



House Herald

Feature:

Meet our new Brand.

Inspiring stories:

Paul, Peter & Virginia.

Regional Reports:

People, places & news.

Events:

City 2 Surf.

Our new logo and visual identity — **House With No Steps (HWNS)** has launched a new logo and visual identity. The launch builds on our new strategic plan and ties in with our recent official company name change from ‘The Wheelchair and Disabled Association of Australia’ to ‘House With No Steps’.



Why are we changing our logo?

HWNS is growing and evolving — HWNS is a leading provider of services to people with a disability. However, the way people with a disability access support and the types of support available are changing (largely for the better).

We are growing and evolving to meet these changing needs. We have nearly doubled in size over the last five years, expanded our services to over 140 locations and provide services to more than 3,000 people each year.

Our focus has widened to provide services for ALL people with a disability, including mental health.

Our ‘look and feel’ needs to reflect these changes. We need an easily recognisable logo, and a visual style that portrays us as modern, professional and entrepreneurial, but with warmth and heart.

Now is a good time to launch our new logo, as our recent formal company name change requires us to reprint brochures and replace signage.

The disability sector is changing — The future of the sector is changing for the better. Individuals will have more choice and control over the services they receive and who provides them.

Change which empowers people with a disability to have control over their own lives is a good thing! HWNS is embracing these changes and has an entrepreneurial outlook.

We are willing to try new things and develop better service models and businesses. We’re determined to create all types of opportunities for people to achieve their personal potential.

Our new logo and visual identity has been developed to reinforce this flexible, entrepreneurial outlook and to help create a fresh perspective in people’s minds.

Innovation in service delivery — We are striving to be at the forefront of innovation in service delivery. We believe in being a true partner to people with a disability, their families and carers and government funders. Together we are looking at what good service provision looks like.

Some examples of this include:

- A true focus on achieving outcomes for individuals through building our person centred planning expertise
- A commitment to trialling new support models
- Piloting new accommodation models
- Trialling and evaluating new family governance models
- Offering self-managed packages and flexible options to choose from

We hope you will agree that our new logo and visual identity reinforce our position as an innovative and leading service organisation truly focused on the needs of people with a disability.

House with No Steps

Cover photo: Glenn Dowey, Strand Wire Manufacturer House With No Steps Engineering Division

You’ll start to see our new visual identity appear in collateral and throughout our communications – exciting times!



City 2 Surf

City 2 Surf is Sydney's favourite sporting event. Last year 80,000 people entered, making it the world's largest fun run. Runners and walkers made their way along the 14km scenic route from the city centre to Bondi Beach.

Seven HWNS supported employees braved the event last year. This year it is going to be even bigger and better!

Please consider sponsoring the participants who decide to take on this mammoth task and leave a note of encouragement on the Everyday Hero website from the beginning of June. www.everydayhero.com.au

Alternatively, you can be a Hero and run or walk on our behalf or you can volunteer for us on the day.

For more information about how you can help contact Elise Cooper on 02 9451 1511.

Be an Everyday Hero and support us in the City 2 Surf.



Entertainment Books

Available Now – The Entertainment Book is your guide to the best dining spots, attractions, activities, theatres, cinemas, retail services, travel and accommodation – at valuable discount rates and two-for-one offers.

Sydney & Sydney North \$65

Parramatta \$60

Newcastle \$60

Other regions available too

If you buy yours from Cheryl in Fundraising, a percentage of the proceeds will go directly back to House With No Steps. Contact Cheryl at Head Office to order your copy now: cwaters@hwns.com.au or you can order online by following the steps at <http://www.hwns.com.au/online-shop>.

20% from each book sold goes to House With No Steps.





Paul

Paul is a true Aussie larrikin. Nothing brings him more joy than scaring his mates and playing practical jokes on his family. It's all about having a laugh!

Paul is 24 years old. When he was 18 months old he was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia, a fast growing cancer of the blood and bone marrow. Paul's mum Donna tells us,

“I remember the day he was diagnosed. I was trying to vacuum and Paul kept sneaking up, switching it off and running away giggling.”

That is one of Donna's last memories of Paul running with such ease and freedom.

Paul commenced a gruelling eight months fight for his life. After months of chemotherapy, blood tests, spinal taps and additional tests he reached remission, but sadly paid a very high price. Paul's treatments not only destroyed the cancer; they also resulted in Paul developing multiple disabilities - an intellectual disability, severe epilepsy, mild cerebral palsy and partial blindness.

Paul understands most of what is going on around him. However, because of the lesions on his brain Paul has been unable to develop his language further and can't walk or run unaided.

Paul needs constant support. It's the simple every day living skills like eating and washing, which we take for granted, that Paul can't manage by himself.

