

OUR VALUES

Respect

We recognise & value individuality.

Wellbeing

We encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

Flexibility

We provide innovative & responsive services to meet individual needs.

Accountability

We are professional, ethical, honest & take responsibility for our actions.

AN OVERVIEW

This annual report is a brief overview of the achievements, activities and financial performance of the past 12 months. Every page and story reflects only a small number of the people we support, employ and partner with. It is written to provide an insight to our organisation for our members, the people we support, our staff, volunteers and the community.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Community Living & Respite Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the country. We pay our respect to them, their cultures and customs, and to Elders both past and present.

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@CLRSINC



@CLRSINC

Inc. No. A0013878U

NDIS Provider No. 4050003963



Pictured above: Insp. Paul Huggett - NSW Police, Tim Dawes - Kiwanis and Glenn Rogers - Murray River Tea Rooms.

Echuca Moama's Kiwanis donated \$200 worth of coffee at the Murray River Tea Rooms to the NSW police officers stationed on the border during our first lockdown.

Cover Image: Helen & Karen

Photographer: CLRS

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Design: Studio Whyte



CONTENTS

■ CEO & President's Report.....	2	■ Meet Val Miller	15
■ Ty's Story	4	■ Johnno's Run	16
■ Out of Home Care Services	5	■ Emma's Story	18
■ Ashley's Story	6	■ Sheree's Story	19
■ John's Story	7	■ Thank You Brendan Hogan.....	21
■ A Snapshot of Our Services.....	8	■ Our Team	22
■ Helen & Karen's Story	10	■ Staff Facts	24
■ Nicole's Story	11	■ Staff Profiles	25
■ A Supportive Community.....	12	■ Workforce Structure & Recruitment	26
■ Dinner Plans Project	13	■ Senior Leadership Team	27
■ Our Collaborations.....	13	■ Opening Doors Project	30
■ Our Dedicated Volunteers	14	■ Financial Highlights	31



CEO & PRESIDENT'S *Report*

This year has been our fourth full year delivering National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funded services and we are continuing to grow and develop our organisation to ensure it is in a sustainable position into the future.

Community Living & Respite Services (CLRS) has faced several challenges across the last year. As a result of these challenges we have developed better systems and processes and improved our business structure.

The construction of the fourth Opening Doors Project on Barry Street in Echuca, is planned to commence soon. This project will build four units, to enable people with disability to live on their own, supported by their family, our staff and our community. We are delighted that these homes will enable the residents to live independently within their community.

Johnno's Run has been sending a team to participate in Run Melbourne for the past 7 years. Over this time we have raised \$366,038 and have had over 800 people participate.

All of this has been done in support of our Opening Doors Projects. This year we made the decision to bring Johnno's Run home and we have planned 5km and 10km routes to run, walk or wheel on September 5th 2021 in our beautiful Echuca Moama community. As a result of COVID-19 risks, we saw a great opportunity to deliver an inclusive annual event in our local community, encouraging participation in exercise and social activities and providing an opportunity for our community to come together to support building homes for people with disability.

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Over the past year, we welcomed Elaine Hamilton to the Board.

Elaine's wealth of experience of disability support, volunteering and community services, is a valued skill for the Board.

During the year Andrew Cowin and Peter Hyden resigned from the Board. Andrew made a significant contribution to the Board over a period of four years and Peter contributed to the Board for just over 12 months. We thank them both for their support of CLRS.

HIGHLIGHTS

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant challenge for everyone in our community. The way that our community of clients, families, staff and volunteers has worked together in the past year to ensure that people were supported, that Personal Protective Equipment was worn and positivity was maintained, has been a highlight. While the continually changing restrictions and the border issues are not easy to deal with, the way in which everyone responds is a reflection of great relationships and dedication to delivering support to our clients.

During the past year, the Board and the senior leadership team discovered that our dedicated workforce was not being paid correctly and that this had been occurring for several years. The error occurred as a result of a lack of awareness and understanding that elements of our Enterprise Agreement should have been meeting requirements within the Fair Work Act.

An industrial relations expert and independent accounting firm were engaged to support a full review. The review included all current and former employees. CLRS has informed the Fair Work Ombudsman and is working with them to ensure we have addressed this issue appropriately.

Leah, the board and I are very sorry that this has occurred and we are making sure there are systems in place so this does not happen again. Paying our people properly is vital and all underpaid amounts will be returned. In addition to any back pay owed, affected employees have also received an interest payment, plus applicable superannuation contributions.

The majority of current and former staff have already been reimbursed and we are continuing to attempt to contact the few former employees with amounts outstanding.

It is fair to say that the cumulative underpayments are significant and this is reflected in both the Financial Year (FY) 2020/21 results and in our incoming 2021/2022 budget. Going into FY 2021/2022, the CLRS Enterprise Agreement has been terminated and the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability (SCHADS) Award is now the instrument under which we employ our staff.

Critically, we are rectifying the errors that enabled this to occur and engaging HR consultants to complete a review of our payroll processes and systems in October 2021 to ensure that the work we have so far completed, is in line with relevant awards and legislative requirements.

PARTNERSHIPS

Our partnership with our clients and families is the most important pillar in our success. Our clients, who make it possible for us to deliver the many services and programs we have on offer, drive CLRS to continually improve.

Because of this partnership, CLRS is able to support our clients and their families to live the life they choose, within their community.

Our clients and families support our fundraising efforts, our social enterprises and enable us to continue to deliver supports to people in our community.

Our partnership with our staff has been tested this year with many changes implemented in our workforce structure, responding to COVID-19 restrictions and requirements and learning of the error in their pay. Despite these challenges, or maybe because of them, our staff have demonstrated significant resilience and dedication to supporting our clients. Over the course of the year we have increased our permanent staff members from 53% last year to 80% at June 30 this year. We value being able to provide certainty and consistency for our clients and staff. The work of our staff is the cornerstone of our success, and for this, we say thank you!

Our strong relationships with sponsors, donors, local community, state and federal government bodies, local and community groups and disability support organisations, are an integral part of our ongoing success. We also value our partnerships with the community services and corporate sector. This support enables us to have greater reach and impact in the provision of vital services for our clients and their families.

LOOKING FORWARD

We are looking forward to sharing the 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan. This plan will be focussed on having an engaged, inclusive and skilled workforce, sustainability to enable responsible growth and safe, effective, connected and collaborative support with every person, every time. The Board are looking forward to building on the work that has been achieved over the last 40 plus years.

As a Board we will continue to respond to the opportunities and challenges ahead with the same positive attitude, committed to providing the governance needed to ensure CLRS remains committed to our values and focussed on our vision of an inclusive community.

We thank our Board members and senior managers for their leadership, and thank our valued staff, volunteers and ambassadors for their continued commitment and dedication to meeting the needs of people with disability in our community, empowering them and their families to live the life they choose.



CEO: Leah Taaffe



President: Wayne Jenkin

TY'S *Story*

Ty Harrison has been living with CLRS since 2009 and came from Colanda, an institution in Colac.

