

# 2018

ANNUAL REPORT

**caringa**   
*A Complete Life*



# Acknowledgement of Country



Caringa acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Australia.

We pay our respects to elders both past and present, and all Aboriginal peoples within the Clarence Valley and Coffs Coast and region.

**Bundjalung, Gumbaynggir, Yaegl**

# About Caringa Australia Ltd

Caringa Australia Limited (Caringa) is a diverse, mission-focussed, values-based and socially responsible organisation with its base in Grafton, NSW and operations across the Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour Council areas. Caringa is a leading provider of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) supports and services.

Caringa has been operating since 1953 when the community first raised funds to start a school for children with disability. Over time, Caringa has grown into an innovative and professional organisation offering people with disability a diverse range of supports and services. We continue to evolve to meet contemporary demand and to co-design services with clients.

- Supported Independent Living
- Support Coordination
- Finding and Keeping a Job
- Centre and Community Day Programs
- Plan Management
- Short-term Accommodation (formerly Respite)
- Supported Holidays

Caringa Australia Ltd. is registered with the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission.

**Registration No. 4-3LLO-1022.**

Caringa is a Registered NDIS Provider | **Provider No. 54195540.**

Caringa supports the experience and enjoyment of *A Complete Life* with choice and independence.

# Governance

Caringa's Board of Directors are all volunteers drawn from a diverse cross-section of the local community. They are generous with their time, knowledge and skills. The Board's role is Corporate Governance; they set Caringa's Strategic Vision and Focus for the future. All Directors are active on Board mandated Sub-Committees to actively implement good governance and sound financial and risk management strategies across the Company.



COLLEN  
PRITCHARD



CORALIE  
HALL



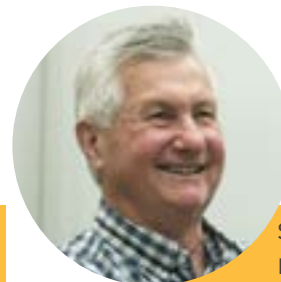
DEB  
VLASTARAS



KENN  
PAYNE



MATTHEW  
KATON



STEVE  
MCKIMM

# Mission & Values

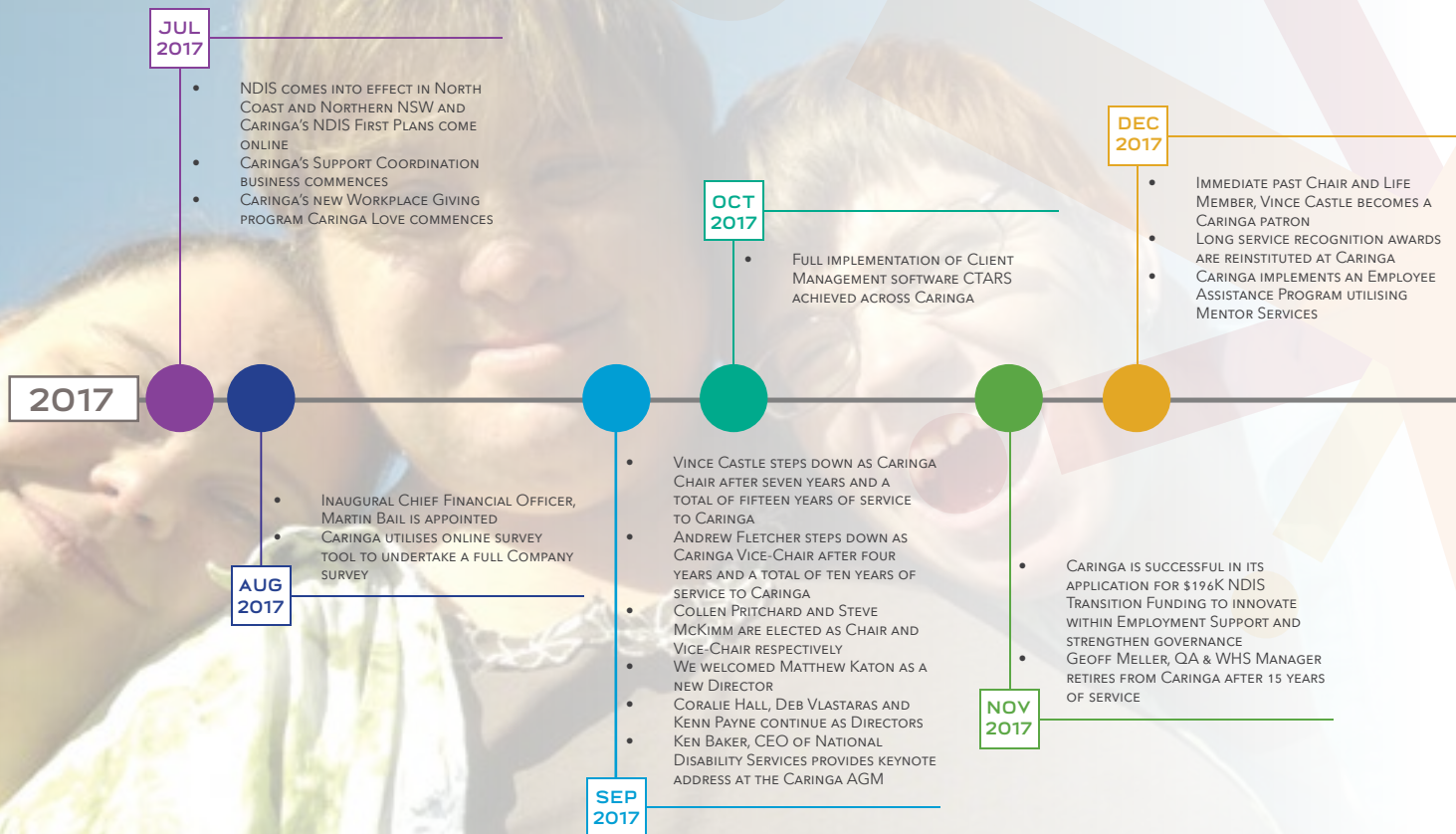


To Support and Empower People with a Disability

**RESPECT | ACCOUNTABILITY | EMPOWERMENT | INCLUSION | COMMITMENT | RIGHTS | PURPOSE**

- We are person centred and community focused.
- We are accountable, ethical and financially responsible.
- We are making a positive difference in the lives of people with disability and their families.
- We value the individual strengths of the people we support and the people we employ.
- We provide appropriate and desirable working conditions to our staff.
- We support the rights of children and people with disability in all aspects of our service.
- We are one team with common goals.

