

NAIDOC Person of the Year

Kelvin Kong.

Excellence and community leadership honoured at National NAIDOC Week Awards.



By [Tahnee Jash](#) and [Carly Williams](#) for [ABC News](#)

The major winner of the NAIDOC Week Awards has dedicated his award to raising awareness of the devastating rates of middle-ear disease impacting First Nations people.

The NAIDOC Person of the Year in 2023 is Worimi man Professor Kelvin Kong, Australia's first Indigenous surgeon.

"I'm accepting this award on the back of terrible ear statistics, I'm ashamed of that," the ear, nose and throat surgeon said in his speech.

"But I don't want to dwell on some of the horrible statistics of some of the operations I do — I'd rather dwell on some of the happier successes."

Outside of his job at John Hunter Hospital on Awabakal country, Dr Kong spends time in remote areas where patients battle with long waiting lists and a shortage of specialists.

Middle-ear disease is impacting more than 50 per cent of First Nations children living in remote communities.

"Our culture, it is so wonderful," Dr Kong continued in his speech.

"For our Elders who have done so much for us — I stand here before you because of the opportunities you gave to us and it is so pleasing to be here representing what you've done."

From [NextSense](#): Professor Kong is part of the expert network of surgeons we work with to deliver cochlear implant services. He's passionate about early intervention and equal access to quality hearing healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. It's wonderful to see this public recognition for his clinical work and his advocacy.

Prof. Kong qualified as the first Aboriginal Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. He practises in Newcastle, NSW, as a surgeon specialising in Otolaryngology and Ear, Nose and Throat surgery and spends time working in and for remote communities in Australia.





This [great profile](#) on the NAIDOC site describes his work to ensure barriers to learning, education, employment and healthy living are eradicated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“If we can reduce the risk of hearing loss, we can have a direct impact on a child's ability to learn and develop. The change that we see is remarkable,” he said.

Lala Gutchen accepted the Caring for Country and Culture award.

A Meuram woman from Erub Island in the Torres Strait, she has been documenting over 2,000 unrecorded Erub Mer words, collaborating with technology giants like Google and Apple, to create a literacy app to ensure Erub Mer language would exist for generations to come.

Lala has also been a key cultural witness in a historic Queensland Land Court case, where she provided evidence for her people about the

impact that the Waratah Coal’s Galilee Coal Project would have on the Torres Strait including on the islands of Erub, Poruma and Merad which are threatened by rising sea levels due to climate change.



“Stand with us, Australia.”

The referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament was also on the night's agenda.

Rachel Perkins, who won the Creative Talent Award, used her acceptance speech to urge Australians to vote 'yes' in the referendum later this year.



"Can I also pay respect to Linda Burney, Minister of Indigenous Australians," Ms Perkins said during her speech. (And) Pat Anderson, elder of the year last year — these two women are leading us with the Uluru Statement from the Heart and leading the country to a 'Yes' this year. Stand with us, Australia," she said.

Rachel Perkins is the daughter of civil rights activist and politician Charles Perkins and she blazed her own trail, using her 30-plus year career to truth-tell Australian history that many didn't learn at school.



The ‘life-changing day’ Matildas goalkeeper Mackenzie Arnold transformed her hearing loss journey.

Matildas goalkeeper Mackenzie Arnold always knew her “hearing was not great”, however she did not expect the effect her hearing loss journey would have on others.

Arnold became a reluctant hero when she was fitted with hearing aids as her partner filmed and uploaded the video to Instagram.

The West Ham goalkeeper is busy preparing for the [FIFA Women’s World Cup](#) this month. But if not for her brother, who has had hearing aids since he was young, she would struggle to hear the roar of the crowd during Matildas matches.

“He has helped me so much through this process and without him, I probably couldn’t have done it.”

Arnold never planned to film the video of her being fitted with hearing aids, yet the “life-changing day” has been “so rewarding” and she now embraces her role model status for young kids and anyone experiencing hearing loss.