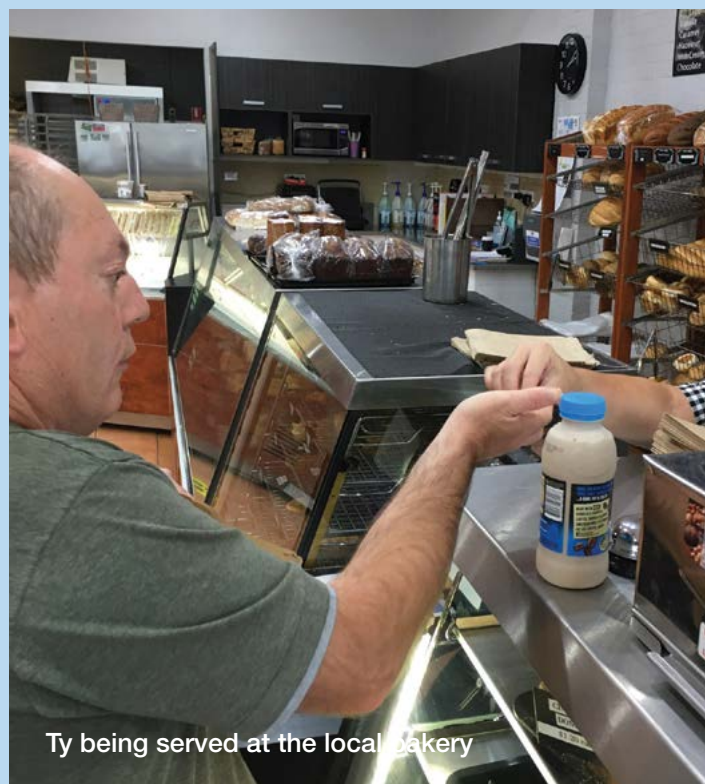
Ty was 37 years of age when he arrived in Echuca and he had not lived in a home setting since he was 14 years old. Ty was unable to complete any daily living tasks such as cooking, cleaning, gardening, or accessing the community safely. Ty was also only able to say three words.

He has made very steady progress over the years and is now confident baking and cooking, he is able to crack an egg, stir, grate and flip. Ty enjoys setting the table, rinsing his dishes, and stacking the dishwasher. He is able to hang out and bring in his washing, use the iron, and enjoys being out in the garden looking after the veggie patch and the chooks.

Ty's community participation has increased and he has learned to pay for his purchases independently. Ty enjoys the cinema, the hydro pool at Dynamic Fitness, accessing the supermarket, and completing both personal and household shopping.

He loves walking, especially in bush settings, fishing, and gathering wood for a fire. Ty has a remote control car which he regularly uses at football ovals and netball courts around Echuca. He is now able to tell staff what he wants, how he is feeling and where he would like to go. Ty uses an app called "Let me talk" and this helps him know with whom he is working with each day, where he is going, and what he is having for lunch. Ty is able to select an option for each setting and then touch the button that replays the day's events back to him.

Ty's increase in participation in all activities of life is due to his motivation and a consistent team approach which has enabled him to experience new activities and increase skills with fewer limitations placed on him.



OUT OF HOME CARE *Services*



CLRS staff & client

Children and young people are usually placed with Out of Home Care when they cannot live with their families. Out of Home Care Services look after children and young people when:

- A family needs support
- In cases of family conflict
- If there is a significant risk of harm or abuse in the family home.

CLRS has been delivering Out of Home Care Services for young people with disability since 2006. We are the only provider to deliver this service in the Echuca area. We deliver residential care where a team of staff provides 24/7 support for young people in a home or homes in our community. We are currently delivering these supports in two homes in Echuca to four young people.

This requires CLRS to meet the requirements of the Children, Youth & Families Act and be registered as an Out of Home Care Provider with the Department of Fairness, Families & Housing (DFFH). This means we undergo an assessment every three years and can have spot audits completed at any time.

All of our staff who work in this team are required to be registered on the Victorian Carer Register, hold a Working with Children Check, and have a police check. Staff are also required to complete a Certificate IV in Children Youth & Families.

This supports staff to develop their understanding and skills in supporting young people who are suffering from trauma, ensuring they are supported in the most appropriate way for each young person.

The four young people CLRS is currently supporting, all attend Echuca Twin Rivers Specialist School full time and receive fantastic support from the team of teachers and support staff. These young people have been supported by CLRS for between 2 and 10 years. We aim to provide a safe and consistent support system for these young people so that when they turn 18 they are supported into their next phase of life as successfully as possible.

The support that our staff team provides is incredibly important to the development of these young people. The teamwork with speech therapists, occupational therapists, behaviour support therapists, and DFFH Case Managers ensures that the support being delivered is continually being adapted to meet each young person's needs.

It is a privilege to deliver this type of support in our community and we have a very dedicated team who enable these young people to live successfully in their community.



Ashley volunteering at Recyclability

ASHLEY'S *Story*

Ashley Stone has been volunteering his time within the Recyclability program since March 2018. Ashley's role at Recyclability is varied. Depending on the schedule for the day, Ashley carries out a wide range of tasks that help make the whole program tick.

With the assistance of his support staff, Ashley delivers the flyers and bags in the local community, gathers donations from around the greater Echuca area, and aids in the sorting and recycling of the donations received. Ashley ensures that any donation that needs to get to our op shop locations or our shed gets to where they need to go.

Since Ashley first began volunteering in Recyclability, his ability to complete his work independently has skyrocketed! This has been in large part due to the determination and skill of Ashley who is contagious in his passion and enthusiasm for the work that he does but also due to the wonderful support of the Recyclability support staff and community volunteers.

CLRS is so thankful for the time that Ashley and other volunteers continue to provide week in and week out.

JOHN'S *Story*

John Rowland was a very fit and independent member of his community when he suffered a stroke in October 2019. As a result, he spent a number of months recovering in a Melbourne hospital before being transferred to Echuca Regional Health. John underwent an extensive rehabilitation program before moving to Bendigo to complete his community based rehabilitation.

In November 2020, John received his first National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plan, which included Support Coordination funding.

This funding played a pivotal role in supporting John to transition from supported living in Bendigo to living independently in a unit in the Echuca Moama area.

As John's speech was affected by his stroke, his support coordinator acted as a communication partner, whilst supporting him to make new connections with both mainstream and disability services within his local community. When working with his support coordinator, John was given choice and control around how his funding was used to access support and services to work towards achieving his NDIS goals.

Through engaging regularly with his support coordinator, it has been possible for John to make strong connections in his community. John, with assistance of his support workers, has been able to renew his social participation within the community. John also works with his supports, completing domestic duties such as food shopping, meal preparation and cleaning.

Another role the support coordinator played was in connecting John to Allied Health providers to support him in his independence goals. John's support coordinator made referrals to engage a physiotherapist, occupational therapist and speech therapist. John had a specialised assessment completed, which provided recommendations for assistive technology and home modifications to further support him to achieve his goals and live as safely and independently as possible.

In the six months that John has been back in his community, his support workers have noted that he is a recognised member of his community, and is often greeted by name when visiting different shops and organisations. John recently regained his licence so is able to make short trips around town which has contributed greatly to regain his independence and mobility.

It's often the little things that make a big difference and show that people of all abilities can live independently with the right support and attitude towards life.

Pictured below: John and his support coordinator Jodie



A SNAPSHOT OF *Our Services*

CLRS delivers a broad range of services across a large geographic area. Our services provide essential supports to our community.

