



# 2022

## Annual Report

**caringa**  
*A Complete Life*



# Acknowledgment of Country

Caringa acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Australia.

We pay our respects to elders pasts, present and emerging, and all indigenous peoples within the Clarence Valley and Coffs Coast regions.

**Bundjalung - Gumbaynggir - Yaegl**

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# Our Story

**Caringa Australia Limited (Caringa) is a diverse, mission-focused, values-oriented and socially responsible organisation with its base in Grafton, NSW and operations across the Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour Council areas. Caringa is a trusted and 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. Caringa is 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 and supports with clients. Caringa can provide services to all NDIS participants regardless of how your plan is managed (NDIA Managed, Plan Managed or Self Managed).

Caringa Australia Ltd. is registered with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Registration No. 4-3LLO-1022.

Caringa is a Registered NDIS Provider. Provider No. 4050000721

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

- \* Allied Health/Therapy (multipiciplinary)
- \* Support Coordination
- \* Daily Living Skills and Support
- \* Specialised Disability Accommodation (SDA)
- \* Social and Community Inclusion
- \* Plan Management
- \* Short-term Accommodation (including respite)
- \* In-home Supports
- \* Capacity Building
- \* Finding and Keeping a Job including:
  - Supported Employment
  - School Leaver Employment Supports
  - Customised Employment
  - Job Carving
  - Micro-business Support



# 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. Caringa's Directors are committed to contributing effective and contemporary skills to Caringa.



**Tim White**  
Chair



**Matthew Katon**  
Vice Chair



**Katrina Austen**  
Director until May 2022



**Phil Elliott**  
Director



**Geraldine Gallagher**  
Director



**Deb Vlastaras**  
Director



**Marilyn Brien**  
Director until June 2022



# Our Vision

## People with disability experience a complete life within a community that celebrates their individuality

- ✦ Caringa promotes inclusion, takes action for effective change and partners with our community for social change so that our clients experience acceptance, empowerment and inclusion.
- ✦ Caringa's values shape our expanding operation as we serve more people with disability in our community.
- ✦ Caringa's quality of services, social enterprises and innovation enable each client to live a complete life with dignity, choice, control and independence.
- ✦ Caringa pursues sustainability through our people, processes and business decisions to enhance the wellbeing of clients and our community.

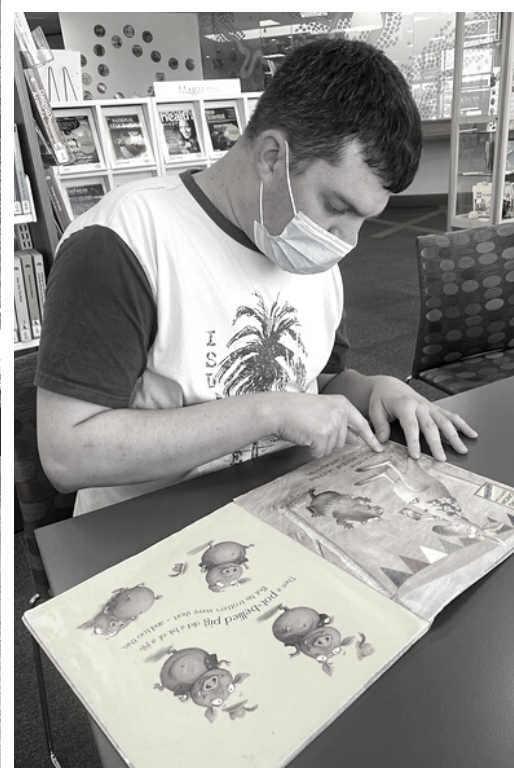
# Our Mission & Values

## To support and empower people with a disability

- ✦ 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 a 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.

**Respect ✦ Accountability ✦ Empowerment**

**Inclusion ✦ Commitment ✦ Rights ✦ Purpose**









# From the Chair

Welcome to the 2022 Annual Report for Caringa Australia Limited. Whilst we had many wins, the 21/22 financial year was definitely not the smooth sailing year that we all hoped for following bushfires, floods and the pandemic of prior years. However, the compassion, strength, resilience and attitude of our Caringa community has once again risen to the top and allowed us to come through it all with many positive outcomes and results. Our thoughts are with those that have lost loved ones during the year and those that have been affected by the recent floods.

Caringa has again performed well across many measures. We have made numerous changes along the way to juggle staff shortages and to find required efficiency in the resources that we have available. One example, amongst many, of this is the rethinking and redesign of how we deliver services including utilising The Castle Centre Head Office space for expanding client focussed activities and increased service delivery opportunities.

Our Disability Support Workers have once again showed that they, along with our clients, are at the heart of our Caringa community by managing the challenges thrown at them with compassion, skill and flexibility. Well done and thank you to all of our front-line workers. Caringa could not deliver the positive outcomes it is known and respected for without you.

Thank you to our clients and families for weathering the COVID-19 storm as its spread across our community at a speed that we had previously not experienced.

It was only a matter of 'when' the Clarence Valley was going to really experience the effects of the pandemic. Thank you to everyone for your understanding and patience while we attempted to control the spread and did our absolute best to keep our Caringa community safe and supported.

In addition to above, thank you to all Caringa employees that have gone above and beyond doing additional cleaning and shifts, accommodating changes to regular routines and have generally assisted in controlling the spread of COVID to this point. This includes regularly taking and performing Rapid Antigen Tests to ensure the highest level of safety is being delivered to our clients. We all appreciate and notice the massive effort you have put in. Of course, a special mention to the rostering team for juggling all the balls this year and filling those shifts, often at very short notice, along with the Therapy team, Support Coordinators, Outcomes and Practice Leaders, Client Services Coordinators and the entire Corporate and leadership teams. Well done.

Despite the wet that never seemed to stop, the team at Top Cuts managed to get the lawns mown and keep on top of the gardening jobs. To see these crews, roll out the driveway, loaded trailers in tow, shows their commitment to their job and to keeping Top Cuts client's yards clean and tidy. Well done! In addition, well done to all the workers at 1 Orara Street who have continued to offer confidential waste paper solutions, produce wooden pegs/stakes and poll caps and keep the Bare Earth to Bounty project rolling. Congratulations on another strong performance from you during a disrupted and difficult year.

I would like to recognise the efforts of two of our Executive team that have made the decision to move on from Caringa in this financial year. Our CEO Rachel Choy left Caringa in April 2022 to focus on personal matters. Rachel was the CEO of Caringa for nearly 5 years and during that time was instrumental in driving change and guiding Caringa through the initial phases of the NDIS rollout. We saw many new projects come to life under Rachel's guidance, projects that have helped Caringa grow and contribute to the delivery of A Complete Life for Caringa's clients. Rachel, thank you for your time as CEO of Caringa, we appreciate your significant contribution. I wish you all the best for the future.

