



afford news

November 2022



The Australian Foundation for Disability acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community.

The Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford) provides essential services in accommodation, lifestyle and recreation, and employment for people who have a disability.

Afford's mission is to provide innovative, flexible and high-quality support to enhance lifestyle, learning and vocational opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers. Our vision is to be the partner of choice, supporting people with disability to shape their own lives.

Everything we do is underpinned by the values of integrity, cooperation, empathy, respect and excellence.

This magazine is published to tell stories of interest to our community, to share news and information, and to celebrate our people – including our clients, our clients' families and friends, and our employees.

If you have any questions or want to suggest a story contact b&e@afford.com.au

Inside

02 From the CEO

03 In depth with... Marco and George

04 National Carers Week 2022

05 Five things you need to know about... International Day of People with Disability

07 Five things you need to know about... Heroes with Ability

09 News

On the cover:

Heroes with Ability ambassador Marco junior and co-founder George. Read our stories on pages 3 and 7 to learn more about HWA.





From the Acting CEO

The end of the year is not too far away as we bring you our November edition of Afford News. Our Chief Executive Officer, Jo Toohey, is taking some well-deserved annual leave and it's my pleasure to serve as Acting CEO at Afford until she returns in December.

I don't know about you, but I'm enjoying our new magazine because it's great to share these stories with our community and about our community. In October we celebrated National Carers Week, which is such an important point of awareness for our community at Afford and in the wider community right now. We are seeing the far-reaching impact that a lack of support for carers can have – and that includes people who do not do this as paid work, as well as people who do. There is a shortage of talent in the care sector, and there is a shortage of understanding and support for those who dedicate their time, life and love to caring for people. Care comes from the heart, but it doesn't mean that there isn't a cost, or that it is provided without its challenges as well as its wonders. Read our stories of lived experience from the perspective of those who provide care, and those who receive it, in this edition.

Coming up soon in December is the International Day of People With Disability, and we've provided a great rundown of five things you need to know about this day of awareness – including how Heroes With Ability celebrate. Who is Heroes With Ability, you might ask? Afford is Heroes With Ability's partner and works closely with this extraordinary charity who give people living with disability the opportunity to play sport. The health and social impacts of what Heroes With Ability achieve through their mission is outstanding, and we are so proud to work in partnership with the team at HWA. You can get to know the founders – Marco and George – in this edition's 'In depth with' feature.

Have a great November, everyone.

Nick Johnson

Acting CEO



In depth with **Marco & George**

Afford partner, Heroes with Ability (HWA), is a grassroots organisation dedicated to removing social barriers for all people with disability in Australia, so they can reach their full potential. We caught up with HWA's founders, Marco and George, to find out how they are achieving this aim through a modified sports program that focuses on inclusion.

When Marco and George launched Heroes with Ability (HWA) in 2019, they did it with one thing in mind: to give people living with disability the opportunity to play sport.

Marco grew up playing soccer and the experience ignited within him a passion for sports that extended beyond the physical.

"I loved the team environment, meeting new people and making new friends. You learn a lot from that experience of socialising," he says.


Sport as a tool for inclusion was something Marco realised he could utilise to support his son, Marco junior, who lives with physical

and intellectual disability. When he realised Marco junior wanted to play sport, he focussed his efforts on overcoming barriers.

This quest led Marco to George, a Paralympian who has used his own experience of cerebral palsy as a catalyst for creating change. Together Marco and George formed HWA, running sports programs for Afford clients and schools that include everything from rugby league to mini-Olympics and even gym circuits with disco dancing.

George believes that people don't have to love sports to experience its benefits. "Sport is the bonus," he said. "The biggest impact from HWA is the confidence Heroes gain to be themselves around other people." Marco added that: "HWA is about community spirit, being accepted and included, and unique."

Looking ahead, Marco and George aspire to reach even more Afford participants, expand their school program, and continue to open up opportunities for people with disability.

Read more about Heroes with Ability on [Page 7](#). 

National Carers Week 2022

Did you know 2.65 million Australians provide care and support to a family member or friend? As part of National Carers Week 2022, Afford shared the carer journeys of Jocelyn and Ray.

