

Lobbying Toolkit

Introduction



Booklet

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About this Toolkit

This Toolkit will help you to learn how to speak up, and how to tell people who make decisions about the things people with disabilities want and need in order to have a good life and be treated equally.



What is Lobbying?

Lobbying is all the different things you can do to change the way things are done to make life better for people with disabilities.



Who do you Lobby?

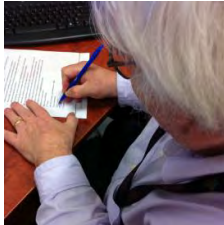
The people or groups you might lobby include:

- Politicians
- Government workers
- Service providers, for example where you work, your day program etc.
- Housing providers
- Local community groups



What can we do to Lobby?

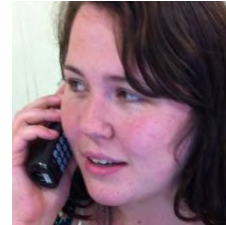
Some of the things you can use to lobby people are:



Letters



Petitions



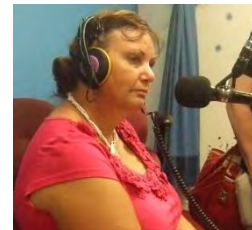
Phone calls



Emails



Newspapers



Radio and TV



Meetings



Posters



Holding an advocacy day



You Can Do It!

Lobbying sounds hard but it can be easy. In Victoria self advocacy groups and people with disabilities have made change happen by speaking up and telling people what they want.



You can do it too!!!!!!!!!!!!



What is in this Toolkit?

Booklet 1	Introduction to Toolkit
Booklet 2	Picking Your Issue
Booklet 3	Who do You Lobby?
Booklet 4	Who Can Help?
Booklet 5	Meetings
Booklet 6	Lobby Activities
Booklet 7	Case Study: “Shut In Campaign”
PowerPoint 1	Lobbying and Campaigning (Printed Notes)
PowerPoint 2	Lobbying Local Politicians (Full Version Printed Notes)
PowerPoint 3	Lobbying Local Politicians (Plain English Version Printed Notes)
Tip Sheet 1	Form Letter
Forms	Picking Issues Forms x 2
DVD	Masters of all documents PowerPoint
DVD	Presentations 1, 2 and 3

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Picking Your Issue



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Picking Your Issue



What is an Issue?

People with disabilities can have lots of issues or problems in their life. There are lots of things that you would probably like to happen to make things better for yourself and for other people with disabilities. Some of these might include:



Better Transport



Good Jobs



Access to Buildings



More Houses



Choosing who you live with



Good Pay



Doing things in the community



Your human rights



Getting your money



Closing Institutions



Plain English

Picking Your Issue



How Do We Pick an Issue?

The first step to lobbying is to pick an issue or problem that your group would like to work on. If you have not done lobbying before it is a good idea to start by working on just one issue. Here are the steps you can take to help your group pick an issue.

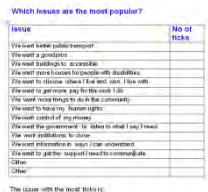


Step 1 Photocopy the “Issues Important to Me” form in this kit and hand out copies to the members of your group.



Step 2 Each person should tick two issues on the sheet they think are important. If your issue is not on the sheet there is space at the bottom the sheet to add other issues.

Step 3 Ask people if they would like to tell the group the issues they ticked and why?



Step 4 Photocopy and hand out the “Which Issue is Most Popular” form and handout. This form will help you work out which issue is most important for the people in your group.
















Step 5 Talk about the issue picked. Why is it important? What should happen to make things change for the better?

Ask everyone if they are happy to pick this issue for the group to work on.



Step 6 Now that you have picked your issue go to Book 3 to learn about the people who can help you to lobby.

Issues Important to Me!!!

 <p>I want better public transport <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want a good job <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want buildings to be accessible <input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>I want more houses for people with disabilities <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want to choose where I live and who I live with <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want to get more pay for the work I do <input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>I want more things to do in the community <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want to have my human rights <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want control of my money <input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>I want the government to listen to what I say I need <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want institutions to close <input type="checkbox"/></p>	 <p>I want information in ways I can understand <input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>I want to get the support I need to communicate <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Other: draw or write here <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Other: draw or write here <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Which Issues are the most popular?

