



# Worklink Newsletter

## Manager's Report



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Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for 2008. The year has slipped away so quickly and so much has already happened.

The service continues to perform well, achieving a broad range of employment and social outcomes for our clients. The DEN program once again achieved an excellent star rating of 4.5 stars

In May I was thrilled to be given the opportunity to promote the Job Seekers of Worklink at a joint event put together by Advance Cairns and the Vocational Partnerships Group Inc. The event "TNQ Skills Master Class" focussed on local solutions to the skills shortage crunch and was attended by over 100 employers and HR managers from the Cairns business community.

Worklink had the recent pleasure of hosting a visit by the Minister of Employment Participation, The Honorable Brendan O'Connor during his visit to the Far North. The Minister had the opportunity to speak to clients, employers, management and staff of Worklink and was presented with an issues paper that addressed the most prevalent issues impacting on the Personal Support, and Disability Employment Network Programs, now and in the future.

Worklink was recently successful in securing funds under the Mental Health Council of Australia's Capacity Development Grants, to develop two organisational capacity areas.

These are HR Management and Consumer Participation. The funds will be used in the development of a new Organisational Structure to meet the rapid growth of Worklink and better meet the future strategic directions of the organisation. It will also be used to enhance Consumer participation within the organisation at both an individual and management level. Worklink is very aware that consumers have a unique expertise and understanding due to direct experience of mental illness and to improve the level of consumer participation within Worklink is to improve the quality of service delivery.



### Special points of interest:

- Ministers visit
- Consumer Participation Forum will be on the 19/8/08
- Stress Less Day Luncheon 8/10/08
- Stress Down on 24/7/08

I would also like to extend my thanks to those consumers and employers who attended the National Mental Health & Disability Employment Strategy consultation in Cairns to review the Howard Governments Welfare to Work Reform. The consultation was hosted by Minister Bill Shorten who was seeking broad consultation with Disability Employment Services Staff, Consumers and Employers to identify some of the major flaws in the current system which make it extremely difficult for people with a mental health condition to participate in employment.

# Managing diversity

Worklink has now delivered 25 workshops to 349 people over the past two years, through funding from the Department of Health and Ageing.

The workshop is targeted at managers, supervisors, human resources, job agency staff and small business owners.

We have just completed an evaluation of the project and over 90 % of respondees said they had increased their knowledge about mental health, would now consider employing staff who had experienced mental health conditions and were more willing to talk about issues and help existing staff. We hope to attain more funding and continue to run these workshops.



## A Short Story

### Link Up For Life

#### A Short Story by Kathy

Big tall lady, tiny little dog,  
Setting off together for a jog, jog, jog,  
She does her stretches, one and two and three,  
He sniffs around a bit, then has a pee.

They start out slowly towards the sun,

Two friends unwinding when the day is done.  
Pony tail, silky tail swinging to the beat,  
Pink socks, brown socks now they're packing heat.  
There's a story behind this everyday sight,  
We shall go back a year; to just after the fight  
When she sat on the couch, drenched with despair,  
Her dog by her side, she with unkempt hair.

A cookie for her, a cookie for him,  
Eating and eating to make bad memories dim,  
The way not to go, she knew in her heart,  
But she'd left her marriage to make this fresh start,

Alone in her flat-well almost alone,  
She'd her dog, and the cookies and a silent phone,

The eating, the crying, she curled up on the couch,

This continued for months, she developed a slouch,  
She went to the kitchen for another packet,  
He followed her in, she heard a racket,  
And turned to find him as sick as could be,  
His fur was all matted and out jumped a flea,  
He was fat and unsightly, "Oh my poor little dove,

How could I do this to my only love."

She gave him some water and cleaned up the mess,  
And brushed him and washed him, now she had to confess,

She'd neglected him, pursuing self-absorbed ends,  
And it was up to her to make amends.

So come the next day she'd found his leash,  
She'd washed her hair and cleaned her teeth.

He waddled to the door, leash in his mouth,  
She put on her sneakers –had trouble bending south.

After locking the door they stepped outside,  
She let out a sigh, "It'll be a bumpy ride",

But walk they must, around the block to begin,  
"That wasn't so bad," she thought with a grin,

The very next day at about the same time,  
He sat near his leash and started to whine.

She looked at him softly and put on her shoes,  
"Then we'd better get going. We've nothing to lose."

They continued this way for quite a long while,  
His whining, then walking, her burgeoning smile,  
She explored her suburb, then further they went,  
She discovered a park, he followed a scent,  
She saw all these people running around,  
Soon she would join them, her and her hound.

They start out slowly towards the setting sun,  
Ten friends unwinding when the day is done.

This is the end of that story, my dear,  
Another one's starting and the sky looks clear.

