



July - Sept 2011
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Chief Executive Officer's Report

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Hello to everyone I hope this Newsletter finds you well. I am sure you have heard a lot about changes to the Disability Support Pension. These changes will only apply to people who apply from January 1, 2012. They do not impact on anyone who has already been granted DSP.

From Sept 2011 the focus will be on potential to work so Job Capacity Assessors will be taking into consideration:

- Skills you may have;
- Employment where adjustments can be made to the workplace so you can do your job; and
- Whether training or rehabilitation can help.

These changes will be introduced from September 2011. After the change is implemented if you claim DSP you will need to have evidence that you have received appropriate employment assistance and are still unable to participate in the workforce. Evidence may include demonstrating that you have actively participated in open employment service programs or rehabilitation and you cannot be assisted back to work. Job Capacity Assessments for DSP will have a greater focus on a person's potential to work. They will give greater consideration to the transferrable skills of a person, suitability for alternative employment

with reasonable adjustment and a person's capacity to benefit from vocational training and rehabilitation.

Those that do not provide sufficient evidence will have their DSP claim rejected and will be referred to an employment service or rehabilitation.

Changes if you are receiving Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance, Parenting Payment or Special Benefit (unless you are exempt from participation requirements).

Under these changes:

- If you don't attend an appointment or activity your Centrelink payment may be immediately stopped until you speak to Centrelink and agree to attend a further appointment. You will get full back pay once you agree to attend a further appointment.
- If you don't attend this next appointment your payment will again be stopped.
- This time, if you don't have a **reasonable excuse** for not attending, you will actually **lose** payment every day until you do attend a further appointment. **You won't get back pay for these days.**
- Money for these days will be deducted from your very next Centrelink payment.
- If you cannot attend an appointment or activity

you must **contact** the organisation that made the appointment before the time of the appointment or activity, to let them know why you can't attend.

• If you don't tell them before the appointment your payment may be stopped, a penalty may be applied and your Centrelink payment could be reduced, even if you have a reasonable excuse for not being able to attend (such as working or being sick on the day).

If you have any questions about these changes please speak to your Job Co-ordinator. Under Gold Coast Employment Support Service's contractual obligations we will be reporting all non attendance to Centrelink.

On a brighter note I am sure you will join me in welcoming our new staff members Sarah and John. For those of you who are yet to have the pleasure of meeting them in person you can meet them briefly via their introductions on the following pages. I am pleased to say that all GCESS staff should be fully recovered and back at work by the time you read this letter and I do hope that you all know that should your co-ordinator not be available you can speak to me to gain assistance with any issues.

Take care

Melissa Williams
Chief Executive Officer

CLIENT MEETING

When:

Wednesday 24th August

Time:

2.00pm-3.00pm

Where:

GCESS Office

Topic:

QA/Disability Service Standards.

Christmas Party Planning.

Refreshments will be provided!

Clinton's Efforts Awarded!!!

GCESS would like to congratulate Clinton on achieving employee of the month for April 2011 at Hungry Jack's, Australia Fair. Clinton received a certificate and movie passes to enjoy.

The certificate states...
"for his outstanding efforts in this dining room! His constant customer compliments and positive attitude. Awesome work Clinton!!!!"

Clinton started working at Hungry Jack's last year and has become a valuable member of staff as we can see from his

award. Well done Clinton you deserve it.



Keri (Restaurant Manager) and Clinton.

**"The desire to do something because you find it deeply satisfying and personally challenging inspires the highest levels of creativity, whether it's in the arts, sciences or business."
- Teresa Amabile, Professor—Harvard University**

Shelly's Farewell

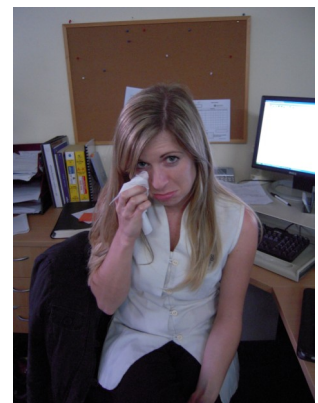
I am very sad to say goodbye to my colleagues and clients as I leave GCESS. To my special clients it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with you and I wish you success and happiness in your future endeavours.

To my colleagues thank you for thoughtfulness,

assistance and friendship. It feels like I have been a part of GCESS for much longer than just over a year, it is a place that easily feels like home with all the friendly faces that are around me! I will think of you all often!

Love from

Shelly Whitfield



Painkillers Interfere With Antidepressants

People taking certain antidepressants may find the effectiveness is reduced if they are also popping aspirin or ibuprofen on a regular basis.