# Milestones



JAN  
2017

- CARINGA COMMENCES WORK WITH CONSULTANTS BLUE BIKE TO STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP AND CREATE A PLANNING ROADMAP
- CARINGA SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTS NEW FINANCIAL SYSTEM MYOB

2018

FEB  
2017

- CARINGA CEASES OPERATION OF ITS AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY ENTERPRISE, LOUISA'S FINE FOODS IN BONALBO AFTER WORKING WITH THE NDIA TO REPOSITION EXISTING CLIENTS
- CARINGA COMMENCES A REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM TO UPGRADE ITS QUEEN STREET PROPERTY

MAR  
2017

- CARINGA MEMBERS UNANIMOUSLY VOTE TO CHANGE CARINGA'S NAME TO CARINGA AUSTRALIA LIMITED
- COMMONWEALTH CONTINUITY OF SUPPORTS FUNDING CONFIRMED FOR CLIENTS AGED 65 YEARS AND ABOVE
- CARINGA CO-SPONSORS GRAFTON HARMONY DAY CELEBRATIONS
- PREMISES IN COFFS HARBOUR SECURED FOR NEW CARINGA SERVICE OUTLET
- MICHAEL ADA AND GUY ROBERTSON GRADUATE FROM LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA PERFORMANCE EDGE TRAINING

APR  
2017

- NEW CFO, VISHAL SHARMA IS APPOINTED
- BUILDING WORKS COMMENCE IN COFFS HARBOUR TO FIT OUR CARINGA'S NEW SERVICE OUTLET
- NEW HOUSING AGREEMENT WITH CARINGA CLIENTS IS IMPLEMENTED

JUN  
2017

- BUILDING WORK AT COFFS HARBOUR SERVICE OUTLET ARE COMPLETED
- CARINGA'S WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAM RAISED \$9,230.50 OVER THE FINANCIAL YEAR
- CARINGA ENDS NDIS TRANSITION YEAR WITH A 13% NET PROFIT
- IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PAYROLL SYSTEM HR3 COMMENCES

MAY  
2017

- FIRST CARINGA LEADERSHIP TEAM OUTWARD BOUND CHALLENGE IS UNDERTAKEN ON THE UPPER NYMBOIDA AND CLARENCE RIVERS
- CARINGA'S ADE PASSES ANNUAL SURVEILLANCE AUDIT AGAINST THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR DISABILITY SERVICES
- DONNA JACKSON GRADUATES FROM LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA'S PERFORMANCE EDGE TRAINING
- INAUGURAL CEO'S ROUND TABLE FOR MEMBER PARENTS AND CARERS OF CARINGA CLIENTS
- CARINGA GETS A SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE NDIS SAFEGUARDING & QUALITY FRAMEWORK AT A PRESENTATION IN SYDNEY
- NEW PRODUCT LINE 'CARINGA FRUITIES' IS BORN

# Chairman's Report

Caringa catches your attention...a starburst logo....a glimpse on the pathway to shopping....the garden stakes supporting your vegies....the ingenuity of selling 'Fruities' re-useable fruit and vegie bags... a barracking group at the State of Origin...the joy of music and song...the skill of creativity...formation of life skills...an introduction to a friend, a farewell, a Christmas party...joining families...a safe, secure, caring community. Caringa creates a sense of awe for the dedication and work of the Caringa founders, Directors and staff. It creates a sense of pride in the accomplishments of the many people whom we support to enjoy *A Complete Life*. Caringa contributes to creating safe, secure & loving environments in which life unfolds. Caringa is known and respected far and wide.

Caringa continues to develop progressive and professional supports for people with disability. The idea of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) initially disrupted our way of thinking and working. However, we have successfully created pathways of innovation, stable financial growth and individualised supports for NDIS participants thanks to the foresight of past Directors and staff, current Directors and especially the outstanding contribution of the current CEO, Rachel Choy and the Executive team. In particular, Client Services Manager Guy Robertson and his team have taken Caringa to a new and exciting level of performance. Five years ago we created a Caringa Strategic Plan and we

have progressively actioned the strategic directions within Caringa's values of Respect, Accountability, Empowerment, Inclusion, Commitment, Rights and Purpose.

In the lead up to the NDIS, we struggled to systematically reconcile what had been considered disparate organisational structures, and despite everyone's hard work and diligence, the flow of information was often incongruent. A number of changes were introduced to reset our course. Firstly, we employed inaugural Chief Financial Officer, Martin Bail who implemented a new accounting system and since then we fortunately gained the financial leadership of Vishal Sharma who, with his team, has introduced new insights and professional skills as we experience strong financial growth. Secondly, Caringa engaged Blue Bike to strengthen planning and leadership capacity for dispersed decision making. Thirdly, Directors are increasing their capacity to govern and meet our fiduciary responsibilities through training from the Australian Institute of Company Directors. So far this training has expanded our knowledge and increased our confidence in managing strategy, risk and finances.

The CEO successfully sought grant assistance from the Department of Social Services to review Caringa's Australian Disability Enterprises in order to create relevance within the NDIS. Caringa has been working with Disability Services Consultants (DSC) to review our practices and create a

# Collen Pritchard

NDIS model of operation. In the next 12 months, Caringa will move towards a new way of supporting Employment for NDIS participants which is a significant philosophical and practical change from our existing practice of exclusively providing Supported Employment through the Australian Disability Enterprise model. Moving forward, Caringa will provide a variety of co-designed Employment Supports for young people and adults with disability which best suit their stated goals as well as continue to provide Supported Employment through Australian Disability Enterprises.

Caringa's ability to maintain and foster our ongoing success and relevance within the NDIS is dependent on our adaptability, agility, skills, education and sensitive and respectful open communication. Each Friday afternoon it's a joyful enlightenment to read Rachel's much anticipated 'Good News Week'(GNW) which is excellently composed of delightful snippets and stories of client and staff activities and broad ranging information about Caringa's past, present, and future strategy and operations. The GNW is 'confidential' for the Caringa community and is a wonderful innovation and a valuable method to ensure staff and Directors are kept up-to-date with our sometimes personal stories and organisational realities. Good and transparent communication across our evolving Company is essential as we engage with an expanding referral network, build new supports, seek to maintain our position as an 'employer

of choice', and communicate with approximately 200 staff throughout the Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour.

