



**Submission made by Julia Farr
Association**

**Australian Social Inclusion Board
- Breaking the cycle of
disadvantage**

ABN: 16 464 890 778

104 Greenhill Road Unley SA 5061

PO Box 701 Unley Business Centre SA 5061

t: (08) 8373 8333 f: (08) 8373 8373

e: admin@juliafarr.org.au w: www.juliafarr.org.au

Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	2
2.0 RESPONSE TO INQUIRY QUESTIONS	2
2.1 What are different cycles of disadvantage, and how do people enter these cycles of disadvantage?.....	2
2.1.1 Service arrangements not meeting the needs of vulnerable people.....	3
2.1.2 Service arrangements that place power with the helper rather than the helped	3
2.1.3 Poor access to information	4
2.1.4 Lack of access to material resources	4
2.1.5 Lack of opportunity to move into relationships and fellowships.....	6
2.2 How do people avoid or break out of cycles of disadvantage, that is what is it that makes a difference for these people?	6
2.2.1 Carrying a personal vision	7
2.2.2 Asserting a citizenship-based approach to service systems	7
2.2.3 Access to supported information	8
2.2.4 Access to material resources	9
2.2.5 Fellowship and connection	10
2.3 Does personal choice play a role in breaking cycles of disadvantage, and if so how can you help build motivation and aspirations?.....	10
2.4 Are there any successful interventions that should be considered, and are you aware of any current research which is focused on this?.....	12
2.4.1 Carrying a personal vision	12
2.2.2 Asserting a citizenship-based approach to service systems	13
2.2.3 Access to supported information	13
2.2.4 Access to material resources	13
2.2.5 Fellowship and connection	14
3.0 CONCLUSION	15
APPENDIX A - Consultation with the disability community and amplification of issues identified by the disability community.....	16

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Julia Farr Association and its predecessor organisations have been involved with the disability community for over 130 years. The Julia Farr Association is an independent, non-government entity based in South Australia that fosters innovation, shares useful information, and promotes policy and practice that support people living with disability to access the good things in life. We are not a service provider – we deliver research, evaluation and information services that are anchored upon the stories shared by people living with disability and other people in their lives. As such, we feel we are in a good position to offer comment and analysis without vested interest.

The Julia Farr Association believes that the Australian Social Inclusion Board's research into breaking the cycle of disadvantage is necessary to respond to the social and economic barriers that people living with disability experience which can lead to disadvantage and exclusion. This investigation is also timely in the current environment. There is commitment "to address the barriers that are faced by Australians with disability and promote social inclusion"¹ through the National Disability Strategy. Further, there is international acknowledgement of the social disadvantage that people living with disability experience, and emphasis through the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ratified by the Australian Government in July 2008, that measures are put in place to ensure that people living with disability can fully participate and be included within their society².

Much of the content of this submission has been drawn from the Julia Farr Association 2010 publication '*Model of Citizenship Support*'³.

2.0 RESPONSE TO INQUIRY QUESTIONS

2.1 What are different cycles of disadvantage, and how do people enter these cycles and become trapped in them?

The UN Disability Convention views people living with disability as holders of rights "who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society"⁴.

The Julia Farr Association believes that if vulnerable people are not afforded these rights and do not have choice and control of how they live their life, they can enter, and become trapped in, cycles of disadvantage.

¹ Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs 2009, 'National disability strategy', p. 1, <<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/progserv/govtint/Pages/nds.aspx#3>>.

² United Nations n.d., *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and optional protocol*, <<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>>.

³ Williams, R 2010, *Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia.

⁴ United Nations n.d, 'Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities', viewed 7 July 2010, p. 1, <<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=12&pid=150>>.

2.1.1 Service arrangements not meeting the needs of vulnerable people

A range of service arrangements can create situations where a vulnerable person does not have the opportunity to make choices about the support s/he may require. This can result in the person experiencing a loss of dignity and respect, and a diminishment of personal horizon of what is possible in her/his life as her/his identity becomes little more than service recipient. The person is then at risk of being in a cycle of dependence on others/services to make decisions for her/him, where such decisions might be based on the anxieties of others or the convenience of services. In this way, the person can miss out on a wide range of life opportunities because such opportunities don't fit with the role of *service recipient*. This in turn fuels a cycle of disadvantage.