SERVICES

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Services

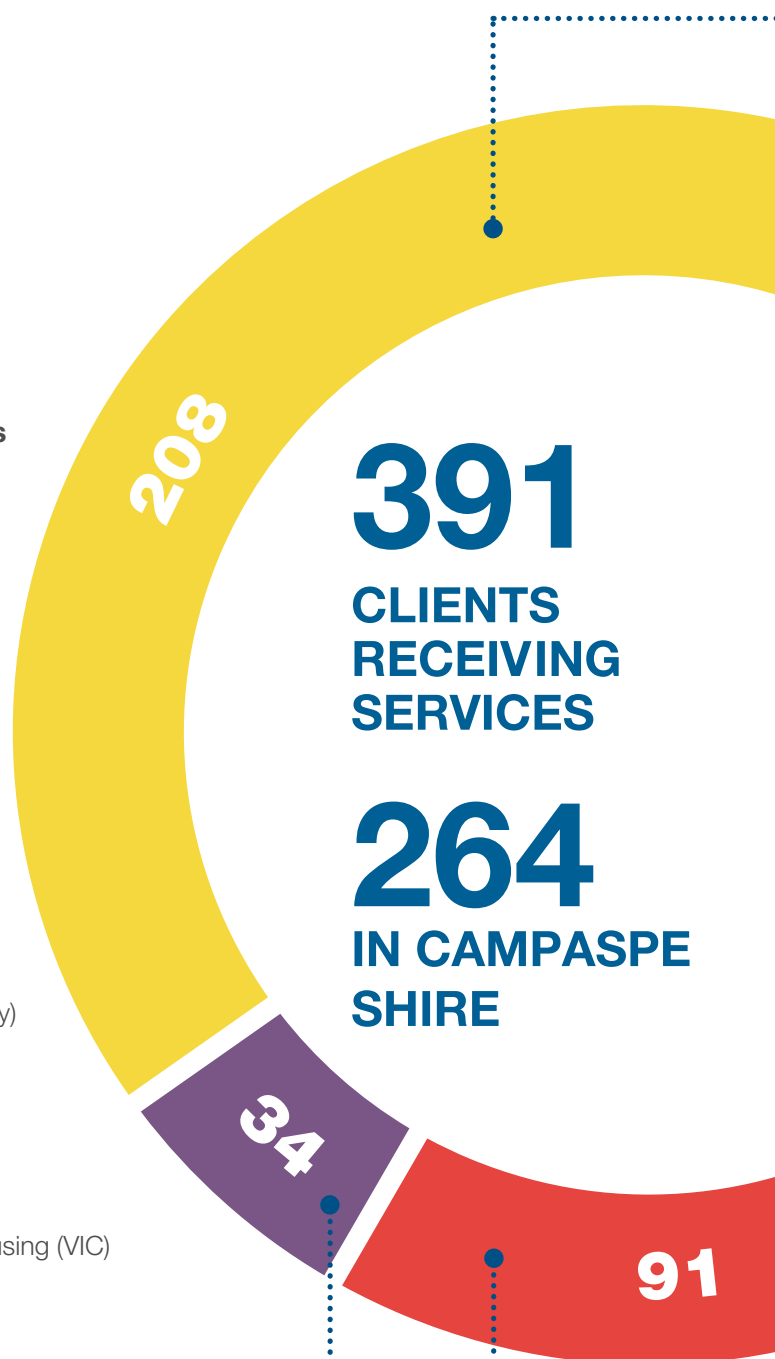
- Support Coordination
- Supported Independent Living
- Recyclability Social Enterprise
- Murray River Tea Rooms Social Enterprise
- Club Teen Outside School Hours & Holiday Program
- Community Activities & Social Groups
- Independent Living Programs
- In Home Support & Attendant Care
- Customised Employment

Other Services

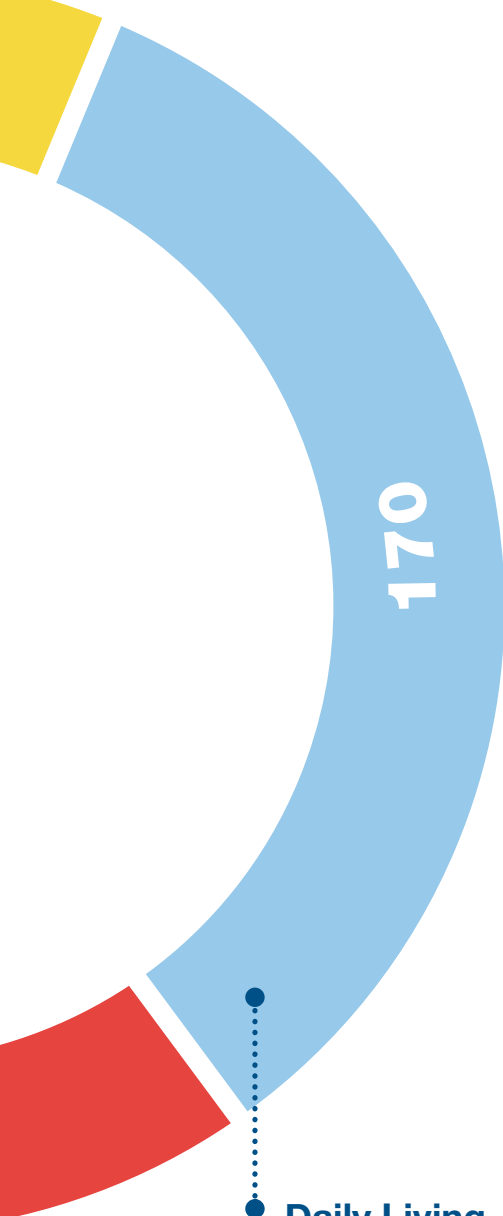
- Residential Out of Home Care Provider (Children with disability)
- Aged Care In Home Support
- TAC Provider
- Veterans' Affairs Provider
- Support Groups
- Registered Provider - Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (VIC)

Note: some clients access multiple services

**Residential Services,
Out of Home Care &
Disability Support**

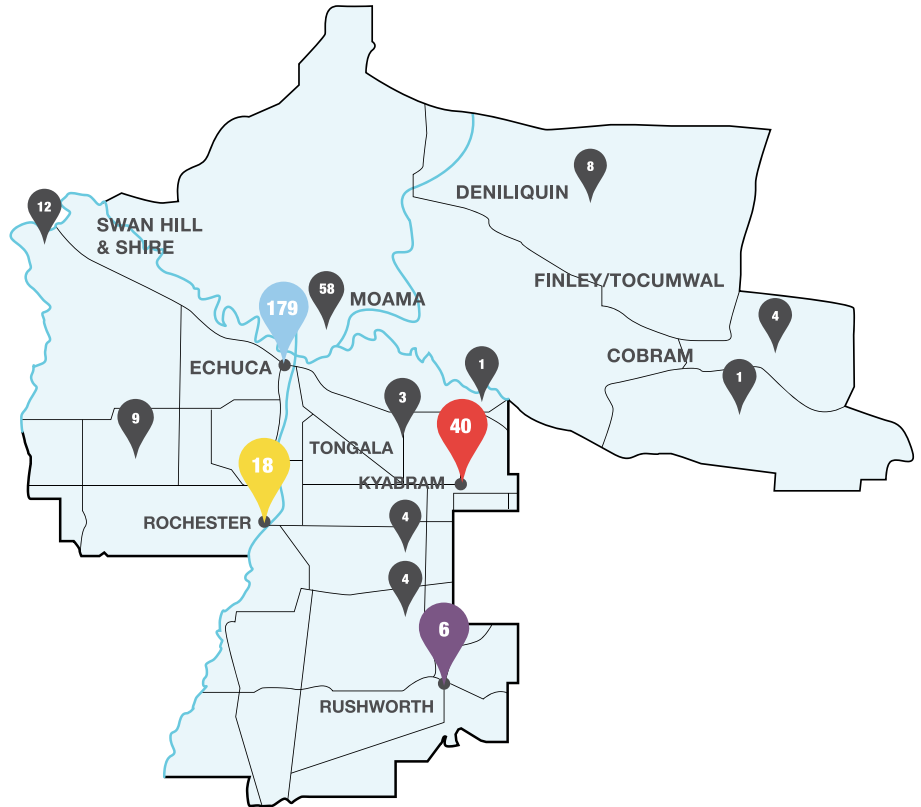


Support Coordination helping to implement NDIS plans



Daily Living - Individual Support Services

Defined Programs, Social Enterprises & Group Programs



Daily Living - Individual Support Services

- NDIS In Home and Community Support
- Short Term Accommodation and Assistance
- Transport Accident Commission (TAC) provider
- Aged Care In Home Supports
- Veterans' Affairs Provider

Defined Programs

- Recyclability
- Murray River Tea Rooms
- Club Teen - After School and School Holiday Program
- Community Activities and Social Groups
- Customised Employment

Residential Services

- Supported Independent Living
- Out Of Home Care Provider (Children with disability)
- Specialist Disability Accommodation

Support Coordination - Helping to implement NDIS Plans

- Coordination of Supports
- Specialist Support Coordination



Helen & Karen riding across the Campaspe foot bridge

HELEN & KAREN'S *Story*

Two of our residents have recently acquired new bicycles through their NDIS funding. These bikes have created a new way of exercising, enjoying the outdoors, and provides the ladies with low impact exercise as they age.