When Paul finished school at 19 years of age, he needed to find a post school program to provide him with support to continue to develop his life skills, participate in the community and continue to build friendships. Donna and Neil knew they had found the right place as soon as they were introduced to House With No Steps.

At House With No Steps, Paul participates in a variety of activities like fishing, BBQs, ball games and simply walking in the park. He also participates in essential life skill programs such as cooking and shopping. His favourite activity by far is swimming. Paul needs someone with him in the water at all times and of course, splashing his carer and friends is always on the agenda.

Paul's family are delighted with the improvements they have seen in Paul since he has been at House With No Steps.

Did you know?

Having a disability places you in the world's largest minority group.





Peter

Peter is a true blue Aussie with a heart of gold. He lives in regional Australia where the landscape can be hard but where people look out for each other.

Peter was born with an intellectual disability. When he was young he lived on an isolated farm with his family. Peter used to help out a lot on the farm and as a result has developed a strong work ethic. “At times you’d forget he had an intellectual disability because he was so handy. He just loved being involved. He was like my shadow”, says Jim, Peter’s dad.

However, it became obvious to Jim that Peter needed to become more independent. Jim tells us,

“I realised that if anything happened to me, Peter would be in big trouble and so I had to let him learn to be independent.”

Peter’s drive for hard work was recognised by the House With No Steps Lawn Maintenance business and he was given a job. The positive influence and camaraderie of the lawn maintenance team has had a huge impact on Peter’s life.

Work gives Peter much more than a wage at the end of the week. Work gives Peter dignity, self esteem, independence and an opportunity to meet friends and have social interaction.

The support provided by House With No Steps has not just helped Peter to succeed at work but has also helped him develop other vital skills that enable him to live independently.

When Peter first came to us he was in tremendous debt. His big hearted nature meant that he believed any salesperson who crossed his path. He often signed up to contracts he couldn’t afford. His unit was filthy and Peter was run down by bad eating habits and a poor lifestyle. Peter needed some support to get on his feet.

House With No Steps’ Independent Learning Program (ILP) provided support to Peter by teaching him how to budget, how to keep a tidy house and what food he should buy and eat to keep at the top of his game. Peter still attends cooking classes with ILP and delights in coming in to work and boasting about what he cooked the night before!

Did you know?

It is estimated that 1,238,600 Australians experience disabilities with a ‘profound or severe core activity limitation’.





Virginia

Virginia is a 24 year old woman who lights up a room when she enters. She is vibrant, twinkling with enthusiasm. Virginia has a genuine interest and really cares about other people, children and animals.

When you look at Virginia you would have no idea that she was born with severe speech Apraxia. Virginia has difficulty putting sounds and syllables together in the correct order to form words. She knows what she wants to say, but a breakdown occurs in the message from the brain to the speech mechanism. This is very frustrating for Virginia.

Virginia's birth was difficult and she suffered brain injury as a result. Then when she was 13 years old Virginia was also diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy.

Virginia and her younger sister Melody grew up with their mother in Queensland. They share fond memories of a childhood and have always been very close.

Sadly, the girls lost their mother to cancer a couple of years ago. It was really hard for both of them. As their grandmother explains,

“It required a massive adjustment for Virginia because she relied so heavily on her mother.”

Fortunately, Virginia was already attending a House With No Steps post school program, so her family was very relieved when it was confirmed that she could also move into a House With No Steps supported living program.

It was the first time that Virginia had ever lived out of home and she was still very sad, withdrawn and shy when she first arrived.

With the patience and perseverance of the staff Virginia has really blossomed. She has gone from a quiet girl who didn't want to leave the house to a young woman who has started to access the community independently and who does regular work experience helping children with special needs.

Virginia's first goal is to catch the bus to and from the near-by shopping centre. With the support of the team from House With No Steps, Virginia has also put together a pocket sized communication aid to help her converse with the bus drivers and shopkeepers.

Melody beams with pride as she tells us, “My sister really inspires me and I am so proud of her. Virginia really has come a long way as we have been working toward her independence for quite some time.”

Did you know?

One in every five Australians has a disability.



NDIS

House With No Steps supports and helps fund the Every Australian Counts campaign, established to promote the introductions of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Productivity Commission says that the disability sector is “underfunded, fragmented, unfair and inefficient, and gives people with a disability little choice and no certainty”.

Current funding only provides half of what is needed. The NDIS is an opportunity to fix this problem.

This system will allow people to be supported on a personalised individual basis, with certainty about the future. The Productivity Commission supports this approach and recommends a doubling of funds.

We ask all Australians to stand up and say that people with a disability, their families and carers in this country deserve better and that it's time for change. We need every Australian to say that disability is part of human diversity and that people with a disability, their families and carers count.