As the financial year draws to a close and after many years of providing accommodation services and planning expansion in Coffs Harbour, Caringa is on the cusp of opening a service outlet to serve the Coffs Harbour community. Caringa in Coffs Harbour located at 'The Vault' will offer expanded NDIS supports for people with disability and their families.

Thanks to fellow Directors, Steve McKimm, Deb Vlastaras, Coralie Hall, Matt Katon and Kenn Payne who volunteer many hours ensuring Caringa Australia Ltd delivers efficient and professional support and services with empathy. It's an exciting time to be part of a changing Caringa with strong and strategic leadership, Team Leaders with ever evolving skills and a skilled and dedicated frontline staff who combine passion, empathy, diligence and support for people with disability and their families.

Most importantly. I invite parents, friends and anyone interested in improving the life choices of people with disability to become a member of Caringa Australia Limited.

**Collen Pritchard** | Chair

# CEO's Report

This last financial year has been significant for Caringa as we transitioned in full into the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Caringa has not only survived this transition year but we have thrived in spite of unpredictability. This has not been without design. Our success has been partly good governance and strategy, good planning, transformational technology, necessary decision making and a workforce that has been engaged, dedicated, agile and pragmatic.

I am very proud of how Caringa has supported our clients as they transitioned into the NDIS or into the Commonwealth Continuity of Supports Program if they were 65 years or older. This has been our greatest triumph of the past year. We have also welcomed many new clients. A significant change this year has been our name change from Caringa Enterprises Limited to Caringa Australia Limited to more accurately reflect our broad and diverse service supports within the NDIS.

Caringa employed its foundation CFO Martin Bail in August 2017 and he was succeeded by Vishal Sharma in April 2018. Despite only a short time with Caringa, Martin's legacy to the organisation is his flawless implementation of MYOB which has allowed Caringa to comprehensively track the complexities of our new operating environment. Another is our successful implementation of client resource management system CTARs and its continued improvement by Ruby Grieves and Guy Robertson.

Caringa has been competent. Ensuring lean overheads in keeping with the NDIS environment has required difficult

decisions to ensure limited resources are directed towards success. Accordingly, we reduced staff numbers within Administration and Management roles and increased the frontline. Non-performance was addressed and in February 2018, Caringa ceased operations at Disability Enterprise Louisa's Fine Foods in Bonalbo, but not before ensuring the six Supported Employees there were repositioned with fast-tracked NDIS First Plans. Quelling losses here allowed Caringa to commence an expansion into the growing Coffs Harbour area and Caringa will open a new service outlet in Coffs Harbour next fiscal year.

Caringa has maintained our income whilst reducing overheads and this has resulted in our strong financial position as at 30 June 2018 of a 13% nett surplus. There is always more work and in the coming fiscal year, Caringa plans to implement an investments strategy to ensure our equity and assets yield a better return. We will examine resource allocation to ensure that they too are working efficiently in line with operational and strategic requirements.

Our Support Coordination service which also offers Specialist Support Coordination has become the gold standard for how this new NDIS support is implemented in our area. Support Coordinators, Karen Metcalfe and Nicole Tyler are renowned for their impartial, professional and discreet support of NDIS participants.

We have worked with Disability Services Consultants to review our current Employment supports within the NDIS context. This

# Rachel Choy

is currently a work in progress and in 2018/19, Caringa will move to revitalise our service methodology and support offerings to ensure they are contemporary and relevant.

'Good News Week' has continued throughout this year. Dispatched each and every Friday, it serves as a vehicle for transparent communication directly from me to the entire Caringa workforce and Directors. Covering strategy, operations, decisions (and rationale) and activities over the week, it reinforces a culture of accountability which flows both ways from the leadership to the frontline and vice versa.

Caringa has invested heavily in building capacity within middle management. We have worked with consultants Blue Bike to map and implement a planning roadmap for the Company and a complimentary system to track progress against strategy. Leadership Management Australia has provided a learning platform for us to reinforce high performance within our Team Leaders. It is this layer of Caringa who mentor and support a large and ever growing frontline. Senior Managers and Team Leaders undertook a Leadership Challenge in May 2018 which realised previous classroom learning about team performance, communication, strategy, resource allocation, and decision making. We are decentralising decision-making and want decisions to be made as close to the source as possible. Thank you to all our Team Leaders who are the critical conduit between strategy and operations. With them, anything is possible.

None of what is produced and provided at Caringa is possible

without our superlative frontline which includes Vocational Supervisors. Our frontline team go above and beyond on a daily basis to ensure that all NDIS participants experience and enjoy *A Complete Life*. They are the beating heart of Caringa and our brand ambassadors. Without them, nothing is possible.

We are all held together by an efficient, hardworking and largely invisible corporate team. Grateful thanks to Clancy Attwater, Sean Austin, Anthony Carthew, Mel Gaddes, Sue Pearce, Anna Walsh, Karen Wynn and Karen Yarnold. Without them, we are lost. In the 2019 fiscal year, we are investing in our frontline as we implement self-paced learning resources to enhance their professional skills. Team building with respective Team Leaders will also be a priority to enhance communication and build high performance.

Last but not least, to my senior colleagues in the Executive team Mark Smidt, Guy Robertson and first Martin Bail and then Vishal Sharma, my sincere thanks for your energy, innovation, support and counsel. Many brains make light work and we enjoy working as a close-knit team.

Caringa's Directors govern with vision, passion and commitment, and without remuneration. I thank them for their strategic foresight and courage over the past 12 months. I am privileged to belong to this vibrant community of dedicated professionals and the people whom we support. Here's to another dynamic year as we progress to 2019.

Rachel Choy | CEO

# CFO's Report

This note recaps Caringa's 2017-18 financial performance in light of our key strategic challenges. It concludes with our financial forecast for fiscal year 2019 and some thoughts on our longer-term outlook and strategy.

Caringa Australia Limited remained financially strong in fiscal year 2018. Revenue has grown steadily by 10.9% over the last two years and has exceeded our forecast. Against this revenue growth, we continued to tighten the reins on expenses. Careful budget discipline is part of our culture at Caringa as we work to generate the greatest possible impact with the resources available.

Our efforts are bearing fruit. The resulting growth in cash from operations enabled Caringa to continue to make strategic investments in priority areas while still ending the year with a healthy unrestricted reserves balance. These reserves are crucial in providing the organisation with sufficient liquidity to execute on its objectives and to sustain the operations through economic cycles over the long term. Further, the Caringa surplus contributes to the overall financial health of the larger community for whose benefit it primarily exists.