Our Chief Financial Officer, Vishal Sharma, left Caringa in June 2022 with plans to move interstate with his family. Vishal was the CFO of Caringa for over 4 years and during this time provided the Board with many cost saving opportunities and cost analysis of planned projects. Vishal, we wish you all the best in your next journey in the finance world.

Following these resignations, the Board appointed two of our trusted leaders to the position of Co-CEO's (interim) – Guy Robertson and Glen McClymont. Their strengths complement each other and their understanding of Caringa, the clients, the staff, the policies and procedures and the inner workings of the business put them in good stead to take the reins while we search to fill the position of CEO. Guy and Glen have spent countless hours in filling the shoes of CEO and CFO while continuing to complete their original positions as well.

Thank you, Guy and Glen, for taking this on. The two of them could not have done it without the support

of many of the Caringa team, so again thank you all.

The Board has also seen some change in the past few months with Katrina McAndrew and Marilyn Brien leaving to focus on their busy lives. Thank you both for your immense contribution through the sharing of your knowledge and skills with Caringa and the Board over recent years.

To all Directors, thank you for your support and time. You have each been called upon to attend many meetings and devoted many hours to Caringa. I look forward to working with you across the next financial year and hopefully beyond for the betterment of this wonderful organisation.

Finally, and again, thank you to all of Caringa's clients and staff, without you we don't have Caringa. I hope that the 2022/23 year brings A Complete Life to everyone.



**Tim White** | Chair

# Executive Summary

## From the Interim Co-CEO's

**We are pleased to share the 2022 Annual Report with our Caringa Australia, Clarence and Coffs Coast communities. Continuing with the same theme of recent times, the 2021/2022 financial year highlighted the importance of community cohesion, resilience, creativity and resourcefulness. In what seems to have become the norm, all parts of our community have been called upon to meet challenging situations, often unprecedented, on a range of fronts. In retrospect we think we can all agree that we have seen the best of the human spirit when it comes to caring for each other.**

Accumulatively Caringa continued to successfully work towards both our long and short-term Strategic Goals while navigating an ever changing and at times volatile business environment. The NDIA continues to adjust its approach to client funding, reporting, planning and reviews which ultimately creates an atmosphere of uncertainty and stress for many clients, their support networks and family members. Caringa continued to play our part in proactively navigating these changes to minimise undue stress and anxiety to our clients by monitoring industry developments, implementing proactive change and engaging with stakeholder groups to receive feedback and suggestions.

It should come as no surprise that safety remained a top priority with continued investment and training in this critical area. We welcomed Kim Johnston as Safety Officer, an addition and investment that produced immediate results and improvements

across multiple areas of the business. This runs parallel with the ongoing dedication and oversight of our team of elected Health Safety Representatives who provide consistent structured feedback and communication across our entire business footprint. We have also continued the rollout of ICARE's Protect Together (P2) program recommendations with the goal of continual improvement to Work Health and Safety at Caringa right across the board.

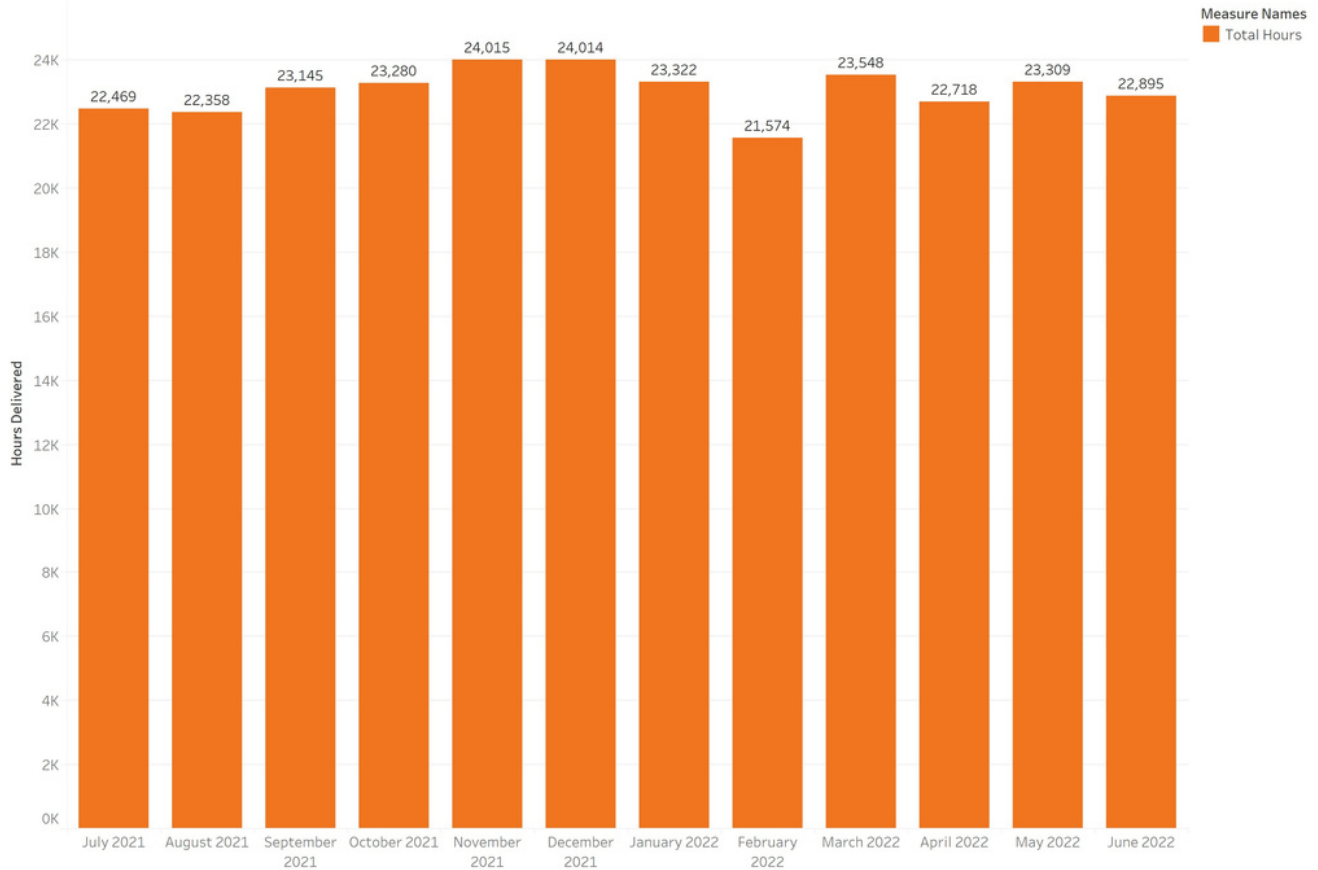
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**Caringa's human resources management will remain a high priority into the foreseeable future, as it was this year, with our commitment to meet our continuity of support obligations a key consideration.**

