

## In this edition

From the Chair .....	1-2
A Word from Wendy .....	3
Carer Advisory Committee.....	4
Happenings at Harrow House.....	5
Update on Stage Two Covid Safe Response .....	6
The Story of Ann Marie Smith.....	7-9
Easter at EBL / Highlights from Wendy.....	10
Mother's Day / Anzac Day / Tauri's Birthday .....	11
Low Cost Assistive Technology / NDIS Updates .....	12

## From the Chair

**2020 will surely be remembered by us all for a very long time. As I write this it is nearly the end of June. Half-way through the year, yet it feels like we've dealt with enough worry, stress, heartache and unknowns to fill several years.**

**C** OVID-19 has changed our lives, probably forever. What the eventual effects on the economy will be are also going to change our lives. Some of these issues seem so big, it's hard to even grapple with them. I think we've all been in our bunkers, trying to stay healthy, and trying not to over-think all the other stuff.

But EBL, through Wendy's strong leadership, targeted planning and effective implementation, has not only met this crisis, but adapted to and overcome many challenges. This has kept all of our staff and our clients safe, and enabled the organisation to continue to operate. I could not be more proud of all of our staff, especially those at the frontline through this pandemic. Their commitment to our clients, and to keeping them well and as stress-free as possible has been simply awe-inspiring.

No doubt you have all read with horror and dismay about the death of Ann Marie Smith, and the discovery of how she lived her last few years while ostensibly being cared for by an NDIS registered carer, under an NDIS plan. This situation would be the worst fear of every parent of a profoundly intellectually disabled child. – Who will oversee our child's well-being when we are gone? And it is a situation which EBL has taken steps to address in relation to some of our clients and their families, where appropriate. I can assure you all, that what happened to Ann Marie Smith has not ever happened, and could not ever happen to a client in the care of EBL. Indeed, I hope that our organisation can be involved in providing information to the various



(continues on next page)



enquiries as to what protocols we have in place to prevent such circumstances ever arising. Topics like this are why our Carer Advisory Group is so important, and as soon as all the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, you can again gather with them to air anything you are concerned about.

But this tragic story does highlight some of the flaws in the NDIS. Those of us with family members who cannot advocate for themselves have long been aware that the NDIS does not provide any comfort to them in the area of protections from abuse or negligence by carers or organisations that may be registered with the NDIS but who are not properly monitored, either internally or externally.

I am so thankful to live in South Australia. I am so grateful for our excellent health system, and the good decisions made by our leaders at all levels. And I am so proud to be part of the EBL family. There are lots of unknowns still. But I am very confident that we are dealing with all the challenges as they arise. Importantly, we are all presently healthy. And we all want to stay that way. Hug your loved ones (but no-one else). And keep washing your hands!

### ***Sue Chapman***

Chairperson

EBL Disability Services



*Support from the general public.*



## A Word from Wendy

**W**ithout doubt, this year has been our most challenging on so many levels!

In support of our Chairperson, Sue Chapman's wise words we agree that COVID-19 has changed our lives forever. While we do not know what the long-term effects will be, we remain committed to safeguarding our community on every level as we navigate towards a brighter future.

I think it's fair to say that COVID has caused many of us to reflect on what is important in life. On a personal note, I feel there is no more noble a calling than to support people with disabilities through challenging times like these. One of the best parts of my role has been receiving kind feedback from individuals, families, and staff grateful for our efforts to keep them and their loved ones safe.

We are reminded that we are all in this together. And feeling blessed to work alongside many wonderful people who put their own fears aside to support our participants needs above their own. We observed many acts of kindness throughout the peak of the pandemic and continue to be humbled by our team's commitment and care for others. Over the past 3 months, they have done this in ways that no one else can.

**To our front line support workers we salute you!**

Throughout the peak of the pandemic, we maintained contact with all homes and services via doorstep catch-ups, zoom meetings, and constant interactions to ensure people did not feel alone. In addition, we received unwavering support from our Chairperson, Committee Convenors and Board of Directors. We wish to acknowledge and thank them for their selfless dedication to the EBL community.

We are forever grateful.