Being the NDIS transition year, Caringa faced continued pressure to streamline systems and processes to maintain operating margins. We remained committed to investing in information technology and now have an array of cloud based systems that seamlessly communicate with each other for compliance and reporting. To ensure that the organisation continued to live within its means as the scope of activity at Caringa expanded, our top financial priority was

to ensure that revenue growth, including developing new sources of revenue, continued to exceed the rise in operating expenses.

We successfully executed on this priority in fiscal year 2018, driven by notable success in our NDIS business. Our expense control performance was mainly attributable to team effort in identifying wastage and inefficiencies. Underpinned by significant cultural change, the organisation's net operating margin rose 9.8%, year over year, reflecting new strategic initiatives.

Looking ahead to fiscal year 2019, our financial plan is focused, as always, on continuing to generate a healthy operating surplus as we work to fulfil the organisation's core objectives. Caringa is making progress, but we need to remain diligent in monitoring the relative rates of expense and revenue growth, as there may be softness in the organisation's revenue streams at a time of continued strategic innovation and industry change.

Our 2019 plan includes a commitment to further strengthening our programs across the Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour region, and providing our customers generous support. At the same time, we will continue to work toward the goal of evolving our subsidiary enterprises into self-sustaining and surplus-generating activities.

2019 will be an active year for capital investments, primarily focused on building our organisational resources. We will strive as always to maintain a balance of unrestricted reserves for initiatives and investments, while maintaining the organisation's long-term financial security and flexibility.

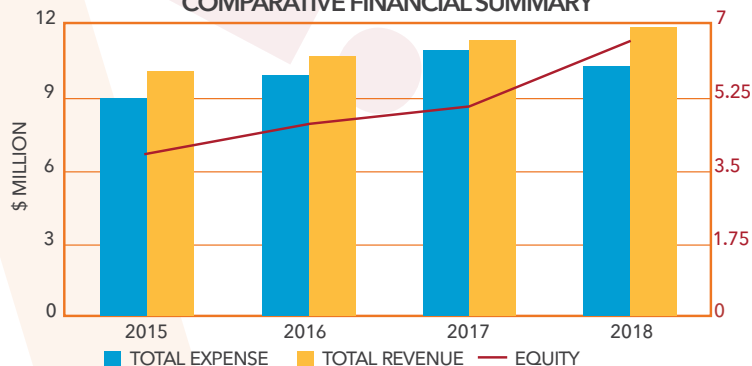
# Vishal Sharma

In summary, Caringa begins fiscal year 2019 with a healthy economic model and a strong reserves balance. Our financial plan provides flexibility for adjusting to changes in the industry, while continuing to invest in mission-driven innovation, employee recruitment, training and retention, and complete customer satisfaction.

One of our financial planning goals is for Caringa to serve as a living model of a well-run organisation. Achieving this goal starts with transparency and information sharing. To that end, our 2018 financial results are reported in detail on our website and may be accessed by anyone. We remain committed to thoughtful stewardship of the organisation's resources in the year ahead.

Vishal Sharma | CFO

## COMPARATIVE FINANCIAL SUMMARY



## PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

INCOME	\$000
OPERATIONAL	6,874
GRANTS	3,745
SALES	966
OTHER	204
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>11,789</b>
EXPENSES	\$000
STAFF & RELATED	8,062
OPERATING & ADMINISTRATIVE	1,207
PROPERTY, VEHICLES & DEPRECIATION	612
COST OF GOODS SOLD	317
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>10,198</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS</b>	<b>1,591</b>

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

ASSETS	\$000
CASH & TERM DEPOSITS	3,752
INVENTORY & RECEIVABLES	442
PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT	4,269
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>8,463</b>
LIABILITIES	\$000
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	834
PAYABLES & OTHER LIABILITIES	743
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	281
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,858</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>6,605</b>

# Client Services

Over the past year the pace of change in the disability sector has been extraordinary. It has been both challenging and rewarding as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has continued to become available to an increasing number of people with disability in our local area. Caringa's focus in 2017-2018 has been on improving the way we work, thereby embracing the opportunity to better serve NDIS participants.

We have seen many achievements throughout the year, with several opportunities becoming realities, sometimes through the sheer force of will from our team. From the frontline to senior management our organisation is very fortunate to have such dedicated and passionate people working together to improve the lives of people with disability.

## Support Coordination

Support Coordination has been a very successful part of Caringa's NDIS business strategy this financial year. Support Coordination is a service that was not available prior to the rollout of the NDIS. Our Support Coordinators work with our clients to co-design services, link with other service providers and mainstream supports to implement their NDIS plans. Our Support Coordinators are well respected, and known for putting the person at the centre of the support coordination process and all decision making.

## Creating more time for our clients

To keep up with changing needs of clients, we have introduced timesaving online systems that means less paperwork and more time for people.

The new system CTARS is enabling our staff to work with a single source of information about our clients and their needs. CTARS has enabled Caringa to automate our NDIS claiming workflows, reducing processing time from approximately 45 minutes per claim to approximately five minutes per claim. This financial year Caringa Australia made over 15,000 individual claims. This would not have been possible without the introduction of CTARS. It is important Caringa is agile and lean; our focus on systems during FY2017-18 is what has enabled us to keep administration overheads to an absolute minimum.

## Additional benefits of our cloud based systems are:

- Better matching of support workers to clients (EMPLIVE);
- Accurate Billing and NDIA Claims (CTARS, MYOB);
- Effectively and effective capture of client information;
- Improved client outcomes through accurate and real-time data collection;
- Creating a platform for future sustainable growth and scalability;
- Supporting the implementation of our One Caringa Strategy.

# Guy Robertson

## A Better Way to.... Deliver Services

The NDIS has been a huge challenge for service providers in NSW as organisations grapple with developing services that our clients want, truly need, and value. We have spent a considerable amount of time this year reflecting on what services we offer, what they look like, as well as identifying areas for improvement and growth. In the past year Caringa:

- Worked with our clients and their families to navigate the NDIS, and implement their First Plans. It has been a significant opportunity for learning what our customers want, but also how to best operate under the NDIS.
- Building and expanding our NDIS workforce. This year we have experienced the workforce crunch that the Productivity Commission predicted. We have struggled to keep up with demand for our services (some people would consider it a good problem to have, but a challenge none the less).
- Completed the merge of our day and accommodation services into a single client facing team; a key component of our "One Caringa" strategy. This has allowed us to serve our clients in a more holistic way to support *A Complete Life*
- Caringa has been making it easier to do business with us through improving client contact, on-boarding and claims processes.
- Began work to expand Caringa services into the Coffs Harbour region, with a Caringa Service outlet and administrative offices opening in Harbour Drive. I look

forward to reporting on the opening of the outlet and the outcomes at the next members meeting.