“My partner was with me and she thought ‘I’ll start filming it just for the sake of it because it’s a big day’.

“At the end, I was just thinking ‘I’m going to have to go into West Ham tomorrow and explain that I’ve just got hearing aids’ and I thought I’ll just put the video together and put it out there and then everyone knows and there will be no questions.

“It was so I could just get it done and not have to talk about it because I was so self-conscious about it.

“But then, since posting it, the amount of messages I’ve got from parents, from young kids that have the same thing and that are going through their football journey as well it’s honestly been insane, it’s been so rewarding.

“I hope that kids can view me in that sense and I can really help them through the process like my brother did for me.”

“I’m itching to get home and we are pretty much straight into it and I’m looking forward to everyone being back together as well,” Arnold says.

“It’s very important for the Matildas to have success at the World Cup.

Read the rest of the article by [Joel Martelli](#) for [7News.com.au](#)

Watch every Matildas match and key knockout games, including the semi-finals and final, on [Seven and 7plus](#).

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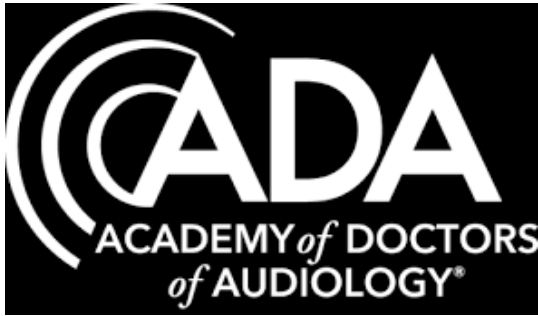
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Risks for audiologists who accept incentives for hearing aid purchases.



The Academy of Doctors of Audiology in the United States recently examined the potential legal consequences for audiologists who participate in programs that offer incentives, such as paid conference registration, in exchange for purchasing hearing aids from manufacturers or distributors.

The Academy reports that according to U.S. federal law, accepting any form of value, such as a conference registration, from a hearing aid manufacturer or distributor in return for referrals qualifies as remuneration or a monetary incentive. Consequently, hearing aids obtained through such promotional schemes may be considered tainted under the Federal Anti-Kickback Statute.

Audiologists who make claims for fitting hearing aids obtained through these promotions to any healthcare benefit program could potentially result in liability. Audiologists must ensure that they do not dispense these hearing aids to Medicare/Medicaid patients or any other

patients whose benefit plans prohibit activities. Tracking which hearing aids are dispensed to which patients can be challenging, and even a single mistake could have costly consequences.

The Academy said that participating in such promotions raises ethical concerns. Audiologists must ensure that their clinical judgment is not influenced by their business need to accept the promotion or fit the hearing aids obtained through the promotion.

It was also important to note that some states have disclosure laws requiring healthcare professionals to report benefits received from manufacturers. Audiologists who accept these promotions should review their state laws to make the necessary arrangements to comply.

The bottom line is that promotions offering incentives, such as paid conference fees, in exchange for hearing aid purchases carry significant risks of civil and criminal liability for audiologists in the United States.



NALscribe is a free, easy-to-use live speech captioning tool to help people understand speech and conversations.

Created by Australia's National Acoustic Laboratories, it is especially beneficial when the person speaking is wearing a mask or face-shield, when communication is more difficult because the lips are hidden and sound is muffled.

[Click here to download from the Apple App store.](#)



Henry Lawson: a writer and his deafness.

Australian poet and writer Henry Lawson was born in 1867 in a tent on the goldfields of Grenfell in country New South Wales. He lost his hearing loss after an ear infection at the age of nine.

Lawson had only three years of formal education and yet, encouraged by his mother, with whom he moved to Sydney following the end of his parents' marriage, he began writing poetry and short stories.

He was famous during the colonial period along with his contemporary Banjo Paterson. He is among Australia's great short story writers, writing about life in the bush. He died in 1922.

