

*Rising to life's challenges*

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
**2020-2021**

COMMUNITY  
LIVING  
AUSTRALIA

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We work alongside clients to build resilience, wellbeing, relationships and natural support.

*Together We Achieve.*



We have fun



We care for each other



We believe in independence



We practice social inclusiveness



We see everyone as an individual



**We support people to achieve personal goals**



**We offer access to multiple services**



**We deliver services in regional locations**



**We have dedicated qualified staff**



**Together we achieve**

# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

In 2020-21, Community Living Australia has continued to rise to life's challenges as an organisation, with the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Royal Commission, and the NDIS environment requiring us to continuously review and adjust our systems and processes to ensure we remain compliant and well-positioned to deliver quality services to our clients.

I am always inspired by the ways in which our clients can rise to life's challenges despite the systemic barriers they face in engaging with their communities and participating meaningfully within them. With Community Living Australia's support, we have seen our clients gain a level of independence and control over their lives they may never have thought possible before, with our client case studies demonstrating the value our services create in people's lives. We are so proud to see our clients exercising choice and control over their lives, and look forward to seeing how they can continue to grow their skills and capacity.

Throughout the year, COVID-19 had an ongoing impact on our ability to deliver some services, but we have been able to work through it together as a team, with our focus remaining on safeguarding the health of our clients, employees, and communities as the utmost priority.



Community Living Australia continues to support the Royal Commission by actively engaging with the process, providing submissions and feedback that will help to make the disability support sector stronger and safer for people with disability as we move forward.

To our staff, thank you for your commitment to continuing to provide quality services during what has been a very challenging and unsettling period — you have personified our organisational values in every way.

I would like to thank Chief Executive Mark Kulinski, the Executive team, the Management team, and Community Living Australia's frontline staff for their continuing dedication to working in partnership with our clients to help create opportunities with them to rise to life's challenges.

Thank you to our clients and families for your continued trust in us. You are our purpose for being, and we remain committed to creating opportunities that provide you with choice and control.

To my fellow Board and Committee members, thank you for your dedication in ensuring Community Living Australia operates with integrity as a trusted partner to clients, their families, and the communities we serve.

I want to particularly thank John Greenslade, Roslyn McGowan and Rex Keily AM, JP, who are all retiring from the Board, for their commitment and service to the organisation for many years and we wish them all the best for their future endeavors. Thank you also to our Patron, His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South Australia and our Ambassador, Jo Hill.

To our partners, stakeholders, and our local communities — thank you for partnering with us to create opportunities for our clients to rise to life's challenges and achieve goals.

As I reflect on what has been another testing, yet great year for Community Living Australia, I remain confident that our organisational focus on continuous improvement positions us well for a bright future as a high-quality, local service provider in the regional communities we serve. By being an employer of choice and attracting great people, actively working to strengthen and support the broader disability services sector and increasing the opportunities provided for people with disability within our communities, we can help them to rise to life's challenges and achieve their goals.

Your faithfully,

**Bill Rowe**  
Chairperson



“When we create meaningful opportunities, people are empowered to exercise greater choice and control in their lives.”

*Bill Rowe, Chairperson*



# Case Study

## Shoot 'n Hoops

A group of clients from Murray Bridge and the Hills posing for a photo at the Come and Try Basketball Clinic run by our Ambassador Jo Hill.

Rising to life's challenges requires you to be resilient, motivated, committed, determined and able to work with others and ask for help when you need it — all things that team sport teaches, develops and provides.

In 2020-21, our amazing Ambassador Jo Hill, an Olympic Silver Medallist, WNBL All-Star and SANFLW leading goalkicker, graciously offered to help us develop and run a basketball clinic for our clients and people with disability living in the Murraylands and Adelaide Hills regions.

Over 40 people with disability took part and had an absolute ball (pun intended!), improving on their existing skills and learning new ones.

The program provided an invaluable opportunity for our clients and people with disability to meet and connect with people from other regions outside of their usual friendship groups, to develop new social connections, engage in new experiences, and further develop their self-confidence.

Shoot n' Hoops demonstrates Community Living Australia's commitment to providing new experiences and opportunities for our clients, as well as our collaborative approach to working with key people and organisations in our local communities to create them.

We want our clients to be learning to take shots both on and off the basketball court and to set goals they can work towards. In working together as a 'team' with our clients, we are sure we can hit some three-pointers and slam dunk some of these goals!

We thank Jo for the time and effort she put into the program, and for her continued support of our organisation — we can't wait for next time!

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2020-21 has been a year that has required Community Living Australia to rise to multiple challenges as an organisation, from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to the Disability Royal Commission and continuing to work closely with clients and their families to help them navigate ongoing changes to the NDIS.

Our organisational vision, 'Together We Achieve' has certainly been realised over the past 12 months, with all employees and departments of the organisation working closely together to keep us in the best position to be able to support our clients to rise and overcome life's challenges and meet their goals. I am always so inspired and proud to see our clients take control of their lives and make choices for themselves, and we have seen many instances of this during the year, as our Case Studies throughout this report show.

COVID-19 brought several challenges and changes to our services in 2020-21, but maintaining the safety of clients, employees and our communities remained our utmost priority. While these changes may have been an inconvenience, our response has been driven by a determined focus on maintaining everyone's health and safety. Even though we had to postpone some non-essential services, we were able to remain responsive to our clients and maintain all essential services in line with Government advice to ensure those who needed services received them in a safe manner. I would like to thank our staff for rising to the challenge and continuing to provide quality services throughout the year.

At Community Living Australia, we see our employees as people first. Throughout this difficult year, we have supported our employees through the challenges of COVID-19, providing financial aid to those who were ineligible for Government initiatives. This was done with the understanding that if we support our employees they will be in a better position to support our clients to achieve their goals and to be in a position to navigate difficult financial times during lockdowns.

Our Client Services team have been hard at work on a range of initiatives to help our clients engage meaningfully with their communities, from the 'PEER2PEER' program launch in Southern Metro, to the launch of a new Client Consultative Committee (CCC) and a 'Come and Try' event run by our Ambassador Jo Hill, where clients from the Adelaide Hills and Murraylands came together to learn new basketball skills, build new relationships and improve their community connections.

During 2020-21, the Business Services team completed the consolidation of our Strathalbyn, Mount Barker and Totness offices into one new location at Victoria Crescent, Mount Barker. Our office-based employees are now all located in one building together, creating opportunities for greater collaboration, flexibility and efficiency. In Renmark, the team also completed the fit-out of a new Day Options and centrally located office site at the Geokontra Mall, which provides better community access for clients and increases the visibility and integration of our services within the local community.

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT CONTINUED

The People and Culture team conducted an internal Culture Project in 2020-21, which aims to create and maintain an organisational culture that supports and empowers our employees while also ensuring we remain a provider of choice in the provision of high-quality client services. I attended all Culture Workshops, and it was my great pleasure to meet with our employees to hear about what is working and not working well in our organisation. There were some excellent suggestions for how we can improve what we do, and I was inspired by the passion of our staff and the great work they do.

Our client support ethos is to provide personalised services that are evidence-based, value-for-money and match with the needs and aspirations of our clients, creating genuine opportunities for people to live their best life. This ethos is backed by a high-quality safeguarding framework, skilled, empowered employees, and a commitment to encouraging an agile, collaborative approach that places the health and wellbeing of our clients at the centre of everything we do.

I would like to thank all employees, including our volunteers, for the passion and commitment they continue to bring to the valuable work they do. Community Living Australia will continue to support you to deliver outstanding services that create opportunities for our clients to rise to life's challenges and achieve their goals.

Community Living Australia is committed to remaining an industry leader in service delivery, and in informing our clients and the community about the NDIS and the needs and challenges of the disability sector. We are continuing to support our clients and their families to help them maximise the benefits of the NDIS and are providing additional supports to help people who are struggling to navigate the system.

In 2020-21, we continued to encourage our local communities to become more inclusive of people with disability through the expansion of existing partnerships, as well as the development of new initiatives. We are always seeking innovative ways to work with our local communities to make real and lasting positive change and will continue to advocate for an inclusive approach to community participation for people with disability.

Community Living Australia has continued to place its support behind the Disability Royal Commission, as it will help to ensure improved safety for people with disability moving forward and may also help some people to have their voices heard and find justice and/or closure. While there are still negative stories in the media about the sector, we are committed to providing high quality, safe services to our clients. While there is always some level of risk, we have and always will do everything in our power to ensure the safety of clients and staff.