## Recruit

Our people are the single most critical contributor to our business success. We are committed to ensuring we have the best people in the right roles. We want to also ensure our employee experience is as positive as the experience of our clients. We have sought to do this through:

- Implementing an online system of recruitment;
- Introduction of "safe select" online recruitment screening tool;
- Committing to values based recruitment;
- We have developed processes to implement an online industry induction and training package (which will be implemented in FY2018-19);
- Management of employee skills, abilities and training through our cloud based systems.

## Lead

We want our employees' experience to be a positive and consistent one. This in part comes from good leadership. During the past year a number of programs and resources have been developed and implemented to increase our leadership capability and skills in order to build a client focused high

# Client Services

performing team that reflects our organisational mission and values. These include:

- Developing a partnership with Leadership Management Australia to deliver performance edge training to all team leaders
- Working with Blue Bike Solutions to enhance team leader leadership capability
- Development of a cloud based business intelligence tool and KPI measurement suite

## Operate in the NDIS

This year we have been focused on successfully transitioning our clients to the NDIS, and ensuring that our organisation is agile, and sustainable. FY2017-18 has been a very successful year, with solid results. The whole team looks forward to the challenges the new year and year two of NDIS will bring.

**Guy Robertson** | Client Services Manager

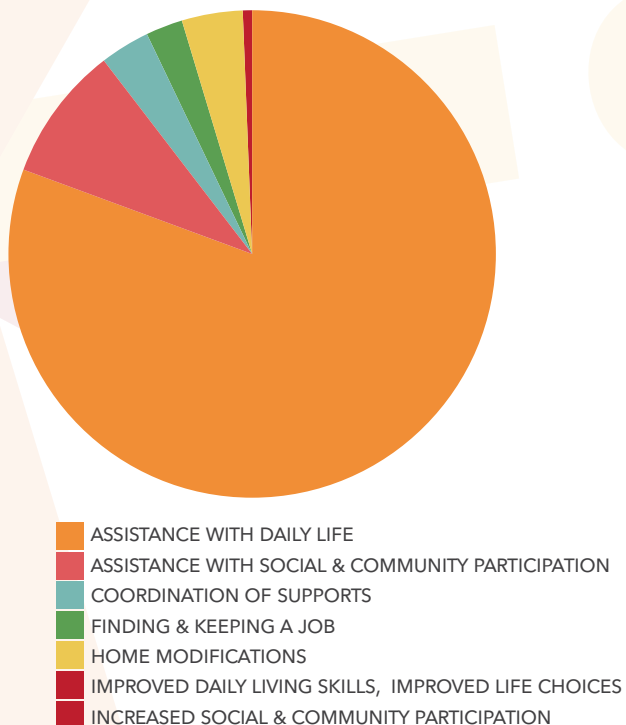
NUMBER OF CLIENTS BY SERVICE



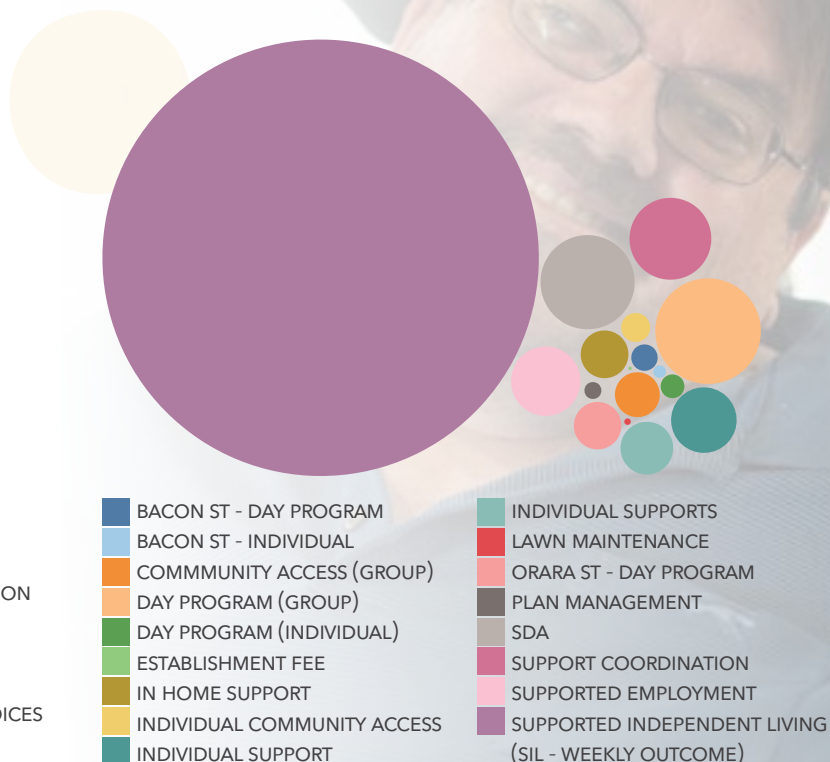
■ DIRECT SERVICE (54%)  
■ PLAN MANAGEMENT (9%)  
■ SUPPORT COORDINATION (37%)

# Guy Robertson

NDIS REVENUE BY SUPPORT CATEGORY



REVENUE BY SERVICE TYPE





# Australian Disability Enterprises

2018 has been a transition year for Caringa's Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE) with 30 Supported Employees transitioning into the National Disability Insurance Scheme and 2 Supported Employees who are over 65 years of age transitioning into the Commonwealth Continuity of Supports Program. As at the end of financial year, there are two Supported Employees yet to transition into the NDIS. During this past year the ADE underwent an external surveillance audit against the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS). New auditors were in place this year with fresh eyes and they still confirmed previous audits that our processes and professional practices are in good order alongside a high level of client (Supported Employee) satisfaction.

Caringa's relationship with long-term customers remains strong and production levels were high as we continued to grow our customer base. Orara Clarence Industries (OCI) supplied many major infrastructure builders with products and services. At the peak of the Pacific Highway upgrade, OCI was supplying 8 out of 9 contractors on the Woolgoolga to Harwood section. Our customers have provided a diversity of work and other valued outcomes for Supported Employees. OCI was the showcase in a media event for the John Holland Group organised by local MP, Chris Gulaptis. OCI manufactured nesting boxes for use by native wildlife during initial earthworks at the new Grafton Gaol site.