2.1.2 Service arrangements that place power with the *helper* rather than the *helped*

It remains the case that when people connect with human services for assistance, the balance of power appears to rest with the provider of those services. Because of the way that human services are generally procured and delivered, there are severe restrictions on choice (for example people with significant support needs typically find themselves in shared living arrangements with people who they did not know prior to the arrangement and would not necessarily have chosen as their flat mates). Such service arrangements have a tendency to view the recipients less as active citizens and more as the embodiment of a collection of tasks that need to be performed by support staff. This objectification leads to patterns of service that deal with daily support needs, diversion, and little else. This in turn fuels a cycle of disadvantage.

Further, services viewing people living with disability “as ‘objects’ of charity, medical treatment and social protection”⁴, or mere recipients of supports, can result in people not being provided with the opportunity to collaborate in how services should be run.

The power relationship also means that services expect recipients to be compliant and grateful for what is available, and any behaviour that doesn't fit with this can be quickly labelled as difficult or challenging⁵. This in turn creates the possibility that restrictions will be implemented by the service agency (unfortunately such actions are validated in the current National Standards for Disability Services⁶), which means that the person will have reduced opportunities because of those restrictions (it has been reported elsewhere that

⁵ Williams, R 2008, *why is it so hard to speak up and be heard? Views from the loop conference 2007*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia

⁶ Details on the National Standards for Disability Services can be found at <http://www.facs.gov.au/sa/disability/standards/Documents/nsds1993.pdf>.

people also have increased vulnerability to neglect and abuse from those controlling and providing the supports⁷). This in turn fuels a cycle of disadvantage.

2.1.3 Poor access to information

Access to appropriate information is necessary for people “to make choices, to assess risk, to test ideas, and to grow capacity”⁸. It is also a fundamental right that people living with disability have equal access to relevant information to enable people to fully participate in all aspects of life².

However, vulnerable people can experience situations where information is unavailable, inaccessible or not appropriately conveyed. This can impact on people’s capacity to make informed decisions and actively participate in the life of their community.

If a person cannot access good information with which to assess choices, risk and consequences, then there is a much greater risk that the subsequent decisions will favour the status quo. If the status quo is a lifestyle where there is a dearth of opportunities, then this will fuel a cycle of disadvantage.

2.1.4 Lack of access to material resources

Access to material resources is critical to breaking out of a cycle of disadvantage. It therefore follows that a lack of access to material resources can create or maintain a cycle of disadvantage.

In support of the importance of access to material resources, the UN Disability Convention states that people have the right to have access to:

- “a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community”⁹;
- Mainstreams services and facilities on an equal basis as the general population⁹.

However, people living with disability are not necessarily afforded the exercise of these rights due to not having ready access to the personal and community material resources they require to participate in all aspects of life. A number of

⁷ National People with Disabilities and Carer Council 2009, *Shut out: The experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia. National disability strategy consultation report*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

⁸ Williams, R 2010, *Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia, p. 6.

⁹ United Nations n.d., *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and optional protocol*, p. 14

<<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>>.

factors can impact on the capacity of people to access the material resources they need.

- People living with disability “on the one hand, often have fewer financial resources than other members of society, while on the other hand may have to bear additional costs due to their disability”¹⁰.
- People living with disability experience higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of labour force participation¹¹;
- People living with disability are more likely to be reliant on income support as their main sources of income and live in low-wealth households¹¹;
- People living with disability experience poor access to their community due to not having ease of access to transport and premises. This can limit opportunities for people living with disability to gain employment, participate in education and access the community supports they require.
- Attitudinal barriers within the community can reduce the opportunity for people to actively participate within their community. Examples include:
 - Service staff and operators not appropriately supporting people due to having a lack of knowledge and awareness about living with disability and people’s rights to access services and facilities on an equal basis as other citizens¹²;
 - Services having in place policies or systems that are discriminatory due to not fully understanding their obligations to ensure people living with disability have equal access and opportunity to contribute to their community. For example, people “being unable to access buses due to bus stops and kerbing not being accessible, accessible spaces in public transport not being appropriately signed resulting in others using the space, and mobility aids not being loaded on planes due to airlines having restrictions on the size and mobility aids that can be transported”¹³.

In all of these ways, people living with disability are denied fair access to material resources and are therefore more likely to enter, and remain within, cycles of disadvantage.

