

Disabled People's Association



Annual Report

2011 – 2012

Disabled People's Association

Disabled People's Association (DPA) is a non-profit organisation of people with disabilities. It was formed in 1987 and was registered as a charity with the Commission of Charities on 30th December 1996. On the 7th November 1997, DPA became an Associate Member of the National Council of Social Services (NCSS). DPA has issued tax-exempt receipts for direct donations since April 2000. Membership stands at 120 as at 31st March 2012.

Charity Registration Number:	1348
ROS Registration Number:	202/84/WEL
UEN Number:	S86SS0002F
Registered Address:	25 International Business Park #04-77 German Centre Singapore 609916
Patron:	Dr Tan Cheng Bock
Banker:	DBS Maybank Hong Leong
Auditor:	Verity Partners Pte Ltd Certified Public Accountants
Website:	www.dpa.org.sg
Affiliation:	Disabled Peoples' International
Associate Member:	National Council of Social Services

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President's Review

This past year has been about renewal and re-strategizing. After the last Annual General Meeting (AGM), I took over as President and some new office bearers came on board and there were also changes within the DPA staff. We have strived to build on what was achieved previously and continue to steer this organisation towards our common goal, which is a Singapore that is truly inclusive and accessible.

This past year has seen DPA continuing to ask itself questions about how to strengthen its role as the voice of persons with disabilities and how to reach out to and engage more with stakeholders. With this in mind, DPA consulted with local disability organisations, persons with disabilities and other interested parties about the Singapore government's intention to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by 2012. Signing the CRPD is an important milestone as it announces Singapore's intention to the international and national community that it will implement the articles of the Convention at the national policy level. Together with MARUAH (the Singapore focal point for the Working Group for an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism), DPA prepared a position paper based on the findings of this consultation that it later shared with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS). DPA is committed to working with persons with disabilities, disability organisations and the relevant Government agencies to advance the integration of those with disabilities into a more inclusive and barrier-free society and implementing that Convention is an important step towards that goal.

DPA has taken part in and hosted a number of roundtable meetings and focus groups on issues that have been discussed in the national newspapers such as the car labels for the disabled parking lots and the accessibility of public spaces. DPA was also invited to and attended international and local conferences on disability issues. As advocates for persons with disabilities in Singapore, it is important that the DPA shares knowledge with and learns from the best practices of disability organisations in other countries as well.

DPA has also become more visible in the press, writing letters to and being interviewed by national newspapers such as The Straits Times, TODAY and the New Paper. Having more of a media presence benefits DPA's advocacy work not only in that it allows DPA message to reach a larger audience, but it also helps establish DPA as an organisation that is able to engage with the policy makers and be the voice of persons with disabilities in Singapore.

Going forward, DPA will not let up on its quest to educate the public on all things associated with disability. We will continue to look to improve our advocacy work process. And on that note, I invite you to let us have your feedback and input on issues you may face as a person with disabilities so that we may continue to advocate and speak for you.

I am pleased to be able to inform you that we will be moving to a new office premises located in Jurong Point sometime in the 4th quarter of 2012. The new premises will not only be more

accessible in terms of location, but also in its design so that more people with or without disabilities can drop by and share their views. The new office will have an area where DPA members are invited to come in and browse our library for the latest in disability developments, surf the Internet or have a cup coffee or tea free of charge. The new premises will also place us in close proximity to other disability organisations enabling DPA to strengthen existing relationships and establish new ties with these stakeholders.

These are exciting times for - DPA and I hope that all of you will not only feel the benefits that come with these changes, but also be inspired to become more involved with DPA's initiatives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mr Nicholas Aw
DPA President

DPA's Profile

Our Mission

To be the voice of the people with disabilities, helping them achieve full participation and equal status in the society through independent living.

“Vox Nostra” – A Voice of Our Own

Our Objectives

1. To encourage and enhance self-help and independent living among people with disabilities in the community.
2. To facilitate, encourage and further advance the full participation and the equality of disabled people in the community so as to enable them to enjoy the living conditions and improvements in the standard of living resulting from social and economic developments.
3. To do such other things that are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects as the General Meeting of Members of the Board of Management may from time to time decide, DPA shall:-
 - a) Work towards removing all architectural and attitudinal barriers and those barriers that would hinder the full participation of disabled people in the educational, vocational, economic, social, cultural, sports and recreational life by making the necessary recommendations to the relevant authorities or organisations, by taking action to facilitate the full participation of all disabled people, including those who are home-bound in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes, and services for their needs, and to monitor, evaluate and review such services; to also provide communication links with all disabled people and to make accessible information about disability, its treatment, correction and prevention;
 - b) Ensure that the benefits of reform and development programmes in every field, nationally and internationally, also reach disabled citizens;
 - c) Promote or organise and/or to initiate the provision of cultural, educational/vocational, sports and recreational facilities, where none exist as well as social benevolent and other activities for the benefit and welfare of the disabled people;