Lawson always acknowledged that his deafness played a significant role in shaping his writing journey. Throughout his life, he relied on close proximity and facing others when engaged in conversation. In his own words, deafness was "in a great measure responsible for my writing."

Hearing aids were not readily available, and few accommodations existed for deaf people. Consequently, he often faced disadvantages.

He twice failed university matriculation because he was unable to hear the dictation test. But his determination to become a writer persisted, and his first poems were published in the Bulletin when he was twenty.

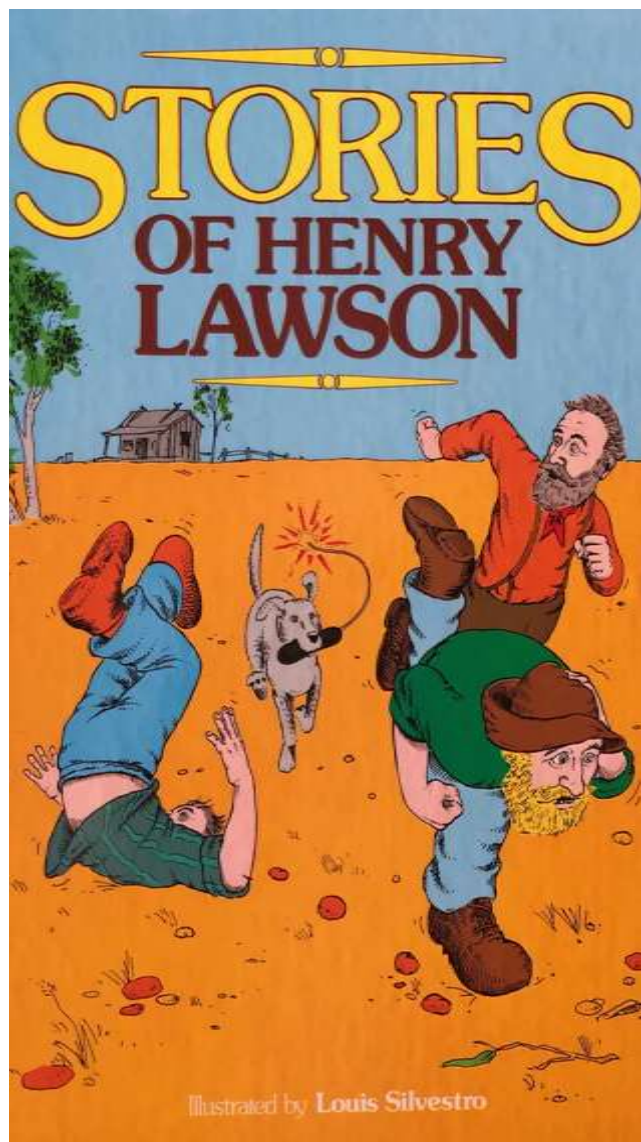
Lawson's deafness continued to influence both the content and style of his writing during his career. His portrayal of deaf characters in his short stories differed from the typical approach. Unlike many writers who emphasise deafness as a constant focal point, Lawson would often mention a character's deafness just once, choosing instead to convey the experience of deafness from within.

Interestingly, his writing style itself bore the imprint of his deafness. Rarely did he include descriptions of sound, even during moments of heightened noise. Instead, he masterfully painted intricate visual details. Consider his vivid depiction of an explosion in his short story "The Loaded Dog," where he writes:

"Bushmen say that that kitchen jumped off its piles and on again. When the smoke and dust cleared away, the remains of the nasty yellow dog were lying against the paling fence of the yard looking as if he had been kicked into a fire by a horse and

afterward rolled in the dust under a barrow, and finally thrown against the fence from a distance."

Lawson developed a keen interest in how visual information could enhance communication.



As a deaf person, he was attuned to any visual cues that could aid his understanding of the spoken word. He experimented with the interplay between visual elements and storytelling.