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*"If you would like to submit a short story, poem, recipe or picture to appear in the next Worklink Newsletter please come in & see or contact Jennifer on 4031 0877."*

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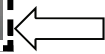
**Jobs Achieved  
between  
December  
& June  
Well done to all.....**



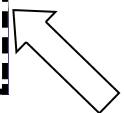
- Covert Security Officer x 2
- Gardener x 5
- Kitchenhand x 6
- Registered Nurse's Assistant
- Car detailer x 3
- Storeperson
- Teachers Aide
- Consumer Companion x 2
- Administration Officer x 2
- Gaming Attendant x 2
- Café Assistant x 3
- Cleaner x 10
- Waitperson x 3
- Lawn Maintenance
- Shop Assistant
- Labourer x 3
- Delivery Driver x 4
- Banana Farm Packer
- Chemical Labourer
- Data Entry
- Youth Worker
- Management Trainee
- Avocado Picker
- Traffic Controller x 2
- Metal Fabricator
- After School Care Worker
- Hairdresser
- Child Care Assistant/Driver
- Child Care Assistant x 3
- Landscape Assistant
- Picker/Packer
- Retail Assistant
- Apprentice Mechanic
- Trolley Collection
- School Crossing Supervisor
- Support Worker
- Child Minder
- Truck Driver
- Trainee Driver
- Housekeeping/Room Attendant x 2
- Cashier
- Food Service Assistant x 2
- Sales Assistant
- Publishing Distribution
- Printer Sorter
- GIS Officer
- Parts Interpreter
- Swimming Teacher
- Night fill
- Administration Assistant

**New Staff Recruits**

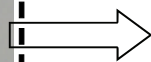
There has been further increase in our new staff numbers since our last Newsletter. We would like to welcome Michelle Watson, Kourtney Joseph and Kathy Reardon.



Michelle Watson—Employment Development Officer. Michelle has 15 years experience in various Government Departments.



Kourtney joined Worklink in 2008, as the Administration Trainee. She is currently studying a Certificate III in Business Administration.



Kathy Reardon started work in the Personal Support Program in Innisfail in March 2008. She has 18 years experience in the Community Sector providing quality caring services to homeless youth and marginalized persons in community and Personal Support Programs. She has qualifications in counseling, community services and workplace training.

***Stress Down on 24/7***

On Thursday 24 July, do something fun with your co-workers, friends or family to reduce your stress levels and raise funds for Lifeline. Need an idea? How about a theme day. The money raised will go towards covering the growing costs for Lifeline's 24 hour telephone Counseling Line— 13 11 14.

## SUDOKU (Level: Easy)

### First Aid Training

We are now regularly running First Aid courses through Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE on our premises. Jackie Jansen is the trainer and she makes the training practical and fun and creates a very comfortable and relaxed atmosphere for all attendees. Congratulations to the 16 people who achieved their certificate and the 2 people who up-

dated their CPR certificate at the last course in May.

The next course is on Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd July.

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*Please see your Employment Development Officer or Personal Support Officer if you are interested in attending any of our First Aid Courses.*

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1		8		5			6	
3	6			4	2	1	5	
	4		1			8		

### Personal Support Corner

The PSP Art Show is once again being held and it is envisaged that it will be held in February 2009. The venue and further details will be forwarded out to all PSP participants when they become available and Mission Australia is going to be the major coordinator with assistance from other PSP providers and participants. Therefore, for all those budding artists, sculptors, poets, jewellery makers etc. – we would love to see your pieces of art. Talk to your caseworker and see what they can do to help.

We have a new addition to the PSP staff with Kathy Reardon joining Kathy Martin in Innisfail. The Innisfail staff provide outreach to Tully, Mission Beach and Babinda and many of the small towns and villages in between.

### From the Promotions Corner

Countdown has started for Stress Less day luncheon on Wednesday, 8 October, 2008 at the Sofitel Reef Casino. This year's guest speaker will be the highly acclaimed Dr Michael Carr-Gregg and he will speak on the topic – "The Stress Resistant Personality – how to develop one". Michael is one of Australia's highest profile psychologists and works in private practice in Melbourne. He is a founding member of the [National Centre Against Bullying](#) and an official ambassador for the National Depression Initiative - [Beyondblue](#) as well as [Mindmatters](#) - one of 16 youth suicide prevention programs run by the Federal Government. Michael has also written several books, is a columnist for [Girlfriend Magazine](#), [Australian Doctor](#) and is a regular on [Radio 3AW](#) as well as occasional presenter on the popular [Sunrise Show](#) - Channel 7. Further details will be released in early September.

### Consumer Participation Forum

All clients of Worklink are invited to submit an expression of interest to attend a Consumer Session on 19/8/08 at the Pacific International Hotel. The Forum is to enhance consumer participation and representation on the Management Committee and staff selection.

Please contact Joanne or Vanessa on 4031 0877