

Talkback Association for Aphasia, Inc.
Annual General Meeting – 15 September 2010
Chairperson's Report: Bev Dodd

This has been a very busy but productive year. At the start of the year we identified a number of projects that we would like to undertake. Most of these have progressed well. We have also undertaken some successful fundraising activities. In addition we have continued to support our members and Talkback Groups.

1. Carers Project

Feedback from previous surveys told us that carers have a number of issues. This year we did a survey and arranged a lunch for carers to get together to discuss what they would like. The group decided to have regular lunch meetings for social and emotional support and education. Thanks Kate and Coralie for organising this.

2. Young people with Aphasia Project

We wanted to look at social activities for young people with aphasia. We have had an initial meeting and have written to Speech Pathologists to find out how many young people with aphasia are around. We have drafted a letter to go out to young people and plan to continue this project next year. Thanks to Jackie, Anne and Tom for getting this going.

3. Retuning Recreation Project

Two OT students, Aedan and Callum, worked with us on a project looking at how to help people with aphasia be more involved in leisure activities. They met with members to discuss their difficulties and researched what help is available. This information will be sent to all speech pathologists and OTs. Aedan and Callum also organised a barbeque for Talkback members, which was well attended and appreciated.

4. Driving with aphasia Project

Two OT students, Nancy and Lauren, did a project about assessing people with aphasia who want to return to driving. They came to several of the groups and members helped them with their project. The findings from this will be used by OTs to improve the way they test people with aphasia.

5. Website

We agreed that the website needed to be updated. Jeff asked his son Joel to do the website. We have developed some new information and taken lots of new photos for the website. The website is still in early stages of development as Jeff had to discontinue this work due to ill health and no one else had the time to pick the project up. Thanks Jeff for co-ordinating the work so far.

6. Brochure on the Association

We want a brochure on the Association and what it does. We have done several drafts and have now formed a sub group to continue with this project. We hope this will be finished in the next few months.

7. The Social Inclusion Unit Disability Review

The Premier has asked the Social Inclusion Unit to develop a “blueprint” to improve the quality of life of people with a disability and their carers. Early in the year, we wrote to Monsignor Cappo, who is the Commissioner for Social Inclusion, about the lack of services and support for people with aphasia. We have provided the review team with information about aphasia and some of the needs of people with aphasia. Some of our members with aphasia, carers and I will be meeting with the team sometime in October to provide more information.

Anne and I have also attended workshops run by the National Disability Services and had input into their submission.

8. Pasta and Auction Night

Our major fundraiser this year was a pasta and auction night. This was held at the Marche Club in November. We had a live auction, “silent auction”, a raffle and a short “yes/no” quiz. We had a great attendance and everyone said that it was a lot of fun. As well as raising a lot of money, this event also raised awareness about aphasia among those who attended. Thanks to Vic, Jackie, Margaret, Danny and his family for organising this very successful event. Thanks Danny also for organising Kevin Domato to be the auctioneer.

9. Australian Central Lottery

We decided to sell tickets in the Australian Central Lottery this year and raised \$600.00 from doing this. Thanks to Jeff and Margaret for organising this.

10. City to Bay Fun Run

The City to Bay fundraiser went well. A number of committee members and partners, and Speech Pathology students walked for Talkback. Participants wore out T shirts to raise awareness of aphasia.

11. Talkback and Other Groups

Talkback Groups have been stable over the last year with all groups meeting regularly. Groups continue to provide members with the opportunity to meet and chat in a supportive environment.

We have had some contact with a therapist who is planning to start a group at Mount Barker and will continue to offer her assistance.

12. Wednesday Without Words Get together

In September last year, we had a get together for members to celebrate Wednesday without Words. About 40 members attended. Several members told their stories and people enjoyed sharing information about aphasia. It was also a good opportunity for members to see our new office area.

13. Talkback Newsletter

The newsletter continues to be a valuable service for our members. It provides useful information and also keeps people up to date with Association news. Danny has done a tremendous job as editor in producing such high quality and regular newsletters.

14. Conference Support

Four of our members are attending the Australian Aphasia Association (AAA) conference in Sydney at the end of September. The conference is a great way for people with aphasia and their carers to find out what other people are doing and get support and it often gives people a real lift. Committee has decided to provide some help with expenses for those attending.

15. Office

We get lots of e mails and requests for information from people who have logged on to our website - often from interstate or overseas. Although we think it is good to support the general community, the time taken in answering these questions is time that is not available for Talkback projects. This year, we have started developing "general

proforma” responses that can be sent out. We will continue to do this next year to try to reduce the time taken up on non member issues.

Sandy Nash has continued to run the office. Sandy handles enquiries and some of the correspondence, prepares the correspondence lists and other material for meetings. This year Sandy has also attended some meetings for Talkback. Thank you Sandy for your continued enthusiasm and support. David has also helped out in the office on Thursdays. Thanks David

16. Committee

I would like to say a big thanks to all the committee members. The committee has worked very hard and successfully undertaken or worked on a number of projects and activities. Together we achieved a considerable amount over the year.

Several members left the committee during the year. Thanks to Jeff Bull and David Bajjali for your work on the committee. A particular thanks to Deb Hersh who started the Association. Deb moved to WA in December.

To all the other committee members who have worked on Committee. Thanks everyone – to Kate Danny, Margaret, Coralie, Vic, Jackie, Anne, Tom and Meri. I think we have worked well together and am pleased that you are all staying on Committee. I am also pleased that we will be welcoming some new faces to the Committee.

Beverley A Dodd

Chair, Talkback Association for Aphasia Inc