"The creeks were dancing and flashing in the morning sun, the birds were making the air pleasant with their songs, and the bush itself seemed to be alive with moving objects." (From the short story "The Drover's Wife")

In his description of a cyclone in the "The Bush Undertaker", Lawson presents the visual effects of the lightning, the bright burst of white light, and the subsequent darkness, creating a vivid picture of the storm's sound and intensity.

"A great blaze of white light burst around and above us, and then the thunder—a crash that shook the earth, and rolled and rolled, seemingly reverberating through all space, and combining with the blinding lightning and the deafening downpour to make a climax to the cyclone."

From an article, [Henry Lawson and Judith Wright were deaf...](#) by [Amanda Tink](#) PhD Graduate, Western Sydney University and [Jessica White](#) Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and Literature, University of South Australia, published in [The Conversation](#). And from additional sources.



Australian pastoral dynasty, late 1800s.

The mark of a good heart can be found on the face.



📷 Melvyn Hunt (far left) with Jessica Kirkness (centre right) and Phyllis (far right). Melvyn and Phyllis are Jessica's grandparents, and both profoundly deaf.

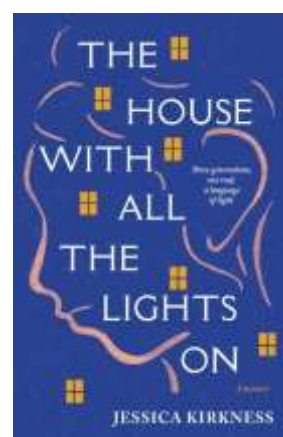
As a child I spent a lot of time in the company of deaf people. Nanny and Grandpa's deaf friends often dropped by for a chat and stayed for several hours.

I was drawn to the liveliness of signed conversations. Information was delivered with such verve and gusto, I wanted so badly to be involved. But mostly, I was an observer. To me, Auslan looked operatic and grand. There was something artful, perhaps even musical about its prosody.

I would gaze at the crowd before me, mesmerised by the uniqueness of individual signing styles. It felt like an elaborate secret code that I could penetrate on occasion but that otherwise remained obscure and unknown. The adults signed so quickly, while my skills were limited. I'd soon reach the inevitable juncture, the point where I could no longer follow or contribute to discussions. I would then gaze at the crowd before me, mesmerised by the uniqueness of individual signing styles.

Everyone had their own flair and panache, their signature tone and energy. There were those who signed with utilitarian brevity, some were slower and drawling, and then there were others who possessed a cascading gestural intonation, with a seamlessness to the flow of their prose. Looking on as they chatted, I'd hum quietly to myself, composing accompanying soundtracks to the motion pictures before me: tunes that rose and fell with the dynamics of their movements. At other times I listened intently, enjoying the murmurs and sounds that punctuated deaf interactions: the soft clicks and clacks of jaws, lips and teeth.

Of all the distinctive quirks – the idiosyncrasies that marked my grandparents as deaf – none was more enduring than their preoccupation with faces. Nanny was always pushing hair off my cheeks. Hats and sunglasses, though she conceded their use in the Australian summer, were a nuisance that prevented full access to my facial expressions. According to her, the mark of a good heart can be found on the face. Body language is observed and noted, but the face has primacy. It is the canvas upon which she reads sentiment, and by extension an individual's character. If Nanny likes someone, she'll remark that they have a "kind face". When I ask her what she means, she struggles to tell me. "I just know. You can see it."



This is an edited extract from **The House with All the Lights On**, by Jessica Kirkness, Allen and Unwin. Read the full article at [The Guardian](#). 📷 by Allen and Unwin.

New Research.



Research trends and hotspot analysis of age-related hearing loss.

Up-to-date information about the trends of age-related hearing loss (ARHL) and how this varies between countries is essential to plan for an adequate health-system response. This study aimed to assess the research hotspots and trends and to provide the basis and direction for future research. [Frontiers in Psychology](#)

Is cochlear implantation good for profoundly deafened elderly?

Analysis of a small group of people assessed the benefits of cochlear implantation in the elderly. The people were 60 years and older. They had been fitted with unilateral cochlear implants. Audiological testing included preoperative and postoperative testing. Everyday life benefits from cochlear implantation were also evaluated.