Helen is a confident rider and enjoys the space of her own company. Helen's bike has given her an extra sense of freedom and enabled her to have some valuable 'alone time'. When riding around the local oval, she requested staff don't walk with her while she rides her bike.

Our residents are surrounded by people at all times during the day whether it is at home or at programs and this simple activity of riding around the oval gives Helen the space to be on her own and ride. We can all see the joy this brings Helen with a big smile on her face.

Helen also uses her bike to transport herself to appointments such as her hairdresser, to do her banking, or just go for lunch. Karen loves getting out and about on her bike.

Her father Jack, let us know that as a child Karen would just take off for hours on her bike without him knowing where she was. Karen has benefited greatly from riding her bike as it has helped improve her health, which was impacting Karen's ability to get around and restricting her independence.



Helen & Karen on their brilliant bikes

NICOLE'S Story

In 2020/2021 many clients had to make significant changes to their weekly routine and how they engaged with their support services including with CLRS. Many clients were used to spending time out and about engaging with their community, however, lockdowns and restrictions meant supports needed to be delivered in people's homes.

To say the least, this was challenging and in some circumstances led to people feeling rather isolated and disengaged. After restrictions started to ease, some of our clients faced some setbacks, hesitation, and challenges in re-engaging with their community and needed an extra helping hand to restore their sense of belonging and inclusiveness.

Nicole Deakin is an active member of our community and thoroughly enjoys being out and about. Support during lockdown was a huge change of pace for Nicole and her staff but she was able to make use of their time together at home. An unexpected challenge for Nicole was the prospect of re-engaging with the community as restrictions started easing. Like many of our clients, Nicole faced some anxiety about this and it was a challenge for her to reinstate her time with her group activities and the community in general.

In late 2020 Nicole was thinking about going back to Life Skills, a group activity delivered by CLRS, but she had a few concerns. During her Daily Living supports, Nicole and her staff worked through these concerns and used Nicole's strengths to tackle them head-on. Nicole spoke with the staff in the group activities to best prepare herself for re-attendance at Life Skills. With support, Nicole undertook a few practice runs on the bus into town and back home and made a plan as to how she would get to and from her activities. Nicole had a trial first day back at Life Skills and was so happy to be back that, after one session, she decided she would go back every week.

Seeing her friends and getting back out in her community was a huge motivator for her.

After getting inspired by the Christmas preparations happening at Number 4, Nicole asked her Team Leader if she could decorate the reception area at 26 Percy Street. With support from staff member Narelle Woodgate, Nicole assembled and decorated our office Christmas tree and hung up decorations at the reception desk. The whole office appreciated the Christmas cheer they were greeted with when walking into the office.

Nicole was looking for a new challenge in 2021 and approached her Team Leader about returning to the Murray River Tea Rooms. Because of the work she did to overcome her anxiety before returning to Life Skills, Nicole was ready to jump straight back into volunteering at the Tea Rooms. Nicole had her first shift in June and is now volunteering at the Tea Rooms three times a fortnight. Her duties include taking orders, delivering coffees, clearing tables and washing dishes. Volunteering is a passion of Nicole's and she loves getting to chat with the customers and other volunteers. Nicole worked really hard to be where she is and is now thriving thanks to her motivation and persistence to achieve her goals.



Nicole in the kitchen



Nicole (middle) with the CLRS team Brigid Dullard & Narelle Woodgate

A SUPPORTIVE *Community*

Not for profit organisations like CLRS, rely on the generous support of individual donors, trusts and foundations, corporate partners, community groups and the community to enable us to deliver the services and activities we do.

The support we receive has enabled us to continue to deliver our Social Enterprises, Club Teen and Community Activities programs.

In this past year, the support we have received has enabled us to purchase sensory equipment, open our third Opening Doors Project at Maiden Street in Moama, buy a new cake fridge for the Murray River Tea Rooms and get our fourth Opening Doors Project underway. The support we receive also enables us to deliver fundraising initiatives, which in the past year have included our MEGA DRAW, planning to raise up to \$60,000 with all of the proceeds going to the next Opening Doors Project. We have been generously supported with the major prize of home improvement vouchers to the value of \$10,000 and three prizes every month as a bonus to encourage people to purchase tickets.

44% of our staff contribute to CLRS through our workplace-giving program.

This fortnightly contribution by staff, demonstrates their understanding and commitment to the work that they deliver and the additional support our organisation needs in order to continue to deliver supports to people with disability in our community.

This past year has been very challenging for everyone as a result of a full year of COVID-19 restrictions, which have variously meant we have all had to deal with lockdowns and travel restrictions. Every area of our community has been impacted and we are even more grateful to those who have continued to support us.

Thank you to each person who has volunteered at events, sold MEGA DRAW tickets, assisted with Recyclability, the Murray River Tea Rooms, Club Teen and administration.

Thank you to every business that has donated and supported us in any and every way they could.

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

Elsie Murray Trust
Roy Ogden Foundation
State Trustees Australia Foundation

CLUB GRANTS

Moama Bowling Club
Moama RSL
Rich River Golf Club

GOVERNMENT

Department of Education and Training
Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
Commonwealth Department of Social Services

JOHNNO'S RUN

Participants, sponsors and donors

OPENING DOORS PROJECT MEGA DRAW

Sponsors, donors and ticket buyers

WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAM

84 CLRS staff members

MAJOR DONORS

Barker, R & N
Maughan, N & D
L'Huillier, K
Echuca Toyota
Echuca Metaland

Community Living & Respite Services Inc acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.



Health
and Human
Services

DINNER PLANS *Project*

This year, CLRS was successful in being chosen to embark on delivering a new short term program to support the carers in our community to rest, connect, reflect and celebrate their successes.

Funds were provided by Carer Support Services to deliver what we called “Dinner Plans”. The Dinner Plans Project provided care givers the rare opportunity to go out for dinner in the local area enjoying a break from their role as carer, whilst their loved one was taken care of.

The project had a focus on creating an opportunity for carers to connect with other local carers, create natural support networks and gain knowledge of local programs that may be of benefit.

10 families reached out to take this opportunity for a break in different ways across the program duration.

The same way that COVID has impacted so many of our plans in the past year, so too did it have an impact on the way CLRS was able to deliver the program. However, necessity is indeed the mother of invention, and we were able to come up with new and meaningful ways for carers to

be supported in the community. Some remaining funds were able to be redirected in the form of vouchers to help families in need of a “pick me up”. Other funds have been held aside and allocated to programs as discretionary funds to be able to help provide additional supports when carers have no other alternatives for support.

Whilst the “Dinner Plans Project” has not been delivered exactly how we planned, we can safely say that it has achieved its objective of supporting carers, and recognises the tireless work that they do, day in and day out for those who need it most.



OUR *Collaborations*

Involvement with community, health, disability, youth and aged care providers has included:

- Aboriginal Health Disability Reference Group
- Aboriginal Health Partnership Group
- Acquired Brain Injury Network Meeting
- Aged Care Service Providers Network
- BEACON
- Campaspe Cohuna Local Learning & Employment Network - Board representation
- Campaspe Family Violence Action Group
- Campaspe Murray Mental Health Network
- Campaspe Primary Care Partnership Management Group and Committees including:
 - » Service Integration Steering Committee
 - » Health Promotion Leadership Group
 - » Vibrant Volunteers Coordinators Network
- Campaspe Youth Partnership
- Communications Access Network Meeting
- DFFH Campaspe COVID Working Group: Locality Testing Promotion & Community Engagement
- Echuca Community Mental Health
- Echuca Moama Alliance - an alliance with Echuca Community for the Aged and Echuca Regional Health
- Echuca Moama Tourism
- Kyabram Community Leadership Forum COVID-19 Response
- Loddon Mallee Disability Service Provider Network
- Loddon Mallee Mental Health Network
- Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership
- Network of Disability Service Providers
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Out of Home Care Operations Group

OUR DEDICATED *Volunteers*

CLRS appreciates the valuable contribution made by all volunteers over the past challenging twelve months. This includes staff, students, family and friends.