Issue	Number of ticks
We want better public transport	
We want good jobs	
We want buildings to be more accessible	
We want more houses for people with disabilities	
We want to choose where we live and who we live with	
We want to get more pay for the work we do	
We want more things to do in the community	
We want to have our human rights respected	
We want control of our money	
We want the government to listen to what we say we need	
We want institutions to close	
We want information in ways we can understand	
We want to get the support we need to communicate	
Other	
Other	

The issue with the most ticks is:

Lobbying Toolkit

Who Do You Lobby?



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Who Do You Lobby?



Who do we speak to?

Now that you have picked your issue you need to find who makes the decisions about your issue and who has the power to help change things. The types of people you need talk to include:

- Politicians – State, Federal
- Local Council
- Government workers
- Service providers
- Transport companies
- Unions
- Business owners
- Human Rights Commissioner

See the list on the next page to find out who you need to lobby about different issues.



Issue

Who to Contact

Accessible Transport



People you might lobby about this issue include:

- The Department of Public Transport in your state
- Your local State Government Members of Parliament in your state
- The Minister for Public Transport in your state

Employment and Wages



People you might lobby about this issue include:

- Your local Australian Federal Government
- The Minister in charge of employment in the Federal Parliament

Issue

Who to Contact

Good Accommodation for People with Disabilities



People you might lobby about this issue include:

- Your local member for Federal Parliament
- Your local State Government Member of Parliament
- The Federal and/or State Minister in charge of housing
- A disability advocacy service near you

Access Issue including:

- Buildings
- Transport
- Shops
- Parks



People you might lobby about this issue include your:

- Local Councillor
- Local Mayor
- Local Council CEO

Issue

Who to Contact

Feeling Safe and Hate Crime and Bullying



People you might lobby about this issue include:

- Your local Victorian State Government MP
- The Senior Sergeant at your Local Police Station
- A disability advocacy service near you

Getting Your Human Rights



People you might lobby about this issue include:

- Local State and Australian Government MPs
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- A disability advocacy service near you

**Contact SARU for help to find phone numbers
and contact details**

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Who Can Help?



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Who do we speak to?

Now that you have picked your issue you need to find other groups who can help you to lobby to change things. Here are things that other groups can do to help you to lobby:

- Give you more information about the issue
- Help you learn about lobbying
- Tell you about groups and people to lobby
- Share their resources, posters, DVDs etc.
- Give ideas about who else can help you
- Work with you – there is strength in numbers



Have a look at the list on the next page for ideas about who could help you to lobby.



People Who Can Help - Contact List

These groups might be able to give you advice or help you with your lobbying:



Public Transport

Public Transport Users Association

Phone: (03) 9650 7898

Email: office@ptua.org.au



Jobs and Real Wages

AED Legal Service (in Victoria)

Phone: (03) 9639 4333

Email: noni.lord@aed.org.au



Access to Buildings

Disability Justice Advocacy (in Victoria)

Phone: (03) 9481 7022

Email: info@justadvocacy.com



Equal Rights

Human Rights Law Centre

Phone: (03) 8636 4450

Email: admin@hrlc.org.au

Australian Human Rights Commission

Phone: 1300 369 711



Communication Rights

Communication Rights Australia

Phone: 1300 666 604

Email: info@caus.com.au

Australian Human Rights Commission

Phone: 1300 369 711



Housing Rights

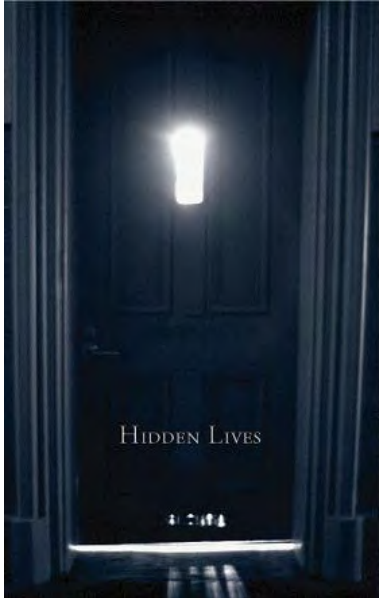
Australian Human Rights Commission

Phone: 1300 369 711

AMIDA - Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation (in Victoria)

