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The Digital Access Show

Season 3, Episode 35

Hanah | Care Done Differently

Transcript

Introduction

Narelle: Hi. Welcome to another episode of The Digital Access Show. I'm Narelle and I'm the host. I've got a question for you all. How many of you have gone onto a website, you need to find, I'll choose support workers, okay? You're helping look after someone, you're a support coordinator. And you say to your client, oh, my gosh, I found a great support worker. And they say, oh, let me go and have a look at the website. And you know what? They can't access it. Could be so many reasons. It's tons of reasons. This week, I'm talking to a company...that are a support working company with a difference. This is Hanah from Care Done Differently. Hanah, thank you so much for coming on the show.

Hanah: You're welcome. I'm happy to be here.

About Care Done Differently

Narelle: Hannah, can you tell us about Care Done Differently, and what you do?

Hanah: We are an NDIS service provider across Illawarra, Shorehaven, Southern Highlands, and we've recently expanded into Queensland. We do...more of the community sort of service side. So, we do community access, assisted daily living. We have registered nurses on board that we do in-house community nursing for. And that's pretty much all we cover. We don't sort of jump in and do 101 things. We do what we specialise in.

Communication That Meets People Where They Are

Narelle: One of the things that I really liked about you, the first time I met you, other than your cute kid. Well, I thought he was cute. I can't see him, but I was happy, was the way you approach communication. Can you tell us a bit about...what it is that's different about you that...in approaching communication with people, how you work with people?

Hanah: About getting to their level of understanding. So, like, a lot of providers that I speak to personally are like up here, but like we need to be here. Like, the participants that I talk to...either come in and they've got like intellectual disabilities, we've got people in the deaf community that we can't...just come in with like...all of these like large terminology against the NDIS, and then try and explain that to them. You've really got to break it down for them. That could come across as, like our website for example. We've come to you and changed the way our website looks. It could also fall into place with onboarding documentation. And things like that.

Narelle: No, but what about, the one thing that I got really excited about, I remember you laughing at me. All your support workers have to learn Auslan.

Hanah: They do have to learn sign.

Narelle: Why?

Hanah: It's more for we do have, what have we got? I think we've got seven participants in total that have, that are from the deaf community. But we also have quite a few ASD clients as well, which that skill can transfer over to non-verbal.

Making the Website Easier to Use

Narelle: Oh. Yeah.

Hanah: Communication barrier, even though you're learning it for...deaf participants, you can transfer it over, which I think is great.

Narelle: That's a really good point, because I hadn't really thought about that, cause...I know about keyword sign and things, but the fact that, yeah, Auslan is

based in using your hands to communicate, and that gives your support workers another method, another method to communicate, isn't it? I mean, when you strike someone like me that's as blind as a bat, different again because we can just talk. But...you know, for me, I just need people to describe things. And you've got that down pat. What made you decide then to update your website? And what did you do?

Hanah: I think it was like we, like when I met you, obviously we had a discussion, and then it was also like I found, not even just from my website, but other websites that I've accessed, it's like you're going in and you're searching for stuff. Like, where's the intake? How do I sign up with this company? Then you've got to click the little tabs at the top, and it takes you, say, five minutes to find where you've gotta be. Whereas with our new website, it's straight from top to bottom. You just scroll up and down. Everything's there. You don't have to click a tab to find another tab to get to where you need to be.

Narelle: What else makes the difference for your...clients and potential clients?

Hanah: It comes easily read. Like, it's not like, like, paragraphs and paragraphs of writing. It's just like...this brief statement piece that says this is what we do, this is how we do it, and this is where we are.

Narelle: Which is what people with ASD need, isn't it?

Hanah: Yeah, like people with like intellectual ASD, any sort of like, if they've got like learning difficulties, they might, say, be like dyslexic and can't...just read lots of information. So, it just stands out. They've got key information that they need. They don't need to sort of have a whole plethora of stuff that's not relevant to them.

Narelle: And that's a big thing, isn't it? Cause...I don't think people really get that a website is just the introduction to the company.

Hanah: Yeah.

Finding Accessible Services

Narelle: You know, and that's, it's frustrating. I know for me, one of the things in doing your website was...me using screen readers, I could get around it so easily, find what I needed, keep going. But it's also that time factor...in accessing information. And as you said, you don't wanna sit and tab through everything.

Hanah: No. And especially with like, I like, on our new website, the intake process. Like, it downloads the form for them, and they...have it right there. It's not sort of like this click and tab option, where they have to drop tabs down, and then search for what they need. Everything's there in that PDF format for them.

