



BUSINESS COUNCIL
OF CO-OPERATIVES AND MUTUALS

DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE CO-OPERATIVES AND MUTUALS SECTOR IN AUSTRALIA

A Research Report by Per Capita for the
Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals
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Introduction

In 2016 the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM) joined with Per Capita to undertake research into gender diversity and inclusion in the co-operative and mutual enterprise (CME) sector in Australia.

The resulting research report, titled *Eliza's Project*, evaluated the state of gender equality in the CME sector in Australia, and with industry engagement, developed a strategy document with actionable objectives to give the co-operatives sector a leadership position on gender inclusion in Australian workplaces.

Early in 2018, the BCCM engaged Per Capita to extend its investment in promoting diversity across the CME sector by considering how it can create a more inclusive workplace environment for people with disabilities.

This report is the outcome of a six-month collaborative project to explore ways in which businesses in the CME sector in Australia can position themselves as 'employers of choice' for people with disabilities, and meaningfully increase their engagement and support of employees who live with disabilities.

The report was informed by both qualitative and quantitative research, including an online survey of workers in the CME sector nation-wide, and two co-designed social innovation workshops with representatives of the CME sector and disability advocates.

It is intended to inform leaders in the CME sector about the opportunities, challenges and benefits of employing people with disabilities, and to provide a tool-kit to enable individual businesses in the sector to develop Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plans (previously known as Disability Action Plans).

Executive Summary

The BCCM commissioned this research to determine how the CME sector in Australia currently performs with regard to the inclusion of people with disabilities as employees, and to identify practices that could support businesses within the sector to become 'employers of choice' for people with disabilities in the future.

Per Capita undertook research into the current state of employment of people with disabilities in the CME sector compared to the national average, through a combination of desktop research and an online survey of workers in the CME sector. This was enhanced by two workshops with sector representatives, using a social innovation, co-design methodology to explore the lived experiences of people in the sector, and to uncover potential barriers to greater inclusion of people with disabilities as employees.

We found that the CME sector generally is more inclusive of people with disabilities than the average Australian workplace, and that leaders in the sector evince a greater understanding of the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace, and of the benefits of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

At the same time, we uncovered particular challenges and potential barriers to increasing the number of employees with disabilities in the sector; however, given the strong commitment to inclusion demonstrated by sector leaders, and the recognition of the opportunities that come with a more diverse and representative workforce, the tools to overcome such barriers are more readily at hand within the sector than in some other workplaces.

This report outlines our findings about the state of disability inclusion across the CME sector in Australia and provides a tool-kit to enable individual businesses within the sector to develop their own, tailored Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plans.

These plans may be used to support employers to increase the number of people with disabilities they engage; to provide the necessary workplace adjustments and initiatives that enable people with disabilities to work effectively; and to ensure that businesses are getting the greatest benefit from a more diverse and inclusive workshop. The plans may also be registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission if so desired.

Background: People with Disabilities in Australia

What is a disability?

According to the Australian Network on Disability (AND):

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible.¹

Statistics

AND is a useful source of information about PWD in Australia. Some relevant statistics for the purpose of this report include:

- Over 4 million people in Australia, or one in five people, have some form of disability.
- 18.6% of females and 18.0% of males in Australia have disability.
- 2.1 million Australians of working age (15 – 64 years) have disability.
- 35.9% of Australia's 8.9 million households include a person with disability.²

Despite common misconceptions, disabilities are usually not visible. For example, only 4.4% of people with disabilities use a wheelchair.

Moreover, the extent of disability varies amongst people who have the same form of disability: while there are 30,000 Deaf Australians with total hearing loss, whose first language is Auslan, as many as one in six Australians are affected by some level of hearing loss.

When it comes to sight, Vision Australia estimates that there are currently 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or have low vision.³

It is important to remember that disability includes the restriction of mental function. Three million Australians live with depression or anxiety, and 45% of all Australians between the ages of 16 and 85 will experience a mental health condition during their lifetime. While not all incidences of mental health conditions are disabling, an increasing proportion of Australians live with a mental or sensory function disability that can affect their lives.⁴

¹ <https://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html>

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

Employment of People with Disability

Statistics

1 in 5
Living with a disability.
That's over
4 million people

of those
2.5
million
are working age

but only
53%
are employed

The above statistics are compelling, but we should note that not all people with disabilities who are of working age are able to work or seeking employment.