**Wendy Warren**

Chief Executive  
EBL Disability Services

*“What I am looking for is not out there, it is in me.”*  
– Helen Keller

*“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart.”*



## EBL Carer Advisory Group

**T**he COVID-19 is in the forefront of most conversations and media at the moment and South Australians should be very proud of themselves and their leaders for the good position we are in at the moment. I hope you have coped with the restrictions asked of us. I have taken the isolation to catch up on a lot of things in the home that have been put aside for when I had more time. No excuses anymore and I am proud to say I have achieved a lot and now enjoying the easing of restrictions.

The closing down of the learning and lifestyles programs and limiting of respite services during this time can be difficult for our children to understand and deal with. They like routine and sometimes if this is not occurring it can lead to anxiety. Thankfully these services have slowly been returning and I hope they will settle into their routines again. While this may be the case for some there could be other programs that may not return or will not offer the same that you had before the COVID-19 outbreak. I would hope you have been receiving communications from other services in the same way that

EBLDS has been doing with their clients. I would like to suggest that if you have not had the contact you were expecting then you may need to look elsewhere. If you are a valued client they need to make that evident to you. Under NDIS we are able to choose our providers and if you need to make a change your Support Coordinator can help you with this.

Unfortunately, the last Carers morning tea had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. We hope to be able to invite you to another morning tea in July and an invitation will be sent to you when a date is settled. Please remember the Carers Advisory Group are here for you if you have a concern you would like to discuss and you do not need to wait for a morning tea. My contact number is 041148396 if you would like to contact me.

**Dawn Brodie**

Convenor

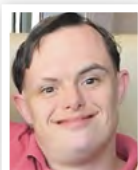
EBL Carer Advisory Group

*“Our vision is to passionately support individuals and their families to lead fulfilled lives.”*

# Happenings at Harrow House

At the end of 2019 we never imagined 2020 would pan out the way that it has. The resilience everyone has shown throughout this period has been incredible. Here is just some of what the team at Harrow House got up to during lockdown.

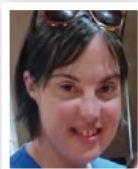
1. What was the best thing about staying home?
2. What was the worst thing about staying home?
3. What was your favourite Harrow activity?
4. What did you miss the most?
5. What did you do to stay positive?



1. Being able to relax.
2. Not seeing my friends every day.
3. Doing zoom meetings.
4. My friends and Jos scramble eggs.
5. I talked to my friends on the phone and saw family in small amounts.



1. Zoom time with Isy and No strings.
2. Not going to Mums house.
3. Walking and cooking.
4. Cafés and family time.
5. Reading my book and joining activities and walking.



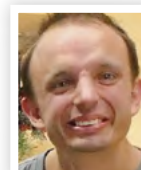
1. Being lazy.
2. Being bored.
3. Helping Dad out (and Mum too).
4. My boyfriend Ryan and my housemates.
5. Stay healthy.



1. Spending time with my Mum and Dad.
2. Disconnection from friends.
3. Helping Mum around the house.
4. Seeing housemates and all staff.
5. Zooming with friends.



1. Do some Artwork on Canvas.
2. Being lonely, missing my friend from Tutti in Covid 19.
3. Everything.
4. Family.
5. Watched TV.



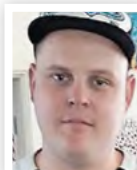
1. Take away lunches.
2. Going back to work.
3. Harrow bowling.
4. Going out.
5. watching movies.



1. Walking to the parks with my staff.
2. Nothing.
3. Playing golf with Chris Hill.
4. I missed Orana.
5. Bowling at Harrow.



1. Meditation.
2. Missing Mum.
3. Sports Day.
4. Working.
5. Playing golf with Uri on Wii.



1. Take away lunches.
2. Going back to work.
3. Harrow bowling.
4. Shornee and Joelle Abbott.
5. Meditation, computer and skype.