Nine Supported Employees successfully attained their Certificate II in Warehousing in 2017/18 which was a significant skills enhancement.

After uncertainty surrounding the wage assessment methodology since the demise of the Federal Government's wage assessment process, the Fair Work Commission has ruled that the Commission will be developing its own tool. This confirms that existing processes will change and replaced by this new tool. However, for the moment Caringa will continue with SkillsMaster as our wage assessment system which has recognised that many Supported Employees have increased their skills this year to achieve pay increments during their annual skills assessment. Caringa was successful in attaining a grant under the NDIS Transition Consultation Round 3. We have utilised this to engage Disability Services Consultants to review our current ADE offering. Their brief is to align Caringa's employment services with the NDIS environment to fulfil participant demand. A plan is in formulation following extensive and comprehensive consultation with stakeholders between April to June 2018.

During this past year, Caringa Fruities evolved from concept to product. Caringa Fruities are reusable produce bags made from recycled plastic bottles. They represent Caringa's contribution to the war on waste and single-use plastics and provide Supported Employees and other Caringa clients an opportunity to participate in direct and B2B sales. Fruities are at present on a proof of value trial with an initial market release of a limited number of units. Each unit comprises five bags. Sales figures will be analysed to review the ongoing viability of this product.

# Mark Smidt

Caringa's Topcuts Lawn Service serviced 1050 sites for 20 customers this past year. Led by Lance Predo, the Supported Employee team kept working through brutal summer conditions as true professionals. Satisfaction surveys show a 100% customer satisfaction endorsement.

During this year, Books & Gifts Direct made a transition from a day program activity to Supported Employment option. This has offered the development of literacy, numeracy, product sales, cash handling and navigation to 3 Supported Employees who participated in this business.

Caringa made the difficult decision to close Louisa's Fine Foods (LFF) in February 2018 in Bonalbo, NSW. Declining Supported Employee numbers, the scale of the operation and its remote location made this business stream harder and harder to operate sustainably. The decision was not a reflection on product quality, staff and Supported Employee dedication and enthusiasm or Caringa's dedicated attempt to keep LFF operating. A service withdrawal plan was developed in November 2017 with a gradual implementation until 28 February 2018.

I wish to pay tribute to Team Leader, Sue Henderson and frontliner Alana Quirk who continued to work until the doors closed. Their professionalism and continued support of Supported Employees is an inspiration to all. My thanks to our Supported Employees Shirley Thomas, Jo Moss, Barbara Szafron, Ron Makings, Fred

Makings and Tegan Jolley for their contributions over the years of Caringa's involvement with LFF. Caringa undertook significant work and consultations with various agencies in Bonalbo and Casino to ensure that the LFF Supported Employees would have robust supports in their NDIS First Plans and beyond.

OCI Manufacturing Pictos:

- Manufactured 30,000 pole caps.
- Manufactured 120,000 timber pegs, 46% of those painted.
- Destroyed over 21,000kg of confidential documents.

**Mark Smidt** | Disability Enterprises Manager

# Caringa Staff

## FRONTLINE STAFF

ZAKI ABDUL-MAJID  
VIRLISSA ADAMS  
SHASTINE ALTMANN  
ANDI AMAN  
LEANNE AUSTIN  
DARREN BARKESS  
CAITLIN BEESTON  
MELISSA BENSON  
PETER BERNARD  
LISA BERRY  
DEBRA BILLING  
RHIANN BRADY  
DEAN BROUGHTON  
GEMMA BUCKLEY  
GLEN BUSH  
AMY BYRNES  
NICHOLAS CAMPBELL  
STEPHANIE CANTLY  
DAVID CARRETT  
JASON CHEVALLEY  
STEFFANEE COLGARVE  
DECLAN COLLIE  
HUAN COLLIE  
TENILLE COLLINS  
JEREMY CONE  
NATHAN COTTEN  
GREG COWAN  
MARGARET CRITCHLEY BREAD  
CUNNINGHAM  
TIANA DARE  
DAMIAN DELEIEN  
GRAHAM DEWBERRY

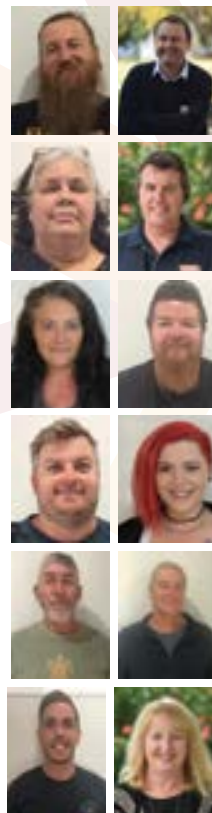
LISA DICKENS  
GABRIELLE DIXON-RITCHIE  
HASANI DOUGLAS  
SIMONE EARLE  
REANNAN ELLINGWOOD  
JAYDEN FAHEY  
MICHAEL FREIER  
CARMEN FRENCH  
MELISSA FRENCH  
PETER FREND  
JEFFREY FULLER  
ASHLEIGH GRIFFIN  
JACINDA HALCROW  
RENEE HAMILTON  
BLAKE HAMMOND  
CATHERINE HARGANS  
KEN HARPER  
TAMARRA HARRIS  
PETER HARVEY  
BREANNA HATGIS  
JODIE HATGIS  
GLENN HAWKINS  
DIANA HILL  
ERIKA HONNERY  
KIM JOHNSON  
KIMBERLEY KAVGAS  
MATTHEW KELLY  
SIMON KELLY  
DIXIE KNUDSON  
HEIDI KRUGER  
BRENNON LAVERY  
ROBERT LEES

BRIDGETTE LYNCH  
MALI MANDALA  
PAUL MARSCHAM  
ZACHARY MASON-GALE  
ZAKARY MASTERS  
PHILLIP MCCARTHY  
MICHAEL MCKENZIE  
FIONA MCLENNAN  
VICKI MCPHERSON  
RICKI MOORE  
MATTHEW MORRIS  
SUZANNE MOSS  
PHILIP MULLINS  
MARYANNE NEWTON  
SHARYN PATON  
LUCINDA PAXTON  
KAYLA POKE  
SUSAN POLSEN  
MICHAEL POTTAGE  
LANCE PREDON  
GARY PYM  
PAUL RICCOBONO  
JOSEPH RIGG  
JANE ROOKE  
MELISSA RYAN  
JULIA SAUNDERS  
WAYNE SECCOMBE  
CHRISTOPHER SHEEHAN  
SJANE SHOEBRIDGE  
CARRIE SILK  
DIANNE SIMMONS  
NEIL SPRING