According to AND, of the 2.1 million people with disabilities of working age, just over 1 million are currently employed and another 114,900 are looking for work.

This translates to an unemployment rate of around 9.5% - almost twice the national average rate of unemployment in the general community.

Some other key statistics about people with disabilities and their relationship to the labour force include:

- 34% of people with disability are managers & professionals.
- Graduates with disability take 56.2% longer to gain full time employment than other graduates.
- People with disability aged 15-24 years are 10 times more likely to experience discrimination than those aged 65 years and over, and the source of discrimination is an employer in almost half of those instances.⁵

In order to position businesses in the CME sector as 'employers of choice' for people with disabilities, and to ensure that the sector can take advantage of the proven benefits of employing and retaining workers with diverse abilities, it is important to understand how and where discrimination occurs, and to identify barriers other than discrimination to the engagement of employees with disabilities.

Legal requirements

There are specific obligations under Australian law in relation to the employment of people with disabilities.

⁵ Ibid

The following explanation is taken from the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC):

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including: employment, education, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places, because of their disability.

The DDA covers people who have temporary and permanent disabilities; physical, intellectual, sensory, neurological, learning and psychosocial disabilities, diseases or illnesses, physical disfigurement, medical conditions, and work-related injuries.

It extends to disabilities that people have had in the past and potential future disabilities, as well as disabilities that people are assumed to have.

In addition, the DDA protects people with disabilities who may be discriminated against because they are accompanied by an assistant, interpreter or reader; they are accompanied by a trained animal, such as a guide, hearing or assistance dog; or they use equipment or an aid, such as a wheelchair or a hearing aid.

The DDA also makes it against the law to discriminate against someone because of their association with a person with a disability.⁶

In relation to the employment of people with disabilities, the DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities in employment, including:

- the recruitment process, such as advertising, interviewing, and other selection processes
- decisions on who will get the job
- terms and conditions of employment, such as pay rates, work hours and leave
- promotion, transfer, training or other benefits associated with employment
- dismissal or any other detriment, such as demotion or retrenchment.⁷

Such discrimination at work can be either direct – when a person with a disability is consciously treated less favourably in their workplace directly due to their disability; or indirect – when an employer puts in place conditions, requirements or work practices that appear to treat all employees equally but in practice put people with disabilities at a disadvantage.⁸

Most employers are aware of their obligations under the DDA and direct discrimination against job applicants or employees with disabilities is relatively rare.

Indirect discrimination is more common but can be difficult to definitively prove. It is often unintentional and stems from a lack of awareness or understanding on the part of the employer, but the impact on the worker with a disability is still significant.

Both direct and indirect discrimination against people with disabilities is unlawful under the DDA. More information about legal requirements can be found on the AHRC website.

⁶ <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/disability-discrimination>

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

The business case for employing people with disabilities

Above and beyond the requirements under the DDA and related legislation, there are compelling reasons to employ people with disabilities, and to improve the way your business engages with and supports them.

There is a strong business case for employing people with disability.

Employing people with disabilities can enhance your business's public reputation and image in the community.

Including people with disability in your workforce ensures that your business is representative of the community and your customer base. With one in five Australians living with a disability, your business likely engages with customers who have a disability regularly.

People with disabilities tend to build strong connections with customers, often displaying high levels of empathy and understanding, and can provide a viewpoint due to their experience of living with a disability that can enrich your business's understanding of customer and community needs.

Evidence has also shown that a more diverse workforce improves productivity and creates a more welcoming and inclusive culture. People with disabilities, like all workers, bring a range of skills and talents to the workplace, and can boost staff morale and create or improve a sense of teamwork.

When workers with disabilities are employed in suitable positions, with the necessary workplace adjustments and support, they perform as well as any other worker in terms of productivity.

What's more, due to the demonstrated commitment of workers with disabilities, there are real cost savings in employing people with disabilities through reduced staff turnover and lower recruitment and retraining costs.

There is strong evidence that people with disabilities take fewer sick and other leave days and stay in the same job longer than other workers. As a result, employment costs for people with disabilities can be as low as 13 per cent of the standard employment costs.