1. Playing my computer.
2. Not going on outing.
3. Sports day.
4. Mummy.
5. My room and my computer.



1. Cooking with staff.
2. Missing work and my girlfriends.
3. Bowling.
4. I miss Alice and house mates.
5. Help staff.



1. Relaxing.
2. Missing Dad.
3. Harrow bowling.
4. Dad.
5. Doing puzzles.

# SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ROADMAP FOR EASING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

## STEP 2 PLUS CURRENT



1 per  
4 sqm



1.5  
metres



300  
total max



75 max  
(per room/group)

- Defined businesses and public activities must have a COVID-Safe Plan
- Private gatherings 75 people max
- Funerals and weddings 75 people max
- Hospitality (seated at a table) at restaurants, cafes, wineries, pubs, breweries, bars
- Recreational spaces in venues using shared equipment (e.g. billiards, pool, darts) without alcohol and food consumption
- Beauty, nails, tattoo and massage
- Cinemas, theatres, galleries and museums
- Churches, mosques, places of worship and ceremonies
- Aged care visit restrictions apply
- Hospital visit restrictions apply
- Community, youth and RSL halls
- Auctions and inspections
- Local government libraries
- Pools (all water activities permitted)

- Campgrounds and caravan parks
- Driving instruction lessons
- Gyms
- Zoos and wildlife parks
- Outdoor public assemblies 300 max
- Indoor group fitness classes:
  - 1 per 4 sqm for up to 10 people
  - 1 per 7 sqm for 11 to 20 people

### SPORT (CURRENT)

- Non-contact outdoor sport (competition)
- Non-contact indoor sport (training and competition) and indoor recreation activities
- Contact outdoor sport (contact training)
- Contact indoor sport (non-contact skills training)

### SPORT FROM 25 JUNE

- Contact outdoor sport (competition)
- Contact indoor sport (contact training)

## STEP 3 FROM 29 JUNE



1 per  
2 sqm



no  
max

COVID Safe Plans will continue to be required for defined public activities. An approved COVID Management Plan will be required for some activities, including large public gatherings (further details to be provided).

Most activities/business will be permitted including those previously not allowed:

- Food courts (on-site consumption)
- Nightclubs and music festivals
- Gaming rooms/facilities in pubs and clubs
- Casinos
- Contact indoor sport (competition)
- Spas, saunas and bathing
- Standing hospitality
- Indoor play centres, amusement arcades, amusement parks

## INTERSTATE TRAVEL

- Currently, travellers entering South Australia directly from Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania are not required to quarantine. Travellers entering from other states/territories are required to quarantine for 14 days.
- Subject to a public health risk assessment, from 20 July travellers entering from New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory will no longer be required to quarantine for 14 days.



Updated 23 June 2020



**Avoid close contact with others**  
Practise physical distancing



If you have cold or flu symptoms, seek testing and stay home until you are well



Wash your hands often, wipe frequently touched surfaces, and cover coughs and sneezes



Download the COVIDSafe app to keep you, your family and your community safe

**SA.GOV.AU** or **1800 253 787**

**KEEPING SA  
SAFE & STRONG**



Government of  
South Australia

For further updates on Covid, visit our website at: <http://eblds.org.au/>

## Expedited COVID-19 testing

**S**A Health has recognised the additional risks posed when people are living and working in shared residential settings and SA Pathology is willing to prioritise test results in these cases.

This applies to any resident or staff member working in a group living environment such as disability supported independent living or a supported residential facility.

If anyone in this situation requires COVID-19 testing, please advise your treating medical officer of your shared residential living/working risks.

Requests for expedited test results can also be made by phoning Anna Bartsch on **0407 320 903** with the permission of the unwell person – a full name and date of birth is required.

Please also note that we expect a statement from SA Health shortly regarding hospital admissions should anyone from a shared residential facility become unwell with COVID-19.

SA Health is also keen to reinforce the message that, although we have no evidence of community transmission in South Australia, we must maintain social distancing and hygiene practices.

### Helpful links and resources:

Latest SA COVID-19 information: <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/>

Social distancing and hygiene practices: <https://bit.ly/stopthespreadCV>

COVID-19 symptoms: <https://bit.ly/CV-Testing>

How to get tested for COVID-19: <https://bit.ly/howtogettested>

## The Story of Ann Marie Smith

We at EBL are heartbroken over the story of Ann Marie Smith. As an organisation who prides itself on community, inclusion and creating space for all to live rich and meaningful lives, this tragic story has left us all utterly speechless. We can assure you all that what happened to Ann Marie Smith has not ever happened, and could not ever happen to a client in the care of EBL.