Scientists from Rockefeller University in New York have found anti-inflammatory painkillers interfere with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors

(SSRIs), a type of antidepressant which includes Prozac and Zoloft. The interference cuts the rate of remission from depression from 55 to 45 per cent.

In studies on mice, painkillers were found to interfere with an antidepressant's ability to improve the transmission of serotonin in the brain, which lifts depression.



New Staff Profile—John Lindsay

As a new staff member at GCESS I am enjoying my role of assisting our jobseekers with the challenge of finding meaningful and rewarding employment.

I have a broad and varied work history including being a business owner, but it was through a personal physical injury and faced with unemployment that I was introduced to Disability Employment Services and decided to study and follow a career path in this field.

I am originally from the Sutherland Shire in Sydney's south, and my wife is Swedish. We settled on the Gold Coast two years

ago, but only after much debate; six months travelling around Australia sleeping in the back of an old 4x4, bouts of living in Sweden, the Sunshine Coast and a small island in the middle of the Baltic Sea.

I am happy to say the Gold Coast is now home and we are the proud Parents of a little 7 month old Queenslander. (Although Dad says "Go the Blues!")

I am passionate about the Australian wilderness, wildlife and conservation of our remaining indigenous areas of cultural significance. Having a love of boats, the beach, waterways, waterfalls and rain forests, I consider

myself fortunate to reside and have employment in an area where I am surrounded by such things.

Thanks to GCESS for welcoming me to their team.

John Lindsay



New Staff Profile—Sarah Luskin

I am the newest member to join Gold Coast Employment Support Services. I started on June 27th and am very excited to join such a great organisation and a terrific team.

When you meet with me, you'll realise that I have an accent. That is because I am Canadian. I am married and have a lovely little Bichon Frise dog who will be joining us in Australia shortly.

My husband and I moved to Australia about 9 months ago. The reason for our relocation was so that my husband could pursue a PhD. Initially, we lived in Perth for a period of about six months but moved to the Gold Coast after my husband's supervisor accepted a job at Griffith University. Al-

though Perth was lovely, we are very excited to be living on the Coast.

I have a Bachelor degree in Human Relations and Psychology from Concordia University, and a Masters in Counselling Psychology from McGill University, both in Montreal, Canada.

My employment and volunteering history involve working in various organisations related to Employment Services and Counselling. I am very passionate about working with people and am excited about my position with GCESS as it is a perfect marriage of my education and my passion.

My other passions and hobbies involve travelling, swimming, reading, and tasting foods from different cultures and

ethnicities. I don't surf yet, but am thinking of trying it, now that I live on the Coast.

I would like to thank all the clients and GCESS staff who have given me a warm welcome. I look forward to working with you and becoming a part of the GCESS team.

Sarah Luskin



**"Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do."
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

**Gold Coast Employment
Support Service Inc.**

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87 Griffith St
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Gold Coast Employment Support Service Inc (GCESS) is a not for profit employment service that assists people with disabilities/barriers to gain and retain award based employment in open community based settings. Since GCESS was first incorporated in 1992 we have grown steadily and our thirteen staff members now assist an average of one hundred and forty service recipients.

GCESS Mission Statement

The Gold Coast Employment Support Service Inc. is committed to providing quality employment support and training for people with disabilities/barriers who aspire to obtain and maintain award based employment.

GCESS Corporate Mission

To provide responsible, ethical and compassionate corporate governance, to determine policies and to oversee the direction and financial viability of Gold Coast Employment Support Service Inc.

**DO YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT
ABOUT A DISABILITY EMPLOY-
MENT OR ADVOCACY SERVICE?**

The disability Complaint Resolution & Referral Service was opened to handle complaints from consumers about service providers or certification bodies. This service concentrates on fixing consumer complaints about disability employment and advocacy services.

To contact the Disability Complaint Resolution and Referral Service:

PHONE: 1800 880 052
TTY: 1800 301 130
NRS: 1800 555 677
TIS 13 14 50

STAFF DIRECTORY

Chief Executive Officer:

MELISSA WILLIAMS

Co-ordinators:

DAVID BOTT
LEISA GAMBLIN
JENNIFER GLASSON
JOHN LINDSAY
SARAH LUSKIN
SALLY McLEAN
KANE PRIOR
STEVE REEDS
KIM ROBERTSON
JODIE RUSSELL
GRAEME SLEEMAN
HUGH TROWBRIDGE

Administrator:

VICKIE RYAN
INA HALES (Assistant)