

WELCOME

to our July 2020 newsletter

Joint Standards ME-067 committee update

Members Matt Butterworth (Sunrise Medical) and Lauren Roberts and Alan Tocker (both Cubro) have been working on our behalf within the AUS/NZ Joint standards ME-067 committee since late 2019. The committee is in the final stages of the draft review of AS/NZS 3856.1 and AS/NZS 3856.2 Hoists and ramps for people with disabilities – Vehicle mounted. This will soon be going out for public comment. This project was already well underway when our New Zealand colleagues joined on behalf of ATSNZ and although they have not had lot of content involvement, they have been attending all of the meetings to understand the process and get a feel for how reviewing a standard works. This has given ATSNZ an eye on the process ensuring content is relevant to our industry.

During this time volunteers were asked to help with the view of AS/NZS 3973 Shower/toilet chairs (mobile and static), so Lauren and Alan put their hands up. This is a standard our New Zealand colleagues know well, and they will be valuable to the project. This project is still in the early stages and they have only had one meeting. The second meeting is about to be scheduled.

Membership of the Federation of Disability

At the end of June, we were offered the opportunity to become an associate member of the Federation of Disability Information Centres. The committee unanimously approved this opportunity and we have signed up as members for the 20/21 period. It provides us with another avenue to stay on top of what is happening in the Disability sector in New Zealand. So far, we have shared the Voices Project Report with you and the opportunity to hear first-hand about the improvements to Firstport, which will be presented next.

Firstport update

Most ATSNZ members will be familiar with the Firstport website (Firstport.co.nz) that is for anyone looking for information, advice, support or equipment relating to disability in New Zealand.

On Wednesday 22 July, the Federation for Disability Information Centres hosted a Zoom meeting in which Erin Allen, from Enable, presented the recent improvements and additions to the website.

Erin quoted website traffic statistics, 23000 visits to the website, 82% of which were new visitors. Most of the visitors find the website through organic searches. 62% of the visitors access the site through their mobiles, highlighting the importance of mobile friendly design.

Their intention has been to make the website as warm, engaging, and personal as possible and they have made an extra effort to be personable. One way they did this is to bypass stock imaging, based on feedback. Their early campaign (Life through a Lens competition) focused on asking for images from everyday life. The images received have been used on their website and the competition entries are on the site under News and articles/Life through a Lens Gallery, with a few under the heading Assistive Technology.

Their focus on keeping the website personal is clearly established through the 'In my own words' series and their 'Bitesize' campaign, well worth a read when you next find an opportunity.

The improvements in the informative side can be seen in their signposting to local resources. They use the Common Web Platform which is the Government platform with accessibility at the forefront.

Building the Accessible Day out Library is another feature of the site improvements and is a work in progress. It is based on the experiences of those that have been to the venue or event, generating a library of reviews.

Under Workshop and Events, anyone can apply to have an event submitted. It gives the event national exposure. We hope to have the ATSNZ Disability Expo listed there soon. If you'd like to view the session presented by Erin click here: <https://youtu.be/b27Pze7SfW8>

ATSNZ AGM 2020

Our ATSNZ AGM 2020 is scheduled for 11 August at 10.30 AM at the Stardome in Auckland and is also accessible via Zoom, for members who are not able to make it to the location.

Adri Isbister (Deputy Director General Disability) has accepted our invitation to present to our members at the start of the meeting. She will be presenting on the Disability Strategy. This document can be found on the website of the Office for Disability Issues <https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/> where the implementation plan is also hosted.

Adri has over 25 years' experience in the health and disability sector. She is the former CEO of LIFE Unlimited, a national health and disability service provider. During her career Adri has received 2 overall CEO and best business awards. Adri also supported the development implementation of the first New Zealand Disability Strategy 2001. Adri has been immersed in governance in various positions including in Corporate, PHO's, NGO's, DHB's, national Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination Association (NASCA), and disability information services.

Adri most recently comes from the Wairarapa DHB where she was CEO and has, during her tenure, led the development of cross-sector work and the implementation of Health Care Home, a primary care initiative. Adri holds an executive master's degree in business administration.



This is a picture of Adri, with Lisa Martin (Complex Care), Paula Tesoriero (Disability Rights Commissioner) and Jan Moss (Complex Care) at the launch of the Voices Project Report.

Meet our members - Introducing Martin from Euromedical Ltd.



Each newsletter we hope to introduce our members to each other through the interview questions posted below.

What is your company's area of specialty?

We have always specialized in European only sourced products, from those countries who are leaders in innovation in the disabled sector. When we started Hatfield Mobility 35 years ago we noticed there were niche products available that were produced in the Scandinavian countries particularly in the children and patient handling fields. Back then I was very fortunate to meet dear (Emily) Jill Gooder who on occasion travelled to Sweden to visit friends. I asked her if she would be interested in meeting a senior OT from Scandinavian Mobility who could give her a tour of their factory and disability showrooms. She came back suggesting these could be ideal for the NZ market and it all started from there.



The products had great style, were usually designed with input from therapists and had tests that were unheard of in NZ. We are proud to say we still bring products from these same companies 35 years on. Our relationships with these companies have been remarkable and will continue to be in the future.

Where do you see our sector in 5 years?

We see this sector flourishing due to our aging population and recently, with more focus being applied to improved funding for the disabled community which will hopefully happen. If and when the disparity of funding is addressed between ACC and MOH then this sector will move forward!

A recent success story?

Just recently we had a client who had bilateral above knee amputations due to a tractor accident. He still had the desire to stand. Taking into account this gentleman did not want any prosthetics, it seemed like a daunting project! He had seen the Levo C3 Power standing wheelchair and after many adaptations this client now stands and drives in a fully upright standing position. Initially something we thought would not be possible. This power of positive thinking has led to the manufacturer in Switzerland to perhaps developing a specific model for this client group worldwide. However, the look on the client's face when he "walked" again was a highlight.

If you could change one thing about this sector what would it be?

The disparity between ACC clients and those born with or have inherited disability

What's the best bit of advice you have ever received?

Plan in decades, think in years, work in months and live in days.

What do you enjoy most about working in this industry?

The lifetime friends I have made with all of our suppliers, where we have had holidays with their families both overseas and in NZ. Something that may now be disrupted for some time!

Our industry is about people and good people who in most cases have learnt to fend for themselves. Helping make their lives a little easier with the aid of good quality products is very full filling.

Also, the relationships we have between most of our competitors is satisfying.

What's the last thing that made you laugh out loud?

Climbing up a ladder on my roof to change a battery in my weather station and getting my shorts caught over one of the ladder uprights on the way down! Unfortunately, I like to go frontwards back down a ladder to the amazement of my family. A video was taken and luckily for me was never downloaded onto Facebook. Believe me when I say laughter is frequent within our team at Euromedical, which does make for a good working environment.