We have 24 community volunteers, 32 supported volunteers, 12 staff volunteers, 8 Board members, 10 fundraising committee members and 14 Ambassadors regularly assisting in various roles throughout the organisation. ANZ Bank Echuca, is a corporate volunteer and rotate their staff in our Number 4 Percy Street Op Shop weekly. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, there have been less opportunities to volunteer in our community.

Some of the ways we celebrate and acknowledge our volunteers each year are; through National Volunteer Week, social media and at the staff and volunteers Christmas lunch. COVID-19 has meant that some of these events couldn't take place in person in the past twelve months.

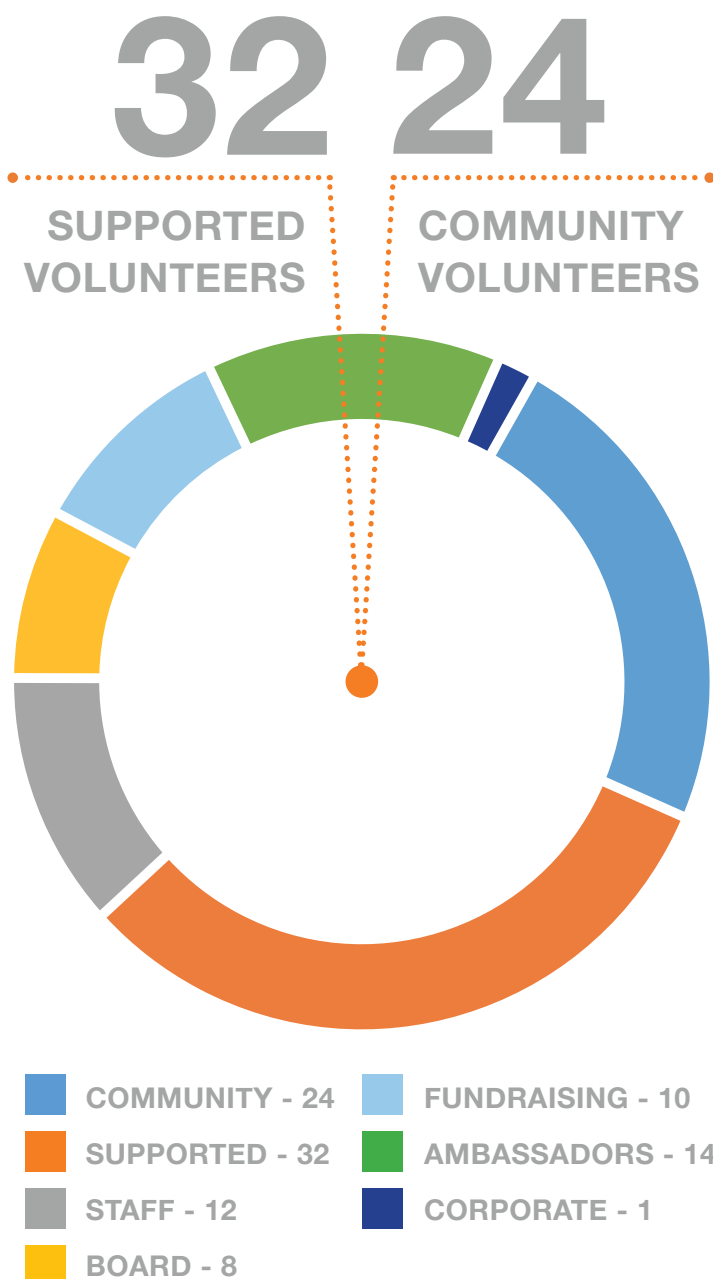
CLRS encourages and supports students to volunteer within our organisation. The Murray River Tea Rooms and Recyclability have opportunities for these students to learn and share skills. CLRS is a member of the Campaspe Primary Care Partnership Vibrant Volunteers Network who provide support to volunteer coordinators and managers and volunteering organisations in our region.

We thank our volunteers for continuing to adapt to the ever changing COVID-19 environment. Their flexibility and understanding makes a difference in these challenging times.

Volunteer roles include:

- Hospitality, retail, maintenance and administrative support at the Murray River Tea Rooms
- Retail assistance in the Op Shop at 4 Percy Street Echuca
- Support with fundraising activities and events
- Various aspects of the Recyclability Social Enterprise including Upcycling
- Assisting with Club Teen transport to enable children from the Kyabram area to attend holiday programs in Echuca
- Office administration support
- Fundraising Committee
- Ambassadors for the Opening Doors Project
- Board Members

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering or would like to know more, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Liz Rowsell, on 5480 2388 or via the website www.clrs.org.au/job/volunteer/



MEET *Val Miller*

Val is a valued volunteer not only with CLRS but with the wider community. She enjoys helping others, meeting new people and giving back to the community.

Val started volunteering with CLRS in 2017 after learning about what the organisation does for the community, from her good friend and neighbour, Glenys Kennedy, a Life Member of CLRS.

Val's love of op shops made her decision to volunteer easy. You'll see her most Saturdays at our Number 4 Percy Street Op Shop and she helps out during the week when needed.

Val and her husband Stuart live in Moama, after having relocated in 2005 from the family dairy farm near Tongala, where they had lived and worked for forty years.

They have seven children and fifteen grandchildren living in Victoria. Val's interests, outside of family and helping out with all the grandchildren, are cooking, catching up with friends, being involved in the community and, of course, op shopping! Pop in to the op shop on a Saturday and say hello to Val.



CLRS Life Member Glenys Kennedy & Val Miller in the Recyclability Op Shop

JOHNNO'S *Run* 2020

On Sunday 26 July 2020, Johnno's Run ran as a virtual event for the first time since 2014. Due to COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions, the team chose not to participate in Run Melbourne.

While we made the decision not to focus on CLRS fundraising activities and fundraising events because of restrictions, we wanted to still give our Johnno's Run team and the community an event they could be part of, so we chose to hold Johnno's Run virtually. This meant that we could still have our Johnno's Run singlets for people to purchase and wear proudly for the virtual event.

Due to the border closure, participants ran, walked or wheeled on their side of the river. They took to the roads, streets, parks and forests on the Sunday, at a time that suited them to show their support for CLRS and to help build homes for people with disability in our community. We had a CLRS photographer based in both NSW and VIC to capture the participants in action.

With 150 singlets sold, proceeds went to the current Opening Doors Project in Barry Street, Echuca. It was great to see splashes of red around our twin towns of Echuca Moama.

Thank you to everyone who purchased a singlet, took part in the event and to everyone who donated.

Just over \$13,000 was raised which is an amazing effort in the current climate.

Participants and the community are kept up to date via the Johnno's Run Facebook page www.facebook.com/johnnosrun and Facebook group www.facebook.com/groups/johnnosrun

We encourage everyone to follow and get involved.



Thank you to our generous sponsors; Moama Bowling Club, Riverine Herald, Worklocker, Brett Sands Watersports, Cosgriff Lawyers, Echuca Moama Print & Design, Edge FM, Radiant Media Productions and Squires Air Conditioning Electrical & Refrigeration.

Pictured: Georgia, James & Lucy Irwin





Emma and Sophia Doellstedt

EMMA'S *Story*

Emma Tye started her Customised Employment journey with CLRS in December 2020, after finishing school. Emma was provided School Leavers Employment Support funding (SLES) within her NDIS plan, to support her to prepare to look for and gain employment.

Emma chose to begin the CLRS Customised Employment program to help her identify her skills, challenges, passions, and dreams for her future. The Customised Employment process provided a framework for Emma to be able to create pathways of opportunity in the local community.