All people significantly improved their audiological and speech understanding performances.

The results of this study showed that cochlear implantation is a successful treatment for improving speech recognition and offers a great help in everyday life to deafened elderly patients. They can be good candidates for

cochlear implantation and their age alone should not be a relevant or excluding factor when choosing candidates for cochlear implantation. From [Taylor & Francis Online](#).

Friends of the Alliance.

The Hearing Health Sector Alliance is a group of national representatives of the hearing health sector, including consumer groups, health professionals, industry associations, and research organisations. It acts as a representative body to the government, advocating for the interests of the hearing health sector. Its objectives include:

1. Elevate the priority of hearing health in the minds of policy makers, funders and health professionals.
2. Hold successive governments to account for the implementation of the Roadmap for Hearing Health and subsequent hearing health sector plans and initiatives.
3. Advocate to maximise access to hearing health care and support.
4. Advocate for the very best hearing health care and support in Australia.
5. Advocate for better education of Australians in regard to hearing health and hearing loss.

The Alliance also recognises certain bodies as “Friends”. Friends support the aims of the Alliance and contribute to Alliance endeavours.

Benefits include participating in the Annual Friends and Members meeting, receiving an annual report on activities, an opportunity to express ideas on Australian hearing healthcare and any concerns to the HHS Executive.

The annual fee to become a Friend of the Alliance is \$2,000. If you are interested in joining as a Friend, or would like to know more, please contact the Alliance Chair at chair@hearinghealthsectoralliance.org.au.

Ear-screening through the first 2,000 days.



Ears2Learn is a safe, free ear screening program for children aged from 9 months to 5 years of age in Perth, Western Australia.

It began in August 2019. Since then, it has conducted thousands of screenings, with more than a third of children warranting referral to a health professional.

Ears2Learn is a collaboration between Connecting Community for Kids (CCK), Earbus Foundation of WA and Goodstart Early Learning.

Ears2Learn enjoys the active patronage of Professor Harvey Coates AO DM MS FRACS who recognises Ears2Learn as “a wonderful and promising alternative model to screen and, through timely referrals, promptly treat young children at risk of speech and language delay and reduce waiting times that are far too long both in the public and private sector.”

How did it come about?

Despite the importance of ear health and the never-repeated brain-building that occurs in the first 2,000 days of life, there is a five-year gap in universal ear-screening for Western Australian children.

Currently, the ears of newborn babies are screened at birth but this is not repeated until school entry at 5 years of age.

Ears2Learn commenced in 2018 as a rapid learning trial conducted by CCK, a collective impact initiative supported by the Woodside Development Fund in the urban communities of Kwinana and Cockburn, Perth.

The eight-week trial in 2018 involved 76 children aged 2-3 years at four early learning centres. It found that the ears of over half (59%) of the children in the trial needed medical attention due to fluid in a middle ear or Eustachian tube dysfunction associated with OM. These children were referred to a General Practitioner and/or Audiologist and the risk of permanent hearing loss was averted for those children at that time.

The trial exposed a clear need for ongoing ear-screening through the first 2,000 days.

How does it work?

The two defining features of Ears2Learn are that paraprofessionals (early childhood educators) rather than health professionals are trained to safely screen the ears of very young children, and the screening occurs at early learning centres and playgroups rather than at health clinics. Rigorous training, clinical support and ongoing competency assessment of each Practitioner is provided by Earbus audiologists.

One Practitioner can screen approximately 40 children per 7-hour day and Ear-screening occurs every 12 – 16 weeks at no cost to parents.

There are two screens conducted:

1. The trained screener uses an otoscope to conduct a general ear exam.

2. They also perform a tympanogram test to rule out fluid in the middle ear, infection or perforation of the ear drum.

Results

Through referrals triggered by Ears2Learn since August 2019, hundreds of children in the Kwinana and Cockburn area have been placed on the pathway for ear-health assessments by health professionals. The treatments they have received include antibiotics for OM, removal of foreign objects from their ears, surgery for grommets, or being fitted with hearing devices. While some of these ear-health issues may have been identified without Ears2Learn, it is likely that many would not.