HANNAH STRAW  
BROOKE THOMPSON  
ELAINE TOWNS  
DANIEL TRICKETT  
CLIVE TULLIPAN  
DEBORAH VANZINO  
AARON WALKER  
KYM WARREN  
SARAH WARREN  
DONNA WATERHOUSE  
LESLEY WATKINS  
MADISON WAYGOOD  
ANNIKA WILLOWS  
HOLLY WILSON  
NICHOLAS YEATES  
JENNIFER YOUNG

## TEAM LEADERS

MICHAEL ADA  
SEAN AUSTIN  
BRENNAN ELKS  
DAVID GREEN  
DONNA JACKSON  
SHAYNE MARTIN  
PAUL MCKENZIE  
ZACHARY PAGE  
COL WORMALD





# Caringa Staff

## CORPORATE STAFF

CLANCY ATTWATER  
ANTHONY CARTHEW  
MELISSA GADDES  
RUBY GRIEVES  
KAREN METCALFE  
SUZANNE PEARCE  
NICOLE TYLER  
ANNA WALSH  
KAREN WYNN  
KAREN YARNOLD

## EMPLOYEES WHO LEFT DURING THE YEAR

MARTIN BAIL  
ADRIAN BAKER  
JAYNE BANKS  
VANESSA BESESTRI  
TIARNA BROWN  
ANTHONY COLLINS  
WILFRED DALEY  
SHANE DENSHIRE  
JULIE FINLAY  
BENJAMIN GARRETT  
SUSAN HENDERSON  
DEIDRE JONES  
RENEE LAFOREST  
BERYL MADDEN  
JESSE MADDEN  
ASHLEE MCLENNAN  
FIONA MCNEVEN

GEOFFREY MELLER  
REBECCA PATEMAN  
REBECCA PESCHLA  
ALANA QUIRK

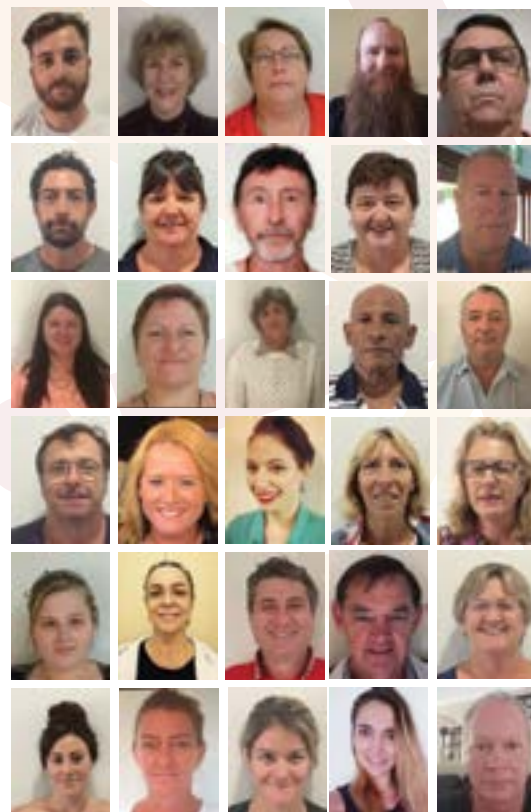
## SUPPORTED EMPLOYEES

ROSS BAILY  
GARY BAKER  
GREGORY BOOTHBY  
MITCHELL CAMERON  
PHILIP COCHRANE  
BEVERLY DARGUE  
TYE DILLON  
BRENDAN FORD  
ROBERT FOSTER  
DANIEL GARDEM  
LEE GOODIN  
DANIEL GREENLAND  
ANTHONY HAYES  
AMY HICKSON  
NATHAN HULL  
SINEAD JOHNSON  
DAVID JONES  
MARK KELLERMAN  
KATE KRATZ  
BRYAN LIVERMORE  
ABRAHAM LOCKYER  
ANGELA MCGRATH  
JAKE MCHUTCHISON  
GAVIN NEALE  
JAMES NIXON

MOIRA O'CONNOR  
MIKAILAH PASSLOW  
CRAIG PERRETT  
SARAH RAPMUND  
LEANNE SMITH  
WAYNE SMITH  
KEENAN STILLMAN  
BRADLEY TAYLOR  
LEONIE TAYLOR  
MATTHEW TEALE  
SAMUEL VENN

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYEES WHO LEFT DURING THE YEAR

TROY COLE  
HEATHER CONNOR  
JASON DICKSON  
ANNETTE HAYWARD  
TEAGAN JOLLEY  
ANDREW LAIDLAW  
ANTHONY LANE  
FREDERICK MAKINGS  
RONALD MAKINGS  
MICHAEL MORRIS  
JOANNE MOSS  
SARAH RAPMUND  
LEANNE SMITH  
BARBARA SZAFRAN  
SHIRLEY THOMAS  
BARRY WANT  
ASHLEY WILSON



# Quality, Safety & Systems | Ruby Grieves

Most of the Quality goals for this year have been around planning and preparation for the changes the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has brought to the Organisation and to the Disability Industry as a whole. Caringa streamlined administration and prepared for the future under the NDIS.

A significant change in the 2017/18 year has been the decision not to renew our ISO 9001:2015 Certification. Caringa has deemed it is no longer the best Quality Systems framework for operations under the NDIS. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework provides clear definition for requirements as a registered provider within the NDIS. Caringa has been working and will continue to review our existing Quality System in line with this. Caringa has access to the National Disability Services (NDS) Quality Portal through BNG NGO- Standards Performance Pathways. This online portal provides self-assessments, risk management tools and cross maps all relevant legislations so we can make decisions based on clear evidence of compliance requirements. The review and update of our existing Quality Management System is underway. This has been done carefully with the implementation of more contemporary systems to avoid duplication. Our aim has been to maximise the utility of any new system and work smartly. We have made significant investment in new systems which allow real time information, provide data to make informed choices and make information more accessible to all stakeholders within Caringa. We regularly critically review our current systems and

commitments and do not shy away from walking away from things that no longer best meet our needs.