Phone: (03) 9650 2722

Email: amida@amida.org.au



Closing Institutions

Inclusion Australia

email: paul.cain@inclusionaustralia.org.au

Shut In Campaign

Phone: 02 9370 3100

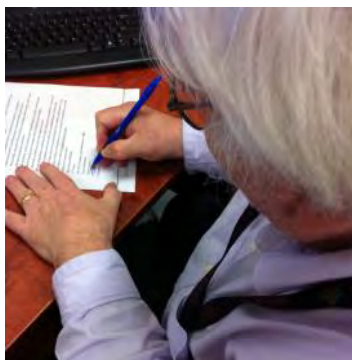
Email: info@shutin.org.au



Asking for Help

Once you have picked people who might help you to lobby you need to contact them. You can ring, email or send a letter to them and:

- Tell them about the issue you want to work on and why you want to work on it
- Ask them if they have any ideas or information they could share with you
- Invite them to come and talk at one of your meetings
- Ask them what work they are doing to help people with disabilities get their rights
- Ask if they know who else could help you



- Find out what they think of your lobbying ideas

Lobbying Toolkit

Meetings



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Face to Face Meetings



One great way to lobby is to have a meeting with the people who make decisions and change things. People you might want to meet with include:

- Local Politicians
- State Government Departments
- Local Community Groups

Step 1

Decide who is the best person to contact for your issue (See Booklet 3)

Check

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Step 2

Decide where to have the meeting. In the person's office, at your group's meeting place, at a coffee shop etc.

Check

☐



Step 3

Write a letter to the person asking for a meeting.
Check out the sample letter we have written for you
and see the hot tips below.

Check



HOT TIPS



- Always include your group's name, address and phone number so the person knows where to send a reply
- Use your own words in the letter
- Keep the letter short – no more than one page
- Be clear about what you want to talk about in the meeting
- Include where you would like to meet
- Ask the person to let you know a day and time that would suit them to meet you and include some days and times that could suit you
- Ask for a reply

(Group Name)
(Address)
(Phone Number)
(Group Email)

To: (Name of Person)
(Person's Title)
(Address)

Dear Mr/Mrs (Person's last name),

I am a member of the (Group Name here) Self Advocacy Group. Our group is run by people with disabilities who have joined together to have their voices heard and to support each other. We work together to make sure we have the same rights, choices, and opportunities as anyone else. Our group meets (insert here how often you meet and when).

We are writing to you because we have an important issue we would like to talk to you about. Our issue is that (insert your issue here). We feel very strongly about this issue because (insert here why the issue is important).

We would very much like to meet with you about this issue and some of the changes we think should happen to make things better. Some of these changes are:

- (Insert the change you want here)
- (Insert the change you want here)
- (Insert the change you want here)

We would like you to come to one of our meetings to talk about the issue(s) or if you cannot come to a meeting we would be happy to come and meet you at your office.

We hope that you will be able to meet with us because we would also like to hear any ideas or information you have about the issue. You can email or phone us to organise a meeting time and place.

Thanking You.

Yours Sincerely,

(Insert Name, position, and group name here.)

Step 4



Before you go to the meeting make sure that you:

- Make a list of questions and the things you want to say
- Decide who will do the talking and practice saying it
- Know the time and place of the meeting and make sure you get there early
- If you are going to meet at the persons office make sure you know how to get there

Check



HOT TAP

Before you go to the meeting why not practice what you are going to say with a role play? You can have someone act out the role of the person you will be meeting.





Step 5

At the meeting:

- Keep it short - tell him/her about your group and also the issues you care about
- Take someone with you to take notes during the meeting
- Let the person know what actions you want them to take
- Ask the person to tell you what they can do to help and when they plan to do it
- Leave behind some written information about your group and the issue

Check

☐

Step 6

After the meeting:

- Write a Thank You note. In the note you can remind the person about the things they said they would do for you.
- If you have not heard anything back in a month, ring or write to ask politely what is happening about your issue.