In 2022 alone 1,152 ear screenings were conducted with one in three (36%) referred to a Health professional.

There are 15 Goodstart centres in Western Australia offering Ears2Learn Ear Screenings.

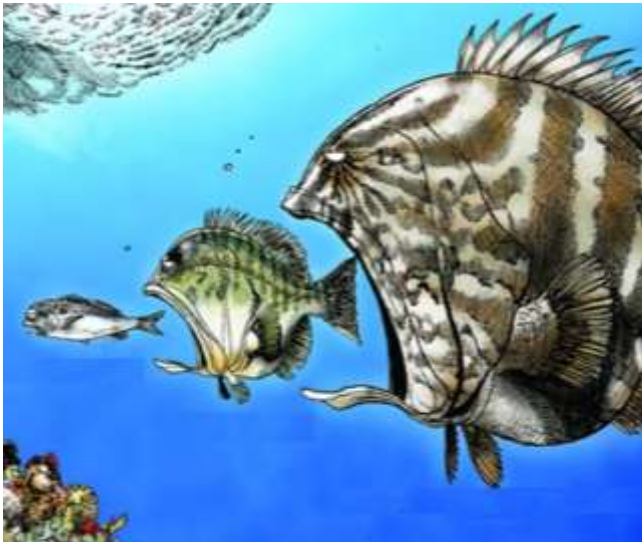
The identification of ear-health issues should not be left to chance. Ears2Learn is a tried and tested 'up-stream' preventative program which is ready to be applied at scale across Australia.

For more information on Ears2Learn visit www.connecting4kids.com.au



Deafblind Awareness Week celebrations.

Deafblind West Australia worked for 8 months in collaboration with Mosaic Association of Australia and New Zealand to design, create and install this fine garden totem at Perth City Farm. 70 people attended the celebrations.



The [28 June edition](#) of [One in Six](#) reported that [Deaf Connect](#) announced a takeover of Western Australia's [Access Plus](#).

These two organisations were among what was once known as Deaf Societies, created – some, a century ago – by members of Deaf communities to be their meeting place, a collective voice, and to provide supports.

Many in the Deaf community expected WA's Access Plus to merge with the Victorian, [Expression Australia](#). But the board of Access Plus was working on a deal with [Deaf Connect](#), headquartered in Queensland.

In recent years, Deaf Connect absorbed the NSW Deaf Society, opened offices in Darwin, Melbourne, regional NSW and ACT, and acquired a Deaf Auslan service platform in SA from a failing provider. With this latest acquisition, only two of the former Deaf Societies remain, raising concerns about choice of services and the independence of advocacy for Deaf communities.

Deaf Connect requested editorial space in this [One in Six](#) to provide context to its WA merger, its strategic direction and rationale.

We offered Expression Australia equal space.

You can read their responses later in this article.

Other views: Advocate for deaf people's human rights and **former executive officer of Deaf Australia Karen Lloyd** offered her thoughts in a blog at [Life And Deaf](#). This is a small extract.

“While some deaf community members are celebrating the merger of Access Plus WA Deaf with Deaf Connect, many are not and many are afraid to comment publicly.

“I don't believe it is in our best interests to have a big national organisation doing everything for us. I know there are others who agree with me but feel it isn't safe to say anything.

“One large organisation doing everything for almost all deaf people all over Australia is not healthy for our community. Control in too few hands is limiting.

“Many people don't seem to understand why the current situation is so bad for us. It is bad for us because, first, when the same organisation takes so many roles there are conflicts of interest. Deaf Connect provides services and it advocates for us. That's a huge conflict of interest. It makes its money by providing services to us, so it benefits Deaf Connect to advocate for things that keep us dependent on its services.