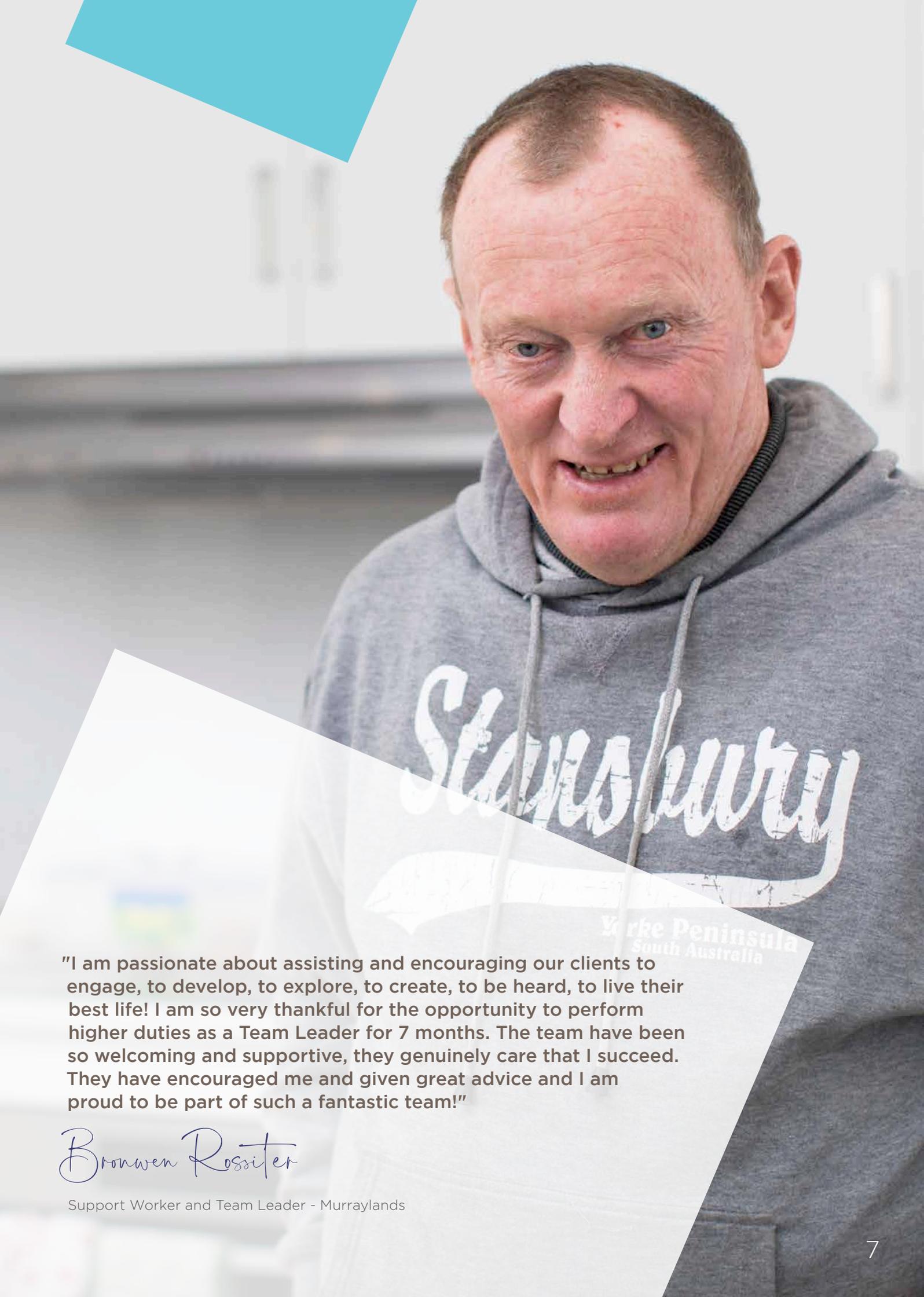
To our clients and families, our commitment to providing services that meet your needs and to help our clients to rise to life's challenges and achieve their goals remains our priority - thank you for continuing to support and place your trust in us.

Despite the ongoing impact on our business from COVID-19 in 2020-21, Community Living Australia is well placed and has long-term financial stability which enables us to continue to deliver individualised services that create opportunities for our clients to rise to life's challenges well into the future.

Take care and stay safe,

**Mark Kulinski**  
Chief Executive





"I am passionate about assisting and encouraging our clients to engage, to develop, to explore, to create, to be heard, to live their best life! I am so very thankful for the opportunity to perform higher duties as a Team Leader for 7 months. The team have been so welcoming and supportive, they genuinely care that I succeed. They have encouraged me and given great advice and I am proud to be part of such a fantastic team!"

*Bronwen Rossiter*

Support Worker and Team Leader - Murraylands

# THE PANDEMIC IN REVIEW

2020-21 was an extremely challenging year for everyone due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Community Living Australia was not immune to the challenges presented by this unprecedented event.

However, rising to life's challenges sometimes involves looking at them through a different lens and developing strategies to overcome them successfully, which is the approach we have taken to continue to be able to provide quality services while keeping our clients, carers, staff, and communities as safe as possible.

To achieve this, we have continued to operate in line with our COVIDSafe strategies, including physical distancing wherever possible, mask-wearing when required, good hand hygiene and adhering to contact tracing requirements. We have also supported in the hosting of vaccination clinics at office sites in some of our regions to make the vaccine more easily available to our clients, their families and our employees. We have followed and proactively responded to changes in restrictions as they have evolved and have kept all stakeholders up to date with the changes and what effects they would have.

## COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM

**Community Living Australia's COVID-19 Response Team was activated at the beginning of the pandemic and has been maintained in 2020-21 to ensure we are kept up to date with any changes to our operational and/or legislation requirements, that we make the correct response when implementing changes across venues, and that stakeholders are communicated with in a timely and effective way regarding the changes.**

The team have also ensured we have sufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and training to respond and deal with the pandemic, focusing on keeping everyone as safe as possible through workplace training in the correct usage of PPE, Infectious Disease Control and COVID-safe practices.

## COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AND LOCKDOWN RESPONSES

**Throughout 2020-21, major restrictions and lockdowns intermittently impacted our operational capability.**

When these challenges impacted our Support Workers, the following strategies were implemented:

- Permanent Support Workers whose hours were reduced or who were only able to work with one client were 'topped up' to their usual contracted hours during lockdowns
- Casual Support Workers who had shifts cancelled due to lockdowns had their regular hours honoured at the ordinary pay rate
- Office-based employees were supported and encouraged to work from home when required.

**"I love having Ethan as my 1:1 support on a Friday to attend the lift up voices music program. Ethan not only supports me but also gets involved in each session. Friday's are the highlight of my week."**

*Jared Williams*

Client - Adelaide Hills

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Throughout 2020-21, the availability of the EAP was promoted internally and made available to all employees.

This service provides free confidential counselling to our employees and was an important program for supporting them throughout a very stressful period.

This support was evidenced in the results of our recent culture survey, with 80% of our employees responding that they felt well-supported and informed by Community Living Australia regarding the challenges, changes and impacts of COVID-19.

Chief Executive Mark Kulinski also released frequent vlogs (video blogs) to help keep employees informed on COVID-19 workplace changes and conducted random, personal phone calls to check-in and gauge the wellbeing of employees and to gain feedback on the impacts of organisational changes.

## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

**Over 200 clients, their family members and employees were supported to receive the vaccine in 2020-21.**

This was achieved by supporting clients who wanted vaccinations to attend medical vaccination appointments, assisting Aspen Medical to attend accommodation sites to administer vaccines to clients who wanted it, and assisting Aspen Medical to run vaccination clinics at our office sites in Mount Barker, Murray Bridge, Renmark and Mount Gambier to make the vaccine more readily available to those who wanted it.

## CORE TEAMS

**Very early in the pandemic a 'Core Teams' strategy was developed to limit the number of contact-points clients were exposed to, this was then implemented by the Client Services and Scheduling teams.**

The strategy was designed to assemble a 'Core Team' of Support Workers to work with a specific individual to limit cross-contact between employees and clients and minimise the potential spread of COVID-19 in an outbreak. We have seen some positive outcomes from this strategy, with smaller designated teams increasing the quality of supports provided to clients due to increased familiarity and the focused development of support worker's skills in line with specific clients needs. We have also seen this strategy create more tightly knit teams, resulting in individuals taking more personal accountability and responsibility for the services they provide, and working more closely on service solutions and improvements.

There were also some challenges with this strategy. Some employees expressed their concerns over the increased risk of burnout when working in more complicated and involved services and expressed that they missed the variety of work and services they could conduct when working across multiple sites and services.

With some minor tweaks, this strategy has been maintained throughout 2020-21 to ensure its continued performance and suitability to client and employee needs in line with South Australian Government and SA Health advice.

The Core Team strategy is under consistent review to ensure it continues to remain fit for purpose and effective in ensuring we can continue to provide quality and safe services while supporting and looking after the health of our workforce.

## 2021-22 KEY FOCUSES

**In the coming year as the pandemic continues its impact, Community Living Australia will focus on:**

- Maintaining the safety of all clients, carers, employees, and our communities as our highest priority
- Continuing to follow and meet the guidelines and restrictions implemented by the South Australian Government and SA Health
- Conducting ongoing, regular reviews of the implemented COVID-19 changes and processes to ensure continuous improvement with minimal disruptions to service quality and delivery
- Leveraging our experience and key learnings in responding proactively and successfully to any future restrictions and/or lockdowns
- Supporting the voluntary vaccination of our clients and employees by enabling access to available vaccines
- Keeping stakeholders regularly informed about operational changes, vaccine updates, and other relevant COVID-related information
- Utilising the positive benefits we create and/or find in our COVID-19 response, e.g. the benefits of Core Teams, as an organisational learning and development opportunity to review and negate potential downsides in any future response strategies
- Continuing to support Aspen Medical to run further COVID-19 vaccination clinics to deliver the Pfizer vaccine to clients, their families and the employees who wanted to receive it – to date, over 200 people have voluntarily received the vaccine.

# Case Study

## Sophie – Rising to the challenge of cancer

The theme of this year's annual report is rising to life's challenges. No one demonstrates this better than Sophie, one of our Adelaide Hills clients.

With the help of her friends Kristy and Kimmy, and with the support of our local Adelaide Hills Team, Sophie held a fabulous Biggest Morning Tea to raise funds for the Cancer Council to fund research, support services, prevention programs and advocacy.

Hosting the morning tea in memory of her mother, who sadly passed away from cancer, Sophie surpassed her fundraising goal to raise over \$250 for this great cause.

Held at our office in Mount Barker, attendees were spoilt for choice for their morning tea, with a range of sandwiches, platters, fruit and baked delicacies on offer.

Cancer is a major life challenge that has touched most people at some point. Dealing with the personal tragedy of losing your mum to such a horrible illness, then rising to this challenge by working and fighting for others to raise awareness and money for research is simply awesome. It is a testament to Sophie's character and also demonstrates the great work and impact people with disability have in our communities.

The three ladies thanked everyone for their support and attendance, and look forward to hosting the morning tea again next year.

**Well done Sophie (and friends!) – You. Are. A. Legend(s)!**



Cathy, Kymmy, Sophie and Kristy at the Biggest Morning Tea standing behind all of the delicious food they made.

# CLIENT SERVICES

In 2020-21, the Client Services team have continued to improve our service offering and work in trusted partnership with our clients to create opportunities for them to rise to life's challenges and achieve their goals. We continue to strive to individually tailor our service offering to meet our client's specific needs and ensure the best outcomes are achieved.

## SERVICE OFFERING

**Community Living Australia is committed to providing quality services and supporting people with disability by growing our presence in our local service areas, including the Adelaide Hills, Murraylands, Southern Metro, Riverland, South East, Fleurieu, and Kangaroo Island regions.**

Our continuous improvement approach remains focused on delivering optimal outcomes with our clients while achieving sustainable growth and building our reputation as a quality service provider.

Throughout 2020-21, the Client Services team have delivered the following services:

- Supported Independent Living
- Respite and Short Term Accommodation
- Day Options
- Group Activities
- In-home Support
- Community Access Support
- Recreation
- Transition to Independent Living Support

The Client Services team have continued to support our clients to develop their skills and capabilities throughout 2020-21, including:

- Connecting and participating actively in their local communities
- Developing their social skills, friendships, and connections
- Increasing their independence and independent living skills
- Living healthy lifestyles
- Using public transport
- Volunteering and engaging in employment opportunities
- Improving and maintaining positive mental health.