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# Direct Support Hours

## July 2021 - June 2022



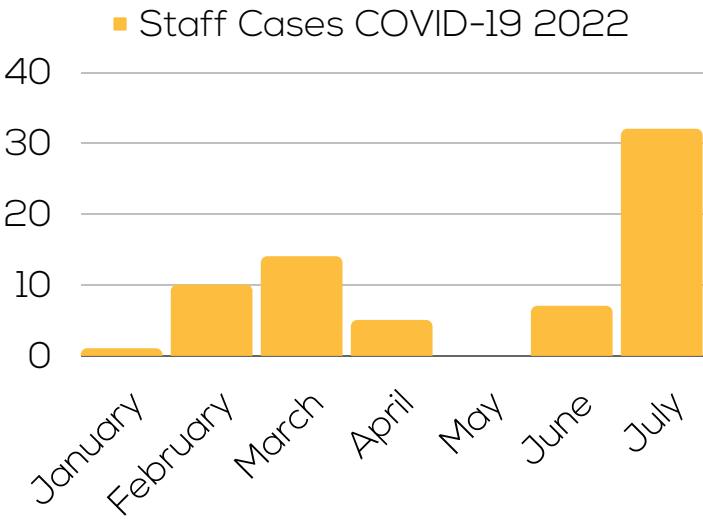
Total Hours for each Date Month. Color shows details about Total Hours. The marks are labeled by Total Hours. The data is filtered on Payroll month and Location. The Payroll month filter excludes Null. The Location filter excludes Administration, Administration Support and Head Office. The view is filtered on Date Month, which excludes June 2021.



The year in review was heavily influenced by the ongoing COVID pandemic as well as a significant flooding event felt across large parts of our region. On both fronts our Caringa team worked tirelessly to minimise the associated risks to our clients and employees while routinely updating policies and procedures to learn from the evolving situations at hand. To everyone who has assisted thank you. To everyone who has been directly affected by these events, our thoughts were, and continue to be, with you.

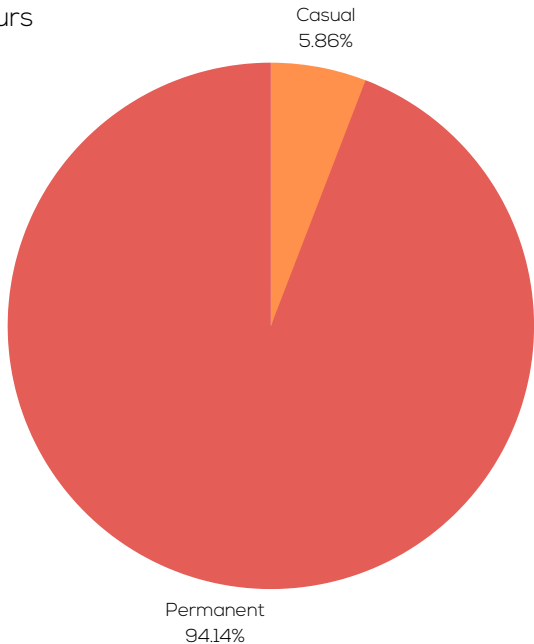
Disability Support Worker recruitment continues to be an organisationally significant challenge with local trends mirroring regional and national workforce shortages. Caringa’s reputation, quality and breadth of service options continue to produce solid enquiry numbers right across our geographic footprint which in turn places increased pressure on our recruitment systems and workforce to meet community needs. This important area of Caringa’s human resources management will remain a high priority into the foreseeable future, as it was this year, with our commitment to meet our continuity of support obligations a key consideration.

Financially Caringa has navigated a particularly complex year where consolidation, increased efficiencies and financial course correction were overarching themes. We have continued a growth trajectory on many financial measures including Caringa revenue. Our cash reserves remain strong providing confidence when considered against our current liabilities. We welcome and encourage your review of the Caringa Australia Limited Financial Statements for The Year Ended 30 June 2022 available at our AGM and thereafter in full on the Caringa website ([www.caringa.com.au](http://www.caringa.com.au)).