Moreover, workers' compensation costs for people with disabilities are as low as four percent – this is because people with disabilities have fewer workplace accidents.⁹

Given the many benefits of employing people with disabilities, it makes good business sense to think about how you can increase the number of employees with disabilities and support them to do their best work in your organisation.

This means going beyond the legal requirements not to discriminate, towards creating a culture of inclusion where all employees, including those with diverse abilities, can thrive.

⁹ Graffam, J, Shinkfield, A, Smith, K, and Polzin, U 2002, 'Employer benefits and costs of employing a person with a disability', *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, vol. 17.

Disability Inclusion in the CME Sector: A Sector Snapshot

To inform our understanding of the current attitudes, understanding and practices in relation to the employment of people with disabilities across the CME sector in Australia, we undertook an online survey of BCCM members. (Appendix One). The survey was open for six weeks and we received more than 100 considered responses, providing us with a 'sector snapshot' of disability inclusion in CMEs across Australia.

The sector snapshot contained a lot of positive results.

89%
of employees in the
sector said employing
people with a disability is
important

80%
believe their workplace
was inclusive of people
with disabilities

90%
of employees with
disabilities had
experienced positive
attitudes from colleagues

Most employees in the CME sector already believe their workplace is inclusive of people with disabilities, and overwhelmingly they agree on the importance of disability inclusion.

Employees with disabilities in the sector want managers with the knowledge and understanding to support them.

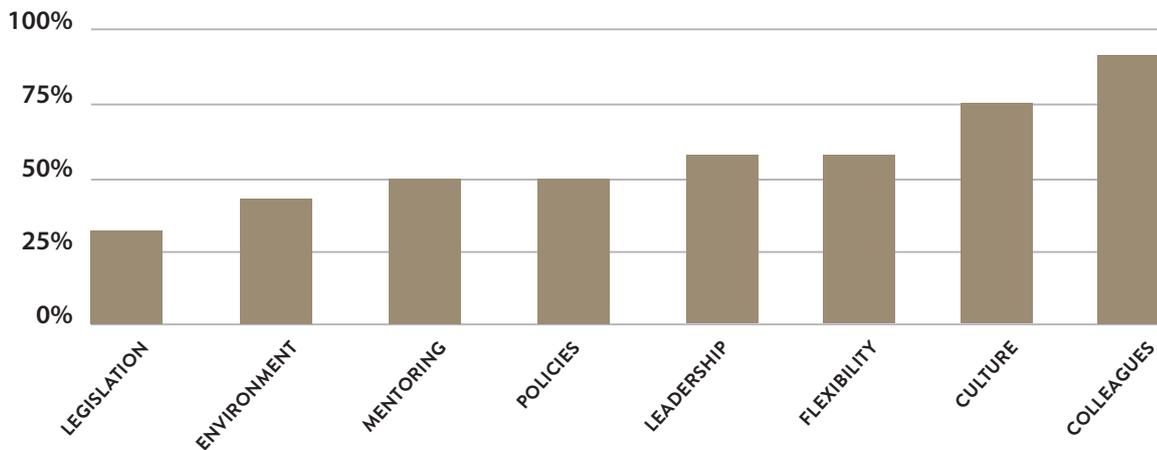
Managers want this too:

- 66% wanted information and advice on how to employ a person with a disability;
- 59% wanted training and support to understanding the associated legal requirements; and
- 49% wanted information from similar CME businesses with experience employing people with disabilities.

While managers have a tendency to focus on laws and regulations, and on providing accessible physical and operational environments, the survey revealed these issues, while important, to be of less concern to employees with disabilities in the CME sector.

Rather, people with disabilities told us that what makes an inclusive workplace is a diverse and welcoming organizational culture, the availability of flexible working conditions, including working from home and flexibility in office hours, and the presence of understanding colleagues and managers, who provide one-on-one support

What makes an inclusive workplace?



Although the sector performed strongly on most measures of disability awareness and inclusion, there is clear room for improvement in this key issue of understanding and support for employees with disabilities in the CME sector.

50%

of employees with disabilities describe their manager as unsupportive

10%

of managers believe people with disabilities could not be successful in leadership roles

46%

of employees with disabilities said their biggest barrier was lack of understanding from managers/colleagues

Input from Sector Leaders

Following the completion of the survey and analysis of its findings, Per Capita conducted two workshops, using co-design methodology, to further explore the understanding and awareness of disability inclusion in the CME sector, and to develop an approach to positioning businesses within the sector as 'employers of choice' for people with disabilities.