“Another conflict of interest is between service provision and NDIS plan management and support co-ordination. Deaf Connect does all these things. When your NDIS support co-ordinator or plan manager is also a service provider, it benefits them to guide you to use their services rather than others. Many of us who were involved in designing the NDIS argued that plan management, support coordination and advocacy must be separate from service provision but we didn't win that argument. It remains a serious flaw in the NDIS and needs to be fixed.

“In the past we blamed hearing people running our Deaf Societies for patronising and controlling us. Now we need to be aware of new risks. It is good that our Deaf Societies now have deaf CEOs and many deaf staff. But this does not mean that everything they do is good for us.”

Comment from Expression Australia.

When the NDIS was first legislated back in 2013, it was introduced as a way for people with disability to take greater choice and control over the services they received. The term choice and control was at the centre of everything the NDIS espoused. The NDIS model is based on the belief that it is a basic human right to be able to decide for yourself what person or organisation would provide the supports and services that you needed. That a person with a disability should have control over their own life. A basic human right.

Expression Australia is the oldest Deaf Society in Australia, established in Victoria in 1884. Ever since our inception, the community has come first. We've been standing up for our communities' most basic human rights for 140 years and we will never change. Community will always come first, it was our focus in 1884 and will remain our focus into the future.

It is a fact that over the past few years, Deaf communities across Australia have had less choice and less control when choosing what Deaf organisation they want support from, a challenging situation for some people to find themselves in. What Expression provides is choice; a chance to select an organisation that will always put the community first. We have a presence in every State and Territory in Australia with offices in Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia. Deaf communities all over Australia keep asking us for more services in more locations, they understand that without Expression in their community they no longer have a choice.

Lorraine Mulley leader of National group platform [Australian Deaf Elders Group \(ADE\)](#) and the group responsible for successfully championing the cause of free Auslan interpreting for over 65 Deaf People that was equal to NDIS recipients: "Thank you, Rebecca Adam (CEO Expression Australia) for your

vision and understanding the needs of our Community to feel "Independent choice and control" in our lives choosing what services we wish to purchase for supports or facilities"

With these two concepts in mind: choice and control and putting the community first, Expression recently opened a new office in Fremantle, Western Australia. It's an exciting time as we head toward our official office launch on the 17th of July. Being community first means we will be holding a series of community consultations on the 18th to understand how we can serve our community better. What things can be improved on in your every day lives? What things frustrate you or what services are you not getting? We're in WA to make a difference in the lives of the community we serve and we want to hear from the community on how best to do that.

It's so exciting to be able to show the community in WA that we've arrived. We have all services operating, a beautiful office in a beautiful location and we are fully staffed with people from the WA Deaf community. People you know and love! This is an office that Expression has created for the community with a community hub for community members to come and say hello to some familiar faces. We're there for the whole Deaf and hard of hearing community.

While we look to support our communities by opening in new locations, we continue to grow in Victoria and Tasmania. We don't exclude any member of our community and we're there for all Deaf and hard of hearing people:

Rebecca Adam – CEO of Expression Australia: "All ages, all locations, all cultural backgrounds, we're there for you. This is our commitment to you, our community. Some will be young, some will be older, some will be proud Deaf Auslan users, and some will use assistive technology. It doesn't matter, if you are Deaf or hard of hearing in Australia, we're there for you."

We're growing in our heartland because our community wants and needs us to grow. More offices in more regions delivering more services.

At Expression, we've focused our structure on managed growth. It's been carefully planned out and is progressing exactly as we've intended. We grow as our community needs us to grow in a way that our systems and processes can manage to ensure the service we provide to our community remains the best in Australia.

Expression has been supporting Deaf communities for 140 years and we know that Deaf people across Australia have a right around their choice and control. A basic human right.

Email info@expression.com.au

View this article in Auslan



Comment from Deaf Connect.

Deaf Connect appreciates the opportunity to share our story building on the recent announcement related to Access Plus WA Deaf. We actively encourage robust conversations within the Deaf sector and community as we move towards a new phase.