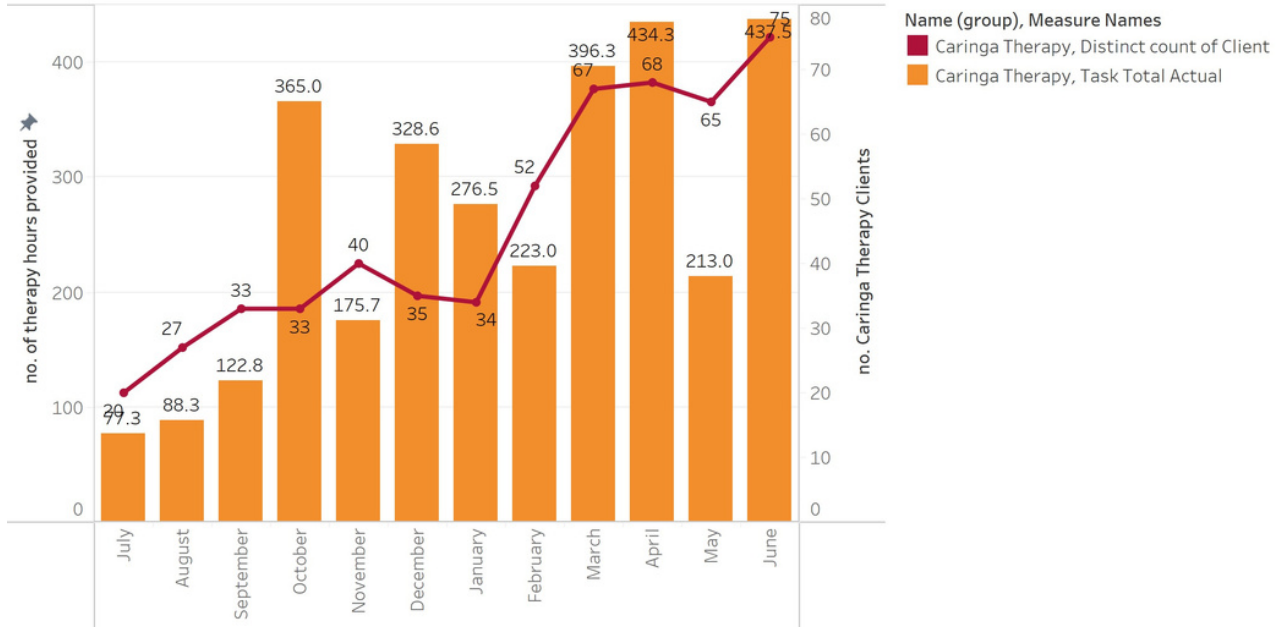


### Employment Type - Frontline Worker

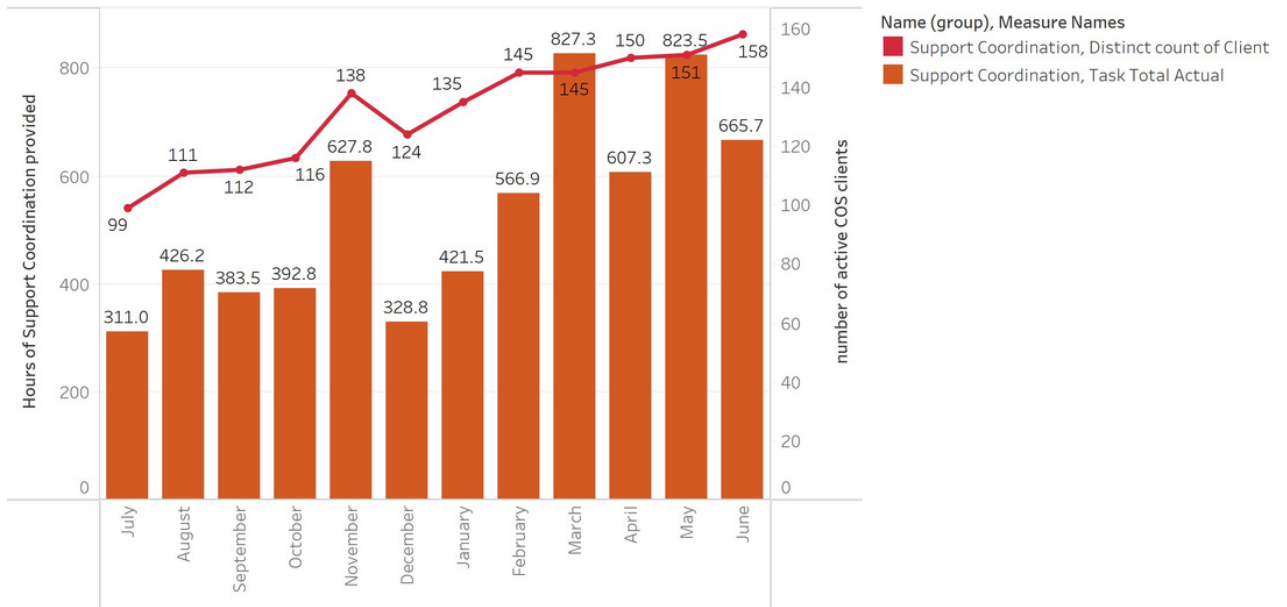
% of total hours



## Caringa Therapy Capability



## Support Coordination Capability



Despite many challenges' Caringa's financial points of note for the year include:

- ✦ Revenue grew by \$1.77 million dollars, an increase of 9.5% when compared to the previous financial year
- ✦ 2021/2022 Retained Earnings totaled \$907k – representing a 4.5% surplus
- ✦ Caringa Equity increased by 9%

A special thank you to the entire Finance team for a year of hard work, dedication and fine detail analysis. This includes the Plan Management team who took thousands of enquiries and client payment

submissions across the year while always providing quality and patient outward facing service to our Plan Management clients.

Caringa's Support Coordination team had another fantastic year providing critical supports to those requiring extra assistance in finding and linking to wide ranging services and supports. Our Support Coordinators provided a total of 6376 support hours to their client base with positive outcomes and linkages far too numerous to highlight. We are certainly blessed with a quality team that continue to provide a foundation of trust and reliability in such an important support area.

Income and Expenditure Summary	\$'000	
	2020-21	2021-22
<b>Income</b>		
Government Funding and NDIS	14,993	16,536
Sales	858	873
Operating	592	617
Other	642	762
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>17,085</b>	<b>18,788</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Staff and Related	13,784	15,409
Operating and Selling	1,263	1,274
Properties, Vehicles and Depreciation	1,067	972
Administrative	145	225
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>16,259</b>	<b>17,880</b>
<b>Retained Earnings</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>908</b>

Summarised Balance Sheet	\$'000	
	30.06.21	30.06.22
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Bank Deposits	1,854	2,338
Inventory and Receivables	273	528
Other Financial Assets	2,932	3,399
Properties, Vehicles and Equipment	8,403	7,909
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>13,462</b>	<b>14,174</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Payables and Lease Liabilities	704	703
Other Liabilities	131	0
Employee Benefits	1,788	1,779
Borrowings	958	903
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>3,385</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>9,881</b>	<b>10,789</b>

We thank Caringa's Directors, led by Chair Tim White, for your dedication and resolve across another challenging and fruitful year. We take this opportunity to recognise the Board's guidance, oversight and ultimate commitment to Caringa's mission and values.

Finally, we show gratitude to every individual employee, client and stakeholder that has contributed to another successful year of positive client outcomes at Caringa. In many ways it has not been an easy period but we genuinely feel that the recent hard work will bear fruit in the near future. We look forward to celebrating in 2023, as part of Caringa's 70th year celebration, the contributions we have all made, both past and present, to the history of this important, caring and successful Charity organisation.

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...we think we can all agree that we have seen the best of the human spirit when it comes to caring for each other.

”



**Guy Robinson** | Co-CEO (Interim)



**Glen McClymont** | Co-CEO (Interim)









# From the Client Service Manager

**This year was a period of great client outcomes, employee dedication and operational challenges. The effects of the COVID pandemic cannot be ignored with great strain being placed on resources right across Caringa and the broader community. While that may be the case, as we have all come to expect, our frontline team of Disability Support Workers, Outcomes and Practice Leaders and Client Services Coordinators have rallied to the cause in true Caringa fashion to ensure quality services continued to be delivered to our clients. This was only possible due to the outstanding efforts of Caringa employees living out our Caringa values each and every shift. Thank you everybody.**

Across the year we welcomed an increased client presence at our 144 Fitzroy Street head office in Grafton with plans for increased engagement in the space next year. It has been fantastic to witness clients using the available spaces for social, community and creative pursuits. We hope that this change really displays our commitment to our day services and our desire to further integrate our service delivery right into the middle of the communities we live and work in. Very exciting times on this front.

Our Coffs Harbour team continues to achieve fantastic results while working at the furthest reaches of our service delivery footprint. Julia and our Southern co-workers have overcome several unique challenges and workforce pressures. By thinking out of the box they have continued to provide the support required to help numerous clients work towards their goals and be one step closer to living 'A Complete Life'.

Our Supported Independent Living (SIL) space saw several longstanding vacancies filled which is fantastic for not only the new clients who join our service (welcome!) but also our teams and existing clients who get to meet and engage with new housemates. In what is always bittersweet news, we also had the privilege of assisting several clients in transitioning to different services/arrangements. This is always a tough time for both clients and the Caringa team but I am proud to say that on all occasions I witnessed the highest levels of professionalism and care to ensure client's needs were not only met but exceeded.

I can't go any further without mentioning our amazing Rosters team whom without over the past 12 months I don't know where we would be. The entire team, led by Sean and our ASRs, supported our operations while also supporting each other in what was at times a very difficult environment.





