



Community connection

Step to a landscape of choice

A NEW and exciting program called Ability Links will be locally launched tomorrow in the training room at 65 Belmore St, Tamworth.

The Ability Links office is located around the corner at 127 Bridge St, Tamworth where co-ordinators, or linkers, Anne Davis and Anitra Larsen will assist people with disability to make connections and achieve their goals so they can live their lives as part of their local communities.

Their role is to support the broader community to be as welcoming and inclusive as possible as well as helping families and carers to connect with resources and opportunities in their community.

"We're moving to person-centred and individualised funding arrangements through the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme), so the Ability Links program is being brought out as a stepping stone, so that any of the people that want to work with our program have got a one-stop shop," Ability Links co-ordinator Lynn Lennon said.

"They can come and ask about services, but more importantly ask about those community



Anitra Larsen and Annemaree Davis are your Tamworth linkers. 2411146601

groups – social groups, sporting groups – that are out there that they previously may not have known about."

The Ability Links Launch will include a performance by Tamworth Conservatorium of Music students, an afternoon tea, a chance to

meet both of Tamworth's linkers and find out more about this exciting program.

For more information about Ability Links or to speak with your local Linker, call Anne Davis 0400 673 370 or Anitra Larsen 0459 096 935.

What is an Ability Link linker?

- LINKERS work with people with disability and their families to build their own plans for the future, build on their strengths and skills, and develop networks in their own communities.

- Linkers are a locally based first point of contact.

- They are available by phone, in person, online and out in mainstream community spaces.

- Linkers will assist people with a disability to:

- Set goals and plan for their future,
- Build confidence to achieve their goals,
- Develop people's

- existing support networks and create new networks, and

- Look at ways to help people further participate in and be part of the community.

The Tamworth linkers are Anne Davis and Anitra Larsen.

TOMORROW'S launch of the Ability Links Tamworth office aims to be the first step towards a new landscape of choice and control for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Ability Links is being delivered by the Pathfinders Ltd, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee operating across the New England and Northwest Tablelands of NSW that operates a number of programs and services promoting youth and family welfare.

"Ability Links enables people with disability to access all of the same community resources and opportunities that people without disabilities access every day," Pathfinders CEO Alan Brennan said.

It is an initiative of the NSW government to support people aged nine to 64 years to achieve their goals and support connection to their local communities.

The introduction of Ability Links is intended to lay the groundwork for the establishment of the National Disability Insurance Scheme which is expected to be rolled out in NSW from July 2016.