Ray and Lene

Ray and his wife Jan support their daughter Lene, who lives with an acquired brain injury following an accident in 1998. Their story charts a dramatic change of the course of life for every member of this loving family. For 20 years, Ray and Jan cared for Lene in their home, before a referral to independent living gave all three access to more support. Ray's advice to carers is: "Don't try to do it all yourself... look around for people or organisations who can help you".

Read the full story here
afford.com.au 🐦



Jocelyn and Kristian

Jocelyn and her husband Gary care for their son Kristian, who lives with autism, intellectual disability and vision impairment. Their story is one that illustrates the importance of support networks and making time for wellbeing when life gets tough.

In a moving interview, Jocelyn spoke about the journey of understanding Kristian's disabilities and the ups and downs of Kristian transitioning to supported independent living at the age of 25. She shares the circumstances of his recent vision loss stemming from isolation during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Throughout her story, Jocelyn emphasised the importance of accessing therapy for her own wellbeing, the strength she draws from her loved ones, and the constant guidance provided by her faith.

Read the full story here
afford.com.au 🐦



5 things you need to know about...

International Day of People with Disability

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) is a day to celebrate the contributions and achievements of people with disability and to promote awareness, understanding and acceptance in our community. IDPwD is held on 3 December every year, and people all around the world get involved.

With IDPwD 2022 just around the corner, it's the perfect time to jump in and learn more, so here's 5 things we think you need to know about this important day.

1 It's an official United Nations day

IDPwD began in 1992 when it was proclaimed by a United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution. This day was established to protect the rights and wellbeing of all persons with disabilities across every aspect of society, development, and life.

2 There's an annual theme

The UN announces a new theme every year for IDPwD. This year's theme is: 'transformative solutions for inclusive development: the role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world'. Visit the UN website for more info: [un.org](https://www.un.org)

3 Our government supports IDPwD

IDPwD has been supported by the Australian Government since 1996, with funds provided to promote the day, raise awareness, and support activities. Plus, the IDPwD program aligns with key action areas under Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31: [disabilitygateway.gov.au](https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au)


4 Heroes with Ability celebrates IDPwD

Afford partner Heroes with Ability will mark IDPwD with a grand final celebration showcasing their sports program Heroes on Friday 2 December 2022. Find out more about the event: [heroeswithability.com](https://www.heroeswithability.com)



5 IDPwD events are held across Australia

Communities, workplaces, and schools around the country recognise IDPwD by holding in-person and online events such as art exhibitions, festivals, film screenings, morning teas and sporting games. Check out this community event calendar to find one near you: idpwd.com.au/events

See how you can get involved and promote inclusion in your community. idpwd.com.au 



3 December
**International Day of
People with Disability**



5 things you need to know about...

Heroes With Ability

Formed with a mission to inspire, teach, and motivate, Heroes with Ability (HWA) is committed to giving people with a disability the opportunity to play sport. Afford is proud to be HWA's major partner, supporting the organisation's mission to strengthen social skills and improve wellbeing through programs that focus on inclusion.

Co-founder, Marco said that HWA is so unique he believes people must experience the program first-hand to really understand the impact it has on everyone who participates. That said, Marco has managed to distil the program's essence into five things he thinks you need to know about Heroes with Ability.



1 HWA runs specialised sporting programs for Afford

Through HWA, Afford clients can improve their fitness, independence, and life skills. Helena, a participant at a recent HWA gala day event, said: “Heroes with Ability is cool and awesome and I love it because now I am strong.”

2 HWA holds lots of special events

As well as modified sports programs, gala days, International Day of People with Disability celebrations, holiday clinics, and charity events offer more ways for Afford clients to get involved with HWA.

3 HWA ambassadors advocate for inclusion

Some of Australia’s biggest sporting names support HWA! The line-up includes NRL stars Ivan and Nathan Cleary, Ryan Matterson, Luke Brooks, James Tedesco, Brett White, Chris Heighington. Billy Walters, and Sean Keppie, Paralympian Lisa Adams, and NRLW’s Jocephy Daniels. HWA’s internal ambassadors, Marco Quintao Jnr, and Todd Dorward, are also fantastic role models!

4 HWA organises sporting event inclusion bays

Thanks to the generosity of community partners such as Penrith Panthers, Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, Gold Coast Titans, Brisbane Broncos, Parramatta Eels, and West Tigers, HWA can invite Afford participants to attend games in exclusive seating bays. And there are plans to expand this initiative even further!