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**It has been fantastic to witness clients utilising the available spaces for social, community and creative pursuits.**

”

Sean and his team were put under enormous pressure in the same way our entire workforce was with regular periods short staffed. They constantly rallied to make it work and, in the process, ensure that as many shifts were filled as were humanly possible at any given time. It was a huge effort - thank you from all of the team and our clients. It hasn't gone unnoticed.

A special thank you to all of our staff who have supported new employees into the position of Support Worker over the last 12 months. Finding Disability Support Workers continues to be a challenge resulting in us having a rolling open recruitment drive. This has resulted in the constant introduction of new staff to the floor. Without the assistance and support of co-workers this vital step in Caringa's ability to provide support would be compromised.

In what must be considered positive recognition of Caringa's quality service delivery, we continue to receive many enquiries from both existing and new clients for wide ranging supports and services. With the assistance of our Communications, Community Engagement & Marketing Officer, Mackenzie Harvison we have assessed and considered hundreds of

requests across every type of service delivery option. Unfortunately, and in the interest of not jeopardising our current quality standards, we have at times had to turn down these requests due to limitations in support worker availability but we hope to overcome this problem in the near future with increased recruitment and hopefully a reduction in employee unavailability due to COVID just around the corner ... fingers crossed.

Finally, thanks to the entire team from People and Culture, Systems and Quality, Employment, Finance, Support Coordination, Therapy and Plan Management for your support of the Client Services team throughout the year. You all play such an important role in helping our clients live 'A Complete Life'.



**Zachary Page** | Client Service Manager



# From the Employment Manager

**The 2021-2022 financial year had a number of large and well documented challenges. For a period of time during 2021, Caringa employment closed its doors to the public, but with sound processes we were able to keep the doors open to our workforce and continue manufacturing our quality products and servicing our lawn and gardening customers.**

This year was also a great year for positive outcomes for our clients. We had the pleasure of assisting two employees in finding open employment with the Grafton Greyhounds Racing Club. Mark and David were supported by Caringa Employment support workers to interview for two positions that were made available after the re-vamp to the local racing course. We also assisted and supported David, Brendan, Mitch, Gary and Robert to successfully achieve their First aid qualification. Congratulations to everyone involved.

During the year Caringa Employment sales remained strong. Topcuts' regular customer base provided over 150 sites to attend. Unfortunately, due to extreme weather, the crews were often behind across the warmer and historically busier months. I would like to thank all of our customers for their understanding over this difficult time. I would also like to thank all the Topcuts workforce, supported and guided by Lance, Mick and Nicholas for their hard work and dedication to the job. We lost over 40 work days to rain during the busiest work period of the year yet financially Topcuts was only slightly down on last year's record figures. Outstanding effort by all.

The Caringa maintenance crews have been kept busy with over 230 internal maintenance jobs completed for Caringa services (off site to 1 Orara street), along with the testing and tagging (for the entire Organisation completed by Aaron) and the regular maintenance and up-keep required on the manufacturing and Topcuts equipment.

“

**This year was also a great year for positive outcomes for our clients. We had the pleasure of assisting two employees to find open employment...**

”







Across the year we have worked hard on a number of on-site safety upgrades including additional safety guarding around higher risk equipment, site traffic management plans, improved training and updates to safe operational procedures. Ryan has constructed two new 'built for purpose' trailers for Topcuts, modified an existing trailer to make it more usable across all areas and built a relocatable shade shelter for the Gardens.

Manufacturing has performed well and was kept busy thanks to increased orders and often hard to find timber. This resulted in us at times prioritising timber product orders and holding off on replenishing stock levels to meet demand. Even with these shortages the team were able to fill every order within the customer's preferred time frames. This was due to an outstanding effort and problem solving from the whole manufacturing team supported and guided by Leanne, Nick, Stewart, Mike and Caitlin. Steel product production remained strong with new customers coming on board through the introduction of the Caringa Store website - this resulted in our customer base now being represented across every state in Australia!

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Col, Meghan and the entire Caringa Employment team for their ongoing professionalism and dedication to providing high quality products and services and outcomes to our employees, customers and the local community. Well done Team.

## Production numbers 2021/2022

- Steel Products - Pole caps 31,274, Identification Discs 83,000, Angle Brackets 45,000
- Pegs 112,904 (53% painted)
- Confidentially managed 18,000Kg of documents
- Performed maintenance to 239 internal requests
- Topcuts completed over 2218 individual jobs



**Brennan Elks** | Employment Manager

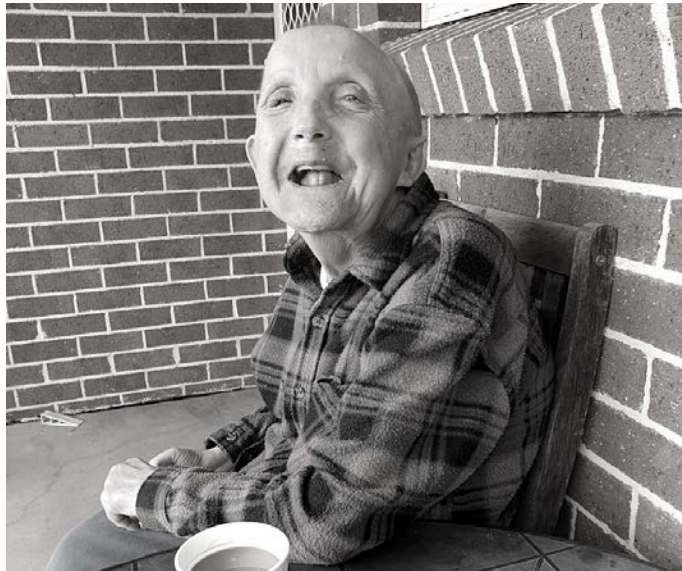




# From the System Development & Quality Coordinator

Once again, we have experienced another year heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters in our region and across the state. The challenges facing our industry continue to be met with inspiring resilience and commitment from the disability workforce and wider community going above and beyond to support our clients to navigate this unfamiliar territory.

2021 saw the implementation of a new strategic plan with the ongoing commitment to the Protect together (P2) program, a partnership with icare to support Caringa to improve workplace safety.



Some of the key initiatives from the P2 program came to fruition this year with the introduction of the Safety Officer Role, training for 13 workers in Mental Health First Aid, implementing new risk management framework and plan and improving WHS feedback mechanisms for workers. Some of the planned initiatives were not able to be completed due to the ongoing impact and urgency of the pandemic but will continue to be pursued in the future.

Other key areas of investment came in the way of system improvements to improve efficiency and consolidate manual and hard copy processes. Work continues on the configuration and implementation of a new Health, Safety, Environment and Quality system that captures all key Organisational information and incidents and events in one place. The system is already being used for injury management, hazard management, incident management, SDS register and COVID-19 case reporting, with new module roll outs scheduled in the coming months.

Another major project was undertaken with the replacement and upgrade of our IT Server which was a huge undertaking but ensures the safety and security of our information and workplace systems over the next 10 years. It also gives our team access to current Microsoft Office suite and has improved efficiency and communications across the business.