## COVID-19 IMPACT AND RESPONSE

**In 2020-21, COVID-19 had a significant impact on the way Community Living Australia provides services to clients, but every change in service delivery was made with the foremost intention of keeping our clients, their families, and our communities safe while maintaining high quality services. These changes included:**

- Strengthening system data to enable fast and efficient rollouts of plans for how we will adapt services in the event of lockdowns to meet guidelines and restrictions

- Using technology to support clients with online activities during lockdowns
- Implementing welfare checking programs across all regions for clients, their families, and our staff during lockdowns
- Seeking feedback from clients, their families, and our staff to improve client support through COVID-19 and related lockdown situations
- Supporting clients and their families with accessing COVID-19 vaccinations.

## SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

**Throughout the year, we have made improvements to our internal incident reporting technology to ensure faster reporting capabilities and access to more detailed information.**

These improvements have meant service provision incidents are now able to be reported faster and more accurately, enabling us to learn from them and adjust our services and supports to better meet the needs of individual clients as a result. This evidence also helps us support our clients in requesting more funding where relevant to meet their support needs and achieve better outcomes.

"The Day Options program at Community Living Australia is diverse and engaging, with each individual's needs and interests considered. The care, support and encouragement that our son receives has helped him learn valuable life skills, develop communication skills, make friends and is a positive place for him to be accepted for who he is."

*Michelle Leach*

Family Member - Adelaide Hills



# CLIENT SERVICES CONTINUED

## 2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Community Living Australia's commitment to creating opportunities with our clients to engage meaningfully in their communities has been demonstrated by a wide range of programs and initiatives throughout 2020-21.

### PEER2PEER PROGRAM LAUNCH - SOUTHERN METRO

**In 2020-21, Community Living Australia launched the PEER2PEER pilot program in the Southern Metro region which matches people with disability with mentors who also often have disability, to best support them in engaging with their community and achieving their goals.**

Our mentors support clients to build confidence, gain independent living skills and/or employment opportunities, all while having fun and sharing experiences. Mentors can support clients to do anything from attending community events and activities, to playing sport, going shopping, to the cinema or a café, joining clubs, taking up hobbies such as music, cooking, Pilates, yoga or gaming, or engaging in academic learning or volunteering opportunities.

The best part about the program is it facilitates clients to develop a friendship with someone they can trust, talk to, and ask for advice.

Importantly, the program employs many people living with disability, providing critically needed employment opportunities. Often, people with disability want to and can contribute to the workforce but are limited by the opportunities provided to them to do so. We are proud as an organisation to be leading the way in terms of providing employment opportunities to people with disability and look forward to expanding this opportunity in the future.

An evaluation of the program will be conducted in 2021-22, and if the program is deemed to be a success and to be sustainable, it will be rolled out to other service regions.

### CLIENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (CCC) LAUNCH

**In 2020-21, a new Client Consultative Committee was launched to provide a forum for purposeful engagement with our clients to provide feedback to Community Living Australia. The CCC reports directly to the Chief Executive and the first meeting was held on 9 June 2021.**

In developing the CCC, an external, independent Chair with lived experience of disability was appointed to lead the committee and ensure it could remain impartial when providing feedback to Community Living Australia. The other critical role of the Chair is to ensure all committee members get the chance to participate and be heard, regardless of the region they are representing or which services they are receiving — ensuring a representative voice for the whole organisation is heard.

Subsequently, Nick Schumi was appointed as independent chair of the committee. Nick is a strong, passionate, and active disability advocate and is a certified Youth Worker who specialises in youth and disability engagement with a strong focus on empowerment. Nick has extensive Board and governance experience including, but not limited to JFA Purple Orange Board of Directors and Housing Board and the Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities (SA). Nick was a candidate for the 'Dignity for Disability' party in the 2014 South Australian State Election and remains an active member.

We thank Nick for his interest, guidance, and support for the new CCC committee.

The CCC's purpose is to provide a forum for purposeful engagement with our clients to provide feedback to Community Living Australia regarding proposed organisational and service-related changes, new initiatives, and decisions.

We see it as imperative for people with disability to be provided with a means of having their voices heard, and for the organisation to facilitate this committee to gather vital insights directly from our key stakeholders.

CCC committee responsibilities include:

- Providing feedback and recommendations to Community Living Australia regarding services and key decisions and their implications, as well as future strategic objectives and plans
- Providing insights into Government, NDIS or organisational policy decisions
- Providing a Community Living Australia client and person with disability point of view regarding relevant matters, changing needs and expectations.

The CCC is comprised of clients from across our regional service areas to ensure a holistic representation and voice from across the entire organisation. Community Living Australia provides the supports necessary for our clients to be able to successfully participate on an equitable basis.

We would like to thank all of our wonderful clients for their input to date and look forward to working closely and collaboratively with everyone as we look to the future.

# CLIENT SERVICES CONTINUED

## WELLBEING IN AGED CARE PROGRAM LAUNCH AND COLLABORATION

In 2020-21, Community Living Australia, in collaboration with Community Options Australia, launched the Wellbeing in Aged Care program in the Adelaide Hills region.

This free program for referred aged care residents provides short-term, psychological counselling interventions to support residents with mild to moderate mental health issues who live in residential aged care facilities. These interventions can assist residents who may be experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns, including:

- depression
- anxiety
- chronic pain
- grief and loss
- adjustment issues
- difficulty coping with illness
- functional decline
- sensory loss.

Qualified clinicians (Psychologists or Mental Health Nurses) experienced in working with the aged deliver the program on a one-on-one basis, via group sessions or a mixture of both, either within the residential aged care facilities participants live in, or remotely via Telehealth appointments.

This service is made possible via funding from the Psychological Therapies in Residential Aged Care Facilities federal funding initiative, through the Country SA Public Health Network.

## SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL AND LEARNING PROGRAM REFRESH - ADELAIDE HILLS AND MURRAYLANDS

In listening to feedback from our clients, their families, and our employees regarding the need for more group-based recreational and community-based activities and events, we initiated some new programs in the Adelaide Hills and Murraylands regions in 2020-21.

In the Adelaide Hills, we launched Dance & Cheer classes run by 'All Abilities Cheer & Dance' which is now well-established and very popular with our clients. We have added sensory equipment to the program with clients helping make some of the items, virtual reality activities at Mount Barker Games Lobby, and have implemented a 'Health Hustle' program where each morning, clients, their families, and our employees engage in physical exercises and activities to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

In the Murraylands, we launched a Men's Group and Ladies Night, regular discos, a Come and Try basketball day with our wonderful Ambassador, Jo Hill, and received grant approval for the 'All Abilities Festival' to be held in September, which will bring both the Murraylands and Adelaide Hills regions together for some great fun and games!

## OPENING OF THE NEW RIVERLAND CLIENT SERVICES VENUE AND OFFICE

In 2020-21, Community Living Australia's Riverland service and office location moved to a new site at Shop 1, Ral Ral Avenue, Renmark (within the GeoKontra Mall).

The new location is more spacious and provides our clients and office-based employees with a more suitable site in which to operate and grow. The new centrally located site provides us with greater visibility within the community and better community access for our clients.

## 'COME AND TRY' BASKETBALL EVENT WITH JO HILL

During the year, our Ambassador Jo Hill held a multi-day 'Come and Try' program to teach our clients some new basketball and footy skills.

The Come and Try event brought clients from the Adelaide Hills and Murraylands together to develop their skills, build new friendships and enhance their connection with the community. The event was held at the Adelaide Hills Recreation Centre, with over 40 people with disability taking part over two days.

**"For many years my brother was not in care for a severe acquired brain injury. Two years ago he had the opportunity to join the Community Living Australia family and he has not looked back. They are such an amazing group of people who's sole focus is the care, well-being and advancement for anyone who finds themselves in this situation. I have such respect and admiration for them."**

*Jason McBain*

Family Member - South East

## 2021-22 KEY FOCUSES

### In the coming year, Community Living Australia's Client Services team will focus on:

- Ensuring we continue to learn from the COVID-19 experience in providing our services so we can continue to improve in the delivery of quality client services and related outcomes
- Increasing our existing consultation and engagement processes with clients, their families, and our employees to generate valuable and timely feedback to inform ongoing improvements to our services
- Continuing to innovate by developing services that meet client needs, as well as any unmet needs in our communities
- Continuing to offer new service opportunities with our clients to better engage in their communities, develop social connections, gain volunteering and employment opportunities, and further develop their skills
- Developing further connections with community partners to continually improve our communities, and the opportunities we can collaboratively provide to people with disability
- Continuing to develop our workplace culture, service offering and working environment to be an employer and service provider of choice
- Reviewing the Team Leader role (as identified through our Culture Project) to ensure we can attract and retain suitable, skilled candidates and ensure there are reasonable and consistent expectations everyone understands, as the current role requirements are too broad
- Continuing to develop the Client Consultative Committee (CCC) to ensure it is meaningful and helps influence our decision-making processes by providing valuable insights while also developing the skills of the committee members
- Hosting the 'All Abilities Festival' in Murray Bridge for people with disability who live in Murray Bridge and the surrounding Murraylands region, which will include fun and games, food and drinks, a dance and cheer performance hosted by 'All Abilities Dance & Cheer', sports competitions, an award ceremony, talent showcases and a social disco at the end of the day! The event will bring people with disability together and give them an opportunity to engage with and be a part of the broader community, showcase their skills and abilities and build their self-confidence and social skills, with the intention of making it an ongoing annual event that will increase in scope and scale over time.



# BUSINESS SERVICES

In 2020-21, the Business Services team have played a key role in supporting the achievement of client outcomes and opportunities by delivering business support services and infrastructure to our regional and metropolitan teams in the areas of:

- Fleet and Property
- ICT
- Finance
- People and Culture  
(covered separately in the People and Culture section)

Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2020-21 financial year, some large projects were deferred to allow the Business Services team's focus to remain on strategies to support business sustainability and continuity during these challenging times. Ensuring the provision of quality services to existing clients and supporting our workforce remained our priority throughout the year.

Prudent financial management and the team's focus on improving and maintaining internal processes and resources has ensured Community Living Australia has a strong asset base from which to support the business through any future disruptions without the need to rely on Federal or State Government rescue packages.

