

Aids & Equipment Action Alliance



2006 – huge concern in the sector about access to aids and equipment or assistive technology.

Two pieces of research were launched at the **Equipping Inclusion Forum** to highlight the issues

[Too little, too late - cost burden for people with a disability \(PDF 301 KB\)](#). Scope Vic

[Aids and Equipment Report, Melbourne City Mission](#)

Victoria's Disability Service Organisations, people with a disability, academics and advocacy organisations agreed to create the

Aids & Equipment Action Alliance

with 2 objectives:

- Achieve increased investment in VAEP
- Ensure greater choice and equity for people with a disability and their carers in the way aids and equipment policies, programs, and supports are delivered.

Agreed principles of Aids and Equipment programs

Any system for allocating aids and equipment should meet the following principles:

Budget equals demand: Government investment in aids and equipment should be consistent with levels of demand, and should be regularly adjusted to reflect demographic and technological changes.

Meets individual needs: Access to aids and equipment funding should be responsive to individual need allowing for choice and the timely allocation of equipment that is appropriate to the individual.

Funding guaranteed against clear eligibility

guidelines: People with a disability who need aids and equipment should have security of entitlement, and eligibility criteria should be transparent.

Allows for life changes: Aids and equipment should be provided which allow for changes in the life situations, needs and aspirations of individuals (families and carers) and which reflect improvements in technology.

Efficient systems: Systems for the provision, maintenance and recycling of equipment should be designed to maximise the efficient use of government resources.

AEAA Achievements

- Now 49 PWD, CSO's and interested individuals
- Buckland Foundation funds for a major research project
- Representation on strategic working and reference groups, including the KPMG Review reference Group, Implementation Reference Group and Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme Reference Group
- Funding Navigator on AEAA website
- Inaugural member of the Victorian Universal Housing Alliance – successful change in building regulations

Achievements cont'd

- Encourage and organise community action
- AEAA members ran workshops showcasing the AEAA model at the National ARATA Conference in successive years, Western Australian Assistive Technology Symposium in March 2009
- AEAA Action Day held on 17/1/08. Event received media coverage in The Age.
Media coverage: ['Disabled call for better funding'](#) (Age, 18/1/08); ['The lives left on hold'](#) (Age 12/4/08);



VAEP Redevelopment

- KPMG did a major review in 2006, released report in
- Most recommendations accepted but not means testing
- http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability/supports_for_people/living_in_my_home/aids_and_equipment_program/aids-and-equipment-program-redevelopment#background
- Vehicle Modification Subsidy Scheme introduced
- New software – at last!
- Single Issuing Centre – currently 27 general and 5 specialist issuing Centres. Ballarat Health is the provider, to begin transition
- by December2010.

DHS Redevelopment Implementation:

Key principle to improve outcomes for individuals and aim to achieve a customer focussed service through:

- Streamlined and timely access to an integrated and coordinated service delivery system;
- Transparent processing, prioritisation and equitable access; and
- Efficient and cost effective use of resources

DHS cont'd

The new statewide service will uphold these principles by providing:

- A single point of entry – one phone number, one email
- A single statewide waiting list; and
- A new function of clinical advisors, who will undertake clinical expertise on applications

DHS cont'd

Staged transition commences Dec 2010, completed by June 2011.

Specialist focus on children will be maintained and funds quarantined, however, RCH and Monash will close.

No change to Lymphoedema Garmnents and Electronic Communication Devices services.