

June 2018

National Virtual Disability Conference first of its kind

The National Virtual Disability Conference, held on the 21st March, 2018, was the first of its kind in Australia and capitalised on technology and access features not brought together in this format before.

The conference was an initiative of the Scope Australia / University of Melbourne partnership which focusses on improving the lives of people with a disability and addressing issues of inequality and social inclusion. Led by Professor Keith McVilly, Scope's Professorial Fellow of Disability and Inclusion at the University of Melbourne and coordinated by Dr Meredith Prain the event focused on the four key streams: Health and wellbeing; Community living; Lifelong education; Meaningful occupation.

Presentations for each stream were led by international and national key note speakers and followed by a panel discussion. Panel members included people with disability, family members, service providers, researchers and policy makers. In addition, individual presentations curated from a national call for papers were given by researchers, service providers and people with disability from across Australia.

Using communication technology delegates were able to engage in real-time discussions with the panel and submit questions for speakers. In addition, to optimise accessibility, all conference sessions were Auslan interpreted and captioned.

The Scope Australia Communication Inclusion Resource Center (CIRC) also provided Easy English summaries of the conference presentations for download. E-posters and abstracts of papers were available on the conference website and accessible to screen reading software.

The inaugural event was able to break down barriers for people who may not have previously attended conferences, such as travel and accommodation costs, enabling people to participate from wherever they were in the world.

For many presenters and participants, engaging with technology in this way was a new experience, however, the vast majority reported they would participate in a similar event in the future. The edited content remains available on-line to those who registered for the conference and those who wish to subscribe post-conference. Full details at: <http://virtualdisability.conferenceworks.com.au/>



Better Evidence Better Outcomes

The Australian disability community
in conversation online



-ends-

Partners

Major sponsorship and partnership was provided by Scope Australia and National Disability Services, with minor sponsorship from WorkSafe, Transport Accident Commission, and Telstra and support from Occupational Therapy Australia.

About Scope

Scope's mission is to enable each person to live as an empowered and equal citizen. We support people with physical, intellectual and multiple disabilities and developmental delays to achieve their goals.

Across Victoria, Scope provides services to over 5,000 people with a disability across more than 108 service locations. Scope also works with corporate and community organisations to improve inclusiveness for people with a disability.

Scope's foundations stretch back to 1948, when a group of parents who wanted better lives and options for their children with disabilities established the Spastic Children's Society of Victoria. Scope acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

For media enquires please contact:

Michelle Paterson, Marketing & Communications Manager, Scope (Aust) Ltd
T: 03 9843 2031 | M: 0457 758 238 | E: mpaterson@scopeaust.org.au
www.scopeaust.org.au