it is only available to organisations that are an Inclusive Employment Australia provider. If you work for one of those organisations and you haven't been given the access information, I suggest that you just check internally, because it has been given to the key contact in your organisation the key contact that DSS has. So my understanding is that it is going live to the rest - to everybody else around the 1st of November. I believe it is going to be launched in conjunction with the launch of the new inclusive Australia employment with the Minister, so that's when it will be live to everybody else.

SALLY KARANDREWS: In terms of the content that's available, how can providers use that? Are they able to reference it in their own materials, is there a process for permission and anything around referencing that they should be aware of?

JENNY CROSBIE: So all of the information that's on the hub is what we are calling freely available. So you won't be charged any fees for any of the information, you don't have to pay for any of the resources. So in terms of copyright and intellectual property, I guess the intellectual property for the centre is owned by the Commonwealth, so like any copyright or intellectual property, if you were to use a resource it would be great to make an acknowledgment to the author and particularly if it is one of the disability representative organisations, for example. Yes, use them freely. The intention is that the resources are used widely and we hope - our hope is that they will be used in a day-to-day way so that people have got the checklist and the tools and the language guides they need to deliver services directly. I am not sure if that answered the question.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Things we have covered off on training and resources and what's up there at the moment and there is more coming there is a question around will people receive a certificate of completion after completing any of the training available on the hub?

JENNY CROSBIE: So right now you do receive a microcredential for doing the ADCET training that they have run, so we are still in our early start-up days and we are actually about to start working with humanability who are the jobs and skills council organisation for the human services sector. So they are very interested in the work that we are going to be doing and they want to, where possible, align any training opportunities we have with accreditation and stepping stones and also this notion of microcredentialing. I also believe that DEA members, many of the resources that are going to be available, like today I think there is 2 CDP points available for members today for attending this Webinar, so where possible we will align our offerings with those types of programs that are offering a form of accreditation for individuals as well.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Lovely. We have got a question around measuring the

number of staff in a workplace with disability. Will there be any resources on how to effectively measure staffing numbers, personal references there being a lot of policy around measurement, but perhaps not much guidance on how to do it effectively.

JENNY CROSBIE: It is a complex one internationally not just in Australia, we know that generally disability is under reported through formal mechanisms, but we know that where there is an anonymous survey for example that's more focused on staff wellbeing and organisational culture, that kind of thing, then we tend to see higher levels of people self-reporting. So yeah, I will take that one on notice, but certainly what we would like to see is the work of the centre being focused on creating employment opportunities for people with disability in a very broad way, so not just through direct services through programs like Inclusive Employment Australia, but also through procurement strategies and other mechanisms. So I think being able to measure that is probably important, so I will definitely take that one on notice.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Excellent. Just coming back to that access question for those who are providing NDIS funded employment supports, they will have access, was it the 1st of November you said to the site?

JENNY CROSBIE: This is to - you mentioned non-providers?

SALLY KARANDREWS: Yes.

JENNY CROSBIE: At this stage we have been told that it is from the 1st of November, but we haven't had that confirmed. I think you will see that there will be some launch activities for inclusive disability Australia but my understanding that our online hub will be launched at the same time. For those of you who have looked at the date, that is actually a Saturday, so we suspect that it is probably going to be the 3rd of November.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Fantastic. Just one more.

JENNY CROSBIE: I am getting a few questions about the logging in, I can see. One thing, so we had to set the restricted access up with a password which is obviously not how it will work in the long-run. We know that some of the IT systems that providers work within, so within the right requirements and so forth that we are having a couple of organisations reporting IT problems. Your manager should have also forwarded you the login details. So if you received the right login you don't need to login, it is built into the URL, but for some people they do need the manual login details. Your managers should have forwarded those to you as well. If you send an email to info@centreforinclusiveemployment.au I can send those to you.

SALLY KARANDREWS: There is a question in the chat around the learning centre and access to ESS. That's separate to the Centre for Inclusive Employment, but I will get back to the person that's asked that question directly with some specific information on that.

JENNY CROSBIE: We won't be having compliance training, that kind of focus in our centre. Our centre is much more focused around the evidence about what worked. Yes, you'll still have to complete your - some mandatory training over in the ESS site, yes.

SALLY KARANDREWS: Certainly. I think that's it for the questions. We are getting close to time. So if anyone has any further questions after today feel free to reach out either to myself at disability employment Australia or the Centre for Inclusive Employment so that we can get back to you. But to wrap up, I just want to let people know that a recording from today as well as the presentation will be made after the Webinar. I'd like to thank Jenny for joining us today and sharing about the hub and the fundamentals for Inclusive Employment Training that is going to be made available. I'd also like to thank the team who are working behind the scenes to make today possible to Hanif and Olivia and everyone else. Just to remind you that next week our Webinar will be on at the same time and I will be talking with Georgia about workplace modifications. Thank you very much for joining us and have a lovely day everyone.

(End)