- d) Affiliate with and to further the work or purpose of any national or international organisation having as its objects the promotion of the interest, welfare and rights of disabled people through social justice;
- e) Work closely and to provide consultative services on matters relating to disabled people to Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations engaged in the field of services to disabled people; promote or undertake research in any aspect of prevention, rehabilitation and equalisation of opportunities; organise training courses not for profit or commercial reasons for disabled and non-disabled people concerned with programmes for disabled people; organise conferences, seminars, study groups of workshops on subjects relevant to disabled people;
- f) With the approval of the relevant authorities, run business with a social mission to create work activities for people with disabilities and to assist them in achieving financial independence.

Management and Governance Policies

DPA fully subscribes to and complies with the regulations of the Charities Act. We have established procedures and guidelines in accordance with the requirements of the Act, and update or review these as required. No new policies were adopted in this financial year.

Management and Staff

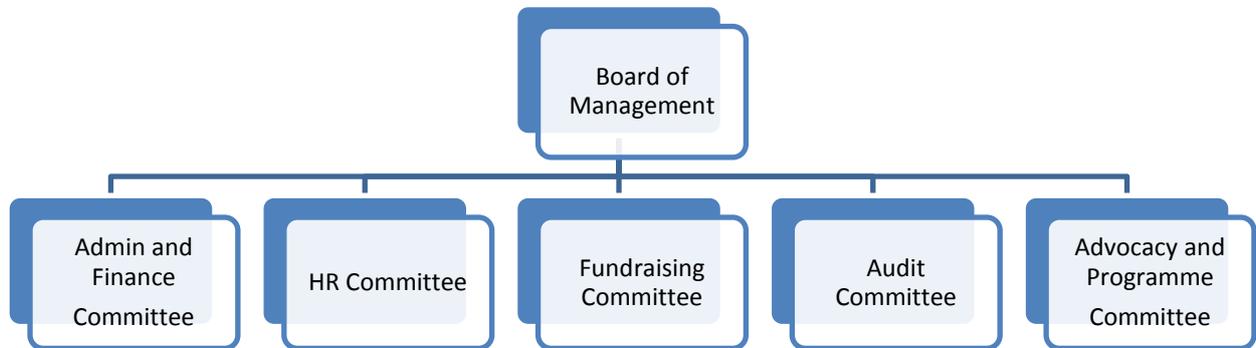
Board of Management for 2010/2011

President:	Mr Nicholas Aw
Vice President:	Ms Judy Anne Wee
Honorary Secretary:	Mrs Chang Siew Ngoh
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr Chia Lee Kiat (resigned on 20 th March 2012) Dr J-L.W Mitchell Van der Zahn (Co-opted 20 th March 2012)
Assistant Honorary Treasurer	Ms Sherena Loh
Members:	Mr Leo Chen Ian Mr Ng Choon Hwee Mr Paul Yuen Kai Seng Mr Arsalan Ali Mr Robert Chew Mun Kai

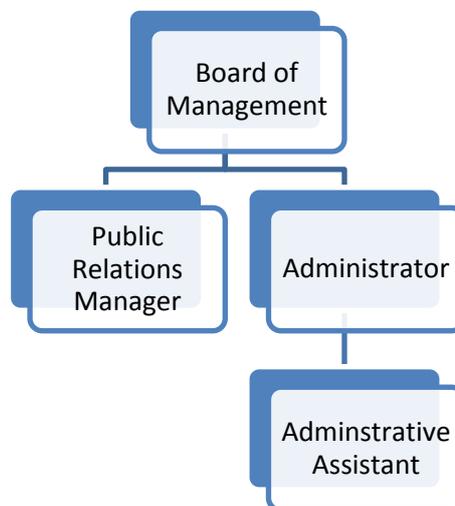
Staff

Public Relations Manager:	Dr Marissa Lee Medjeral
Administrator:	Ms Anusiah a/p Tharmalingam
Administrative Assistant:	Ms Halipa Ahmad

Board and Committee Organisational Chart



Staff Organisational Chart



Honorary Secretary's Report

Membership of DPA as at 31/03/2012

	2012	Arrears	Paid up	Life member
Institutional Membership	5	-	5	-
Associate Membership	10	4	6	3
Sub Total of Associate/Institution	15	4	11	3
<u>Individual/Type of Disability</u>				
Hearing	21	6	15	14
Physical	55	20	35	22
Vision	24	13	11	7
Others	5	4	1	1
Sub Total of Individual Members	105	43	62	44
Total	120	47	73	47

Administration matters

Ms Julia Hawkins, DPA's Executive Director, left DPA on the 19th August 2011.

