



OUR VALUES

Respect

We recognise and value individuality

Flexibility

We provide innovative and responsive services to meet individual needs

Accountability

We are professional, ethical, honest and responsible

Collaboration

We partner, connect and coordinate in support of our services, organisation and community

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 of our organisation for our members, the people we support, our staff, volunteers and the community.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS

CLRS delivers services on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta peoples. We respect and acknowledge their unique Aboriginal cultural heritage and pay our respect to their ancestors, descendants and leaders as the Traditional Owners of this country. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.

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Spoonbill Street Official Opening

Cover Image: Nathan gives Johnno's Run the thumbs up

Photographer: Robyn Ryan

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CEO: Leah Taaffe and President: Wayne Jenkin

CEO & PRESIDENT'S *Report*

The last 12 months have provided us with plenty of moments of joy, sadness, challenge and achievements.

We are delighted to share with you our Annual Report for the 2023-2024 year. Our Annual Report is a great opportunity to thank and celebrate our clients, their families, our staff and our community. Our organisation is privileged to be delivering services and having the trust of our clients, families, staff and community for 45 years.

The last 12 months have provided us with plenty of moments of joy, sadness, challenge and achievements. We appreciate the opportunity to share these with you each year in our report.

We are also pleased to report that the organisation has returned a surplus this financial year. This is important to the sustainability of our organisation and enables us to focus on improving the quality of the supports delivered across our organisation. It also enables us to deliver on our vision of empowering individuals and families to live the life they choose in a community enriched by the inclusion of all.

ACHIEVEMENTS & CHALLENGES

During the past year, we completed our fifth Opening Doors Project, thanks to the incredible support of our local community. The impact of the significant donation we received from a local couple was multiplied by the generous support of our local trades, businesses and individuals who contributed an additional \$550,000 in support. This enabled us to deliver two homes for two men who would otherwise have had to leave their community, their home and their circles of support. The two men have been living in their new homes for 6 months now, their homes have enabled them to be very well supported and have significantly improved their quality of life.

We also celebrated the delivery of the tenth anniversary of Johnno's Run, which was also the second time we delivered the run at home in Echuca Moama.

We were thrilled that our level of participation increased from 230 people to 350 people.

The event wouldn't be possible without the volunteers who help in the lead up to and on the day of the event. It is a significant undertaking marshalling and managing this many people and our volunteers do a brilliant job.

During this past year we also completed our second Voice survey. This is our staff engagement survey which is delivered by an outside organisation, XRef. It is important to the Board that independent agencies are used for this to support the staff to trust that they can give frank and fearless responses and that the results will be listened to and acted on. The results from this year's survey were outstanding with our organisation being awarded a 'Best Workplace Award' as a result. Our organisation can't function without our staff and the work they do each day so we are delighted that they are feeling well supported and engaged with their work.

The impact of the October 2022 floods continues to be felt in our community and it was important that CLRS contribute to the inquiries and reviews that are ongoing as a result of this event. As part of this work, a submission was made to the Victorian Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee's Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria (Flood Inquiry). Our CEO, Leah Taaffe and Lauren Davy, Director of Operations, appeared before the Flood Inquiry when it sat in Echuca and spoke to this submission. It is an important part of our role to speak up about our experiences and to support our community to speak up about their experiences and we look forward to continuing to do this in the future.

SUSTAINABILITY

In the past year we have continued our drive to be a sustainable, efficient and effective business. We have invested in a new human resource system which has significantly reduced the manual processes we were having to complete as part of recruitment and communication with staff. We have invested in a new client management system and new rostering system and the rollout of these have begun.

We expect to see and feel the benefits of these new systems in early 2025.

We are now partnering with Charles L King & Co in Echuca to support our tenants and deliver our property management functions. This partnership will bring many benefits to our tenants and to the organisation, improving outcomes and responses for us all.

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Over the past year we have welcomed one new member to the Board, Michael Maloney. Michael brings extensive experience in human resource management to the Board.

Jacinda Herrett resigned from the Board during the year. We thank Jacinda for her work with the Board during her tenure.

PARTNERSHIPS

Our partnership with our clients and families continues to be the most important pillar in our success. We thank our clients and families for trusting us and enabling us to deliver supports to people in our community.

Our partnership with our staff is also integral to our continued sustainability and success. Our staff are brilliant and our most important resource. Over the course of the year, we have maintained the level of permanent staff at 73% of our team. 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 staff reported, through our Voice Project Survey, that 92% are experiencing job satisfaction, 88% of staff have good wellbeing and 85% of staff are satisfied with our performance.