Narelle: Yeah. What was the hardest part about...building a website that is digitally accessible? What did you find the hardest?

Hanah: I think it's finding...providers that do it. So, like prior to running into you, I didn't actually know that this was out there.

Narelle: Yep.

Hanah: Which I think is great. Like, there needs to be more...accessible providers that do this.

Narelle: And as a participant, there needs to be more NDIS providers that do it as well.

Hanah: Yeah, definitely.

Narelle: It's like what I'm working on at the moment, and trying to put this quote together. And it's sort of, but it's not right. And I sit there and think, you know, every website has to be keyboard accessible. I mean, for you, you've got a background working in the disability sector, so you've got a bit of an understanding, but do you think many people do?

Hanah: I don't think so. Like, it's sort of one of them things that's like...you just don't know about it until you're informed about it. Or it happens, like, say we've got like...a deaf participant at the moment who's trying to navigate housing, but housing aren't contacting them in a way that's...best for them, so they're leaving

them voice voicemails, or calling them, and then the participants like, I'm not answering because I can't hear you.

Narelle: Oh, my gosh.

Communication Barriers in the Community

Hanah: Yeah, it's wild.

Narelle: That is, actually, that's quite disrespectful.

Hanah: It's like they're disabling them.

Narelle: Yeah, that's a really good way of looking at it, because I'm assuming that person that's deaf...is probably very confident in most things.

Hanah: Yeah, well, they're able to sort of communicate...up until having to answer a phone. So, it's like, all housing have to do is put something in place where...here's an email, here's a text message, this is how we're gonna communicate with you. Have a little red flag in their ...profile that says this person clearly can't answer a phone.

Narelle: Where else do you run into that type of issue with...people not being able to access information? You're out there in the community, obviously. I only know for me. I don't know, like people with ASD, when you're taking them out in the community, what are the things that they're running into?

Hanah: I guess it's the barrier of them not being able to, I guess the general community, or like services out in the community not being able to...communicate effectively with them. Like, they don't understand like the awareness around like autism, or intellectual disabilities. So, we've got a few clients, they're on that behavioural side, so it's like...just having a daily conversation between a support worker and someone with an intellectual disability but then...you invite say someone from Woolies into the conversation. And then they're like, oh, why is this person screaming at me? But it's like, they're not screaming. That's just how they communicate across, because they can't control their emotions or they can't regulate. They're clearly dysregulated. But then there's no awareness

around...having spaces or...access to communication tools for them...out in the community, I guess, unless you go to...places that have that.

Narelle: I was gonna say that makes it limiting, doesn't it?

Hanah: Definitely.

Narelle: Cause it also means the person with the disability...might not wanna go out, which really isolates them.

Hanah: It does. We've got a couple who are like, I don't want to go to this shopping centre, because every time I go, they just think that I'm angry or I'm yelling. But then they're like, they'll even say to themselves, that's just how I talk. Like, I'm not screaming at you. I'm just a loud person, or...which is really like, it's excluding them. It's like why can't we just all, I guess, work together to still have them included in community?

Narelle: Yeah. Good question. Because I don't know about what you see, but I often feel...So, when I'm with my support worker, and...I'm laughing now, but at the time was, oh, I don't know how to solve this one. My guide dog actually chewed up the receipt from what I'd just bought at Kmart.

Hanah: Oh, no.

Narelle: And I'm standing there, because apparently the receipts come out the bottom...of the thing, at his height. Yep. And I'm looking, because I grabbed it, and my support worker grabbed it out of his mouth and said, oh. You're not going to believe this. Chewed up the receipt. And I'm going, oh, my God. I don't know how to deal with this one. And the person that...came over, talked to my support worker. And Sandy said, oh, look, Narelle, look, he's come over. And she included me in it. But he talked to her. And I'm thinking, okay, Sandy did put it through the, because it was one of those self-service checkouts, and she just did that bit. But I was the one paying the money. It's my responsibility...that the guide dog chewed up the receipt.

Independence Through Accessible Information

Hanah: You were on your own in the community. If you'd just gone down to Woolies to get a bottle of water, and that happened.

Narelle: Yeah.

Hanah: Are they going to not talk to you cause you're blind? Or...

Narelle: Or because you're yelling. There's 101 different reasons.

Hanah: And it happens all the time. Like, I've seen it, even with, like, we've had...incidents with like law enforcement, and participants are like quite dysregulated. And then the police are like they'll threaten to arrest them or...like, they just won't engage with them. If you're going to scream at us, and it's like, as a support worker, you step in. But then the police just don't want to bar of it or...like emergency services are just like they're...heightened and aggressive, and...It's their, that's, this is just who they are, like you need to...get to their level instead of threatening them, because you're making it worse.