Emma's pathway led her to a love of photography. This was an interest that Emma and her support worker, Sophia both shared. Sophia was able to help Emma delve further into the world of photography to develop her skills in this art. Equally importantly, Sophia was also there to help Emma manage any challenges that arose, such as learning skills around interviewing, resume writing, and editing her work.

Recently, the hard work that Emma and Sophia have put in has culminated in Emma having the skill and confidence to apply and interview for a photography job with a local content creation company called J2 Content Creation. Emma was successful in gaining the role and she has commenced working with them in April 2021.

Sophia continues to work with Emma around her goals and refining her craft whenever she needs support with something particularly tricky, but for the most part, is now able to fulfill the requirements of her role completely solo.

So what does Emma say about her new job?

Emma "loves doing the photoshoots and editing the photos" and "loves using Photoshop and having a play around with Photoshop".

Emma said she "has really enjoyed working with Sophia. She has taught me a lot of things about photography".

Emma's story and success are one of many examples of how the Customised Employment program can help people not only discover their passions in life but can also help them achieve their dreams.



Emma Tye

SHEREE'S Story

Sheree Arnold left home when she was 25 years of age and has shared a home with others as well as lived on her own.



Sheree volunteering at Murray River Tea Rooms



Sheree, Emma & Kim at 5 Minor Street

Sheree and her family have worked tirelessly to ensure that when she was growing up she was as independent as possible, learning everyday skills so she would be able to care for herself. Sheree moved into a unit at the back of 5 Minor Street when the house opened in July 2014.

The unit at the back was great. Sheree resided there from July 2014 until January 2021.

Sheree was at the unit during the week and went home to mum, Anne, on weekends returning Monday mornings.

When COVID came, Sheree spent more time with mum so she wouldn't be on her own. Sheree became aware of a vacancy at 5 Minor street, a shared home, and asked mum to follow up on this in late 2020.

Anne contacted Sheree's support coordinator and asked them to follow up and to have Sheree listed as a possible applicant.

Sheree and Anne went through the process of viewing the house, meeting with the other residents and being interviewed by them and management.

One of the questions asked was "Why do you want to live at 5 Minor Street?" Anne said that Sheree's answer was, "I want company".

Anne thought they would get another couple of years before they would need to look at Sheree changing her accommodation but as Sheree had initiated the request, Anne followed it up. Sheree moved into the house in January 2021.

This has taken a huge weight off Anne's mind knowing that there is always staff there and that Sheree is very happy. Sheree enjoys the company of the ladies and staff and is continuing to complete all her tasks and practising her skills daily. Sheree cooks her own breakfast as well as occasionally cooking meals for all. Sheree still goes to Mum's on weekends but is eager to return for Sunday's dinner. Anne says they joke about the five star meals.

Anne is very thankful to the staff and says now there is no need for her to worry, that Sheree is safe and she now has peace of mind.



**CLETUS GILMOUR
FUNDRAISING** *Award*

This award recognises a person who has been exemplary in their contribution to raising awareness and improving outcomes for people with disability through fundraising.

Front - Kathy Kostoglou, Cletus Gilmour Fundraising Award winner,
back left - Brendan Hogan, back right - Peter Gilmour

THANK YOU *Brendan Hogan*

Brendan Hogan – Board Member 2012 - 2021

Brendan Hogan works in our local community as a Director at Lockwood Partners and the Provide Group and has been heavily involved in the Echuca Football Netball Club for many years. Brendan joined the CLRS Board in September 2012.

In September 2013, he took on the role of Treasurer, in 2014 the role of Secretary and in September 2015 he stepped into the role of President. Brendan, as part of the succession planning for the Board, handed over the role of President to Wayne Jenkin in November 2020. He has provided invaluable support to Wayne, and the rest of the Board in the past year which is a reflection of his dedication to ensuring the Board operates to the best of its ability.

Brendan's support as Treasurer and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee was invaluable to former CEO, Suzanna Barry, and Finance Manager, Kylie Bruns. His accountancy skills and business acumen helped to develop improved reporting and processes within the organisation.

As President, Brendan provided leadership, support and guidance to the organisation through a significant period of both industry change and organisational change – the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the appointment of a new CEO, Leah Taaffe, subsequent to the retirement of Suzanna Barry after 10 years as CEO.

While Brendan was President, the hours of service delivered to clients by CLRS, grew by 54%, staff numbers by 26% and the revenue generated by the organisation increased by 47%.

This level of growth over a short five year period is challenging and the way in which the organisation continues to develop, demonstrates the great leadership Brendan has provided.



Brendan at the official opening of the Eyre Street Opening Doors Project

As he retires from the Board, after the permitted nine years of service, Brendan is planning to continue his support of CLRS through attending the Annual Fundraising Dinner, supporting the Opening Doors Project and participating in Johnno's Run.

All of the team at CLRS would like to thank Brendan for his contribution and the work he has done in developing and guiding the organisation over the past nine years. His work in supporting the organisation to continue to deliver services to people with disability in our community into the future has been invaluable.



Wayne Jenkin, Brendan Hogan and Dr. Claire Goodman

OUR *Team*

The Community Living & Respite Services volunteer Board includes the President, Vice President, Treasurer and six ordinary Board Members. The Board provides governance and approves the strategic direction of the organisation. The Board works with the senior leadership team to ensure the delivery of high quality services.



President: Wayne Jenkin

Appointed to the Board 2016

- Treasurer: Nov 2016 - Nov 2017
- Vice President: Nov 2017 - Nov 2020
- President: Nov 2020 - current
- Member of CLRS Governance Committee
- Home Loan Business Banker - NAB



Vice President: Dr Claire Goodman

Appointed to the Board 2017

- Vice President: Nov 2020 - current
- MBBS
- Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practice
- DRANZCOG (Advanced)
- Registered with AHPRA (Australian Health Practitioners Regulatory Authority)
- Director - Echuca Moama Family Medical Practice



Treasurer: Erin Langman

Appointed to the Board 2016

- Treasurer: Nov 2017 - current
- Chair of CLRS Audit & Risk Committee
- General Manager Echuca Workers
- AdvDip Hospitality Management
- Active Certified Club Manager
- Club Managers Association of Australia



Brendan Hogan

Appointed to the Board 2012

- Treasurer: 2013 - 2014
- Secretary: 2015 - 2015
- President: 2015 - 2020
- Chair of CLRS Governance Committee
- Director, Lockwood Partners and Provide Group



Leanne Cuffe

Appointed to the Board 2013

- Secretary: Nov 2014 - 2020
- Member of CLRS Audit & Risk Committee
- Bachelor of Creative Arts (BCA)



Andrew Cowin

Appointed to the Board 2016 (Retired Feb 2021)

- Member of CLRS Governance Committee
- GradDip Planning & Design (Urban Planning)
- BAppSc (Geol)
- Corporate Strategy Manager
– Campaspe Shire Council



Michelle Allan

Appointed to the Board 2018

- Member of CLRS Governance Committee
- BA (Hons) LLB
- Corporate Counsel - Murray Primary Health Network
- Law Institute of Victoria Member



Peter Hyden

Appointed to the Board 2019 (Retired Nov 2020)

- Retired
- 30 years in Agribusiness



Elaine Hamilton

Appointed to the Board 2020

- Member of CLRS Audit & Risk Committee
- BAppSc (Family Studies)
- Dip Disability
- Dip Community Services (Case Management)
- Rotarian