The first workshop was held in Melbourne on the 25 October, and involved 12 leaders (general managers, CEOs and heads of Human Resources) from different CME businesses from around the country, along with the CEO and Chair of the BCCM.

The second workshop was held in Adelaide on 13 November, co-hosted by the Don Dunstan Foundation. This workshop included the BCCM CEO and Chair, and other CME leaders, as well as representatives of disability advocacy organisations and government departments. International expert on the co-operative movement and disability inclusion, Guy Turnbull, was also in attendance and presented his own research and experience to participants.

The workshops were facilitated by Per Capita's Director of Social Innovation, Myfan Jordan. Per Capita's social innovation practice uses a human-centred design approach, whereby we create solutions to complex social issues together with the people who face the problems. This ensures that solutions will be adopted and embraced by those who will ultimately implement them.

Workshop One

Workshop One commenced with a brief overview of the challenges and opportunities of including people with disabilities as employees, and a short film that highlighted that disability is caused by a lack of accessibility and accommodation in the environment, including the workplace environment.

The workshop asked participants to think about how the CME sector could employ more people with disabilities through improved recruitment practices, and then to consider how employees with disabilities could be better supported once they are in the workforce.

Recruitment

Participants in the workshop were taken through an ideation activity, in which they were posed questions about how employers could make their workplaces more inclusive of people with disabilities through recruitment practices. In this way, sector leaders were charged with the responsibility to think creatively about policies and practices they could put in place to increase the number of people with disabilities they employ.

These questions included "How might we encourage applications from people with disability?" and "How might we support recruiters and make recruitment processes more inclusive?" Participants were asked to consider how to set a vision and narrative to increase inclusion of people with disabilities, including setting clear targets; how to develop and implement policies and procedures; how to change the organizational culture and to develop skills and understanding of inclusion amongst recruiters; and how to track and measure performance against recruitment targets.

The workshop then went on to conduct a series of activities designed to give participants greater awareness of the challenges often faced by people with disabilities in the workplace, and to create 'empathic understanding' among sector leaders about what was needed to support employees with disabilities in their workplaces.

The Empathic Understanding process involved participants putting themselves 'in the shoes' of workers who experience a range of different disabilities, including;

- Vision impairment
- Epilepsy
- Memory loss
- Lupus (a chronic auto-immune condition)
- Bi-polar disorder
- Neural-processing disability
- Hearing impairment

In addition, participants were asked to imagine having a broken leg (a temporary disability) and being a carer for a person with dementia, which can itself present challenges in securing and maintaining paid employment.

In each instance, participants were asked to imagine what their workplace would be like for them if they were dealing with the daily challenges related to their disabilities and caused by inaccessible or hostile environments at work. They were then asked to suggest ways the workplace could better accommodate the needs of employees with the specific disability they were asked to imagine.

Encouraging applications from people with disabilities

In considering how employers and recruiters could encourage applications from people with disabilities, participants came up with the following suggestions:

- Build relationships with disability advocacy organisations
- Focus on the outcomes of the job rather than the tasks – what can be adapted to ensure increased inclusiveness?
- Advise that "our employers support applications from people with a disability"
- Build it into recruitment advertisements and/or review wording of recruitment advertisements
- Recruiters brief (if going through recruitment agency) to include inclusion statement
- Understand and seek out employment service providers who help facilitate and find roles for people with disability
- Advertise on different/multiple recruitment sites
- Advertise on disability job boards and through disability networks
- Provide interview questions to applicants before recruitment interviews
- Create outcome-based, rather than task-oriented, position descriptions
- Include in job ads the contact details for people with disabilities to speak with someone about the role, if they wish
- Spend more time talking about the organisation (and its motivations) rather than the role during interviews
- Position descriptions and job docs should be in accessible formats e.g. HTML
- Form partnerships with disability service (DES) providers

In considering how managers might support recruiters and make recruitment processes more inclusive, participants came up with the following suggestions:

Vison and narrative

- Rather than recruiting people to fit a job, we should look at how we might create the job to fit the person
- Share experience and lessons learned across organisations about successful disability inclusion programs
- Provide links to videos of how the organisation supports employees with disability
- Share and celebrate failures and successes
- Be open about our culture/policies of inclusion
- Expand our culture statement to be more inclusive
- Be clear on the organisational policy of inclusion

Policy and procedure

- Implement a key policy that we want people with disability to apply
- Create all positions to suit all abilities (unless not possible due to physical limitations)
- Position descriptions need to be reviewed for inclusion
- Policies, processes, targets – create action plans around each
- Create a job redesign kit for managers
- When designing a role, consider: could this role be part-time? Flexible hours? Flexible duties?