We will be completing a similar survey with our clients and families in 2024 and look forward to seeing what these results enable us to improve on.

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

LOOKING FORWARD

Our 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan will be reviewed in the coming year, and the strategic plan for the next period will be developed. The current plan is 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. Our Board is pleased with the progress delivered by the organisation on achieving the focus areas and look forward to developing the next areas of focus in a challenging environment.

There will be lots of change, challenge and opportunity ahead in the coming years, and particularly in this next year as we wait on the federal and state government responses to the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review recommendations. We are also in a more challenging economic environment which will impact our clients, staff and organisation.

As a board, we are committed to responding to the opportunities and challenges ahead with the same positive attitude and commitment to providing the governance needed to ensure CLRS stays true to its values and focussed on our vision of an inclusive community.

We thank our clients and families for their trust, our valued staff, volunteers and ambassadors for their continued commitment and dedication to meeting the needs of people with disability in our community, our board members and senior managers for their leadership, and thank everyone for enabling us to continue to deliver the work that empowers our clients and their families to live the life they choose.



CEO: Leah Taaffe



President: Wayne Jenkin



Cutting of the ribbon at Spoonbill Street opening; Project Manager Alistair Morrison, CLRS CEO Leah Taaffe and CLRS Board Member Erin Langman

BEN'S Story

Ben is an active member of the CLRS community and has engaged in several CLRS services including Club Teen, Daily Living and the Murray River Tea Rooms.

Ben has attended Club Teen for many years and is a very social person who is often seen with a big smile on his face whilst he enjoys his favourite drink, a chocolate milkshake. Over Ben's time at Club Teen, he has made great friendships and earned his reputation as a born performer! Ben jumps at any chance to have a sing or dance (particularly if it involves a dress up) and has taken the title of 'Club Teen's got Talent superstar'. Whilst Ben is Club Teen's instigator of dance parties and loud music, Ben has a keen interest in cooking and all things related to running the kitchen. Ben is always hands on in the kitchen, specifically throughout the Club Teen MasterChef challenge days. Last holidays, Ben was well prepared and even brought in his own home-made chef's hat (pictured). Ben enjoyed shopping for ingredients for the cooking days by helping staff at the supermarket to select items from the shopping list. Whilst at Club Teen, Ben has worked on his social skills, independent living skills (cooking, road safety, etc) and communication with his peers and staff. Ben will be greatly missed at Club Teen when he graduates later this year.

Ben has already started to plan and explore his next move in his career planning. Ben attends Echuca Twin Rivers Specialist School and was involved in Careers Week in November 2023. Throughout Careers Week, students were given the opportunity to tour various participating local businesses to scope and understand business and the perspective of a workplace and being employed. As part of the tour, Ben visited the Murray River Tea Rooms and the Recyclability Op Shop. Whilst at the Tea Rooms, Ben was involved in serving customers their coffee orders. Shortly after the tours, Ben and his family expressed interest in Ben attending the Tea Rooms two days per week when Ben finishes school at the end of 2024. This will provide Ben the opportunity to build on already formed partnerships and relationships with his peers, apply his Barista skills whilst working to further learn and develop his volunteering and hospitality skills within a café environment.

Ben has daily living support on Saturday's using his core and capacity-building funding and has been supported by his DSP Alyssa for the past 5 years. During support, Ben and Alyssa plan his activities for that day and sometimes future supports. These activities are planned around Ben's NDIS goals and of course, having fun!

Two of Ben's NDIS goals are:

1. To continue accessing support to assist him in better communicating and building relationships with peers
2. To access his community independently of his parents and sibling

In the past year, Ben, with the support of DSP Alyssa, has regularly volunteered at the Echuca Toy Library and attended Gravity Shack, Paramount Cinemas, Echuca Farmer's Market, Moama Dog Park, Moama Adventure Play Park and has played Pokémon Go in the community.

When in the community, Ben is encouraged to order and pay for items independently and most weeks Ben either meets someone new or runs into a friend. Ben sometimes chooses to do some cooking and will be supported to prepare a shopping list/budget, go grocery shopping and then cook.

DSP Alyssa completes informative and entertaining progress notes about Ben's supports relating to his NDIS goals and it is evident whilst they are having an amazing time, Ben is meeting and interacting with peers in the community and increasing his independent living skills.

