

Sports CONNECT Follow up: Webinar 7- Case Study: Swimming

Below we have tried to respond to as many of the question posed during and after Webinar 7.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

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Questions and Answers

Have you faced challenges getting the State Associations to buy in to the national inclusion strategy and if so, what have been some ways to overcome these?

Michael Woods, Swimming Australia Ltd (SAL): In principal our state associations are receptive and willing to pursue positive outcomes for inclusion of people with disability and in some cases the state association has identified this as a strategic priority. While this is positive there are still some challenges that we face.

- Building an awareness of the National Strategy and understanding of how this can link, guide and add value to the priorities and plans of the associations – each association has different priorities and operate in varying ways so a challenge for SAL is to gain an understanding of each associations “state of play” and working with them on aligning with the national strategy. Then conversely building an understanding within the state association of the strategy and identifying how it can guide and support their existing and future work. To overcome this in most cases it really is about meeting face to face and working through the nut and bolts of it all. To support this process we have developed “Inclusion Activity Agreements” with targeted state associations. This agreement outlines the commitment by the state association to adopt the National Inclusion Framework and work with SAL; likewise it reflects SALs commitment to support the states in this area and other aspects of inclusion such as competition and athlete development.
- Capacity in the Associations – each state association has its own unique capacity to act on addressing inclusion outcomes. Each are funded and supported to different degrees, staff numbers and turnover affect the ability to “do stuff”, and so understanding and accounting for this is a continual challenge. To support this SAL has allocated grant funding in association with the Inclusion Activity Agreements. This is useful in two ways, firstly to assist with the States capacity to deliver the outcomes (the funds can go towards resourcing initiatives, delivering education, paying staff etc) and secondly ensures accountability for the outcomes in the agreements.
- Building momentum is a bit of a challenge too, by this I mean it is not as easy as simply producing the model and then rolling it out everywhere. In order to build the momentum you have take the “easy wins”. We made a decision not to target all associations at once. Rather, take a targeted approach and select the states that showed the willingness, had the best capacity to act, and those with runs on the board already. So it was with these states that I have worked with the closest to date. Then with some of the hard work done, I aim engage the remaining states more directly.
- Obviously as in most federated sports models, there are always some political sensitivity’s that need to be considered and the “what’s in it for me” question is well worth trying to address. In engaging the associations it has been important to show how this approach can be of benefit to them. Showing the positives has lead to buy in and confidence in most cases. Also ensuring that through the process it has been made clear that this is a collaborative approach and not a directive approach. Ownership of the process by the states is important because at the end of the day it is the associations who by and large are delivering the programs, initiatives and projects that service the members and target participants.

Is there evidence that fun days generate continued participation? What follow up is there for clubs?

June Cotter, Mareeba Swimming Club/Pool and Dimbulah Swimming Club: If the club have schools in their area with a Special Ed unit, liaise with them. Following our fun day in Cairns last year the school teachers that supported the fun day now bring 20 students to my pool and work with my staff that also went to the fun day. We have now also purchased equipment that we are able to use for swimmers of all ability at our pool.

Michael Woods, SAL: Using the delivery model, we are able to go some way forward in addressing these issues. By establishing a local network in the community to provide continued support to participants, deliver education and training to the deliverers and local clubs so they are better equipped to take on those who participate in the fun days. Also by ensuring that at the fun day itself participants are given information and support to find ongoing opportunities that are appropriate to them once the fun day is all over. Of course this strategy is still evolving and SAL and Swimming QLD are working together to do this.

Take us through some key steps taken by disability service provider and internal processes that need to occur to provide better sport service to their clients-

Michael Woods, SAL: We would suggest going to agencies where sport is already on the agenda or sport and physical activity is part of their service. Also consider agencies that align with your own sports goals and ethos and more practically the type of sport you are e.g. Swimming while good for just about everyone has some clear synergies with the health and wellbeing outcomes for people with physical disability particularly neuromuscular type conditions, water is therapeutic, provides freedom from confines commonly faced on land and is non-impact so it is a good match up in that sense. It is also vital that as sport we educate the disability world about what we offer. We cannot assume our target market know anything about us! Work on targeted communication/education/awareness strategies that will get your message across, finding the right network or pathway to do this in partnership with the right agencies will help. For example, SAL is partnered with Deaf Sports Australia; we developed an information pamphlet to go out to schools for people with hearing impairment giving direct contact to a portion of the market we are targeting. A one size fits all approach is probably not the best way to go.

What avenues of assistance are available regarding council run pools?

June Cotter, Mareeba Swimming Club/Pool and Dimbulah Swimming Club: All pools should have in place their Pool Operation Manual. Pools are getting audited not only by their Council Auditors but Government Auditors. (I had both last year, the Government ones are random). At my pool I submitted a risk assessment to council regarding disability access; it was received and actioned within months. Another risk was submitted re the chair lift maintenance and council had someone there the next day. I might be lucky and have a good council. So the pool needs to do a risk assessment and risk analysis and forward it on.

Participation Growth Team, ASC:

See below the numerous links to different grants and guidelines. Depending on your state you may have access to a variety of funding and services.

- FAHCSIA- <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/overview/Pages/default.aspx>
- NSW Sport & Recreation- <http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/grants/>
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government- <http://www.grantslink.gov.au/>
- Australian Business Funding Centre- http://www.australiangovernmentgrants.org/?domain=ww3.australiangovernmentgrants.org/&_kk=queensland%20grants&_kt=2d8ad438-2a59-443b-8801-12f63122e95a&gclid=CLyfpJXC4agCFVCpAodwQnUDw
- Parliamentary Library- <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/spgrants.htm>

- QLD Government- <https://www.smartservice.qld.gov.au/services/grants/grantdetails.action?grantId=8ae5936c063948ea01063949034d0007->
- QLD DSR- <http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/Funding/Overviewofallfundingprograms/YoungAthleteAssistanceProgram.aspx>
- Our Community- <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/community/>

What is the Swimming Australia- AIS pathway, how does it run and what does it provide the participants?

Please see the diagram below.