A healthy balance sheet provides security for our clients and workforce so they can focus on achieving their goals and delivering our services.

In 2020-21, the Business Services team appointed its first Business Services Trainee, who will have the opportunity to gain valuable experience across various teams and departments, including Central and Client Services, during their 12-month tenure. Developing the skills of young talent is a core part of our Workforce Strategy, and we will continue to provide local employment opportunities through traineeships in the future.

**"I have been with Community Living Australia for just over a year now. Best Decision! I have met some truly amazing people. Every day is different and so rewarding!"**

*Mel Thornton*

Support Worker - Adelaide Hills

"Community Living Australia is a great place to work. They have great staff and clients and a supportive team that means I can focus on doing what I love — caring for people."

*Allison Young*

Support Worker - Adelaide Hills



Showing the collaborative and general purpose open meeting area inside the new office at Victoria Crescent Mount Barker.

## FLEET AND PROPERTY

### 2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

**It has been a very busy year for the Fleet and Property team, with the completion of the office unification strategy in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2021.**

The team successfully relocated all office-based staff from sites in Strathalbyn, Mount Barker and Totness into our new head office location at Victoria Crescent, Mount Barker, which provides opportunities for increased flexibility, efficiency, and collaboration between teams.

The key highlights, successes, and achievements in 2020-21 for Fleet and Property have also included:

- Completing the new Victoria Crescent head office fit-out and supporting staff through the transition to the new site
- The reintegration of Central Services staff from working from home to the new office space
- The expansion of our Day Options venue spaces at Stephens Street, Mount Barker and Beach Road, Christies Beach to provide more suitable spaces for our clients and the opportunity to grow our services in these regions
- The sale of the former Strathalbyn head office site
- Exiting the leased office space at Totness
- Maintaining stable tenancies for our clients in a very tight and competitive rental market, as well as advocating strongly for clients to secure community housing tenancies and managing the real risk of homelessness many of our clients have faced during the pandemic. This has been done by working with existing landlords to ensure clients are informed as soon as possible if a lease is not going to be renewed, and identifying and securing alternate rental properties through building relationships with property owners and agents to ensure client applications are considered

- As a result, we supported the relocation of 18 clients across six separate sites, and negotiated nine leases on our client's behalf, which is much higher than our usual activity
- Upgrading the vehicle fleet in line with the rotation schedule, including the purchase and/or lease of eight new vehicles, four of which are hybrid models in line with our organisational commitment to becoming more environmentally friendly
- The rollout of our Communal Property Asset Management (CPAM) system, which involves registration and regular inspection of all assets for damage and wear (including communal furniture and equipment at our accommodation sites). CPAM will ensure all furniture and environments remain of a high quality for our clients and employees
- Completing the fit-out of the new, centrally located office and Day Options site at the Geokontra Mall in Renmark, which provides better community access for clients and increases the visibility and integration of our services within the local community
- Exiting the previous Renmark Avenue (Renmark) Day Options and office site.

## 2021-22 KEY FOCUSES

**In the coming year, Community Living Australia's Fleet and Property team will focus on:**

- The development of a resource kit to support clients in understanding their rights and obligations as tenants, empowering them to build their capacity and independent living skills, as well as giving them more control and agency as informed decision makers
- Supporting clients and families in exploring long term housing options, including supporting eligible clients to be approved for SDA and home ownership, as stable and suitable living conditions are critically important to the quality of our client's lives
- Investigating the suitability of property management software to automate workflows and improve our reporting capability.

The outside of the new Renmark Day Options and Office Venue.



**2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Throughout 2020-21, the ICT team rapidly implemented enhancements to our hardware, software, and related processes to support remote working arrangements and provide staff with the ability to efficiently transition from the office to the home office environment with minimal disruption.

The ICT team’s key highlights, successes, and achievements in 2020-21 have also included:

- The delivery of a wireless technology environment at the new Victoria Crescent, Mount Barker office, with meeting rooms and spaces equipped with AV systems to support remote collaboration
- Enhancing our security technology through the implementation of Multi Factor Authorisation, a vital risk management strategy to reduce the potential for unauthorised access to Community Living Australia’s systems and confidential data
- Actioning more than 4,000 support tickets throughout the financial year to support the needs of various business units and our remote workforce
- On approval of the business case, engaging an external consultant and conducting stakeholder workshops to kick off our Intranet upgrade project to enhance the user experience of our Intranet and ensure its functionality allows all employees across the organisation to better collaborate, communicate, stay up to date and access relevant information.



The reception area in the new Renmark Day Options and Office venue.

**2021-22 KEY FOCUSES**

In the coming year, Community Living Australia’s ICT team will focus on:

- Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of crucial organisational software, tools, and platforms to drive increased engagement, service responsiveness and workforce effectiveness
- The delivery of the Intranet upgrade project in Q1 of 2021-22
- Embarking on a major project to upgrade our scheduling, time attendance, billing functionality and provide support workers with access to our Client Record Management (CRM) system to provide more accurate and responsive services and a better employee and client experience
- Enhancing our business support capability by maximising the use of licenced software and ensuring our users receive adequate training and support to effectively use the tools available to them
- Exploring the options for replacing the existing telephone system with new technology to better meet business needs
- Expanding the use of Microsoft Suite functionality, including collaboration tools via Teams, and analytics data via Power BI to better support communication and data-based decision-making within the organisation.

**2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Finance team’s key highlights, successes, and achievements in 2020-21 have included:

- Following a change to the NDIS price guide (effective 1 July 2019), we successfully transitioned 50% of Supported Independent Living (SIL) clients to a Program of Supports (POS). A POS is a fixed term agreement detailing the support a person will receive during a specific period of time
- Extending the use of virtual and fixed limit credit cards as a real-time, secure purchasing option for more employees to increase efficiencies and reduce the reliance on manual approval processes.

**2021-22 KEY FOCUSES**

In the coming year, Community Living Australia’s Finance team will focus on:

- Completing the transition of SIL services to POS
- Implementing POS for all centre and community-based group programs in line with NDIS transition timeframes (to be completed by 30 June 2022)
- Reducing the reliance on manual data entry through automating the recording of services delivered, and the creation of associated invoices.

The Business Services team are looking forward to continuing to undertake exciting projects that will assist our employees and teams in providing great services that best support our clients in rising to life’s challenges and achieving their life goals. We remain committed to supporting our clients in navigating the ongoing changes to NDIS rules and processes and ensuring our business processes become increasingly efficient and effective.

# Case Study

## Sandra - Travelling to new heights

Left: Sandra excitedly showing off her flight centre name badge.  
Right: Sandra posing for a photo with her team at Flight Centre Murray Bridge.



Sandra dreams of working in the travel industry, and with the help of her Community Living Australia support team and the awesome staff at Flight Centre, she got one step closer to realising her dream in 2020-21.

Sandra is one of our Murraylands clients, and she undertook work experience at the Murray Bridge Flight Centre. She had the opportunity to speak to customers, practice her phone skills and organise paperwork and filing.

Just like anyone else in the community, many people with disability aspire to secure a job they love. Often, the major barriers and challenges to achieving this goal are the limitations placed on people with disability, due to individuals and businesses not understanding how to make reasonable adjustments to best utilise their skills.

We are honoured to have been able to support Sandra to secure this opportunity, and we commend Murray Bridge Flight Centre for providing it and setting an example for other businesses.

Sandra's work experience cemented her desire to work in the industry and helped her to further develop her employability and professional skills. We are looking forward to supporting Sandra with the next steps towards landing her dream job!

# PEOPLE AND CULTURE

The People and Culture team are responsible for ensuring Community Living Australia has the right people and workplace culture to achieve our organisational goals. In 2020-21, the People and Culture Team focussed on scoping, developing, and implementing a new Human Resource Information System (HRIS), training our workforce, and ensuring the rostering needs of our clients, families and workforce were met.

## 2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### **HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**In 2020-21, the core HR module for the HRIS was designed and implemented, and is now in use by the People and Culture team.**

The HRIS system provides enhanced management capabilities to facilitate improved employee support and communication, helping to create an environment where employees are supported to thrive and where we can ensure the highest possible quality of services.

### **VICTORIA CRESCENT WORKING GROUP**

**The People and Culture team established a cross-functional working group, to inform the transition in late 2020 into our new working environment at Victoria Crescent, Mount Barker.**

The cross-functional working group consisted of members from each team that would be working from the new office site and helped to transfer information and feedback to and from their teams regarding key issues related to the move into the new site.

This move consolidates the previous Strathalbyn, Totness, and Mount Barker offices into one central site. The consolidation of the multiple office sites into one location allows for increased organisational efficiencies and enhanced opportunities for collaboration between employees and teams.

The Strathalbyn and Totness sites have since closed, with the old Mount Barker site transformed into an expanded client services hub.

### **CASUAL CONVERSION**

**In 2020-21, we continued our focus on casual conversion, with permanent employee numbers now surpassing the number of casuals working for our organisation.**

This approach improves job and income security for our employees, reflects the desire of Community Living Australia to support our employee's personal goals and objectives, and ensures consistency in service provision to our clients through greater workforce stability.



"At home I am well cared for but I sure am thankful for a Support Worker that comes to take me out to do the various things that I may need such as going to my doctors appointments, going in the swimming pool, shopping and sometimes going for walks."

*Anna Wojnar*

Client - Adelaide Hills

# PEOPLE AND CULTURE CONTINUED

## COVID-19

### Core Teams

2020-21 continued to present significant and intermittent operational challenges due to COVID-19. The People and Culture team continued to work closely with our stakeholders to develop a COVID-19 Workforce Strategy in line with Government guidelines to ensure we could provide essential client services in the safest way possible.

Given the vulnerability of many clients with underlying health issues, Community Living Australia's Workforce Strategy acted to create 'core' and 'on-call' teams and to limit services to those deemed essential only, thereby minimising contact risks to both employees and clients. Maintaining the safety of our clients, their families, our employees and the broader community is our number one priority, and every action we take is done with the intention of maintaining this safety.

### Retention payments

During 2020-21, the People and Culture team implemented retention payments to continue to support members of our workforce who were not eligible for JobKeeper. These payments were applied for all new Support Workers for the first two months of their employment throughout the financial year to ensure our new employees were financially secure as they were inducted, trained, and began to develop consistent and regular shifts in service delivery.