Ms Naveena Srividhya, DPA's IT Executive, left DPA on the 29th September 2011.

Ms Halipa Ahmad joined DPA as an Administrative Assistant on 1st November 2011.

Dr Marissa Medjeral joined DPA as the Public Relations Manager on 3rd January 2012.

AGM 2011 Elections

At the previous DPA's AGM, held on the 22nd September 2011, there was an election for the DPA office bearers. The results were as follows:

President: Mr Nicholas Aw

Vice President: Ms Judy Anne Wee

Honorary Secretary: Mrs Chang Siew Ngoh

Hon Treasurer: Mr Chia Lee Kiat

Assistant Honorary Treasurer: Ms Sherena Loh



DPA members who attended the DPA's AGM 2011



*DPA Board of Management members (from left to right)
Mrs Chang, Ms Judy Wee, Mr Leo Chen and Ms Loh.*

Advocacy and Events

Roundtable Discussions (RTD)

CRPD Consultation 18th February 2012 and Position Paper

On the 18th February 2012 a public consultation on the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) was jointly organised by local human rights organisation MARUAH and DPA) at OnePeople.sg. Globally, there are a total of seven international treaties for states to ratify and at this point in time Singapore has ratified two – the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Committee on the Elimination of all Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Given



that Singapore has indicated that it will ratify the CRPD in 2012, this public consultation was a chance for those with disabilities and those without disabilities to come together to look at the Articles of the CRPD. The consultation focused on determining to what extent Singapore's current disability policies comply with the Convention and identifying areas where there is yet more work to be done in order to do so.

Mr Ron Chandran-Dudley, Ex-DPA President, and Mr Nicholas Aw, DPA President, discussing the CRPD

At the consultation, a draft of a position paper on the CRPD in the Singapore context was presented to all attendees for feedback. That feedback was recorded and incorporated into a final position paper that was later sent to the relevant stakeholders and Government agencies.

Roundtable Discussion (RTD) on Car Park Labels for Persons with Disabilities

DPA took part in a series of RTD hosted by the Centre for Enabled Living (CEL) along with representatives from the Handicap Welfare Association (HWA), the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDAS), and the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD) as well as some disabled parking label holders. The first RTD held at CEL on the 14th February 2012 was concerned with how to improve the scheme overall and ways in which to better enforce the proper use of the label. This RTD was followed up by another discussion on the 12th March 2012 and was mainly concerned with the recent newspaper articles concerning the misuse or misunderstanding of Class 2 car park labels for persons with disabilities.

Many interesting points were debated and it was suggested that a public education campaign to encourage the public to become more vigilant about spotting and reporting the abuse of parking lots for persons with disabilities should be spearheaded by the CEL and supported by other disability groups in Singapore.

DPA followed up on these RTD by writing to The Straits Times Forum page stating that “No scheme will ever be perfect. What may work for one may be a source of grief to another. The review encapsulates the best possible compromise of views. This scheme will always be a work in progress, and that there will always be room for improvement. The review arose as a result of abuse of the current disabled parking scheme by those who either use disabled parking spaces when they do not have the appropriate labels, or by class 2 label holders using the parking spaces even when they are not ferrying disabled people. Thus, to leave such issues to the culprits’ “social conscience” is inappropriate. The public should exercise social responsibility by reporting abuses of the disabled parking system to car park operators and the Centre for Enabled Living. It is only by doing so that the culprits might realise that their actions are wrong. Disabled parking spaces are not a privilege, but a necessity for people with disabilities.” (The Straits Times, 15th June 2012)

UNESCAP and Leonard Cheshire Disability ‘Disability-inclusive MDGs and Aid Effectiveness’ Conference 14th-16th March 2012

The Conference on Disability-Inclusive Millennium Development Goals and aid effectiveness was jointly hosted by Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and took place at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand 14th - 16th March 2012. The Conference was attended by Mr Nicholas Aw, President of DPA and Dr Marissa Medjeral, Public Relations Managers of DPA.