Culture and development

- Managers must be open to hiring people with disability
- We must be open about what additional supports we can offer.
- We should identify support people and tools that already exist or could easily be implemented
- Provide support, coaching and training on unconscious bias to HR and other recruiters
- Provide recruiters with the opportunities to ask how they might support an applicant/interviewee with disability
- Ensure the recruiting department 'walks the talk' themselves - for example, by hiring people with disability within their own team.

Tracking and measuring

- Disclose statistics on how many people with disabilities work at your organisation and how many reasonable adjustments have been made to support them
- Get organisations to systematically review their performance around disability inclusion
- Implement bonus rewards for Enterprise Resource Planning
- Understand and evaluate a recruiter's level of experience with disability recruitment
- clear disability inclusion targets and hold staff accountable to meeting them, through to line managers
- Ensure that recruiters themselves have a culture of inclusion

Support within the workplace

When participants turned to the empathic understanding tasks designed to help them understand what measures could be implemented to make their workplaces more inclusive of employees with disabilities, they uncovered a number of ideas, encompassing the full range of disabilities they were asked to consider.

The measures proposed by participants are grouped below in broad categories of support for employees with disabilities.

Physical environment in the workplace

- Create and maintain physically accessible workplaces, through the removal of physical obstacles that could restrict movement for those with impaired movement or vision
- Implement suitable health and safety processes, e.g. around evacuation, removing workplace hazards
- Undertake regular OH&S assessments of potential triggers for conditions such as epilepsy or other sensory disabilities, e.g. lighting
- Provide double-glazed windows to reduce ambient noise for people with hearing impairment
- Provide workplace signage in braille for toilets, meeting rooms, etc.
- Provide Auslan interpretation at important company events and significant meetings where requested
- Involve people with disabilities in the design and modification of the workplace

Technological support

- Ensure technological devices are enabling irrespective of disability
- Provide telephones with adjustable volume for those with hearing impairment
- Provide screen readers for computer monitors for employees with vision impairment
- Eliminate the use of CAPTCHAs and other inaccessible forms of security on IT systems
- Provide desks with adjustable heights
- Provide supportive desktop aids such as cushioned wrist rests for computer use
- Offer audio description programs for those with a vision impairment
- Internally and externally, advertise the adaptive technology the organisation offers

Management and Human Resources support

- Ensure awareness and understanding in management and HR by providing specialist training, including positive awareness of the benefits of having people with disabilities in the team
- Provide an opportunity for a potential employee to disclose their disability at interview, without pressure or prejudice
- Provide a dedicated HR contact if an employee has any questions or needs help
- Ensure that managers proactively ask if there's anything that can be done to support employees with disabilities
- Appoint a workplace mentor who can assist with induction and provide ongoing one-on-one support
- Provide a safe space and opportunity for an employee with disabilities to explain their condition to co-workers, if requested
- Appoint a disability advocate within the organisation
- Ensure that staff training accommodates different levels of ability

- Ensure that a key manager or colleague has knowledge of any required medication or emergency procedures that may be needed
- Provide first aid training for all employees
- Provide mental health support for all employees, including access to a counsellor
- Embed the right to take regular breaks into workplace agreements
- Match the job to the employee's abilities – e.g. non-customer facing role where appropriate
- Provide free hearing tests for all employees
- Make provision for carer support in the workplace, if needed

Flexible working

- Embed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are focused on outcomes over time, rather than rigid daily achievements
- Provide the option to work from home where possible
- Create flexible schedules to accommodate medical appointments, travel outside peak hour, etc.
- Provide flex hours to enable days off when needed to be made up at other times
- Create a culture of flexibility by extending flexible work policies to all employees in all roles
- Management should model flexible working by also working from home when possible, and utilizing flexible hours when needed

Workshop Two

The second workshop in Adelaide commenced with an outline of the process being undertaken by Per Capita for the BCCM, including a brief report on the results of the survey and first workshop.