Caringa also undertook our re-registration audit against the NDIS Practice Standards and Code of Conduct and additional audit for National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS). We received positive results and were recommended for recertification with our application now awaiting approval from the NDIS Commission in the new financial year. The audit is always a good time to reflect on and acknowledge good practice and review any opportunities for improvement to ensure the quality and safety of our services.

The NDIS Commission released 3 new practice standards this year relating to Severe Dysphagia Management, Emergency and Disaster Management and Mealtime Management. As with all updates these changes triggered a review of our core systems, policy updates, service agreement review and increase in worker training requirements. The regular review and update of the NDIS Practice Standards reflect the currency and agility of the commission by responding at a policy level to community experience. This ensures that obligations on providers remain relevant and in line with community expectation and improve and safeguard the supports provided to NDIS Participants.

Looking to the year ahead a lot of the investment in systems and quality we have made will begin to provide benefit to our workforce and clients. The ultimate goal of consolidation and streamlining of our processes is to ensure less time on administrative requirements and more time delivering positive outcomes for our clients. The last few years continue to remind us that change and uncertainty are here to stay but if you are working from a strong foundation, we can face any challenge together.

“

...if you are working from a strong foundation, we can face any challenge together.

”



**Ruby Grieves** | System Development & Quality Coordinator



# From the Safety Officer

“

**Despite the brave new world that we all now face, our Caringa team on the whole has been able to forge forward and make some great improvements right across the safety space.**

”

**My first year as Caringa Australia's Safety Officer has been a rewarding and challenging one with every day (or at least week!) throwing up a new scenario to be navigated for the safety of our clients and employees. The nature of our industry means that safety is always a priority and 2021/2022 has been no different.**

Despite the brave new world that we all now face, our Caringa team on the whole has been able to forge forward and make some great improvements right across the safety space.

Caringa's Health and Safety Representatives continue to provide formalised pathways of communication for their work groups and their ongoing commitment to safety and regular inspections has ensured that the safety of our Supported Independent Living locations and Hubs remains a top priority.



I personally guided an external auditor to many of our SIL locations and he was very impressed with the safety and associated systems at our Caringa residence.

Our ongoing dedication to safety is particularly demonstrated at our Caringa Employment site where the 1 Orara Street team have worked hard to implement changes to the way we do business. These changes have had a significant impact on the overall safety of the site with updates to uniforms, barricading and guarding, racking inspections, pallet monitoring, machinery operating processes and training, showing that much can be achieved in a relative short period of time.

For obvious reasons, we have all had to constantly prioritise and improve our understanding and skills in relation to PPE and infection control in keeping each other and ourselves safe.

“

**This year our Caringa team as a whole have proved themselves resilient and determined in the face of very trying and at times unprecedented circumstances.**

”

I am proud to say on behalf of all of our team that this dedication has paid off and the techniques that we practice continue to minimise the impact of Covid within the Caringa community.

We all look forward to a day where COVID is not on the agenda but for now we will remain vigilant for the health and wellbeing of both Caringa’s employees and clients.

This year our Caringa team as a whole have proved themselves resilient and determined in the face of very trying and at times unprecedented circumstances. I am very proud to say that employee dedication towards the safety of Caringa clients remains outstanding. I look forward to working with everyone to continue our journey of continuous improvement with the aim of an even safer Caringa workplace and support service across the coming year.



**Kim Johnston** | Safety Officer

# Our Caringa Team

## FRONTLINE

MICHAEL AKINS  
KATIE ALEXANDER  
TODD ALLISON  
LEANNE AUSTIN  
ALARNI BAKER  
DARREN BARKESS  
JOSH BARTRIM  
CAITLIN BEESTON  
MELISSA BENSON  
PETER BERNARD  
LISA BERRY  
KELSEY BONACCORSI  
DANIELLE BRADY  
RHIANN BRADY  
KRISTY BRETT  
ANDREW BROWN  
GEMMA BUCKLEY  
GLEN BUSH  
BRENDA BUSHSELL  
JUSTIN BUTLER  
LAUREN CAIRNS  
NICHOLAS CAMPBELL  
KIRSTY CAPLE  
ANNIE CHAPMAN  
JASON CHEVALLEY  
DECLAN COLLIE  
HUAN COLLIE  
JEREMY CONE  
HAYLEY CONNOLLY  
JANELLE COOK  
JODI CORBETT  
NATHAN COTTEN  
RANDALL CRAIG  
DANNY CROPPER  
REBECCA CUMMINGS  
BREAN CUNNINGHAM  
ANTHONY DAHL  
BEAU DELEVANTE  
KIRSTIE DENDLE  
KIM DENOVAN

GRAHAM DEWBERRY  
LISA DICKENS  
INGRID DIGNAM  
EMMA-JANE DONAGHEY  
PAUL DUNWORTH  
KAYLA DYSON  
SIMONE EARLE  
STEPHANIE EGGINS  
DANIELLE ELLIOTT  
TAYLAN ELLIS  
KIMBERLEY ELWELL  
TARA EVELEIGH  
BRETT EWINGTON  
JACQUELINE FABRY  
JAYDEN FAHEY  
CHRISTOPHER FEENEY  
JAKOB FLYNN  
ASHLEIGH FRANKLIN  
JADE FRANKLIN  
MICHAEL FREIER  
CARMEN FRENCH  
MELISSA FRENCH  
PETER FRENDO  
KERRY GALLAGHER  
RUBILYN GARCIA  
REBECCA GEARY  
NATASHA GOLDEN  
DANNIELLE GREEN  
DEBRA GUENTHER  
JACINDA HALCROW  
PIPPA HANSON  
CATHERINE HARGANS  
RAYMOND HARRISON  
SUZANNE HARRISON  
PETER HARVEY  
HOLLY HASTINGS  
BREANNA HATGIS  
JODIE HATGIS  
GLENN HAWKINS  
BROOKE HEAGNEY

DIANA HILL  
KATIE HINDOM  
JULIE HINSCHEN  
SHELBY-ELLEN HOGAN  
LAUREN HOLLAND  
RONALD HORSFALL  
ALYSHA HOSCHKE  
JOANNA HOUGHTON  
JESSICA HUNTINGTON  
KIRSTY INGLEDEW  
ERIIN JESSUP  
KEIRON JOHNSON-HERON  
JANICE JOHNSTON  
ERYN KELLEY  
ANNE KINGSTON  
ROSE KNELL  
HEIDI KRUGER  
MELINDA LACEY  
BRENNON LAVERY  
GERARD LEONARD  
GEORGIA STEVENS  
EMILY LUZZI  
BRIDGETTE LYNCH  
PAUL MARSCHAM  
TAYLOR MARSHALL  
MELANIE MARTIN  
MICHAEL MARTIN  
TIFFANY MARTIN  
PHILLIP MCCARTHY  
LUKE MCCONNELL  
GRACE MCGUREN  
TAMAR MCHUGH  
MICHAEL MCKENZIE  
NICHOLAS MCKENZIE  
JESSIE MCLACHLAN  
FIONA MCLENNAN  
REBECKAH MCNAMARA  
DARYN MCPHEE  
VICKI MCPHERSON