## PPE and infection control training

To better manage the risks involved with COVID-19, we undertook reinforcement training with our entire staff in PPE and infection control to ensure our workforce is well-trained and skilled in the effective use and management of PPE, as well as being able to manage the risk of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases in the workplace. This training demonstrates our steadfast commitment to keeping our clients, workforce, and communities safe.

### COVID-Safe workplace course

All central services employees completed COVID-Safe workplace training, which is a broader course than PPE and infection control focusing on how to ensure the workplace is COVID-ready and able to manage the risk of COVID-19 effectively and appropriately.

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

### Community Living Australia's twelve-month Leadership program concluded in October 2020.

Further leadership skills development was also provided to our regional leadership teams in May 2021. The purpose of the additional Leadership program was to further develop our Leaders understanding in the areas of:

- Organisational Values and Vision
- Leading employees to display consistent Professional Boundaries and Behaviours
- Communication skill building, difficult conversations and Restorative Practice
- Self-Care/Wellbeing
- Professional practice reflection and evaluation.

## TRAINEESHIP PILOT PROGRAM

**In 2020-21, the People and Culture team launched a Traineeship Pilot Program, with a shortage of skilled workforce, traineeships are an excellent way to build an individual's capacity while building skills and becoming familiar with an organisation's operations and values.**

Traineeships were offered across client and central services directorates, including:

- Business Services: Three trainees were on-boarded, with one working in ICT and two completing a Certificate III in Business, working in Administration and our Central Services areas
- Client Services: Six trainees across all regional locations are completing a Certificate III in Individual Support, one of whom is completing a School-Based Traineeship.

## PERSONNEL FILES

**The People and Culture team converted 550 hardcopy personnel files to electronic versions in SharePoint in 2020-21 to increase file accessibility, efficiency and to become more environmentally and space friendly.**

# PEOPLE AND CULTURE CONTINUED

## STAFF TRAINING, PROJECTS, AND REVIEWS

Throughout 2020-21, the People and Culture team facilitated a range of employee training activities, projects, and reviews across both client services and central services.

### Client Services

In 2020-21, a wide range of training opportunities were delivered to employees working throughout the client services directorate to ensure our workforce remains suitably trained and supported to meet the diverse needs of our clients. This training included:

- Autism Awareness
- Personal Protective Equipment
- COVID-19 Infection Control
- Supported Decision Making
- Bullying and Harassment
- Dementia
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Non-Verbal Communication.

### Central Services

In 2020-21, training opportunities were delivered to employees working across various departments of the central services directorate to ensure our workforce is equipped to meet the current and future demands of the organisation.

This training included:

- Business Writing Skills
- Cyber Security Training
- Customer Service and Phone Etiquette
- NDS Workforce Essentials Package
- DSC Portal.

### Non-Verbal Communication project commencement

The People and Culture Team commenced a Non-Verbal Communication project in 2020-21 to help our employees develop strategies to enhance their communication with clients and develop plans to embed and sustain these practices into their everyday work.

This project will provide our clients with better communication and independence, giving them optimal control over their daily decisions. Community Living Australia's employees are currently working through the training modules and providing feedback to the organisation for the development of a training handbook.

The Non-Verbal Communication project has been running as a trial in the Adelaide Hills Day Options and Murraylands Homburg Accommodation sites, providing us with the opportunity to test and adjust the program based on what strategies work best before rolling it out more broadly across the organisation.

To develop and deliver the program, we have partnered with Two Way Street. Two Way Street is an organisation that specialises in creating communication solutions for children and adults with complex communication needs, their families, and organisations within their communities.

### Organisational Training review

In 2020-21, an organisation-wide consultation for the next three years of training requirements was completed, with a new training matrix being developed. This will ensure Community Living Australia remains competitive in the NDIS landscape through high quality, well-trained staff, a safe and supportive workplace, and excellent service delivery. Investing in our people shows them they are valued and supported and helps them to be the most effective in providing great services to clients.

### Transition to NDIS Worker Check

The People and Culture team transitioned our processes to the new NDIS Worker Check in 2020-21, which is a new, nationally recognised screening process required for all employees working in risk assessed roles. This process ensures we are meeting our compliance requirements and keeping our clients safe.

**"I love this organisation. It's not about coming into work and doing a shift and leaving. It's so much more than that. We are helping to make their life meaningful and they are giving our life meaning as well. Caring for someone is more rewarding than any other thing."**

*Sonal Suri*

Support Worker - Fleurieu

## CULTURE PROJECT

**One of the largest projects the People and Culture team conducted in 2020-21 was the Culture Project, which aims to create and maintain an organisational culture that supports and empowers our employees, while also ensuring we remain a provider of choice in the provision of high-quality client services.**

To explain it simply, 'culture is the way we do things around here'. Culture encompasses why we do what we do and how we do it, and the Culture Project's purpose is to investigate what we are currently doing well so we can do more of it, as well as to find out what we aren't doing so well so we can improve it.

The Culture Project's desired outcome is to make Community Living Australia a better place to work for employees, and a better place for our clients to receive services.

The Culture Project comprises four stages:

- **Stage 1:** Consultation
- **Stage 2:** Develop a Culture Action Plan
- **Stage 3:** Conduct Projects
- **Stage 4:** Review, Adjust and Repeat.

The People and Culture team's focus during 2020-21 was Stages 1 and 2, where we conducted an extensive consultation that formulated the development of a Culture Action Plan.

### Stage 1: Consultation

This stage involved four key steps, as outlined below.

#### Step 1: Organisation-wide survey

An organisation-wide survey was delivered to all Community Living Australia employees in November 2020, with over 75% of the workforce completing it. The survey results show that:

- Over 80% of our employees still want and expect to be working for the organisation in 2-3 years
- The organisation received an average score of 8 out of 10 for how well it handled and supported its employees during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Close to 80% of our employees said they would recommend working for the organisation to friends or family
- The overall alignment to our organisational values was found to be 80%, indicating a strong level of alignment between the organisation's values and our workforce.

#### Step 2: In-Depth Interviews

In November and December 2020, in-depth one-on-one interviews were conducted with 47 employees from across all regions, departments, and levels of the organisation.

#### Step 3: Two-Day Large Group Workshop

In May 2021, a two-day intensive workshop was run with 25 of the 47 employees previously interviewed. Again, these employees represented every region, department, and level of the organisation.

#### Step 4: Culture Workshops

In June and July 2021, condensed, single-day versions of the two-day workshop were held in each service region, with all employees given the option to participate. Over 120 employees nominated themselves to participate in the culture workshops.

#### Stage 2: Develop a Culture Action Plan

In late 2020-21, the People and Culture team were finalising a Culture Action Plan based on the feedback received in Stage 1. This plan will outline the key projects and tasks that have been identified as actionable to help us improve our culture and way of doing things.

#### Stage 3: Conduct Projects

The projects identified in the Culture Action Plan will be conducted throughout 2021-22.

#### Stage 4: Review, Adjust and Repeat

This stage will be conducted throughout 2021-22 and will be an ongoing process in the future, as culture is never 'complete'.

Community Living Australia is committed to continually striving to develop and maintain a positive organisational culture that enables us to meet the needs of our employees and clients, as well as the needs of the broader disability sector and our organisation. The Culture Project sets us well upon the path to achieving these outcomes.



Groups at the Culture Workshop brainstorming how to keep making Community Living Australia an even better place to work and receive services.



# PEOPLE AND CULTURE CONTINUED

## YEARS OF SERVICE EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

**Long-term loyalty and service to Community Living Australia and its clients is worthy of praise and celebration.**

Our organisation is full of people who are passionate and committed to their work in supporting people with disability to achieve their life goals.

In 2020-21, events were held in the Fleurieu, Adelaide Hills and Murraylands regions to recognise 17 employees who reached significant milestones during the year, including:

### • Fleurieu

- Alanna Sherrah: 10 years
- David Lisle: 10 years
- Mitchell Olsson-Jones: 10 years
- Timothy Greenstock: 10 years
- Jane Evans: 10 years
- Tracy Dunningham: 10 years

### • Adelaide Hills

- Sue Stuart: 20 years
- Julie Mullins: 10 years
- Hayley Stuart: 10 years
- Robyn Sparrow: 10 years

### • Murraylands

- Sandra Norris: 25 years
- Michael Higginbottom: 10 years
- Joanne Larson: 10 years
- David Johnson: 10 years
- Ian Milowski: 10 years

### • Central Services

- Donna Adams: 10 years
- Narelle Lee: 10 years.

We thank these employees for their hard work, dedication and commitment to our organisation and clients.

## 2021-22 KEY FOCUSES

**Over the coming year, the People and Culture team's focus will be on leveraging the insights gained from the Culture Project to inform future operations.**

The team will work to drive an organisational shift from being 'systems-driven' to being 'purpose-driven' to ensure all employees are supported to thrive in their roles under a leadership group that empowers people and is optimistic, positive, and supportive, driving people to want to learn new skills.

In the coming year, Community Living Australia's People and Culture Team will focus on:

- Further development of the HRIS system beyond daily functions to incorporate recruitment, training, and performance management processes, as well as whole-of-organisation employee access
- Reviewing and benchmarking our frontline worker training program to identify our points of difference from other service providers, and using these to attract quality candidates, to ensure our existing employees are skilled, and to ensure we continue to provide great services

- Reviewing our current recruitment process to ensure we are attracting and on-boarding the best possible talent
- Transitioning the Workplace Health and Safety responsibility to the People and Culture team, and broadening its focus to incorporate employee wellbeing initiatives and connect it to the organisational culture
- Continuing the Non-verbal Communication project, with the aim of completion in the 2021-22 financial year
- Maintain a positive organisational culture, and continuing with our Culture Project as a priority area through the commencement, progress, and completion of a range of major projects that have been identified as part of the Culture Action Plan
- Reviewing our scheduling and rostering systems and processes to ensure optimal outcomes can be achieved for our workforce, clients and their families moving forward
- Support the upgrade and integration of the scheduling and rostering system into the CRM and payroll systems to create greater efficiencies, better access to information, and an enhanced user experience for employees and clients
- Reviewing the Team Leader role to ensure it is well-defined and focused so that we can attract and retain talented people who are best suited to supporting our teams and clients.