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009, *Australia’s welfare 2009*. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra, ACT, p. 155.

¹¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009, *Australia’s welfare 2009*. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra, ACT.

¹² Fidock, A & Williams, R 2010, *tell us 3 survey report: Accessibility*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 7.

2.1.5 Lack of opportunity to move into relationships and fellowships

“Society is built on the ideas of interdependence and association. Through such association, rich and trusting relationships emerge that help sustain and grow us on life’s journey”¹⁴.

However, vulnerable people can experience reduced opportunities to establish, and benefit from, such associations and relationships due to being denied fair opportunity to actively participate within their community.

Barriers within the physical environment, together with community attitudes viewing vulnerable people as pejoratively different or problematic¹⁴, can directly impact on a person’s capacity to form fellowships and connections. Such factors can result in people experiencing loneliness, isolation and a reduction in the richness of relationships that can result from active involvement within their community.

2.2 How do people avoid or break out of cycles of disadvantage, that is what is it that makes a difference for these people?

The Julia Farr Association has extensive experience in investigating, researching and amplifying a range of barriers that have a direct impact on people living with disability experiencing social disadvantage (see Appendix A).

We believe the most important contextual point we can make is that vulnerable people are citizens first and foremost, and as such belong at the core of our communities.

This means that Australia’s public policy settings must have proper regard for the inherent status of vulnerable people, and to promote and uphold this citizenship¹⁵ in the design and commissioning of support services.

We refer the Australian Social Inclusion Board to the Julia Farr Association 2010 publication ‘*Model of Citizenship Support*’³ which sets out key domains for support that will lead people to *citizenship*.

The five domains for *citizenship support* set out in this publication provide a good context for ensuring that public policy settings have proper regard for the inherent status of vulnerable people, and ensure that people have genuine opportunities to

¹⁴ Williams 2010, *Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia, p. 8.

¹⁵ “*Citizenship refers to an active lifestyle that has the prospect of fulfilment for the person concerned. Such a lifestyle is one where, as part of a personally defined set of lifestyle choices, the person is in and part of their local community, contributing and growing through involvement in meaningful valued activities, and participating in a network of relationships characterised by acceptance, belonging and love*” (Williams 2010, *Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper*, p. 3)

break out of cycles of disadvantage and are valued citizens first and foremost. The five domains are covered below:

2.2.1 Carrying a personal vision

Breaking out of a cycle of disadvantage has to be anchored on self-belief. Many people who are in cycles of disadvantage have had their self-belief diminished by their experiences of service reciprocity, poverty and social isolation.

Sustainable emergence from cycles of disadvantage demands that the person is the central architect in her/his personal vision. This vision is about the articulation, affirmation and realisation of a preferred lifestyle, reflecting the person's individuality, ordinary life goals, and opportunity to participate as a citizen in the life of the local community.

The first steps here, especially for a person diminished by their life experiences, are to support the person to reclaim a sense of personhood and to access opportunities to grow her/his capacity to see herself/himself as an individual of worth and an active valued member of the wider community.

2.2.2 Asserting a citizenship-based approach to service systems

As mentioned earlier, the power imbalance in the relationship between the *helper* and the *helped* in formal support systems can establish dependency, passivity, restriction, even abuse and oppression, all of which establish, maintain and deepen cycles of disadvantage.

To break out of this, formal support systems need to be redesigned so that the essence of the relationship between *helper* and *helped* is one of collaboration, and where the *helped* is constantly affirmed as the architect of her/his own life. At the Julia Farr Association, we refer to this as a *citizenship-based approach to service systems*.

There are a number of ways that formal support systems can move towards this citizenship-based approach, including but not limited to the following:

- Public funders demanding evidence of this approach from any support agency seeking to be formally involved in the lives of vulnerable people;
- Ensuring that all new system architecture is designed in partnership with the intended recipients. This practice of *co-design* can help ensure that the public funder systems and support agency systems are built in ways that are more meaningful and helpful to the intended recipients, and establishes a sense of ownership consistent with the principle of citizenship-support;
- Support agencies undertaking social audits of their values and practice, to review and align with the principle of citizenship support;

- Redesigning role descriptions of staff and volunteers so that they are anchored on the principle of citizenship-support;
- Stronger recruitment practice to enrol staff with a citizenship-support value base (noting that such candidates do not exclusively reside in the human services industry);
- Stronger staff induction and training, to build practice in line with the principle of citizenship-support;
- Leadership development, so that we build leadership capacity across agencies, across Australia, in support of the principle of citizenship-support. Note that this includes addressing the issue, as identified by the Julia Farr Association, of ego-based leadership and how to build leadership beyond ego.