RYAN MCSWAN  
DONNA MELLALIEU  
PAUL MILFORD  
JACOB MILL  
MADALYNN MILLINGTON-CARROLL  
CRYSTAL MONKHOUSE  
KIRAN MORRISON  
KRISTY MORROW  
SUZANNA MOSS  
JESSICA MULDER  
PHILIP MULLINS  
AARON MUMBLER WEBB  
JESSICA MUNRO  
VICTORIA MURRAY  
CODY MYERS  
MARYANNE NEWTON  
RUTH NEYLON  
ELLINORE OLDFIELD  
DAWN PARTRIDGE  
SHARYN PATON  
NICOLE PAUL  
LUCINDA PAXTON  
EMILY PERA  
KAITLYN PEDICARO  
COURTNEY PERRETT  
ANGEL PETRIE-WINDRED  
MEGAN PHILLIPS  
SUSAN POLSEN  
LOUISE POTTERTON  
COURTNEY POWELL  
LANCE PREDO  
GARY PYM  
DELENA RAINBOW  
EMILY-RACHEAL RENELT  
JACOB REYNOLDS  
JAMES REYNOLDS  
KATHERINE REYNOLDS  
PAUL RICCOBONO  
JOSEPH RIGG  
JASON ROBINSON  
JANE ROOKE

ADAM ROOKS  
MELISSA RYAN  
SARA RYAN  
RHIANNON SAUNDERS  
GENE SCHAFFER-MCDONALD  
WAYNE SECCOMBE  
MAREE SECKOLD  
RONALD SECKOLD  
CHRISTOPHER SHEEHAN  
JASON SHOOBERT  
ANTHONY SHORTT  
KATE SHORTT  
SAMANTHA SHORTT  
CARRIE SILK  
DIANNE SIMMONS  
BIANCA SIMPSON  
GREGOR SIMPSON  
KYE SLATER  
DANIELLE SMITH  
STEWART SMITH  
JAMES STANMORE  
VICKI STEPHEN  
NICOLCE TASEVSKI  
BROOKE THOMPSON  
NATHAN THOMPSON  
KYLIE TURVEY  
MICHELLE TURVEY  
ELORA VEST  
AARON WALKER  
KASEY WALSH  
KYM WARREN  
DONNA WATERHOUSE  
LESLEY WATKINS  
TAMMY WATTS  
TERENCE WHITE  
KRISTY WILLARD  
TYLER WRATTEN-HANCOCK  
CASSANDRA WRIGHT  
NICHOLAS YEATES  
ELEANOR YOUNG

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYEES

ROSS BAILEY  
GARY BAKER  
DAVID BARLOW  
JENNIFER BAXTER  
MADELINE BLACKADDER  
GREGORY BOOTHBY  
GEOFFERY BROTHERTON  
NATAHLIA BUSHELL  
MITCHELL CAMERON  
JUSTIN CARNE  
TONY CHILD  
LUCY CONROY  
NATHAN COWLING  
BEVERLY DARGUE  
JASON DICKSON  
TYE DILLON  
NICHOLAS FARES  
WILLIAM FARES  
BRENDAN FORD  
RODNEY FORD  
ROBERT FOSTER  
DANIEL GARDEM  
DAVID GOODIN  
DANIEL GREENLAND  
JAY HANSON  
ANTHONY HAYES  
AMY HICKSON  
NATHAN HULL  
SARAH HURE  
BRENDEN JACKSON  
SINEAD JOHNSON  
DAVID JONES  
MARK KELLERMAN  
DORIAN KENNEDY  
KATE KRATZ  
ANDREW LAIDLAW  
KYLE LAWRIE  
ANGELA MCGRATH

KALUM MOORE  
GAVIN NEALE  
JAMES NIXON  
MOIRA O'CONNOR  
MIKAILAH PASSLOW  
CRAIG PERRETT  
EDWARD POWER  
MATTHEW RAINEY  
SARAH RAPMUND  
WAYNE SMITH  
BRADLEY TAYLOR  
LEONIE TAYLOR  
MATTHEW TEALE  
SAMUEL VENN

## THERAPY

CHRISTOPHER BROWNE  
ANGELA CROMPTON  
LISA HONEYCHURCH  
LISA SALTER

## OUTCOMES & PRACTICE LEADERS

DEAN BROUGHTON  
DAVID GREEN  
STACEY HANSFORD  
SHAYNE MARTIN  
PAUL MCKENZIE  
KRISTIE TICKLE (ACTING)  
DANIEL TRICKETT  
DEBORAH VANZINO (ACTING)  
JULIA VIZE  
SARAH WARREN  
COLIN WORMALD

## SUPPORT COORDINATORS

TROY DENT  
DONNA JACKSON  
ASHLEIGH KILLMORE (ACTING)  
LISA MERCY  
SJANE SHOEBRIDGE  
NICOLE TYLER  
ANNA WALSH

## PLAN MANAGERS

CLANCY PATEMAN  
ADAM SANDERS

## CORPORATE

GINO ASCENZO BAHAMONDE  
SEAN AUSTIN  
JOANNE CHARLESWORTH  
RACHEL CHOY  
SHARRON COLLETT  
CHRISTOPHER CORMACK  
BRENNAN ELKS  
MELISSA GADDES  
RUBY GRIEVES  
MACKENZIE HARVISON  
KIM JOHNSTON  
MATTHEW KELLY  
DANIELLE LAMBERT  
GLEN MCCLYMONT  
LEIZA MCGREGOR  
CATHERINE MCSWAN  
MEGHAN NELSON  
RACHEL PEARCE  
SUZANNE PEARCE  
GUY ROBERTSON  
VISHAL SHARMA  
MARTINA SKINNER  
ZACHARY PAGE





# Caringa Therapy

Caringa Therapy, now in its fourth year of operation is comprised of two Physiotherapists, Angela Crompton and Lisa Honeychurch, Behaviour Support Practitioner Chris Browne and Therapy Assistant Lisa Salter.

Lisa Honeychurch joined the team in late 2021 and her addition has allowed growth in our ability to provide service across our Clarence Valley and Coffs Coast footprint. At any one time our team were available for up to 120 participants across Behaviour Support, Physiotherapy and Therapy Assistance.

The great reputation of the team across our footprint has been reflected in the number of new referrals they have received. In the 2021 – 2022 financial year there were approximately 85 initial referrals for therapy services.