**"Great variety of Day Options. The staff are always there if you need to discuss something and are very understanding, caring and dedicated. My daughter loves going to Community Living Australia each day."**

*Mandy Violi*

Family Member - Fleurieu



**COMMUNITY LIVING AUSTRALIA EMPLOYEE STATISTICS** (as at 30 June 2021)

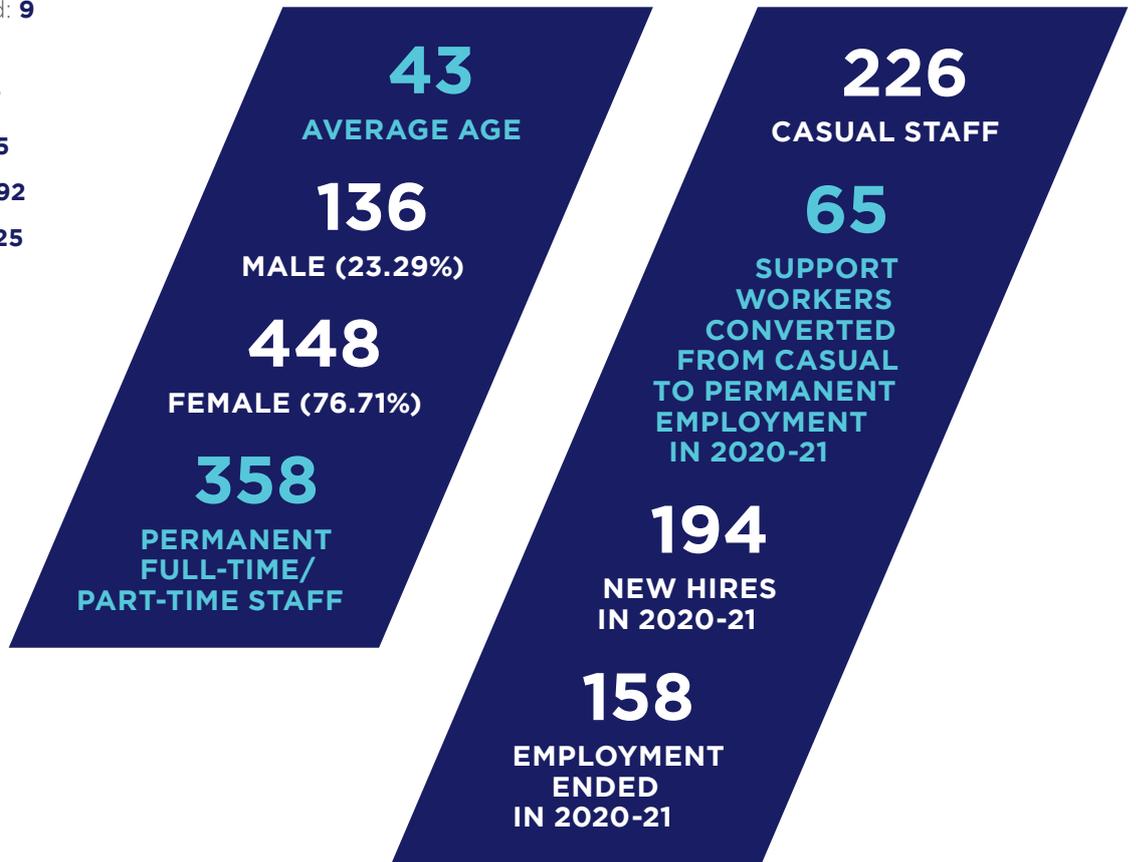
Community Living Australia has 584 employees, comprised of the following:



**LOCATED IN**

- Metro Adelaide: **54**
- Kangaroo Island: **9**
  - Fleurieu: **70**
  - Riverland: **47**
- South East: **75**
- Adelaide Hills: **92**
- Murraylands: **125**

**GENERAL STATISTICS**



# Case Study

## Paul – A talented artist shows us what he’s got

Left: Paul proudly positioned in front of his painting.  
Centre: Paul's painting 'Magic Mountain' on display at the Goolwa Rotary Art Show.  
Right: Paul at the opening event with Councillor Margaret Gardner from the Alexandrina Council.



Paul, one of our Fleurieu clients, is a keen artist whose artwork 'Magic Mountain' was displayed as part of the Goolwa Art and Photographic Exhibition at the Signal Point Gallery in 2020-21.

Paul said, "I entered my painting 'Magic Mountain' into the Goolwa Rotary Art show at the Signal Point Art Gallery in Goolwa. My carer and I went to the opening night and I had a really good time. I got to socialise with other artists, and I saw some amazing artworks".

This was not a disability-specific exhibition, but a community exhibition displaying artwork from all community artists. Our commitment to enhancing community inclusion for people with disability is a major focus for Community Living Australia, so it was great to see Paul participating and being valued as a skilled artist.

French artist Henri Matisse once said, 'creativity takes courage'. Creating something yourself as an expression of who you are, and then putting that outlet for your voice out into the public eye for people to see and experience takes real courage, and we commend Paul for having this courage and sharing it with us.

Similar to the courage required to produce art and display it publicly, courage is also needed to rise to life's challenges.

As an organisation, Community Living Australia strives to be courageous in helping our clients to be courageous in facing their individual challenges, and supporting them to overcome them to achieve their life goals – like exhibiting their art in a public exhibition!

# DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

In 2020-21, Community Living Australia has continued its support of the Disability Royal Commission to bring about the necessary changes to improve the lives and welfare of people with disability, and we will continue to put people with disability at the core of everything we do, including managing our activities and responses to the work of the Disability Royal Commission.

## WHAT IS THE ROYAL COMMISSION?

Royal Commissions have broad-ranging powers, independent of government, to hold public hearings, call witnesses, and compel evidence to investigate matters of great public importance. The outcome of Royal Commissions are recommendations that are provided to the government about what needs to be changed in a given sector or industry.

The Disability Royal Commission was established in April 2019 in response to community concerns about widespread reports of violence, neglect, abuse, and exploitation of people with disability.

Operating under Terms of Reference, which define the issues to be investigated, the Disability Royal Commission are making their enquiries (as per the Terms of Reference), into:

- Preventing and better-protecting people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Achieving best practice in reporting, investigating, and responding to violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with disability
- Promoting a more inclusive society that supports people with disability to be independent and live free from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The focus and scope of the Disability Royal Commission includes investigating the experiences and conditions in all settings and contexts, including:

- Schools
- Workplaces
- Jails
- Group homes and boarding houses
- Family homes
- Hospitals
- Day programs.

The Disability Royal Commission are making their inquiries using several different methods:

- Research
- Public hearings
- Community and other forums
- Submissions
- Hearing the personal experiences of people with disability.

The deadline for the final report to the Australian Government has been extended from April 2022 to 29 September 2023, and will include recommendations on how to improve laws, policies, structures, and practices within the disability services sector.

Community Living Australia supports the Disability Royal Commission. People with disability, like everyone else in our community, have the right to live free of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Community Living Australia has a zero-tolerance approach to any violence, abuse, neglect, or exploitation of people with disability in its services and the community. All Australians should have confidence in the quality and safety of supports that are provided to people with disability.

# DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION CONTINUED

Community Living Australia is committed to:

- Continuing to put people with a disability at the core of everything we do, including our responses to the Disability Royal Commission
- Being supportive of the aims of the Disability Royal Commission and bringing about systemic change to better protect people with disability
- Adopting an open and transparent approach to the Disability Royal Commission, and contributing responses to issue papers
- Proactively supporting our team to ensure people with disability are able to stay engaged and informed about the work of the Disability Royal Commission, and to engage with the Disability Royal Commission if they wish to
- Being accountable and taking responsibility for implementing changes when needed
- Advocating for greater access to the community for people with disability, particularly for those living in regional and rural Australia.

Even with the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-21 has been a busy year for the Disability Royal Commission. The Interim Report was published in October 2020, and there has been substantial activity, including:

Public Hearings focused on:

- The experiences of people with disability during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic
- Psychotropic medication, behavior support and behaviours of concern
- Barriers to accessing a safe, quality, and inclusive school education and life course impacts
- The experiences of First Nations people with disability and their families in contact with child protection systems
- Pathways and barriers to open employment for people with disability
- Education and training of health professionals in relation to people with cognitive disability
- The experiences of people with cognitive disability in the criminal justice system
- The experiences of people with disability, in the context of the Australian Government's approach to COVID-19 vaccine rollout
- Preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation in disability services (a case study)
- Preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation in disability services (South Australia).

Issues Papers exploring:

- First Nations People with disability
- Safeguards and quality
- Violence and abuse of people with disability at home
- Promoting inclusion
- The experience of culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability.

Research Reports exploring:

- Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation against people with disability in Australia
- Experiences of domestic violence among women with restrictive long-term health conditions
- Key elements of the legislative framework affecting people with disability
- Hierarchies of power: Disability theories and models and their implications for violence against, and abuse, neglect, and exploitation of, people with disability
- Something Stronger: Truth-telling on hurt and loss, strength, and healing from First Nations people with disability
- Language and vocabulary used by people living with disability
- The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - An Assessment of Australia's Level of Compliance
- Persons with Disability and the Australian Constitution
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Shining a light on Social Transformation.



**"Community living Australia is a fantastic company to work for – I would recommend this company to anyone who would like a rewarding job."**

*Vicki Fletcher*

Support Worker – Adelaide Hills

## 2020-21 KEY HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Community Living Australia's key highlights, successes, and achievements in 2020-21 in relation to the Disability Royal Commission have included:

- Submitting responses with comments to the Royal Commission issue papers
- Making relevant submissions regarding the state of the sector, and how we think it can be improved to be able to continue to keep people with disability safe and able to access and contribute to their communities
- Providing regular updates to all stakeholders on the Royal Commission's progress and outcomes
- Creating a Royal Commission update video from Chief Executive, Mark Kulinski and Manager Quality and Safeguarding, Trish Kirkland
- Keeping clients, their families, our communities, and staff informed about the Royal Commission's activities
- Making changes to our supports, services, and processes in line with the recommendations and guidance provided by the Royal Commission where possible
- Providing media training to our leaders to ensure we can respond appropriately if called upon to provide media comments
- Remaining proactive in protecting and positioning the Community Living Australia brand through demonstrating the great work and excellent outcomes we achieve with our clients.