2.2.3 Access to supported information

This third domain in the *Framework of Citizenship Support* focuses on people having access to good person-centred information that is easy to use and ensures people are well informed. There can be no doubt that a lack of access to information can keep people in cycles of disadvantage. Citizens need information to make choices, to assess risk, to test ideas, and to grow capacity. Good information makes it more possible for the person to make an informed choice.

However, it's not just the mere *presence* of relevant information that can help break cycles of disadvantage. For many people, the information also needs to be accessible, given that people will vary widely in their capacity to engage with a set of written words, for example because of cognitive issues, physical/sensory considerations when engaging with communication media, and cultural background.

Similarly, the way that information is explained to a person can critically affect their understanding of that information. For example, the way professional staff gives information can critically affect the way the intended beneficiaries understand, and act on, the information. This issue has been reported for example in other jurisdictions in relation to the take-up of Individualised Funding¹⁶.

Therefore, to assist people to break out of cycles of disadvantage, careful attention needs to be given to how information is made available to a person, and how that person, if required, can be assisted to understand that information

¹⁶ Phillips, B & Schneider, B 2004, *Changing to consumer-directed care: The implementation of the cash and counselling demonstration in Florida*, Office of Disability, Ageing and Long-Term Care Policy, US Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.

and translate it into a decision that moves the person towards a life of choice and citizenship.

We call this *Supported Information*, and this refers to the resourcing of information so that it is accessible and understandable, and soundly relates to the person's best interests (as typically articulated by the person) and in any case incorporating citizenship, protection of human rights, and upholding the person's potential.

We assert that the design and provision of *Supported Information* is key to future formal support systems, if we are to break the cycle of disadvantage in people's lives.

This in turn underscores the importance of clarifying the differing roles of different agencies (eg government, service organisations, advocacy agencies) in the delivery of information to vulnerable people.

2.2.4 Access to material resources

We have already stated earlier in this submission that access to material resources is central to people breaking out of cycles of disadvantage. People need to be able to access material resources that enable and reflect active citizenship, that are reasonable in terms of 'levelling the playing field' and achieving a fair go. These material resources include both personal assistance and mainstream community resources.

There are many, many examples of how this can come about. Access to material resources can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- The vulnerable person becoming the central decision-maker in how to spend any public funds allocated to that person (this is variously called Individualised Funding, Self-Directed funding, Consumer-Managed Funding, Cash and Counselling, Personalised Budgets etc);
- Access to other types of financing that can assist the person to move out of cycles of disadvantage e.g. micro financing;
- Accessible affordable public transport so that people can easily move within community;
- Accessible buildings and public spaces;
- Fair, supported access to education, so that vulnerable people can build capacity to access regular paid work and other opportunities;
- Fair access to regular paid employment incentives, where employers are growing workforce diversity that reflects Australia's demography, particularly those people who are under-represented in the economy (e.g. people living with disability).

2.2.5 Fellowship and connection

As stated above, the provision of material resources is an important element in breaking cycles of disadvantage, but by itself does not necessarily deliver people into a good life. Funding and other material resources do not ensure people's active membership of the local community, and people with access to material resources can still be isolated, excluded and lonely.

Society is built on ideas of interdependency and association. Through such association, rich and trusting relationships emerge that help sustain and grow us on life's journey. Therefore, if we are to truly break cycles of disadvantage in a person's life, we need to consider how that person can be assisted into natural connections with other people in the local community.

This demands that the formal agencies involved in the life of a vulnerable person ensure that the support arrangements consistently create proactive opportunities for vulnerable people to move into fellowship and connection with other people in the local community. Put simply, when you have more people in your life who have regard for you and look out for you, you have a better chance of exiting, or not entering, cycles of disadvantage.

This calls upon a range of intentional techniques that can help create sustainable opportunities for a person to move into fellowship and connection with other people in their local community. Such circumstances make it more likely that natural relationships emerge, together with a sense of belonging. These developments help break cycles of disadvantage because the person's life is enriched by their active, valued roles in community and the relationships that emerge.