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr Jack Squire

Mrs Fran Galvin OAM

Mrs Glenys Kennedy

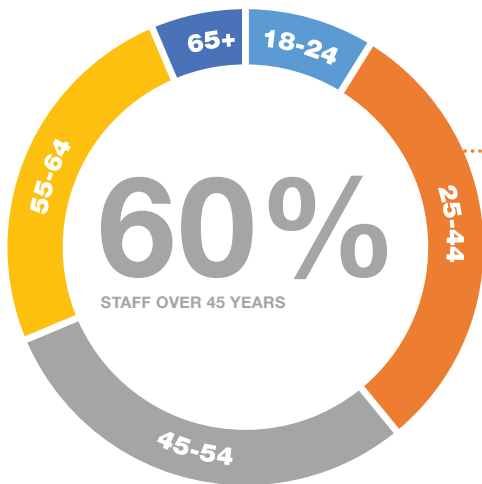
Mrs Jan Rankin

Ms Ann Bennett

PATRONS

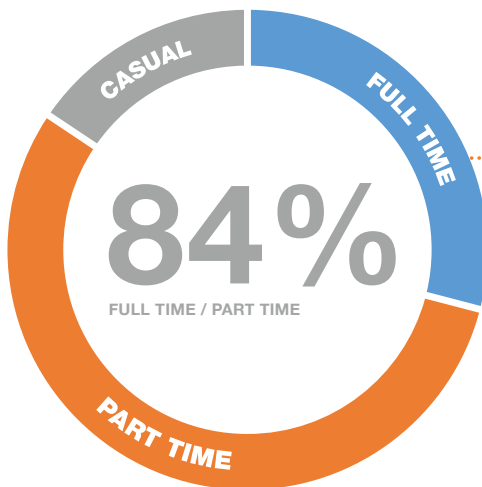
Mr Noel Maughan OAM

2020 - 2021 STAFF *Facts*



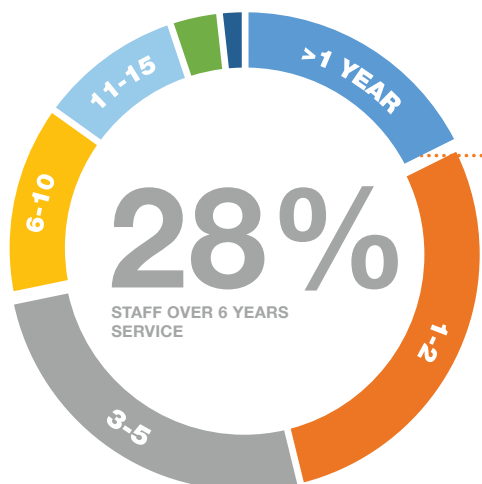
STAFF AGE PROFILE

- 18-24 YEARS
- 25-44 YEARS
- 45-54 YEARS
- 55-64 YEARS
- 65+ YEARS



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- FULL TIME
- PART TIME
- CASUAL



LENGTH OF SERVICE

- LESS THAN A YEAR
- 1-2 YEARS
- 3-5 YEARS
- 6-10 YEARS
- 11-15 YEARS
- 16-19 YEARS
- 20+ YEARS

2021

EMPLOYED STAFF AS OF JUNE 30, 2021

53%

Staff with over 3 years service

5 years

Average length of service

30%

Staff under 25 years

83%

Female staff

82%

Direct support

48 Years

Median age

STAFF Profiles



Amanda Kay

Amanda commenced at CLRS in 2015, after relocating from Ballarat where she gained experience in Residential, Day Program and employment for people with disability. With a collective 22 years of experience in the disability industry, Amanda has enjoyed working in various roles at CLRS including Reception, Team Leader, Payroll, Workplace Training Coordinator and now as HR Coordinator. Throughout Amanda's career, it has been important that she gains a sense of making a positive difference for others in her work and to feel valued and respected, which she experiences at CLRS. She enjoys that no matter the task, there is always someone willing to give a helping hand.



Chris Griffiths

Chris joined CLRS in February 2021, hitting the ground running as a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in Daily Living. Chris saw the satisfaction and enjoyment his wife, also a CLRS employee, gained by working with clients. While Chris is only new to the role, within his first month received glowing feedback from a client's family he is working with. They said "he is outgoing and presents with a good head; this has been very helpful". Having previously supported clients with disability during work placement in other roles, this is something Chris would like to do more of in the future. Chris said "it is fantastic to enable clients to achieve personal satisfaction at a work environment".



Helen Wilkins

After Helen completed her nursing studies, she decided the nursing field really did not provide a sufficient work/life balance. After talking to a Services Manager at a Day Placement facility in Shepparton, she felt that the disability industry was more suited. She commenced as a Disability Support worker in 2008 in Shepparton, working in Day Services. Helen worked across a variety of areas including swimming, arts, cooking, music and technology before moving into Business Services running a flower delivery program. Helen gained employment with CLRS as a Team Leader in Residential Services in 2016.



Deb Oswald

Deb joined the CLRS team as a DSP in May 2001, having worked in the field from the age of 25 years old. Deb found the flexibility of the work fitted with juggling a family and provided a rewarding enjoyable career for herself and the way it worked in with her family. Deb has worked in various residential settings supporting adults and young people. CLRS has supported Deb to complete various training and development, including a Certificate IV Disability. Deb really loves her job! She finds "every day is different, challenging and so satisfying to know you are helping clients to become independent and live a full life".

WORKFORCE STRUCTURE & *Recruitment*



Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) play an essential part in the delivery of high quality and consistent support to our clients.

In this past year, we have made changes to how we structure our teams and how we recruit for our DSP roles.

We had a focus on increasing the number of permanent staff as we value the support we are able to provide to clients and staff when you have a permanent role rather than a casual role.

As an organisation we deliver three types of direct support services:

1. 24/7 support in a home where a number of people live together or one person lives alone. This is our Residential team.
2. Support during the day, usually between 9am and 6pm in groups who complete various activities and tasks. In this team, we deliver our Social Enterprises, Customised Employment and Community Activities. This is our Defined Program team.
3. Support, usually during the day but can be overnight if required, which enables a person to live independently in their community and to access the activities of their choice in the community. This is usually delivered on an individual basis. This is our Daily Living team.

As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, we were required to have one staff team work in one Residential home.

This was directed by Government to support a reduced risk from COVID-19. We discovered that this way of working was beneficial for our clients and our staff, so we introduced “work teams” on a permanent basis. Now all of our Residential team are working in one of our homes and do not work in any other team.

We are planning on introducing the same structure in Defined Programs in late 2021, as this is also a very structured program and the consistent support of clients and staff will improve the quality of the services we are delivering.

We have also changed how we recruit our staff. Our recruitment process has moved from a traditional recruitment model of face-to-face interviews to a much more intensive process with a client focus. Applicants are required to go through a three-stage process which consists of a group activity requiring the completion of a task, role play and finally a face-to-face interview. At each stage, you are assessed as to whether or not you are suitable to move on to the next stage and if you successfully complete all three stages, you are offered the opportunity to become part of the team.

We now offer permanent and casual roles immediately where previously we only offered casual roles. This is because we now recruit to a specific need rather than just continually hiring people who may or may not have been utilised.

The improved structure and process has provided a greater understanding of the role requirements, supported us to match our client needs to applicants, and improved our ability to clearly identify suitability to working with our clients. Improving our aim of ensuring we are delivering a high-quality service to our clients every time.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP *Team*

The CLRS senior leadership team consists of ten people who work collaboratively with staff to ensure safe, effective, high quality support and positive outcomes for clients and their families. Our areas of focus for the past twelve months have been structuring our workforce to better meet the needs of clients, increasing the number of permanent staff and improving our systems to ensure our organisation is operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.



Rosemary Hermans

Commenced with CLRS: October 2001

Position: Services Manager - Residential

Qualifications/Training: Advanced Diploma in Disability, Diploma in Business

Experience: Mental Health and Intellectual Disability at Aradale Mental Hospital. Aged Care and 28 years of disability support

Highlight of the last 12 months: "The reduction in restrictive practice within CLRS accommodation setting. This includes environmental and chemical restrictions being decreased and in some cases removed".