### FAST FACTS

By the end of June 2021, the Disability Royal Commission had received:

**2,634**  
SUBMISSIONS

**9,960**  
PHONE ENQUIRIES

**10**  
PUBLIC HEARINGS

**405**  
PRIVATE SESSIONS

**13**  
ISSUE PAPERS

**605**  
RESPONSES TO  
ISSUE PAPERS

## 2021-22 KEY FOCUSES

In the coming year, Community Living Australia's team will focus on:

- Keeping our clients safe and feeling included with decisions relating to their services and supports
- Remaining committed to providing quality supports and services as we continue to grow and improve
- Continuing to contribute to discussions, submissions, and issues papers where relevant to provide insights and feedback on how to keep people with disability safe
- Continuing to educate our stakeholders on the Royal Commission's progress and outcomes
- Remaining proactive in supporting our stakeholders during the Royal Commission, as there may be discouraging media coverage and stories that reflect poorly on the disability services sector
- Continuing to proactively build Community Living Australia as a high quality, safe provider of disability support services.



People involved in the World Kindness Day activities across all of our regions.

## Case Study

### Spreading a little kindness across our state

'In a world where you can be anything, be kind', said Jennifer Dukes Lee.

In November 2020, a number of our clients and employees went out into our South Australian communities to perform random acts of kindness across the state.

These acts promoted World Kindness Day on 13 November, a day with a mission to make kindness the norm and to encourage people to spread random acts of kindness throughout our communities.

All regions, including the Adelaide Hills, Murraylands, South East, Riverland, Kangaroo Island, Fleurieu and Southern Metro took part, and our clients and staff put some genuine smiles on many people's faces!

Their kindness included handing out SA's favourite Fru-Chocs in Rundle Mall, handing out flowers at Schinella's Market in Prospect, giving away coffee vouchers and notes of kindness in the main streets of Mount Barker, Christies Beach, Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier, Kingston, Millicent and Renmark, handing out delicious bakery goods in Goolwa, hosting a kindness morning tea in the Riverland and blessing people with the gift of chocolate on Kangaroo Island!

Unfortunately, people with disability are often seen as 'recipients' of support rather than as valued contributors to our community. World Kindness Day provided an opportunity for our clients to give back, support others and to demonstrate the enormous value they can provide to our communities.

2020-21 was especially hard for people, with the COVID-19 pandemic, world events and issues closer to home negatively impacting many of us. In talking through what has been happening around us with the people we support, they said they wanted to share a little bit of kindness and happiness to cheer people up.

**Helping people feel good about themselves and supporting people to live their best life is what Community Living Australia strives for, and World Kindness Day allowed us to achieve that aim.**

# Case Study

## Kerry – Giving back to her community and learning valuable skills

Kerry has been a Community Living Australia client for over eight years, and lives in Renmark with support from our Supported Independent Living Team.

She is a keen and active member of her Riverland community, and is always seeking opportunities to develop her skills, give back to her community and provide support to others where it is needed.

When Kerry asked for some support to identify more work and volunteer opportunities to help broaden her skillset and further increase her engagement with the community, the Riverland team were fast to respond to her request.

Over the past few years, Kerry has been supported to volunteer in a variety of local businesses and organisations, including the local op-shop where she helped to sort clothes, the McCormick Centre for the Environment where they support environmental education, research and nature-based tourism, and local primary schools, where she helped kids with their reading.

Kerry is currently volunteering at the Olivewood Historic Homestead and Museum, which provides visitors with an insight into what early life in the Riverland was like.

Kerry helps with watering and maintaining the gardens as well as general tidying and cleaning to make sure the museum is always looking its best for visitors. She also helps to bottle the olive oil they produce.

As if all of Kerry's volunteer work isn't enough to make us all feel exhausted, Community Living Australia also helped Kerry to connect with Job Prospects, a local job network provider, to help her realise her dream of open employment.

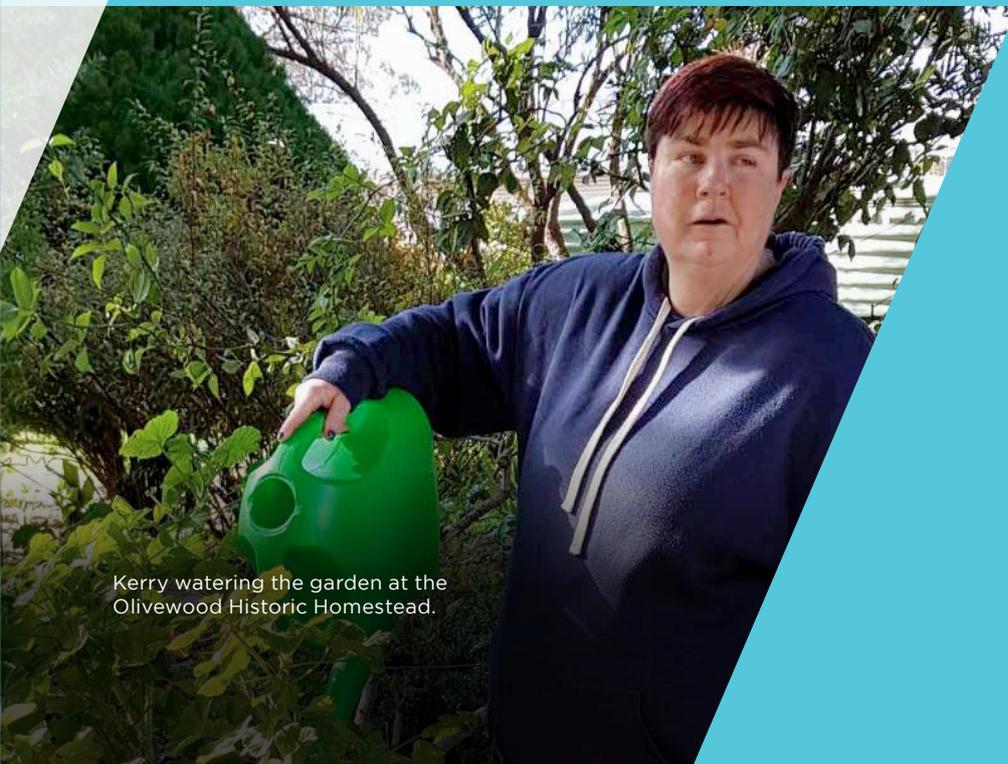
After a few trials at various businesses, Kerry successfully secured ongoing employment with a local commercial cleaning company for three evenings per week, cleaning one of the local primary schools.

Kerry loves her cleaning job (particularly the vacuuming!), and she loves having the opportunity to meet new people through her volunteering.

Although the lion's share of the work has been done by Kerry herself and there have been other supporters such as Job Prospects, the local Community Living Australia team have played a critical part in the process, supporting Kerry to prepare her resumes, come up with ideas for work and volunteering as well as helping her to approach businesses, organise and attend meetings, and providing emotional support throughout the process.

Kerry demonstrates what can be achieved when somebody with the right support is willing to rise to life's challenges and keep trying to find their passion and ways of contributing positively to the community.

**Keep up the great work, Kerry, and the Riverland team!**



Kerry watering the garden at the Olivewood Historic Homestead.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Living Australia's 2018-21 Strategic Plan was the guiding strategy for the 2020-21 operational period. This Strategic Plan and the focus of the organisation during this period is outlined below.

In the current 2021-22 Financial Year, an updated 2021-24 Strategic Plan will be implemented, guiding the direction of the organisation over the next three-year period. The details of this Strategic Plan will be outlined in the next Annual Report.

## OUR VISION

*Together We Achieve.*

## OUR MISSION

**We are a trusted partner who develops and delivers high-quality services and provides a strong voice for people to accomplish their life goals.**

## OUR VALUES

### Integrity

We are open, honest and embrace diversity

### Agile

We see change as opportunity

### Working Together

We achieve more by working together

### Passion

We are proud of who we are and believe in what we do

### Wellbeing

We support positive, personal health and wellbeing

## OUR SERVICE PRINCIPLES

### Health and Wellbeing

Is a key initiative

### Accomplishment

We support you to be your best

### Community Inclusion

We assist you to access available community resources and participate in community life

### Innovation

We will be creative in our service responses

### Education

We continually innovate to support your lifelong learning

### Valuing Individuals

We value every person and will strive to build trust

### Empowerment

We respect your right to make your own decisions

## PRIORITY AREA: OUR CLIENTS

### GOALS

- To be a service provider of choice in the markets in which we choose to operate
- To provide a range of personalised services that are evidence-based, value-for-money and match with the needs and aspirations of our clients
- To place client's health and wellbeing at the centre of all service delivery.



## PRIORITY AREA: OUR PEOPLE

### GOALS

- To be an employer of choice
- To have an enabling culture where values are lived
- To have a workforce that is committed, empowered and skilled.



## PRIORITY AREA: OUR SYSTEMS

### GOALS

- To have systems that meet stakeholder needs
- To have systems that create efficiencies and inform decision making
- To have systems that support us to meet our compliance and quality obligations.



## PRIORITY AREA: OUR COMMUNITY

### GOALS

- To be a trusted community partner
- To lead and contribute to sector development.



**"I love coming to Day Options as it makes me happy, excited and joyful. I like doing art because I can paint zodiac birthday paintings and painting clay moulds. The workers are so cute and they always help me. I love doing Yoga in a group and my favourite is Beautiful Time when I get my foot spa and nails painted - I feel gorgeous."**

*Barbara Hurst*

Client - Kangaroo Island

# PATRON AND BOARD MEMBERSHIP



## PATRON

His Excellency the Honourable  
Hieu Van Le AC  
Governor of South Australia



## AMBASSADORS

### Jo Hill - Appointed in July 2019

Jo is a former professional basketballer who played for the Australian Women's National Basketball Team (the Opals) throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s. She has represented Australia at Olympic level, winning a silver medal, has won the Halls Medal (Best and Fairest) in the South Australian Women's Basketball competition, and is a life member of the WNBL thanks to her time playing for the Adelaide Lightning.

Jo is one of only eight players in history to have played over 300 games in the competition. She now plays Aussie Rules in the SANFLW for the Norwood Redlegs.

Jo is passionate about supporting and promoting positive mental health in her community and to providing opportunity to people with disability. Jo said, "Community Living Australia is a great organisation doing great things in the South Australian community for people with disability. They also have a strong presence in my hometown of Murray Bridge and I am honoured to think that in some way through my career and profile that I am able to assist in the work they do."