This was followed by a presentation by international co-operative expert and disability advocate, Guy Turnbull, and then a roundtable discussion about the issues facing the sector and the challenges and opportunities of improving the inclusion of people with disabilities as employees.

Guy Turnbull's presentation focused on the development of people with disabilities as entrepreneurs within the co-operative and mutual sector in the UK. He noted that many of the characteristics that make a good entrepreneur, such as lateral thinking, adaptability and collaboration involve similar behaviours to those used by people with disabilities as they navigate their working lives.

He further noted that enabling people with disabilities to develop their own enterprises provided them with choice and control and was something the CME sector was well positioned to do.

The roundtable discussion then built on the ideas that emerged from the survey and first workshop, and from Guy's presentation, to discuss the issues participants felt were critical to increasing the employment of people with disabilities within the CME sector.

It was noted that there are around 1 million people with disabilities in Australia who aren't employed, most of whom are not actively looking for work, and that they could be doing meaningful, fulfilling work. There are lots of options for employment for people with disabilities but the ecosystem doesn't support it. A large part of the problem is that opportunities aren't flexible or able to be tailored appropriately to diverse abilities.

BCCM President Terry Agnew noted that opportunities for people with disabilities to develop their entrepreneurial skills will increase over time, but the big opportunity now is that the CME sector employs a lot of people and we want to position ourselves as 'employers of choice' for people with disabilities.

This is because a lot of organisations are fearful of the challenges of employing people with disabilities, and that while there is lots of good intent within the sector, there is not a lot of impact.

Discussion turned to the known benefits of employing people with disabilities, including higher productivity, more loyalty, less turnover of staff.

Guy Turnbull noted that the inherent values of co-operatives should be extended to consider the needs of people with disabilities. How do you support your staff, how do you involve them? There should be a better alignment between the values of the co-operative sector with inclusion than in large organisation. BCCM CEO Melina Morrison emphasised that co-operatives are businesses, and the key thing is for them to learn the message about productivity benefits. How can we leverage the fact that a more inclusive approach to employees with disabilities improves engagement with both customers and members?

The BCCM should provide resources and support for CME businesses wishing to increase and improve their inclusion of people with disabilities, through the provision of the toolkit, access to events and speakers and shared stories of the way other CME businesses have approached inclusion.

It was agreed that showcasing those who are enjoying success as a result of including people with disabilities can encourage and educate others. The BCCM can be a forum for showcasing successful social enterprises. It could also offer a free incubator service from pooled sector resources. This could include sharing open-source access to business models across the sector, where this would not compromise competition.

Critically, the toolkit resulting from this project shouldn't just be about working with employers; we also need to look at how the sector can provide job coaching to ensure people with disabilities are supported into suitable work.

The survey and workshops have revealed a high level of empathy and understanding of the needs of people with disabilities, and a positive attitude to including them in the workplace. Compared to big business, CME organisations are well-placed to build on their values of mutuality and cooperation by creating truly inclusive workplaces.

The challenge now is to embed this cultural advantage in a sector-wide commitment to increasing the employment of people with disabilities, which is underpinned by appropriate programs of support for businesses within the sector, under the leadership of the BCCM.

Next Steps

Per Capita will consult with the BCCM on the findings of this report and distil them into recommendations to drive increased inclusion of people with disabilities as employees in the CME sector.

These will be framed around the role the BCCM can play in providing resources to the sector to enable them to provide an inclusive workplace within their individual businesses.

Along with services the BCCM can provide in terms of sharing information and advice, and opportunities for businesses to hear from experts and from one another about what works, the primary support will be provided by way of a tool kit that will enable CME organisations to develop Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plans tailored to their individual business needs.

This toolkit will be launched in November 2017.

About Per Capita

Per Capita is an independent progressive think tank, dedicated to fighting inequality in Australia. We work to build a new vision for Australia based on fairness, shared prosperity, community and social justice.

Our research is rigorous, evidence-based and long-term in its outlook. We consider the national challenges of the next decade rather than the next election cycle. We ask original questions and offer fresh solutions, drawing on new thinking in social science, economics and public policy.