Check

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Lobbying Toolkit

Lobbying Activities



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Lobbying Activities



What Else Can We Do?

This Toolkit has talked about what you can do to lobby to change things and make life better for people with disabilities. There are lots of different things you can do. You can think creatively about ideas to get your message across.

On the next page are some ideas for you to think about.



Lobbying Activities



Write a letter to the news editor



Information stalls



Make flyers



Art exhibition



Create an information kit



Radio show



Poster making



Make a DVD



Hold a forum

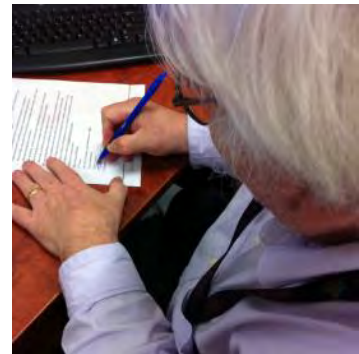
Lobbying Activities



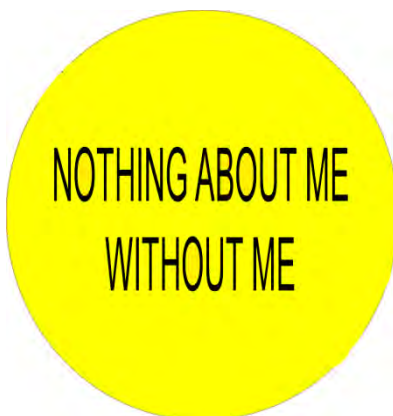
Write a play



Email Campaign



Write letters



Make badges



Set up Facebook



**Speak at
conferences**



Hold a rally



Write a petition



Hand out flyers

Lobbying Toolkit

Case Study: Shut in



Shut In

Booklet

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Shut In Case Study



Shut In Campaign

Shut In is a campaign that was started by two self advocacy groups: Reinforce and VALID.

In this booklet we are going to show you the steps that the Shut In campaign used to lobby.

1. What is the Issue?

When you want to lobby to change things the first step is to decide exactly what the issue is and the changes you want to happen.

Shut In Issue: People with intellectual disabilities are still living in institutions in Victoria and Australia.

Changes: The Shut In campaign wants all institutions to close and all the people living in them to move into houses in the community.

2. Is it a good issue?

The questions that Shut In asked before choosing the issue were:

- Is it something that should change?
The answer was yes!!!! Many people still live in institutions and they are not nice places to live.
- Is it a human rights issue?
Yes! all people have the right to full community inclusion. Institutions exclude people from the community.



Shut In Case Study



4. What was the first step?

VALID and Reinforce were partners in the Shut In campaign. They set up a 'working party' to meet each month. They talked to other groups who could help them and asked them to join the working party. The groups that joined were:

- AMIDA (Action for More Independence & Dignity in Accommodation)
- SARU (the Self Advocacy Resource Unit)
- AFDO (Australian Federation of Disability Organisations)
- People who had lived in institutions



5. Who can make the changes?

The next step in lobbying is to find out the people that have the power to make the changes you want and to ask to meet with them.

The Shut In working party met and wrote down a list of people that had the power to make the decision to close institutions. This included:

- The Minister for the Department of Human Services in Victoria
- Local State Government of Victoria Members of Parliament
- Government workers
- Boards and tribunals

Shut In Case Study



6. Meeting with people who can make the changes.

It is a good idea when you go to a meeting to have a list of things you want to talk about. The Shut In campaign met with the former Minister for Human Services. They had a list of things to talk about including:

- The number of institutions still in Victoria
- Information about how people's lives had improved since moving out of an institution
- Why they did not agree with people who thought the institutions should stay open
- The stories of the people who had lived in institutions
- Why institutions deny people their human rights
- The need for people to live in the community in good houses



7. Lobbying

So you have met with people who can change things but nothing is happening. Now you need to do more lobbying activities to remind people in power about the issue and make sure they do not forget about the issue.

Some of the lobbying Shut In did included:

- Setting up a website and a Facebook page
- Filming people's stories
- Speaking at Conferences
- Asking people to spread the word



Don't forget: if they can do it so can you!!!!!! Good Luck