

Dear Members, Clients and Volunteers

Re: update on all things Huntington's Australia (HA)

Well, the merger implementation is in full swing and just about everyone is getting involved in some way, shape or form.

Firstly and perhaps most importantly, all staff are in the process of having discussions with our CEO, Lenni, and our HR Specialist, Lyn, about transitioning into the new HA organisation. We are still expecting that most of the staff employed by State Associations will transfer to HA.

In addition to our CEO, we now also have another two of the senior management team selected, and both are starting this month - Leah Atkinson as the Head of Finance and Corporate Services and Basil Mabuza as the Head of Community Programs and Services. Leah and Basil are outstanding individuals, and we are extremely happy to have secured their services. Both are passionate about contributing to the community. The final position on the senior management team, the Head of Fundraising & Partnerships, will be called internally to start with, in the next few months.

Amongst all the other things that are happening, perhaps our most important piece of work is continuing with the long process of obtaining our NDIS registration. This will allow us to extend the NDIS support services currently offered in WA and NSW into all the other States. Because of the long time needed to secure registration, it was the first thing we started working on back in August, well before we went to members on the vote at AGMs last November. We have a preliminary audit coming up in the next two weeks and if successful, which I am sure we will be, then we will have 3 months to receive the final approval from NDIA. When we started work on planning for this mid last year, NDIS were working within their stated policy of taking up to 3 months to approve registrations. Recently that timeframe has blown out and this may jeopardise our expected 1 July date for merging, as we have to be registered to continue to provide and grow the services. We are still hoping to meet the 1 July merger date but just in case we don't, we have been talking about a Plan B, that being a possible delay of up to 3 months. There were other options that might have enabled us to nonetheless merge on 1 July but they were complicated and did not uphold our number one principle of putting our clients and community first. We will keep you informed on our registration progress.

Another important thing that is rolling out is the setting up of our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and IT systems. Current CRM systems in each State are different or don't exist and so transitioning to a new system is a challenge but will be integral to all the work we do.

Lastly, as I mentioned earlier, there are a lot of people involved, in helping with the merger tasks, of which there are many. Some people are doing a lot, some are adding to their existing workload, some are just helping here and there, staff, volunteers, contractors, families. Thank you everyone, whatever you are doing, big or small, it all adds up, and it is much appreciated.

Regards



Chris Glasson

Chair HA

20 March 2023