“

**The team aim to provide efficient, equitable, collaborative evidence-based practice to enable our participants to develop and maintain functional skills, through delivering achievable and implementable programs.**

”

We have seen expansion of our ability to provide Hydrotherapy, and now have sessions at the Hydrotherapy pool where the team can be seeing up to 3 clients at any one time. We are also providing group Hydrotherapy to develop and maintain movement and fitness as well as provide social development opportunities where it is appropriate to do so. The benefits of hydrotherapy for people living with disability and limited mobility include pain relief, increased movement and physical activity, mobility, strength and function while being a fun and enjoyable activity that increases not only mental health but physical health outcomes. We are observing positive change in relation to physical characteristics and we are also seeing improvement in overall wellbeing with increased participation in social activities.

Our Physiotherapists and Therapy Assistant have been working on developing physical activity programs and coaching for Day Program staff to deliver activities that are improving the general physical and mental health and wellbeing of the participants. These simple movement-based activities using dance, ball games and music have been embraced by the Castle Centre Community Hub staff and participants and is something we hope to see continue into 2023.



It is a requirement of registration as therapists that our staff participate in continuing professional development. Over the past year staff have attended additional training for specific conditions that can have an impact on the participants we support.

Including;

- ✦ Stroke prevention and management;
- ✦ Dementia care;
- ✦ Ehlers- Danlos Syndrome assessment, management and treatment;
- ✦ 24 hour positioning;
- ✦ Biomechanics and the development of movement;
- ✦ Therapy and management of low muscle tone;
- ✦ Falls prevention and management;
- ✦ Hypermobility spectrum disorder in children and young adults;
- ✦ Pain neuroscience education and management for chronic pain.
- ✦ Developmental orthopedics which includes treatment and management of orthopedic, neurological and genetic conditions in children and young adults with a focus on biomechanics of walking, standing and posture control.

As a population our participants tend to have less opportunities for both intentional and incidental movement, so the therapy team are implementing programs to see an increase for all participants in this area.

The therapy team undertake this through education of staff, participants and their families and provide individuals and group-based programs to facilitate this process

Therapy staff have been involved in staff induction programs with new employees (covering behaviour and an introduction to movement) and with team meetings regarding specific issues for one or more participants and have undertaken training for manual handling within Caringa as part of a deep commitment to positive outcomes for staff and participants.

Thank you to the Therapy Team for your professionalism and commitment to our Clients, their families and staff.







# A Taste of What's to Come - Deb's Story

**“Debbie has gained back her independence since having her PEG removed. Now she can choose what she wants to eat and drink as well as feed herself without assistance. It has given her confidence when out in the community that she can sit down and eat at a café or restaurant.” – Caringa Australia Support Worker Bridgette Lynch**

Debbie joined the Caringa Australia community in 2015 to be supported at one of Caringa’s Supported Independent Living houses. Since being in her early 20s, Debbie has received all nutritional needs via a Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) feed tube. Debbie’s nightly routine consisted of being connected to a feed pump while having to sleep wherever she received this vital assistance.

“

**Receiving her nutrition through her PEG tube really disrupted Debbie's day. She would spend a lot of time sitting around, waiting for it to be over.**

”



Debbie’s days were also regularly interrupted by hydration sessions to keep her fluids up.

“Receiving her nutrition through her PEG tube really disrupted Debbie’s day” said Caringa Support Worker Bridgette. “She would spend a lot of time sitting around, waiting for it to be over.”

Despite these challenges, Debbie never complained and continued to engage in group and individual activities at home and in the community – a true testament to her spirit and resilience.



When the NDIS rolled out, Debbie's opportunities were expanded with the help of her Coordinator of Supports, Donna.

Donna linked Debbie's NDIS funding to allow formal supports such as an Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist and Dietitian to assist and investigate whether Debbie could receive her nutrition orally again. Under guidelines set by health professionals and with the consistent assistance of her team of support workers, Debbie incrementally began to receive food and drink orally again.

As time went on Debbie's oral intake slowly took over her overnight nutritional intake. By late 2020 Debbie was not requiring any food or fluid via her feed tube. Debbie's support staff noticed instantly Debbie was enjoying the benefits of a good night's sleep.

"This was a great change for Deb as she could now have a decent night's sleep without the feed pump whirring away in the background." Says Debbie's Operational and Practice Leader, Shayne. "No more tubes connected overnight."

In early 2021 Debbie had her PEG tube removed. "Debbie has blossomed since having her PEG removed." Stated Bridgette. "It's very evident in her mood and how she is interacting in day-to-day life. It's also been fun figuring out what types of foods she enjoys – just last month she tried devilled sausages and loved it so much!"

As of June 2021, Debbie successfully had her existing PEG site sealed and is now focusing on enjoying life and her newfound independence.





# School Holiday Program and SLES

Over the past 12 months, a small team of staff have worked closely with each of our School Leavers Employment Scheme (SLES) clients, working on their future goals regarding employment possibilities, life skills, further education and personal interests.

The SLES program is person centred with all clients working with staff to tailor their supports to discover their personal goals within their individual needs. Growing in demand, the program is successfully implemented in Grafton, the Lower Clarence and Coffs Harbour.



During this time our SLES clients have explored many different areas of skill building, such as:

- ✦ Life skill training in the form of budgeting, money handling, resume and letter writing, creative writing, hand writing, typing, etc. confidence building, work experience, good hygiene, cooking, nutrition, travel training and building friendships.
- ✦ The SLES crew have undertaken programs for further education in online sexual awareness as well as online safety. Clients have also attended vocational training through Country Hospitality Services (CHS Training) and have successfully obtained their First Aid, CPR, Food Hygiene and Food Safety certificates.

We have many new activities and possibilities lined up to explore increasing independence and confidence within the community.

Our School Holiday Program continued to provide opportunities for our younger client group to engage with their peers through exciting and interactive activities, experiences and learning. A popular program with the staff as well as the participants who attend, we look forward to continuing to provide a safe and supportive environment for participants to build upon their social and emotional independence through jam-packed programs and engaging activities well into the future.



# Journey to Success at the Track

David and Mark, like many other NDIS participants, found securing open employment challenging. But through their experience with Caringa Australia's Topcut's Lawn and Garden supported employment services, they have been able to gain skills and confidence to transition to a mainstream employment opportunity with the local Grafton Greyhound Racing Club, with great success.

Manager of the Grafton Greyhound Racing Association, Glen Heatley, praised the men saying, 'Everyone raves about David and Mark and the work they do. They are both doing a great job.' With the Grafton Greyhound Racing Club recently undergoing a \$6 million upgrade, they are busier than ever.



“  
‘It’s a mainstream  
job to me. That’s  
something I never  
thought I would  
have’  
- David

”

‘We’re definitely getting busier and busier, and having these guys on board is making a huge difference to the club.’

Engaging Caringa Australia’s support for the first few months, both David and Mark are now independently working with Glen and his team.

‘Working at Caringa gave me the confidence to talk to people’ Mark said ‘I really enjoy it’.

David said working in a supported environment like Caringa’s Topcut’s has helped him with his confidence, and that ‘everyone has been so supportive’ with his transition to the Greyhound Racing Club.











**caringa**  
*A Complete Life*

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