The Deaf sector is undergoing transition, from the old welfare, jurisdictional, block funding model to the commercialised, individualised choice-and-control model of service delivery. This has been largely driven by the NDIS, but also through key decisions made by various Deaf Society boards over the years as the sector and community responds to societal changes.

Deaf Connect is the name of the national service provider, social impact organisation, and the result of a number of mergers and transfers:

- Deaf Services Queensland and The Deaf Society of NSW merged in 2020
- Deaf Connect established services in the Northern Territory in March 2021,

following the exit of another Deaf sector organisation, to ensure service provision the Board of Deaf Can:Do (Royal South Australian Deaf Society) invited Deaf Connect to take on their services, staff and assets in March 2022, and Deaf Connect accepted

- the Board of Access Plus WA Deaf Board invited Deaf Connect to take on their services, staff and assets in June 2023, and Deaf Connect accepted.

Each situation was preceded by careful deliberation and due diligence at governance level, driven by Deaf Connect's commitment to the community, ensuring our mission of standing with the community to develop capacity is maintained as well as sustaining services and community benefit and impact. The impact on the local community, if we did not proceed, was also heavily considered. This has resulted in the Deaf Connect we have now, a Deaf-led, national service provider, social impact organisation that delivers services from early intervention to aged care, in all states and territories in Australia, with a workforce of 850 employees and 22 office locations.

Deaf Connect delivers the core services of Interpreting, Walk-in and Individual Supports, but also focuses on developing and delivering unique services across the lifespan of an individual including Early Intervention, accredited training (as the only Deaf Registered Training Organisation) and Aged Care.

Deaf Connect's expansion has been driven by identifying gaps, meeting community needs and taking on risk and operating costs so that new and critical services can be provided. We continue to focus on existing services and identifying gaps in service provision.

Beyond service delivery Deaf Connect actively invests in our community, informed through a national roadshow in 2022 where over 1,000 deaf Australians attended in 13 locations to consult, collaborate and ensure we were directly

informed of community needs. Our community investment priorities are as follows:

- Deaf Youth (partnering with Deaf Australia and funding the delivery of a national 13-17yo youth camp)
- Deaf Leadership (developing a range of initiatives to advance and promote Deaf leadership opportunities including partnering with the Australian Institute of Company Directors to provide a tailored governance training program)
- Deaf History (developing a national Deaf History repository that houses photos, videos and stories connected to our history, culture and language, as well as a legacy and preservation program honouring the 100+ year history of each Deaf Society)
- Deaf Ecosystem (supporting and investing in Deaf businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed)
- Deaf Space (working with local communities to determine how we can create Deaf space)

As you read this, the World Federation of the Deaf Congress is taking place in Jeju, South Korea. As part of our ongoing investment in the community, we are supporting 16 Deaf Australians, as well as staff, to attend, and it has been a wonderful week seeing those people create long-term opportunities for professional and personal growth. Deaf Connect also partnered with Gallaudet University to deliver a global Deaf Leadership workshop in Jeju to provide lasting benefits to the community.

A core strength from our growth is the capacity to develop policy and government relations through submissions, engagement with government at all levels and cultivating a strong relationship with Deaf Australia as our peak representative and advocacy body for deaf Australians. Like other national community services organisations also engaged in advocacy, our policy and government relations team remains separate from operational areas of the business.

We take our responsibility as a national provider seriously and recognise the onus on us to act with the increased integrity, standards and transparency that come with our size and scope. However, our goal remains the same – to stand with our community and to nourish a thriving Deaf sector for us all, rich with history, culture and diversity, ensuring every individual has choice, control and access to quality services.

We welcome further discussion and questions – info@deafconnect.org.au or 0497 587 188 (SMS/FaceTime/WhatsApp). Watch this message in a [video in Auslan](#).



Know someone who deserves their own copy of One in Six? Let us know via hello@deafnessforum.org.au

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