Mr Nicholas Aw at the UNESCAP conference held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand



The feedback gathered at the workshops and during the panel discussions at this conference will feed into a new Asia-Pacific regional strategy to support a new decade to promote the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD), 2013-2022. The Asia-Pacific is moving towards a new decade to 'Make the Right Real' for PWD. UNESCAP is supporting member states in the preparation of a document to be considered by the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 29th October - 2nd November 2012). Its adoption will give Asia-Pacific MDG-style goals, targets and indicators for expediting the inclusion of PWD in the development process.



At the conference it was agreed that the implementation of CRPD was the way in which PWD would be enabled to better their economic circumstances and thus be empowered to lead more independent and dignified life. With the CRPD articles providing a standard by which to determine

whether national laws and policies respect the rights of PWD, PWD will be in a better position to find employment, or better employment and provide for themselves and their dependents. However, much depends on how the Convention is interpreted, implemented and whether PWD are involved in the process.

Going forward, what DPA can work on is not only focusing on preparing for possible reservation to some articles of the CRPD, but also coordinating and galvanizing other disability groups to monitor and record statistics about PWD experiences of the Government's implementation of the CRPD. Such information gathered from disability organisations and its members could be collated by the DPA so it can work with MARUAH to provide parallel reports to submit alongside Singapore's progress reports to the United Nations once it has ratified the Convention.

Media Appearances



On the 14th of December 2011, Mr Gilbert Tan, a DPA member, participated in a panel discussion on Blog TV about the difficulties faced by people with disabilities together with representatives from Singapore Association for the Visually Handicapped (SAVH) and with the Singapore Association for the Deaf (SADeaf). They related the problems that persons with disabilities continue to face despite the Government's effort to help them and tried to address the misconceptions held about them. They also discussed how some of the wrong perceptions people have of the disabled can be dealt with.

Mr Gilbert Tan (Far Right) at the Blog TV discussion

Letters to and Interviews by the Press

Over the past year, DPA had both letters published in and been interviewed for articles in the local newspapers, mainly, The Straits Times, the New Paper and TODAY.

At times, DPA's letters were a response to disability issues being discussed in the press and at other times DPA wrote to newspaper forums to raise issues that were not currently being addressed in the media, but warranted discussion. The most recent letter published in the TODAY newspaper on the 21st March 2012 was about how using the right disability terminology can not only change public attitudes to disability, but also be empowering to the person with disabilities.

The topics of the interviews by the press covered a wide range of issues that affect people with disabilities, including accessibility in schools, buildings and public transport ('Narrowing the gap/ Despite progress, wheelchair users still face difficulties with public transport', TODAY, 21st November 2011; 'Barrier-Free Access?', TODAY, 26th December 2011 and 'New buildings that are user-friendly for all', The Straits Times, 30th March 2012,) and discrimination in the workplace and employment

for people with disabilities ('Fighting stereotypes to get a job', The New Paper, 4th January 2012 and 'Hire disabled workers and get pay-out', The Straits Times, 18th February 2012).

Accessibility Code Working Committee

Ms Judy Wee, DPA Vice-President, is representing DPA in an on-going committee set up by the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) to review the Code on Accessibility in the Built Environment 2007.

The DPA hosted a consultation with people who are wheelchair users or have other mobility issues on the 25th August 2011 at OnePeople.sg. The DPA intends to hold two further meetings to gather feedback about accessibility in the built environment with SAVH and with SADeaf.

Workshops and Presentations on Disability Awareness

ipropery.com Singapore Talk

On the 22nd July 2011, Mr Paul Yuen Kai Seng, DPA board member, was a guest speaker at iproperty.com Singapore. His talk was given to over 600 employees of iproperty.com and addressed how he learnt to cope with and overcame the obstacles his disability presented and ultimately became successful. The talk comprised of 3 main points (BBC): B-strong Belief system, B-Boldness in our beliefs and C-seek Counsel to improve. After the talk iproperty.com donated \$300 to the DPA.

DPA Members' Training

On the 1st March 2012, Mr Paul Yuen Kai Seng gave another motivation talk to DPA members on his BBC system. The talk was free for DPA members to attend and was preceded by dinner in order to build and strengthen ties within the DPA community

Mr Paul Yuen (Far Left) addressing DPA members



Mr Paul Yuen (Far Right) enjoying refreshments with DPA members

St. Francis Methodist School

On the 30th March 2012, Mr Paul Yuen Kai Seng gave a talk to the students of St. Francis Methodist School about DPA and disability issues. Mr Yuen educated the students about how to offer to help a person with a disability and gave examples of how not to do this. This talk resulted in the students and staff at the school donating \$3,689.10 to DPA.