Our audience is the interested public, not just experts and policy makers. We engage all Australians who want to see rigorous thinking and evidence-based analysis applied to the issues facing our country's future.

About the Researchers

Emma Dawson is the Executive Director of Per Capita. Formerly, she was a senior advisor on Digital Inclusion at Telstra, Executive Director of the Institute for a Broadband Enabled Society at the University of Melbourne, and a senior policy advisor in the Rudd and Gillard governments.

Emma has published numerous reports, articles and opinion pieces on a wide range of public policy issues. She is a regular panellist on *The Drum* on ABC TV and various Sky News programs.

Emma holds a BA with First Class Honours from LaTrobe University and an MA with Distinction from Monash University. She sits on the board of the Prader-Willi Research Foundation Australia.

Myfan Jordan is the Director of Social Innovation at Per Capita. Myfan spent 25 years studying and working in the UK, focusing mainly on community involvement, social housing, policy and advocacy, until returning to live in Melbourne in 2011.

Myfan is passionate about the meaningful participation of older people and has worked in roles supporting this at Pensioner Action in the UK, Older Families Program at Commonwealth Respite and at Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria.

Myfan has a BA (Hons) in Social Policy from the University of Sussex and a Masters in Cultural and Media Studies. She has a Diploma in Social Sciences: Crime, Order and Social Control from the Open University, and is an Associate to the Healthy Ageing Research Group at La Trobe University.

Appendix One

Survey questions

1. Has your business ever employed a person with a disability? This includes a person with a physical, intellectual, neurological, sensory or learning disability.

Yes, currently

Yes, previously

No

2. If yes currently or previously: How did this affect your business?

a. It was a very positive experience

b. It was a somewhat positive experience

c. It had no discernable impact on our business

d. It was a somewhat negative experience

e. It was a very negative experience

If A or B: How did employing a person with a disability contribute positively to your business?

If D or E: How did employing a person with a disability contribute negatively to your business?

If no: For what reasons has your business not employed a person with a disability?

a. We have never considered employing someone with a disability

b. We have never received a job application from a person with a disability

c. There are no positions within my business that would be suitable for a person with a disability

d. We don't have the resources necessary to accommodate a person with a disability (please specify)

e. Other, please specify

3. Would you consider employing a person with a disability again / in future?

Yes

No

Unsure

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a. I don't understand the legal requirements around occupational health and safety involved in employing a person with a disability

b. I believe the resources required to accommodate a person with a disability are beyond the capacity of my business

c. I'm worried that a person with a disability will not be as productive as an employee without a disability

d. I'm worried that if I employ a person with a disability and it doesn't work out, I will be unable to make a change that is needed for my business

e. I don't understand what government support might be available to enable me to employ a person with a disability

5. Do you perceive that employing a person with a disability will involve unreasonable compliance and regulatory requirements?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

6. Which, if any, of the following do you believe might assist you to employ a person with a disability in future? Tick all that apply

- a. Government assistance in the form of a subsidy for wages
- b. Government assistance in the form of a subsidy for workplace adjustments or equipment
- c. Training and support to understand legal requirements
- d. Information and advice on how to employ a person with a disability
- e. Information from similar CME businesses with experience employing people with disabilities
- f. Other: please specify

7. The following programs are available to assist businesses to employ people with a disability. Please indicate if you have heard of these, and whether they would be of interest to your business.

	Have heard of	Is of interest
<p>a. Disability Employment Service – A Government service to help Employers recruit and retain people with disabilities.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>b. The Wage Subsidy Scheme – provides payments to eligible employers to help cover the wages of an employee in the first few months of employment. Employers may be eligible for up to \$1,500 as an incentive to employ someone registered with a disability.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>c. The Employment Assistance Fund – The EAF gives financial help to eligible people with disability and mental health conditions and employers to buy work related modifications, equipment, Auslan services and workplace assistance and support services.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>d. The Supported Wage System - a process that allows employers to pay a productivity-based wage for people with disability that matches an independently assessed productivity rate.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Demographic Questions

1. Where is your business located?

Postcode:

2. How many full-time equivalent positions does your business employ?

- a. 1 – 5
- b. 6 – 10
- c. 10 – 20
- d. 20 – 50
- e. 50 – 100
- f. 100+

3. Does your business involve face-to-face interactions with customers?



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