Narelle: And...which is what...you've done with the website. You've made it that...they can find the information for themselves. They can be...I mean, you're talking about eventually putting blogs on, or putting events that you're going to hold on, so they can go and find the information for themselves. And...As a person with a disability, that is enabling us to be independent. We don't need someone to do it.

Hanah: Which is great. Like, we've had feedback on our last website, and it was, like, the website was good. We got good feedback as well. But there was feedback in there, They'd be like, I've had to get like my support coordinator to...get on there, or I've had to get my support worker to help me...access information, which is sort of like upsetting, at the end of the day, but I guess it's a learning curve. We started back in 2024 and now we're in 2026, and we do now have an accessible website that participants...can access independently on their own.

Narelle: Yeah. That's awesome. Hanah, what...information, what advice would you give to other providers...in...working with the clients...to ensure that they can communicate, whether it's digital, written, verbal? What would you suggest?

Hanah: Speaking to the participants, like, themselves. Like, ask them, like, where, for example, we're in the process of updating some of our...harder documentations, like, things like our service agreements, privacy and consents and stuff. Just because, like, you read through it as someone who...isn't sort of in the client's position, I read through it and I'm like, I don't want to read this. Like, I don't want to sit here for 45 minutes and...go through each individual line. And then having that discussion with the participant and saying, what do you think...would look better...when I come in 12 months with an updated service agreement? And then they'll list off sort of how, they just, they don't want to sort of have to sit there and read through...everything, they prefer it summarised. So, working with them directly, because at the end of the day, they're the ones...that need to understand what's in what they're signing.

Narelle: That's a good point. Yeah, that's a really good one, actually. And what about the participants themselves? What would you say to them?

Advice for Providers and Participants

Hanah: I think...It's like finding out...like, letting them express their preferred communication methods. So, like, while we have like tick boxes, we've actually had quite a few participants just say...none of these options work. This is what we prefer. Like, say they don't want to do email or text, or some of them want to do social media. We've got a client who messages us through Facebook Messenger, but that's just their...preferred method of contact, which...then falls into that, like, we get a lot of sort of kick back on, you shouldn't be talking to clients on Facebook, but it's...well, this is their preferred method. And we've outlined the professional boundaries of, like, obviously they can't go and...message staff on their personal profiles, but they can use like the company's profile, or things like that. They're more than welcome to like contact mine. They just can't obviously have us on Facebook as friends. But they understand that as well, which is good.

Narelle: That's something else I didn't know about you. That's awesome, because...it's a little thing to a lot of people, but, you know, to a lot of other people, it's a big thing because if they're on Facebook, and they're comfortable using it, they're going to use it.

Hanah: Yeah, exactly. And if it's a way for them to contact us, even if it's like, we've got clients that are more responsive on social media, versus if you called their phone. So, it's like if that just means that one day there's an incident, and their first point of contact is to go...to Facebook Messenger and be like, I'm in trouble. Can you help? Like, we allow that to be an open...means for communication for them.

Narelle: Yeah. Awesome. So, to sum it all up, was making a website digitally accessible hard?

Hanah: Not with you guys. Obviously, you guys took all that stress away. It was, I guess, just...realising that more needed to be done. You don't realise that until you're there, and you're like, your eyes are sort of opened up to a whole other...playing field...in the NDIS space.

Narelle: Thanks for that compliment, because we actually work hard to make it easy as well.

Wrapping Up

Hanah: You've done really good. I really appreciate it.

Narelle: We had a ball working with you. It was good fun. But, you know, we always have fun. That's part of our thing. It's better off having fun. Hanah, how can people find you...to talk to you about your experiences, the way you communicate with your clients? That's all important information that others need to...copy.

Hanah: They can reach out, obviously, via our website. They can LinkedIn with our BDM, Jack trainer, who's awesome. He's actually better at public speaking than I am. So, you know. But they can find us on LinkedIn, Facebook. We're on Instagram, TikTok, and...I think that's it.

Narelle: Thanks, Hanah.

Hanah: Wherever you go.

Narelle: Yeah. Yep. And there's also Leisha Hunter up in Logan. She's your business development manager in Logan, and she's another awesome lady. So, look, thank you, Hanah, for coming on.

Hanah: You're welcome.

Narelle: Thank you for...working with the Do Better team...to...just, yeah, look, we had fun It's just always a privilege to see...the changes that a website can make in people's lives. And that's all we want to do. Have the best of days. And if you like what we do on The Digital Access Show, please like, subscribe, review. And we will talk to you next time. Bye-bye.