We share to follow the heartbreaking account as reported on by the ABC in May of this year.

# Ann Marie Smith was surrounded by privilege but died in squalor — and her life remains a mystery

By Leah MacLennan

Posted 23 May 2020

Most of Ann Marie Smith's neighbours knew she was there, but reports of when they last saw her vary wildly.

### Key points:

- **Ann Marie Smith's death has been declared a major crime**
- **But little is known about the 54-year-old's life**
- **Neighbours rarely sighted the woman who is believed to have barely left her home**

A couple several houses down said it had been at least a decade since they'd seen her outside, taking in the sun in her wheelchair in her home's driveway.

Another said it was more recent, but still at least five years ago.

Whoever you talk to, it's safe to say the residents of Bradman Court, in suburban Adelaide, hadn't seen the woman from number one in several years.

It was only when their street turned into a scene from a television crime show they realised something terrible had been going on behind her closed doors and drawn blinds.

"Virtually the whole day there were about four or five police cars, plain cars, forensic vans, people in full protective suits, booties and the lot," is how Bram Fynnaart described the scene when police came to the home.

"They were very friendly as we walked past but they spent a lot of time there."

What police knew, and neighbours were learning, is that Ms Smith had been living in horrific conditions for at least a year.

She had cerebral palsy and was

unable to walk, eat or bathe for herself.

Despite having a carer at her house every day, police believe she'd been left in the same chair day and night and wasn't even moved to go to the toilet.

When she was rushed to the Royal Adelaide Hospital on April 5, she was malnourished, in septic shock and in need of surgery to remove rotting flesh caused by severe pressure sores.

She died the following day.



A card left on the doorstep of Ann Marie Smith's house by a stranger.  
(ABC News: Ben Nielsen)

### 'A nice house from the outside'

It was more than a month before the wider public learnt of Ms Smith's fate, when police held a press conference, calling for people with information on the last year of her life to come forward.

Head of SA Police's Major Crime branch, Detective Superintendent Des Bray, delivered the details.

*"Ann died in disgusting and degrading circumstances and her death was likely preventable,"* he said.

*"It was a nice house from the outside, it was in a nice suburb but sadly Ann was living in disgusting conditions inside."*

A manslaughter investigation is now underway to find out how that happened, and other agencies are also looking into the matter.

Thanks to the police statement, the public know the details surrounding Ms Smith's death, but her life remains largely a mystery.

A photo released by police shows a slightly smiling, young, blonde woman — another person behind her is cropped from the frame.

But the photo is decades old, and unlikely to resemble what she looked like at 54, shut in her house for years.

Police say she has a brother who she hadn't been in contact with for some time, and a friend who she considered her next of kin, living in regional South Australia.

By 2009, both her parents had died and she was living alone.

### Neighbours remember security guard outside home

Ann Smith's house sits on the corner of the street, which curves into a short cul-de-sac in Kensington Park, a cosy corner of Adelaide's privileged eastern suburbs.

Most of the residents have lived there for a decade or more and are well acquainted with each other's comings and goings.

They saw her house go up 15 years ago and said her parents built it for her.

There are stories on the street that there had been live-in carers, but they were sacked years ago, leading to a dispute at the property.

*"They refused to move or they claimed squatters' rights after a certain number of years and then there was a security detail out front 24 hours a day for about three or four months,"* Mr Fynnaart said.

The neighbour directly next door to Ms Smith said that for the past few years, a carer had been coming to the house three times a day to look after Ms Smith.

The Fynnaarts, who live down the road, said they saw her small sedan parked out the front every day at 9:00am.

Ms Smith's carer, Hectorville woman Rosa Maione, has been interviewed by police as part of their investigation.

She was working for Integrity

Care, an agency that is now being audited by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission, and has been fined for failing to report Ms Smith's death.

Police said Ms Smith also had a gardener, but it appears Ms Maione was the only person she had regular, physical contact with.