Jo further added:

**“Some of the greatest barriers people with disability face are the barriers created by society through stigma, stereotypes and negative perceptions, as they tend to limit opportunity and create isolation. I am excited by the prospect of working with Community Living Australia to break down these barriers and improve our communities.”**

## BOARD MEMBERSHIP



**Bill Rowe**  
(Chairperson)

**Jill Coombe**  
(Deputy Chair)

**Rex Keily** AM, JP

**Kym Lynch** JP



**Roslyn McGowan**

**Edwina Stevenson**

**John Greenslade**

**Alicia Hopper**

## SUB COMMITTEES

### Finance and Audit

- Kym Lynch JP (Chair)
- Garry Ashworth
- Bill Rowe
- Jason Conroy
- Beata Mitkas
- Mark Kulinski (employee)
- Karin Barry (employee)
- Nicola Marnoch (employee)

### Service Quality

- Jill Coombe (Chair)
- Roz McGowan
- Jonty Whitehead
- Alicia Hopper
- Mark Kulinski (employee)
- Tina Till (employee)
- Nicole Smith (employee)

### Nominations

- Rex Keily AM, JP (Chair)
- Bill Rowe
- Jill Coombe
- Mark Kulinski (employee)

### Business Development and Marketing

- John Greenslade (Chair)
- Rex Keily AM, JP
- Mark Kulinski (employee)
- Soula Dagas (employee)

### Risk and Compliance

- Edwina Stevenson (Chair)
- John Greenslade
- Bill Rowe
- Jill Coombe
- Rex Keily AM, JP
- Kym Lynch, JP
- Mark Kulinski (employee)

### Building for the Future Project

- Kym Lynch (Chair)
- Bill Rowe
- Rex Keily AM, JP
- Mark Kulinski (employee)
- Karin Barry (employee)
- Andrew Park (employee)
- Lee Thomas (employee)

# FINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Community Living Australia prides itself on maintaining a secure financial position, ensuring the long-term viability of the organisation in an increasingly competitive landscape.

This has been achieved through prudent financial management, placing the organisation in a strong position to continue to meet the needs of people with disability and offer employment opportunities in our South Australian community.

The benefits of a healthy financial position have been demonstrated through the COVID-19 pandemic with Community Living Australia able to provide security and continuity to its workforce and clients during uncertain times.

Community Living Australia is actively exploring opportunities to further deploy assets and cash reserves to secure the long-term success of the organisation in supporting our clients to achieve their goals.

**GROWTH METRICS** (increase from previous financial year)  
(\*significant increase aided by COVID-19 related Government Support)



**NET ASSETS ('000)**

**NET SURPLUS**

**EXPENSES**



**INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO**

\$1.4m 2020 | 54% increase  
\$2.2m 2021

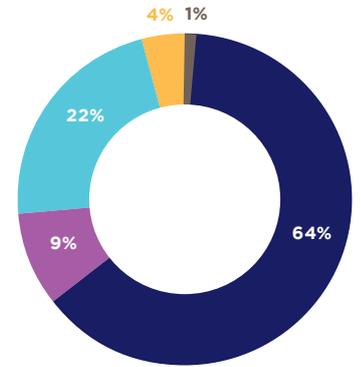
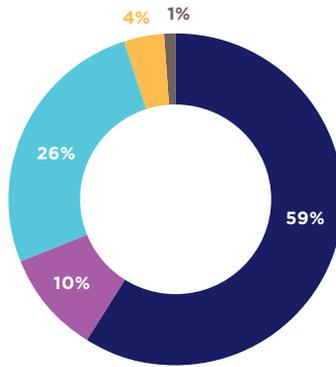
(market value adjustment and further \$0.5m investment)

Employee related **93%**  
Other **7%**

"Working for Community living Australia has been amazing! Management and staff are all really great people and I just simply love my role within Community living Australia."

*Matthew Hastwell*

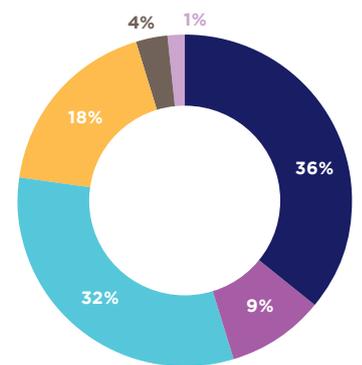
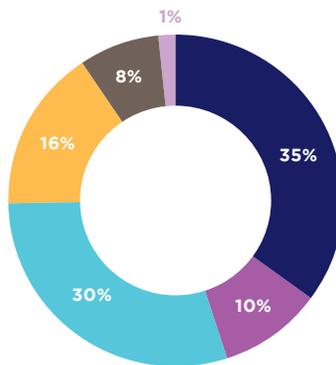
Support Worker - Fleurieu



### INCOME BY SERVICE TYPE

(expressed as a % of total organisational revenue)

	2020-21	2019-20
Accommodation	59%	64%
Day Services	10%	9%
Individual Support	26%	22%
Respite	4%	4%
Group Support	1%	1%



### INCOME BY REGION

(expressed as a % of total organisational revenue)

	2020-21	2019-20
Hills / Fleurieu	35%	36%
Riverland	10%	9%
Murraylands	30%	32%
South East	16%	18%
Southern Metro Adelaide	8%	4%
Kangaroo Island	1%	1%

# REWARDS AND RECOGNITION PROGRAM

At Community Living Australia, we are passionate about supporting our clients to achieve their goals and live their best lives.

2020-21 was the second year of our annual Rewards and Recognition Program, the purpose of which is to recognise and reward our clients, employees and community members who have demonstrated a commitment to improving themselves and achieving their life goals, or who have supported our clients and people living with disability to do so.

The 2020-21 awards were hosted at our new head office facility in Victoria Crescent, Mount Barker, and our winners are listed below – congratulations to all award winners on their hard work and dedication.

## CLIENT AWARDS

### ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD

**Awarded to clients who set personal short term and long term goals, are motivated to reach these goals and who are willing to keep striving towards their goals no matter the barrier.**

**Winner: Allan Hoppe**

Allan was selected for his motivation and ingenuity in running and growing his café microbusiness.

### EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Awarded to recognise commitment to and achievement of educational outcomes.**

**Winner: Jasmine Hobbs**

Jasmine was selected for continuing her commitment to her studies at the University of Adelaide, and for her completion of a sewing and design course at TAFE.

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AWARD

**Awarded to clients who are actively engaging in their community through valued roles.**

**Winner: Kerry Warner**

Kerry was selected for her active engagement in the Riverland community, particularly her numerous and significant volunteer work with local businesses, organisations, and schools.

### CHAIRMAN'S ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Awarded for demonstrating significant and notable achievements in line with individual support plans from each service region (please note nominations were not provided for the Riverland, Kangaroo Island or Fleurieu regions in 2020-21).**

**Winner: Murraylands – Ken Scott and Amanda Laube**

Ken and Amanda were selected for pursuing their goal of getting married and successfully moving into a home together – starting their new lives.

**Winner: Adelaide Hills – Jackie Walker**

Jackie was selected for her improvements in communication, community engagement and managing daily routines.

**Winner: South East – Warren Palmer**

Warren was selected for pursuing his passion for mechanics by volunteering with a local shipwright to help with the restoration of various artifacts for the Millicent Museum.

**Winner: Southern Metro – Adam Priess**

Adam was selected for achieving his goal of moving out of the family home and living independently.



Top: Jill Coombe (Board Member) with Jasmine Hobbs (award winner).

Bottom: The trophy awards lined up ready to be given to the award winners.

Right: Sue Aubert (award winner) with Murraylands Regional Manager (Molly Baulch).



Right: Jill Coombe (Board Member) with Ken Scott and Amanda Laube (award winners).



Left: Hayley Stuart (award winner and Team Leader) with Jill Coombe (Board Member).



Left: Award winners Ken Scott and Amanda Laube with friends Roslyn and Adam Thomas.



## EMPLOYEE AWARDS

## COMMUNITY AWARD

### DEDICATION AWARD

Awarded for demonstrating a commitment to quality service provision, continual improvement and improving the lives of people with disability for an extended period.

**Winner: Meagan Canny**

Meagan is a Team Leader in the Adelaide Hills and was selected for her 15 years of exceptional commitment to quality service provision, and her dedication to improving the lives of people with disability.

### IMPACT AWARD

Awarded for delivering significant improvements in our services and the lives of our clients, nominated by peers.

**Winner: Hayley Stuart**

Hayley is a Team Leader in the Adelaide Hills and was selected for her hard work, dedication, and generosity, which has had a significant impact on her team and her client's lives.

### CLIENT AWARD

Awarded for providing exceptional services and demonstrating a willingness to extend themselves to help others and improve our client's lives, nominated by our clients and families.

**Winner: Sue Aubert**

Sue is a Support Worker from the Murraylands and was selected for her development of innovative learning programs, including a money skills program that has been incredibly popular with, and beneficial to, our clients.

### VOLUNTEER AWARD

Awarded to a volunteer who demonstrates Community Living Australia's values, and whose commitment has a positive impact in the organisation achieving its aims.

**Winner: Vince Tucker**

Vince is a Support Worker from the South East and was selected for his extensive volunteerism through running a regular gaming group that has been extremely popular with young adults, and which demonstrates the living embodiment of Community Living Australia's values.

Awarded in recognition of the positive, enduring impact an individual or group makes to the lives of people with disability in the regions we service.

**Winner: Rock n' Blues Krew**

The Rock n' Blues Krew were selected for organising the inclusive 'Rock the Coast' concert in Middleton. Members Darcy, Sean, Nathaniel, Josh, and Rory brought music lovers with and without disability together in the region to rock out to the tunes of live bands and DJs in celebration of International Day of People with Disability. All funds raised from the event were donated to the Country Fire Service (CFS).



Award winners Sean Hill, Allan Hoppe, Meagan Canny, Darcy Cutten, Sue Aubert, Rory Tyrrell, Josh Pearce, Hayley Stuart, Ken Scott, Amanda Laube and Nathaniel Young.

**COMMUNITY LIVING AUSTRALIA**

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[cloust.com.au](http://cloust.com.au)

The logo for Community Living Australia is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of three stacked dark blue rectangular boxes. The top box contains the word "COMMUNITY" in white, uppercase letters. The middle box contains the word "LIVING" in white, uppercase letters, with a light blue diagonal line cutting through the text from the bottom left to the top right. The bottom box contains the word "AUSTRALIA" in white, uppercase letters. There are also two small light blue geometric shapes, one above and one below the main logo, resembling stylized triangles or chevrons.

**COMMUNITY  
LIVING  
AUSTRALIA**