Intentional techniques include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Circles;
- Asset-Based Community Development;
- Time-banking;
- Community Navigation.

2.3 Does personal choice play a role in breaking cycles of disadvantage, and if so how can you help build motivation and aspirations?

We have mentioned earlier in this submission that the essential elements for breaking cycles of disadvantage and moving into *citizenhood* include (among other things) the person reclaiming a sense of personhood and becoming the central architect of both a personal vision and of the determination of formal support arrangements.

It is clear from the evaluation of Individualised Funding initiatives in various jurisdictions that when people begin to exercise control of resources within the context of an empowering personal vision, some remarkable positive changes can result¹⁷.

So, yes, personal choice does play a crucial role in breaking cycles of disadvantage.

Conversely, if a person has a limited personal vision, then this is bound to impact on personal choice¹⁸. When people do not have the opportunity or authority to make decisions about their lives, they are increasingly vulnerable and at risk of experiencing cycles of disadvantage. As we have mentioned elsewhere, a person's personal horizons can become limited by their personal experiences of service reciprocity and a diminishment of self-esteem and perceived personal worth because of years of negative experiences (including discrimination, oppression, and abuse) that create deep wounds.

Approaches to build motivation and aspirations include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Providing therapeutic opportunities for a vulnerable person to heal the psychological wounds of the past;
- Providing opportunities for a vulnerable person to explore what an ordinary valued life looks like, and to accept this is possible in the person's own life;
- Providing opportunities for a vulnerable person to learn personal planning techniques e.g. MAPS, PATH;
- Assisting a vulnerable person to access relevant supported information;
- Connecting a vulnerable person with others who are in, or have successfully moved on from, similar situations of disadvantage;
- Demanding that all formal agencies involved in the life of a vulnerable person consistently uphold the person's personal authority and status as a valued citizen;
- Creating opportunities for a vulnerable person to naturally connect with other citizens, whose fellowship and regard can help grow the person's perspective and capacity in terms of life choices.

We believe the five domains within the *Model of Citizenship Support* provide the framework upon which a vulnerable person can be supported and encouraged to make more ordinary, valued life choices and grow their capacity. The Model's emphasis on supporting people to have choice and control in their lives and actively participate within their community, can "help ensure that people with greater degrees

¹⁷ Leadbeater, C, Bartlett, J & Gallagher, N 2008, *Making it personal*, Demos, London, UK, <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Demos_PPS_web_A.pdf?1240939425>.

¹⁸ Williams, R 2007, *Individualised funding: A summary review of its nature and impact, and key elements for success*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, p. 25.

of vulnerability are supported to achieve the activities and status of citizenship and in keeping with each person's lifestyle choices"¹⁹.

2.4 Are there any successful interventions that should be considered, and are you aware of any current research which is focused on this?

Referencing the five domains within the *Model of Citizenship Support*, we offer below some examples of interventions or programs that can assist vulnerable people to break out of cycles of disadvantage.

2.4.1 Carrying a personal vision

Person-Centred planning, and approaches such as PATH and MAPS²⁰, provide vulnerable people with the opportunity to think about what they want now and in the future, articulate this, and work towards realising their goals.

Increasing numbers of formal support agencies claim to use person-centred planning approaches, but often these operate at a relatively superficial level, and which tend to maintain existing patterns of dependency, separateness and limited opportunity in people's lives rather than breaking through into genuine lives of citizenship. To be clear then, person-centred planning may be described as follows;

Person Centred Planning is built on the values of inclusion and looks at what support a person needs to be included and involved in their community. Person centred approaches offer an alternative to traditional types of planning which are based upon the medical model of disability and which are set up to assess need, allocate services and make decisions for people²¹.

Research demonstrates that Person-Centred planning has a positive influence on the life experiences of people living with disability with "benefits in the areas of:

- community involvement
- contact with friends
- contact with family
- choice"²².

¹⁹ Williams, R 2010, Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia, p.3.

²⁰ Inclusive Solutions n.d., *Person Centred Planning*, viewed 6 July 2010, <<http://www.inclusive-solutions.com/word/pcp.doc>>.

²¹ Ibid, p. 1.