### Isolation baffles taskforce chief

South Australia's state-appointed disability advocate Dr David Caudrey is now heading up a taskforce looking into the case.

He believes Ms Smith's isolation posed the biggest risk.

*"It's not just one pair of eyes or one person who knows what's going on in somebody's life, it's multiple eyes, it's multiple people,"* Dr Caudrey said.

*"How this poor woman became so isolated that it effectively looks like there was no-one else in her life other than this one carer — you could see that would be very, very unusual."*

He said the disability community is reeling from the revelations, particularly parents who have children with disabilities.



Ms Smith lived in at 1 Bradman Court, Kensington Park, in Adelaide's eastern suburbs. (Supplied: SA Police)

*"I've been in the business of disability and mental health for about 45 years and I think in all of that time I haven't heard of anything as hair-raisingly awful as the experiences that Ann Marie went through," he said.*

*"It's every parent's nightmare to think that when you're no longer around or you can no longer look after your son or daughter with a disability that somehow or another they will not be looked after properly. It pervades your worries."*

She might not have been checked on, but authorities did know Ms Smith existed.

Her care was provided by the state run agency Disability SA until 2018 when she transitioned onto an NDIS plan, where she was funded for six hours care a day.

Dr Caudrey, who was once head of Disability SA, said while the NDIS gives people more freedom and choice, it also opens up more gaps in the system.

*"There are multiple players and when there are multiple players, if you're not careful you find each player defines what they do and everybody thinks that somebody else is taking responsibility," he said.*

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is investigating what happened to Ms Smith, and since the police press conference, there have been 16 calls to Crime Stoppers with information about the case.

Until they yield answers, Ann Smith's neighbours, and the rest of the community, are left wondering how a woman living in such a nice house, on a well-kept street, could have been so terribly neglected.

*"It's not even good to think about it but we just didn't know the details of it. We assumed that the carers were caring," neighbour Klara Fynnaart said.*



*Integrity Care SA was fined by the NDIS for not reporting the death. (ABC News: Mahalia Carter)*



*Flowers and cards left outside Ann Marie Smith's house in Kensington Park. (ABC News: Ben Nielsen)*

Ms Smith was cremated at the Centennial Park Cemetery on May 13, and her remains returned to a funeral home.

**Source:** [www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-23/little-is-known-about-the-life-of-ann-marie-smith/12275658](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-23/little-is-known-about-the-life-of-ann-marie-smith/12275658)



## Easter at EBL + Highlights from Wendy

Over the Easter period, Anna and Wendy attended unannounced visits to each home in Adelaide to deliver Easter Chocolates, PPE and toilet paper. They also organised Easter baskets for the Smith Street Crew from Wallaroo. It was a cathartic experience for everyone after the COVID-19 chaos.

To follow, Wendy shares some of the pictures and highlights from the visits.

Throughout the day, everyone greeted us across the organisation with smiles and heartfelt gratitude for their small Easter gift. Upon arrival to each home, we met with workers holding tubs of warm soapy water, thermometers, and masks in hand. At one home, a new staff member asked me who I was and to prove my identity, which filled me with joy! Once she knew I was the CEO, she went on to share the content of emails I have been sending to staff over the past 3 weeks. Listening to her talk about the respect she has for the organisation was such a humbling experience. We observed genuine acts of kindness and a strong sense of protection for our people. I was very comforted by the composure and strength of our team despite the challenges.

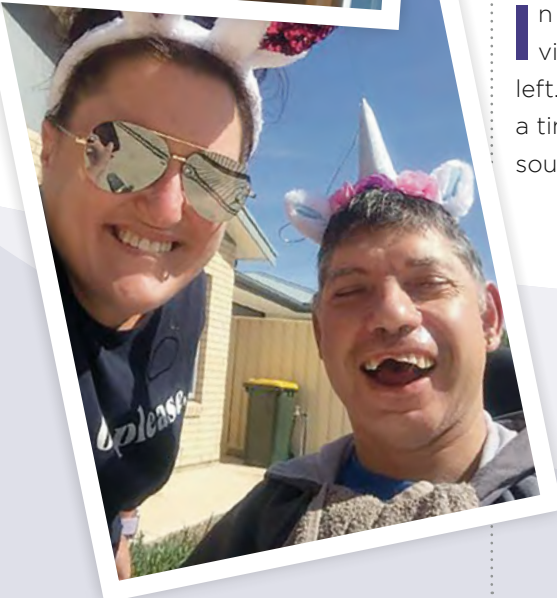
At the end of the day, we had five small Easter baskets left so we dropped in to the Cancer Council on Greenhill Road. Upon arrival, we met the team leader and offered our left-over baskets and some homemade masks for the most in need. The woman became quite emotional when we handed over the gifts. She explained that their sponsorship and donations have dried up in the past month due to COVID-19. So, they were immensely grateful for the treats and looking forward to sharing them with those people who are suffering or recovering from chemo treatment over Easter.