To join the campaign follow the NDIS link from our website or go to <http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au>

Pen-pal Program

Connecting People With People – HWNS in Tuggerah launched a very exciting Pen-pal Program which is all about connecting people with a disability from various locations across Australia.

Jacqui (not her real name) lives in a HWNS group home where she used to visit the mailbox daily, only to become disappointed when there was nothing there for her. The only letters that Jacqui would receive each month were from Centrelink. Sadly, this is a common situation for many people with a disability.

This was observed by a dedicated staff member, Casey, who also provides support to three other people in other locations who love writing several letters a day however, and they didn't send them anywhere. So began the plans to connect these people through the mail and develop a pen-pal program.

After developing all the appropriate material, an information stall was set up at the Mingara Club where celebrations were taking place for International Day for People with Disability. Self-made uniforms were worn with pride as application forms were distributed. There was a great interest in the program and many have signed up to the program as a result.

“It is terrific to see the joy the participants experience when a letter arrives for them”,

says Casey.

There are many benefits to pen-pal programs including social inclusion, increased self esteem and development of literacy skills. By joining the program you will bring joy to a person with a disability by letting them know you care about them.

For more information, you can email connectingpeoplewithpeople@hotmail.com or call 0434 165 151.

From left to right:
Participant, Ellen;
Disability Support
Worker, Casey; Pen-pal
Program Administrator,
Bryce.



News from our regions



1 Sydney

- John Boccanfuso, otherwise known as the Penrith Pen Man, received a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to people with a disability. Congratulations Mr Boccanfuso OAM!
- Nepean group home had a house-warming to celebrate their move into the ADHC built villa model of accommodation support. Residents were delighted to have friends and family over for dinner.

Sydney: John Boccanfuso wears his Medal of the Order of Australia with pride.

2 Northern Region

- The Alstonville site is now known as Summerland House Farm, recognising the growing appeal of the property as a tourist destination. The site and a range of products will now be marketed and promoted under this identity, as part of House With No Steps.
- We now have council approval for the sale of fresh and value add produce. This will provide an avenue for local growers to sell fruit, vegetable and related products, complementing existing businesses and providing new employment options.
- A grant of \$50,000 from Newcastle Permanent to expand the wholesale nursery will help us establish a new revenue stream and consolidate employment outcomes. A huge thank you to Newcastle Permanent for this generous commitment.
- A grant from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to construct a growing tunnel to grow trellis tomatoes will also have the added component of offering a "pick your own" option. Visitors will now be assured of getting the freshest produce around. Eight new employees are expected to be employed on a full-time basis.
- We have been selected as the preferred service provider for a new group home to be established in Armidale. With the home currently being built, it is expected that service will begin towards the end of the year.

Northern Region:
David working in the nursery at Summerland House Farm.





3 Western Region

- Aussie Biscuits has successfully completed the HACCP (food safety) audit.
- Teams came from Dubbo, Orange, Parkes and Forbes to participate in the 30th annual sports day for people with a disability. All participants were presented with a medal to commemorate the day and the 30 years of continuous competition.
- A second group home in Cowra is looking to be ready in March 2012.

Western Region:
Jam drop biscuits are a favourite in the Aussie Biscuits range.

4 Queensland

- Our new HWNS Transition To Independence program in Caboolture Queensland opened its doors on 7th April. The service is designed to assist people with a disability to develop and/or expand on their Independent Living Skills, and Community Connections.
- Our first service in Ipswich opened in September 2010, Transition To Independence (TTI), and we already have nine service users. Ipswich region is already expanding with the opening of an Emergency & Crisis Respite House in Leichhardt.
- Developing and delivering training to Business Enterprise Employees in Hazard Identification, Risk Assessments and the management of identified risks has been deemed a success. Feedback is that it has been easy for the employees to understand and participate in and they now feel they are able to recognise hazards and report them.
- All staff and service users across the region were invited to design a poster using the slogan "Safety comes in a can, I Can, You Can, We Can be Safe" to increase the knowledge and awareness of safety for all staff, volunteers and the people we support across Queensland. We received 36 entries from across the state and the judges settled on the poster submitted by our Post School Services Program at Doonan on the Sunshine Coast.
- During 'Safe Work Australia Week' Queensland held a safety aware project promoting sun safety. We wanted to educate everyone on the dangers of being outdoors without proper sun protection and each service/site was encouraged to participate. Representatives from local Cancer Council offices attended to speak about the dangers caused by prolonged sun exposure.

Queensland:
Above left: We support Roman, Melissa & Libby through our Townsville PSS Program.

Above right:
Winning entry of the "Safety comes in a can, I Can, You Can, We Can Be Safe" poster design competition.