²² Robertson et al. 2005, *The impact of person centred planning*, Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK, p. iii, <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/staff/emersone/FASSWeb/Robertson_05_PCP_FinalReport.pdf>.

2.4.2 Asserting a citizenship-based approach to service systems

Co-design can be a powerful way to create service systems that uphold citizenship. For an illustration of the concept, watch this video on you tube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWgJlwTDIRQ>.

A co-design approach can help ensure that service systems better respond to the needs of vulnerable people. For example, when the need emerged to reform mental health services in Wellington New Zealand, the reform approach included principles of co-design. People living with mental illness, family members, General Practitioners and other community stakeholders had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the new system. This included the opportunity for people to move away from specialist mental health services back to the support of their local GP. The scheme, called the Wellington Mental Health Liaison Service, and each personal solution within it, was constructed in collaboration with the intended beneficiaries²³.

2.4.3 Access to supported information

An example of access to supported information is *Supported decision-making (SDM)*, an approach that ensures people are supported to make informed decisions through communicating and providing information that is accessible and easy to understand.

[s]upported decision-making (SDM) is based on the principle that all individuals have a right to self-determination and respect for their autonomy, irrespective of disability. This means all individuals have a will which provides the basis for decision making. This also means that people with disabilities are entitled to necessary supports for exercising their decision-making capacity; for example, decisions made interdependently with family and trusted others should be legally recognized.²⁴

Research on SDM identified that “[s]imple, appropriate language, accessible information and suitable decision-making environments”²⁵ were essential in supporting people to make decisions and take control.

2.4.4 Access to material resources

Individualised Funding (also variously known as Self-Directed Funding, Personalised Budgets, Consumer Managed Care and several others) gives vulnerable people control over the decisions about how best to use the public

²³ O’Malley, C, McGeorge P, & Kelly A 2000, *Programme evaluation: Primary and secondary care mental health liaison programme*, Wellington Independent Practice Association, Capital Coast Health, Mental Health Consumer Union (Funded by the Mental Health Commission), New Zealand.

²⁴ The Open Society Mental Health Initiative 2005, ‘Alternatives to guardianship: Supported decision making’, viewed 7 July 2010, p. 1, <<http://www.osmhi.org/index.php?page=266>>.

²⁵ Edge, J 2001, *Findings: Demonstrating control of decisions by adults with learning difficulties who have high support needs*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, p. 2, <<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/021.pdf>>.

funds allocated to them. This control can have “a positive impact on quality of life, as reflected in areas such as making choices, achieving goals, participating in the community, and growing relationships”²⁶.

In research conducted in the United Kingdom in 2008 it has been demonstrated that “[s]elf-directed services, combined with personal budgets, create a new operating system for social care that lowers costs, raises quality, improves productivity, offers greater choice, reconnects people to their social networks and helps to generate social capital”²⁷.

In Control UK has played a key role in supporting the delivery of self-directed support since 2003. They have a wide range of resources, research reports and information available on their website – www.in-control.org.uk.

The Julia Farr Association has worked extensively on this topic, is closely associated with the *In Control Australia* initiative, and if required we can supply much more detail on this breakthrough paradigm.

There are examples of initiatives that have created greater access to material resources such as transport, buildings, education and employment, but the timeframe for this submission limits what we can put in this document.

2.4.5 Fellowship and connection

The establishment of intentional networks in the lives of vulnerable people can assist in building trusting relationships which support people to achieve their life goals.

Circles of Support is one initiative which focuses on the importance of establishing freely given relationships and connections.

A circle of support, sometimes called a circle of friends, is a group of people who meet together on a regular basis to help somebody accomplish their personal goals in life. The circle acts as a community around that person (the ‘focus person’) who, for one reason or another, is unable to achieve what they want in life on their own and decides to ask others for help²⁸.

The Community Resource Unit (based in Brisbane) dedicated one of its CRUcial Times issues to people’s accounts and experiences with ‘Circles of Support’ - <http://www.cru.org.au/crutimes/CT38/CT38Mar07.pdf>.

²⁶ Williams, R 2007, *Individualised funding. A summary review of its nature and impact, and key elements for success*, Julia Farr Association, Unley, South Australia, p. 19.

²⁷ Leadbeater, C, Bartlett, J & Gallagher, N 2008, *Making it personal*, Demos, London, UK, p. 36, <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Demos_PPS_web_A.pdf?1240939425>.