Feeling blessed!

**Happy Easter from EBL**

## Good will at Easter in the worst of pandemic

In the middle of the pandemic we received a donation from AR International via Jane Wei our new Management Accountant pictured with glasses on the left. It was most welcome and came at a time when PPE was not able to be sourced.



## Mother's Day



## ANZAC Day

The boys from the Smith Street Crew were very busy making many handmade painted poppies that they lined their home fences with to mark acknowledgment of **ANZAC Day 2020**.



*Here they stand proud of their efforts; medals and all.*



*We will remember them*



*Lest we forget*



*From Sarah, Nick, Lucas, Matthew, David and Smith St Crew team*



# May 24th!

## Tauri's Birthday

Happy birthday Tauri! We hope you had a wonderful day!

# Low Cost Assistive Technology

The NDIS recently shared information about how they have temporarily broadened the flexible approach for low cost assistive technology (AT) items so participants can continue to receive NDIS funded supports and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participants can use their existing NDIS funding to purchase an item if it meets all of the criteria on the Assistive technology explained page on the NDIS website found here:

[bit.ly/ATexplained](https://bit.ly/ATexplained)

This will be in place until September 2020 and will be reviewed in July 2020.

To support this new time-limited policy the NDIS have made this information available in other formats including **Easy Read** and in animation.

You can download a copy of the Easy Read here: [www.ndis.gov.au/media/2369/download](https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/2369/download) or watch the animation here: <https://bit.ly/easyreadanimation>

## NDIS Updates

### What is the NDIS doing to help participants?

Changes announced 12 June 2020

In keeping with national health advice, businesses and the community are beginning to ease restrictions and some temporary measures introduced by the NDIA in response to COVID-19 will also begin to return to normal.

Following a review of temporary

measures to support participants and disability providers during the pandemic, the following will apply from 1 July 2020:

- removal of the temporary 10 per cent price loading on certain core and capacity building supports
- the definition of short term cancellations reverts back to two business days. Providers will still be able to claim 100 per cent of

the agreed support price for a cancellation at short notice, as introduced as part of the Annual Price Review

- the Medium Term Accommodation (MTA) period will return to the original policy of 90 days (rolled back from 180 days).

**Source:** [www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/participants-coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/participants-coronavirus-covid-19)

## Supports funded by the NDIS

The NDIS will assist participants to live independently. This includes:

- Supports that build people's capacity to live independently in the community, supports to improve living skills, money and household management, social and communication skills and behavioural management
- Home modifications to the participant's own home or a

private rental property and on a case-by-case basis in social housing

- Support with personal care, such as assistance with showering and dressing
- Help around the home where the participant is unable to undertake these tasks due to their disability, such as assistance with cleaning and laundry.

The NDIS may also contribute to the cost of accommodation in situations where the participant has a need for specialised housing due to their disability.

**Source:** [www.ndis.gov.au/participants/housing-and-ndis#supports-funded-by-housing-and-other-systems](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/housing-and-ndis#supports-funded-by-housing-and-other-systems)

### Contact details

**t** (08) 8252 1000

**f** (08) 8255 1066

**w** [ebldisabilityservices.org.au](https://ebldisabilityservices.org.au)

**e** [admin@eblds.com.au](mailto:admin@eblds.com.au)

### EBL Disability Services

Endeavour House, Module 5,  
11 – 15 Fourth Avenue,  
Mawson Lakes SA 5095