5 HWA provides employment for people with disability

As HWA’s programs continue to grow, they provide employment (paid and volunteer), training, and career opportunities for people living with disability.

If you would like to experience Heroes with Ability for yourself, reach out to your Afford team leader, or visit: heroeswithability.com 🐦



Celebrating Social Inclusion Week

One of the simplest things we can do to build caring and inclusive communities, is to reach out to those around us. This idea is the cornerstone of Social Inclusion Week (SIW) Australia, an annual initiative launched in 2009 by multi award-winning conductor and singer, Jonathon Welch AM.

Members of our community who are most at risk of feeling lonely and excluded are young people 12–25 years of age, jobless families with children, people with a disability or mental illness, those who are homeless, the elderly and Indigenous Australians. The goal of SIW is to build a movement that inspires communities to reflect on their own inclusiveness and seek out those who are isolated to bring joy and stimulation into their lives.

This year, SIW runs from 19 - 27 November under the theme of 'Connect, Collaborate, and Celebrate'. To mark SIW 2022, Afford is empowering our clients and employees across Australia with a range of resources that will build their understanding of social inclusion and equip them to educate and inspire their own communities and networks. Our SIW resource pack includes social media posts and banners, a fact sheet, posters, and tips for hosting socially inclusive events.

Social inclusion is about all of us showing that we not only care about our own personal wellbeing and security, but that as a community we are able to look after ourselves as well as others. The great thing is that everyone can join SIW's vision of a more caring Australia. Why not start by engaging with the objectives of this year's theme to share knowledge, raise awareness, and host or participate in an event that is focussed on social inclusiveness?

If you would like to find out more about how you can celebrate SIW, visit socialinclusionweek.com.au ➤



New Afford employee benefit

Are you interested in joining the Afford team? We have an exciting variety of roles available across our organisation and fantastic benefits too. In fact, we just added 'Purchased Leave' as part of our focus on wellbeing and work-life balance. In addition to annual leave entitlements, eligible Afford employees can purchase up to 10 days of additional leave within any 12-month period. With Purchased Leave, our employees now have greater flexibility to meet their work and personal commitments.

Explore career opportunities with Afford: careers.afford.com.au ➤

Dylan Alcott's NDIS report

Australian of the Year and disability rights advocate, Dylan Alcott, wants to restore trust in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) by focusing on the lived experiences of people with disability and putting them at the centre of all NDIS decisions.

Last month, Alcott presented 'NDIS 2.0: A Disability-led Plan for the NDIS' at Parliament House in Canberra. The report amplifies the voices of participants about key priorities for the next decade and offers ten recommendations to ensure the NDIS reaches its full potential. **Read the report:** getskilledaccess.com.au 🐦



Source @billshortenmp Twitter



ADE qualification launch

In an exciting first for our organisation, 20 supported employees working in our ADEs (Australian Disability Enterprises) are enrolled in a Certificate III in Process Manufacturing course that is fully funded by Afford.

This nationally recognised qualification will equip the students with the skills and knowledge to operate with minimum supervision in a production manufacturing environment, plan their own work requirements, setup, start up and shut down equipment, monitor product/process quality, and solve a range of typical problems.

Following a lively information night attended by prospective students, their families, and Afford representatives, the course kicked off in the first week of November. Supported employees from Afford ADEs across Sydney will attend a weekly class at our Prestons location, where a trainer from BSI Learning will take them through the program's core and elective units. We'll be sharing more stories throughout the students' journey, and we can't wait to celebrate their successful graduation when the course concludes in September 2023! 🐦

NDIS Code of Conduct


Afford is committed to delivering our services and working with the community in accordance with the NDIS Code of Conduct. This commitment ensures we:

- > act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions
- > respect the privacy of people with disability
- > provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill
- > act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- > promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability
- > take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse of people with disability
- > take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

Feedback & Complaints

Afford is committed to continuous improvement and client-centred service, so we welcome open feedback and complaints. If you want to share your feedback with Afford, or you have a complaint, please visit our website or speak to our Service Delivery Directors in your region. afford.com.au/feedback/



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