Collaboration with Ngee Ann Polytechnic on 'Idea Blueprint'

From the end of 2011 to early 2012 DPA worked with Ngee Ann Polytechnic students on a module called 'Idea Blueprint' in which students pitched innovative solutions to industry partners for problems that the students identify and research solutions for.

Most of the students who worked with DPA tackled the problems that persons with disabilities face when using public transport in Singapore or when visiting public attractions. The ideas that students came up with ranged from iPhone apps that show persons with disabilities the accessible routes around public attractions to proposing a reward system and public education campaign for people who give their priority seat up for a person who needs it more on the MRT trains. The students presented their ideas to the DPA for feedback and in the process the students gained a better sense of what issues persons with disabilities face in getting around Singapore.

Fundraising

Flag Day October 2011



Flag Day this year was held on the 8th October 2011 with the help of 70 volunteers who turned up and collected donations at 3 collection centres across Singapore. Preparations for the Flag Day started 2 months before the actual event. DPA recruited volunteers from secondary schools, junior colleges and tertiary institutions.

A volunteer and Mr Nicholas Aw (middle) helping to count the Flag Day monies at DPA's office.



DPA volunteers, staff and board members then went back to the DPA premises for the counting of monies collected for the Flag Day 2011. The collection for DPA's Flag Day 2011 was \$7700 and when added to the donations in support of Flag Day, the total collected sum was \$16,500.

Mr Leo Chen, Ex-DPA President, and Ms Anusiah, DPA's Administrator, counting Flag DAY monies at DPA's office.

IT Programme and Projects

PC Refurbishing Project

The PC refurbishment programme aims to empower people with disabilities to be equipped with basic IT skills and use computers to access the wider world of knowledge through the Internet. DPA accepts donations of used PCs, refurbishes them and sells them at a low cost to members, people with disabilities and families from low-income backgrounds. DPA is a Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher and Microsoft has allowed DPA to widen its PC Refurbishment scheme to sell PCs to the general public.

DPA would like to thank its team of volunteers who assisted with the PC Refurbishment programme, especially Mr Logaraj Raju, and to those companies and organisations who donated PCs over the past year.

In addition to refurbishing PCs that have been donated to DPA for people with disabilities, DPA has also worked with Care Channels International this year to refurbish 76 PCs and send them to different schools in Philippines, Indonesia and Bangladesh. Care Channels International pays the DPA to refurbish PCs that they have collected through their own donation efforts and sends them to schools where students are normally unable to have access to computers.



IT Workshops

DPA's IT Executive, Ms Naveena Srividhya, conducted IT training for DPA members on the 13th July 2011 from 3.00 to 5.00 pm at the DPA premises. The workshop was on the subject of 'How to create and manage email accounts' and was free for DPA members to attend.

Future Plans and Projects for the DPA

Over the next year the DPA plans to continue re-evaluating its programmes, operations, web site and office location.

Although the DPA has a long history of effective advocacy work, staff turnover and changes to the accessibility of the DPA office building have hindered, rather than helped, how well the DPA is able to reach out to and engage with its members and other persons with disabilities in Singapore. The DPA intends to rectify this by looking at all aspects of the organisation and seeing how best to improve, starting with the website and the office as those are the two areas of the DPA that public interact with the most. The DPA intends to modernise, simplify and update its website to be more accessible and attractive to both persons with disabilities and those without disabilities but are interested to learn about it without compromising its role as an important disability information resource.

The DPA will be moving to a location in Jurong Point that is more easily accessible in terms of transport links as well as in disability-friendly design. The new location will also come with the added benefit of situating the DPA in close proximity to other disability organisations where it can connect with those organisations and strengthen existing relationships. With a location that is easy to get to DPA hopes that more members and other persons with disabilities will drop into the office to engage with the staff.

The DPA also intends to hold more events, training programmes and roundtable discussions to build on the momentum of the recently announced MCYS Enabling Masterplan 2012-2016 and the Singapore government's intention to sign the CRPD later in 2012.

Acknowledgements

DPA would like to give our sincerest thanks to our donors, supporters and collaborators. Your support has enabled DPA to continue our mission to be the voice of persons with disabilities. Those who we would like to give a special mention to are:

- Building & Construction Authority
- Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
- National Council of Social Services
- Far East Organization
- Keppel Corporation
- Lee Foundation
- Hong Leong Foundation
- Tote Board
- Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple
- Lee Kim Tah Foundation

Our sincerest thanks also go to those who have given us donations, our volunteers and our members because your support is invaluable to our cause and we greatly appreciate it.