²⁸ Circle Networks 2008, ‘Circles of Support’, viewed 7 July 2010, p. 1, <http://www.circlesnetwork.org.uk/circles_of_support.htm>.

Another methodology is Asset-Based Community Development. This is a growing movement that uses a community's existing assets (strengths) as the foundation for sustainable community development. For examples, we refer you to the Asset-Based Community Development Institute's publications at <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/publications/>.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The Julia Farr Association asserts that through promoting and upholding the *citizenhood* of vulnerable people, as reflected in the *Model of Citizenhood Support*, people will have genuine opportunities to break out of cycles of disadvantage and intentionally move towards richer lives marked by capacity, choice and inclusion.

The Julia Farr Association would be very happy to provide further information about the '*Model of citizenhood support*' and other aspects of our submission.

For further information about this submission, please contact:

Robbi Williams
Chief Executive Officer
Julia Farr Association
Ph: 08 8373 8333
Email: admin@juliafarr.org.au.

APPENDIX A

CONSULTATION WITH THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY AND AMPLIFICATION OF ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY

The small group of staff who work for the Julia Farr Association collectively amassed many years experience working with vulnerable people.

Julia Farr Association regularly undertakes consultation with the disability community to identify the issues and concerns that people living with disability have, and what the helpful changes might be.

Our qualitative and quantitative research with the disability community has included feedback from:

- Over 700 attendees at across the previous three **Loop** conference programs, which take topics out to country areas in South Australia;
- Around 800 participants in our **tellus** survey in 2008 and currently over 430 participants in the new 2010 version (the survey is still open);
- People involved in a range of specific surveys conducted on topics of interest, including people's experiences using access taxis and accessing services from their local General Practitioner;
- Participants attending a range of JFA-hosted workshops on topics including personal choice and control, building networks, personal planning and action, and community development.

Our research and consultation with the disability community has helped us amplify a range of issues to Federal and State politicians, policy decision-makers and the wider community. A list of our submissions and publications is highlighted below:

Publications

Number	Published	Title
01	2007	Individualised Funding. A summary review of its nature and impact, and key elements for success
02	2008	Individualised Funding – general considerations on implementation
03	2008	Why is it so hard to speak up and be heard? Views from the Loop Conference 2007
04	2008	JFA Briefing Paper – Development of the 2009 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
05	2008	Tell Us report 1 – Disability Funding – Where should it go?
06	2009	JFA Briefing Paper – Resources Available For People Living With Disability When Seeking Employment
07	2009	Tell Us report 2 – Having Choice and Control
08	2009	Getting A Good Life: Taking Control of what's possible – Views from the Loop Conference 2008
09	2009	JFA Briefing Paper – Family members causing harm to their loved ones living with disability

10	2010	Tell Us report 3 – Accessibility
11	2010	Research Paper – The experiences of people living with disability accessing primary healthcare – Challenges and Considerations
12	2010	Going to your local gym: Some ideas for people living with disability
13	2010	Model of citizenship support: Discussion paper

Submissions

Number	Date	Topic	Recipient
01	July 2008	Inquiry into Better Support for Carers	The Australian Government House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth
02	July 2008	Review of the Health and Community Services Complaints Act	State Government HCSC Act Review Reference Group
03	August 2008	Development of the 2009 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers	Australian Bureau of Statistics
04	December 2008	A National Disability Strategy for Australia	Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
05	February 2009	Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds in public passenger transport, infrastructure and service	Australian Government Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
06	June 2009	World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility consultation	Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines Working Group
07	June 2009	National Human Rights Consultation	Independent Committee, supported by a Secretariat in the Attorney-General's Department
08	July 2009	Harmonisation of Disability Parking Permit Schemes in Australia	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
09	August 2009	Greater fairness and equity in the taxation of Special Disability Trusts	Australian Government Treasury
10	May 2010	Planning options and services for people ageing with disability	Australian Government Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee
11	June 2010	Family Violence Inquiry	Australian Law Reform Commission
12	June 2010	Verbal submission at public hearing regarding the Disability Care and Support inquiry	Productivity Commission
13	June 2010	Revision of the National Standards for Disability Services	National Quality Framework Project Team
14	July 2010	Matters related to the General Election of 20 March 2010	State Government Select Committee on Matters related to the General Election of 20 March 2010