

# PRACTICE NOTES

## Centre for Disability Employment Research & Practice

### Updating 2019

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We have now posted a link to the 2019 Retreat Information and registration pages on our website. The good news is that we're about 1/3rd booked without any real advertising, so we expect to be turning down or wait listing registrations from about August at this rate, if not sooner.

Use this link to the Retreat page.

<http://www.cderp.com.au/retreat.html>

Alternatively, just head to our shop page and simply register

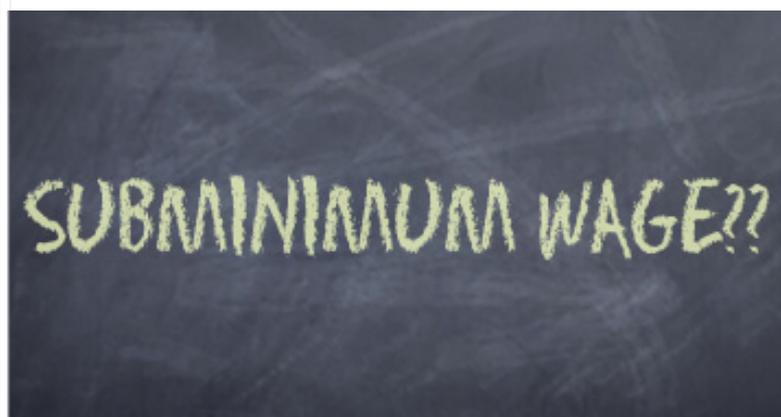
### Peer Reviewed Outcomes

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Consistent with our mission to build the evidence base for disability employment and change practice through education and support, along with providers, we've just had another paper published.

You'll find on our publications page titled Transitioning ADE's to Open Employment.

Two more papers have been submitted, so we'll update you when we get a response on them.



## The push to eliminate sub minimum wages

There is no doubt that this is a topical subject and one that is receiving significant debate in the USA at the moment. The US Department of Labor is currently collecting comments on the use of 14(c) exemptions that allow businesses to pay sub-minimum wages in the USA.

We're yet to fully have that debate in this country, despite the Nojin ruling from a few years ago. It is coming, but I believe that a better journey for us is to progressively invest and develop those organisations (primarily ADE's and social enterprises) that pay sub-minimum wages into viable businesses that afford real training and career pathways for people with a disability.

It's not case of if it will happen, but when. You may think that it's way off, but I'm of the view that the NDIS will drive educational and the expectations of parents and participants. This will force providers of services and supports to new clients to deliver something better. Older, existing clients may be a little more relaxed about it but remember, the client has the money and by default the control.



## Our Own Discovery

At the end of June, Pete Smith will be basing himself in the USA for two months. It's impact on our work is minimal as we use a lot of technology to work together and stay abreast of what we do.

Peter will be based at the ILR School, Cornell University NY working on our new disability employment outcome measure. This is a measure that we have talked about for a few years, and now the timing and opportunity is upon us. The ILR School is one of the foremost institutions on the planet in our field and will provide a boost to not only to the development of the measure, but CDERP's work and expertise in general.

With June Alexander completing her PhD, we're having an exciting time. We'll be bringing all these new learnings to our Retreat this year, so it will be a big one again with a few surprise announcements as well.



The question that you need to answer is whether doing the same will help you or simply lead to a slow death. I am of the view that owning your space and doing it well with diverse offerings - that you specialise in - is a path forward. You don't have to be all things to everyone, but you do have to invest in your future and that will include a business model that will eventually support full award wages for clients that choose a career pathway over a service that looks like work, but is really part of their chosen social pathway.

The active word here is "chosen" - client choice exercised with education and support. There's bigger discussion to be had here, but that one will require coffee and a few hours.

### *Cash Flow is King!*

That might seem obvious, but for many providers this is problematic and we are seeing a number of providers burn through their reserves to keep going without any appreciation for where their business is going and should be investing. Doing what you've always done and offering the same services that everyone else is offering seems like a recipe for retirement or as I expect a big bang failure, which I believe we'll see a number of explosions over the next twelve months.

Last year I wrote about the folly of the Dinosaurs, providers eating smaller providers in the name of growth. Might be time to rethink your diet if that's your strategy.

### *Evolving Employment*

We're hopeful that our advices, meetings and discussions with the NDIA will yield fruit over the coming months that will see the employment supports evolve and offer real employment and career pathways within the NDIS framework. Time get past the DES / NDIS conundrum and realise that clients don't care about internal politics and demarcation nonsense. Employment is a continuum, and one where the client should be able to choose their supports and pathways based on who can best meet their needs.

Benchmark hours, work capacity assessment etc really belong in the era of institutions, not an enlightened society that supports choice and control. We're working to replace these relics with up to date measures and tools that support meaningful employment, advanced practice and research that is relatable and answers real world practice questions, not theoretical navel gazing for the sake of its own self.