## **Work Health & Safety**

This year has seen an increase in reported injuries. The vast majority of injuries are minor and required minimal to no treatment. This volume of reported injuries confirms that our injury reporting process works. Out of 117 Reported injuries since September 2017, 11% required medical treatment and 3% required time loss. Caringa's Return to Work Program is currently being updated to the requirements of the State Insurance Regulatory Authority Guidelines and we have transitioned to icare for our Workers Insurance. Since January 2018, we also have new Claims Management Provider, EML. EML have simplified the claims and notification process and now can be logged online and there is an online portal where Caringa can view and manage existing claims. This year we invested in more training for RTW Coordination. We now have 5 people in the Organisation trained for RTW Coordination. This means there will be support available for any of our injured workers to recover at work and gives us the ability to ensure that the assigned RTW Coordinator is not the direct Supervisor for an injured worker. All RTW processes are currently under review to ensure we are still meeting all of the requirements under SIRA and Safework NSW.

**Ruby Grieves** | Systems Development and Quality

# Leadership Outward Bound Challenge

During 2017/18 Caringa has invested heavily in building leadership capacity at middle management and improving communications.

Outward Bound is a long accepted way to tap leadership potential and to encourage/accelerate team bonding. A three day two night white water canoe adventure was an opportunity for the team to see and experience each other like never before whilst isolating them from the outside world and from work and life-related intrusions, providing an intense and focussed experience.

The adventure experience was designed and led by Dave Cowperthwaite of Wild River Tours and Gray Stride of the Nymboida Canoe Centre and challenged the team both physically and mentally. It enabled the team to experience each other at depths not usually reached in normal work situations, and forge bonds.

The experience improved leadership responsibility, decision making effectiveness and team cohesiveness as our group worked as one organism to survive and succeed in the challenge.

Those unable to participate directly were provided with alternate challenges and fulfilled them with flying colours.

## Participants in the leadership challenge

**Sean Austin**  
**Ruby Grieves**  
**Guy Robertson**  
**Michael Ada**  
**Donna Jackson**  
**Vishal Sharma**  
**Brennan Elks**  
**Shayne Martin**  
**Col Wormald**  
**Rachel Choy**  
**Paul McKenzie**  
**David Green**  
**Zachary Page**

### **In their own words:**

*"...It was a feeling of accomplishment on completing the challenge and great satisfaction how everyone worked as a team in helping one another. Every team member had their own skill set which contributed to an awesome event..."* **David**

*"...Being away from the 9-5 office grind and being thrown into a Crucible of water, rocks and little alien-like grubs that got caught up in your leg hair, gave us all a chance to get to know each other on a greater personal level..."* **Michael**

*"...I learned that even though people may not have been experienced or confident they were still willing to have a go and engage with the challenge. I see this applying to the workplace as well with the move to the NDIS there are many uncharted waters and risks that may lay ahead but everyone is at least on the water. The only concern I have is that one way or another everyone could get to the bottom. If they cruised down the rapid, hit every rock on the way down or swam down, everyone got through. Not everyone was dry or unscathed though. So, not all results are equal. Sometimes it matters how you get there not just that the job is done. And even though everyone is in the boat it does not necessarily mean they know what they are doing..."* **Ruby**

*"...More confident to go to others with ideas and feedback despite the outcome. Failure is a good learning lesson. There is definitely a stronger communication link between all that attended as trust and faith have also been challenged but overcome..."* **Shayne**

*"...There were valuable lessons learnt from the challenge. If we can replicate the same caring attitude towards our work colleagues and team, and accept them with all their imperfections and weaknesses, without constantly judging and criticising them, we can gradually develop the most productive workplace and be an employer of choice in the region. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses so the goal should be to harness the strengths and complement the weaknesses of our team mates so that together we achieve the desired goal as a well-knit team..."* **Vishal**

### **Alternate challenge to organise the Caringa table for a Trivia night fundraiser:**

*"...The organisation of this night was quite an eye opener for me. Sometimes even getting an answer on the sheet was a task. Often there were five different answers to one question and at times there was a need to actually say "Just write something down" so the answer sheet went back without blank spaces...In conclusion this was a good experience for me. I learned that working in a group of different people, in a social setting, can be difficult and there are times when someone needs to take control to help the group to succeed..."* **Col**

# CaringaLove

Caringa believes that in order to serve community, one has to be IN community. We, therefore, encourage all staff to participate in our workplace giving program CaringaLove. This is to instill a sense of community and ownership for staff using a GIVE WHERE YOU WORK philosophy which in turn benefits Caringa's clients. Workers are in effect not only taking but contributing to the financial health and wellbeing of Caringa. Funds are used strictly for benefit of clients. They are managed by the CaringaLove Committee who are staff delegates nominated and elected from the different workplace areas of Caringa.

## CaringaLove Committee

**Susan Polsen** | Chair

**Sue Pearce** | Treasurer

**Dan Trickett** | Secretary

**Margaret Critchley** | Workplace delegate

**Matt Kelly** | Workplace delegate

**Aaron Walker** | Workplace delegate

During the 2017-18 financial year, CaringaLove raised \$9230.50 from our own workplace and has supported the following:

- A LED TV with in-built DVD player for the Supported Employee meal room at Caringa's Australian Disability Enterprise.
- A high tech PA system for Caringa's day program for clients to use with karaoke, band practice, pop up stalls and other performance based activities.
- Multiple fishing rods, bicycles and all safety accessories and 2 x golf sets for clients who cannot afford to own or hire equipment to be shared amongst all Caringa clients on a book-out basis.
- A cardio trampoline to enhance our clients' fitness, health and wellbeing.

# Caringa in the Community

Caringa believes that we have to PARTICIPATE and be IN community in order to serve community. In keeping with this, Caringa has proudly participated and contributed to the following community events during this past year:

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

RSPCA CUPCAKE DAY

ALL HELPING HANDS FUNDRAISERS

DAFFODIL DAY

LEGACY

JACARANDA FESTIVAL

HARMONY DAY

SOCIAL INCLUSION DAY

Social  
Inclusion  
Australia



daffodil day  
Cancer Council



LEGACY





## CONTACT US

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E | [office@caringa.com.au](mailto:office@caringa.com.au)

The Link, Grafton Shoppingworld  
Prince Street, Grafton

## GRAFTON OFFICE

91 Victoria Street, Grafton

## COFFS HARBOUR OFFICE

The Vault - 103  
92-98 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour

[www.caringa.com.au](http://www.caringa.com.au)

**caringa**   
*A Complete Life*