Leah Taaffe

Commenced with CLRS: April 2016

Position Title: Chief Executive Officer

Qualifications/Training: BA (Hons) Applied Social Care & GAICD

Experience: Community Services Sector in Ireland & locally

Highlight of the last 12 months: "This year it has been the way in which our teams have responded to the ongoing changes and challenges that have been presented to them. Our people are incredibly resilient and dedicated to the people they support".



Kylie Bruns

Commenced with CLRS: June 2007

Position Title: Finance Manager

Qualifications/Training: Financial Management

Experience: 31 years in Finance/Management roles

Highlight of the last 12 months: "During the past 12 months we have supported four people with disability to move into specialist disability accommodation owned by CLRS. This includes two gentlemen that have transitioned from Shared Supported Accommodation, to being able to live independently with regular supports".



Lauren Davy

Commenced with CLRS: June 2012

Position Title: Strategy & Practice Manager

Qualifications/Training: Diploma in Community Services and Business Management

Experience: Quality & HACCP systems implementation, Training systems development, Daily Living Team Leader, Services Manager

Highlight of the last 12 months: “The highlight of my role in the last 12 months has been working with our team to redevelop the Quality Plan, I know this work will have benefits for both our clients and staff in the future”.



Anna de Vrieze

Commenced with CLRS: June 2015

Position Title: HR Manager

Qualifications/Training: Bachelor of Business (HR/Marketing) Certificate IV Investigations, MBA (currently studying)

Experience: Community Services/Local Government/Corporate

Highlight of the last 12 months: “After a year that will go down in history, I’m so proud of our team’s ability to continue to improve outcomes for clients and staff despite the challenges that may present. We’ve demonstrated that nothing is impossible and where we can, we will!”



Brittany Somerfield

Commenced with CLRS: November 2013

Position Title: Services Manager – Defined Programs

Qualifications/Training: Diploma Community Services

Experience: Disability Support across 14 years, Child Protection- DHHS, Out of Home Care Team Leader, Support Coordination and Services Manager

Highlight of the last 12 months: “I enjoy the many opportunities and challenges that my work provides on a day to day basis, but my main joy is seeing people learn, grow and achieve things that they never thought possible”.



Rod Cairns

Commenced with CLRS: February 2017

Position Title: IT Manager

Qualifications/Training: Bachelor of Theology; Graduate Diploma Computing; Cert IV Government Investigations

Experience: 15 years Minister of Religion/Chaplaincy; 21 years IT Engineer/Consulting/Systems Admin & Support

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Supporting our staff as they have embraced remote working, knowing the IT services we have implemented have played such a significant role in supporting our CLRS Community”.



Alison Halloran

Commenced with CLRS: November 2020

Position Title: Services Manager – Support Coordination

Qualifications/Training: Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management, Bachelor of Applied Science in Hospitality Management, Cert IV in Training and Assessment

Experience: Over 20 years in leading teams in customer service community based roles, in federal and local government

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Being in a role I am passionate about, while working with an engaged and motivated team. Most of all having the opportunity to positively support the lives of clients and their families and carers in what can be a challenging pathway”.



Dean Walton

Commenced with CLRS: February 2021

Position Title: Services Manager – Residential

Qualifications/Training: Diploma Community Services, Frontline Management

Experience: 30 years in Residential and Community Aged Care & Disability Services

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Knowing that I work with a caring, passionate and dedicated team of people that provide advice, services, assistance and advocacy. Being able to put a smile on a face and make a person’s life a little bit better”.



Sally Brennan

Commenced with CLRS: November 2020

Position Title: Services Manager – Daily Living

Qualifications/Training: Bachelor of Arts (Youth Affairs) & Diploma of Leadership and Management

Experience: Senior leadership and executive operations responsibilities in youth, children, family and disability in not-for-profit within Melbourne Metro/Regional VIC

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Starting at CLRS completely remote from Melbourne during stage 4 COVID-19 lockdown successfully!”



**Our people are
incredibly resilient
and dedicated to
the people they
support.**

- Leah Taaffe, CLRS CEO

OPENING DOORS *Project*

The Opening Doors Project has been in existence for seven years and has built three shared homes and six individual units.

These developments are building Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) homes for people with disability in our community. These SDA homes are required to be built to specific standards which meet the identified needs of people with disability. There are rules which limit the amount of rent that can be charged and this makes these homes more affordable for people with disability.

The project has so far provided 16 opportunities for people with disability to live independently in our community.

The Opening Doors Projects have enabled people to move back into their community, move out of Aged Care, and out of group homes for people with disability. The increased independence, safety and security, engagement with the community and the choice and control these projects have provided, is invaluable to people with disability, their families, and our community.

Construction is soon to be underway on the fourth Opening Doors Project. This latest project facilitates the building of four units; 2 x two-bedroom units and 2 x one-bedroom units on Barry Street Echuca. These homes will provide four opportunities for people with disability to live more independently in their community. The people who

are moving into these units are looking forward to the opportunity to have their own homes. Each of these people has their own story and family supporting them, yet all have a common need for safe, independent, sustainable housing.

These homes are being specifically developed for people who have a need to live on their own and can be overwhelmed if expected to live with others. The design of the interior and exterior has been based on ensuring that these units deliver a calming environment with a sense of safety and security.

With this project, CERNO has been engaged as Project Managers. Their role is invaluable in ensuring that the project is delivered on time, within budget, and to the required Specialist Disability Accommodation standards. CERNO will manage the construction phase now and work hard to make sure that this is completed as planned at the end of February 2022.

Ecotecture Design Group was engaged as the Building Designers for this project and they have been a pleasure to work with in designing these units. We are really looking forward to seeing their design come to life.

This year for the first time we also engaged Jason Clymo from J2 Content Creation, to capture the story and the journey of the Opening Doors Project. Jason has been meeting with and videoing people involved in the project, delivering social media posts, writing blogs, and updating the Opening Doors Project page on the CLRS website. We wanted to create a resource that captures why and how we are developing these projects and provide an opportunity to share what we learn with others.

Concept image: Barry Street, Echuca



FINANCIAL 2020/21

Highlights

ASSETS

- CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS
- TRADE & OTHER RECEIVABLES
- RIGHT OF USE ASSETS
- PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT

\$10,965,974

LIABILITIES

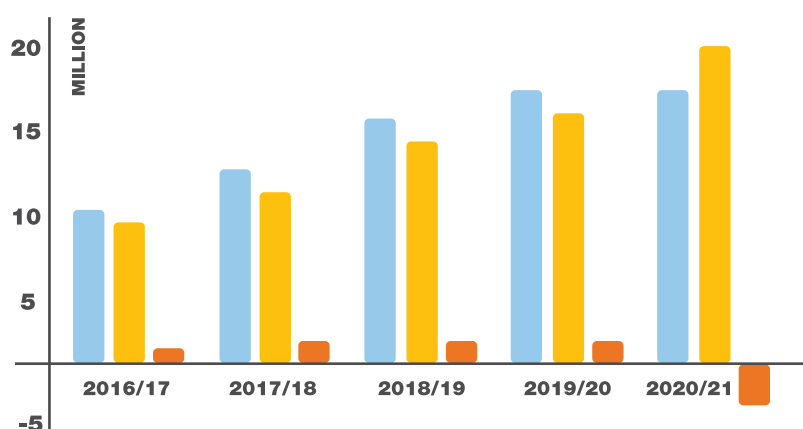
- CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS
- TRADE & OTHER RECEIVABLES
- RIGHT OF USE ASSETS

\$3,729,784

BALANCE SHEET

- TOTAL ASSETS
- TOTAL LIABILITY
- EQUITY

\$7,236,190
EQUITY



PROFIT & LOSS

- INCOME
- EXPENSES
- OPERATING PROFIT

\$15M
TOTAL REVENUE

\$9.6M
NET ASSETS

\$11M
NDIS REVENUE





High Street South
Corner Store







Community Living
& Respite Services

Supporting people with disability, carers and the aged

www.clrs.org.au



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