More recently Ben has started two exciting new activities during his support time. Ben has joined a gym and is working on managing his health and well-being to work towards another of his NDIS goals. In late February, Ben began work experience at Taranto's Pizza, of which Ben reported to DSP Alyssa that he loves his work there. Ben has been learning lots: folding pizza boxes, stacking the drinks fridge and the coordination of first in first out, preparation for that night's service, cutting the pizza dough into balls and portioning toppings. Ben is working with the team at Taranto's and has already built new relationships with his co-workers and was excited to find out they also love music and even more exciting, another staff member is also a big KISS fan!



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

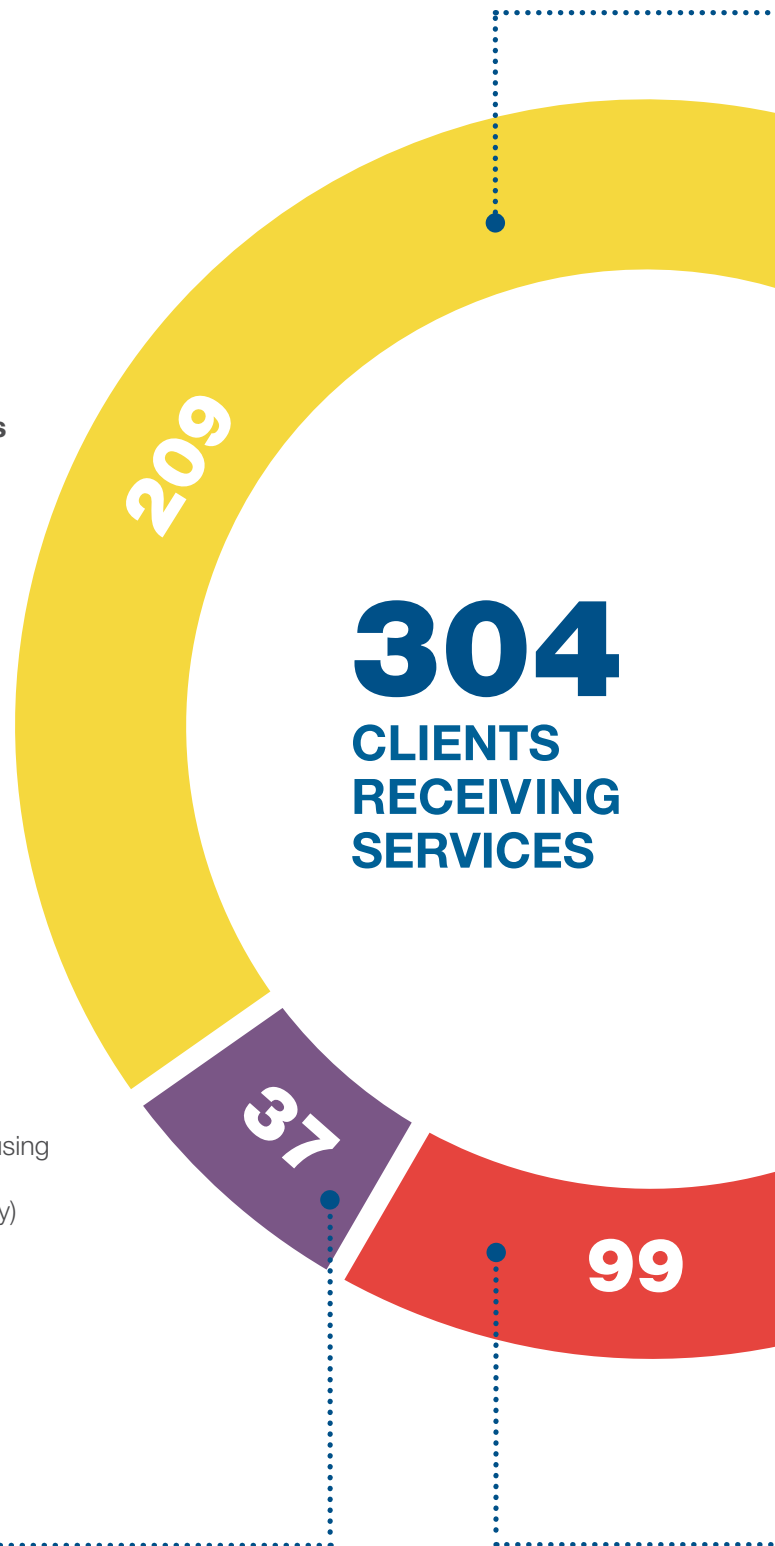
- Support Coordination
- Supported Independent Living
- Recyclability Social Enterprise
- Murray River Tea Rooms Social Enterprise
- Club Teen School Holiday Program
- Community Activities & Social Groups
- Daily Living and Community participation support
- Customised Employment

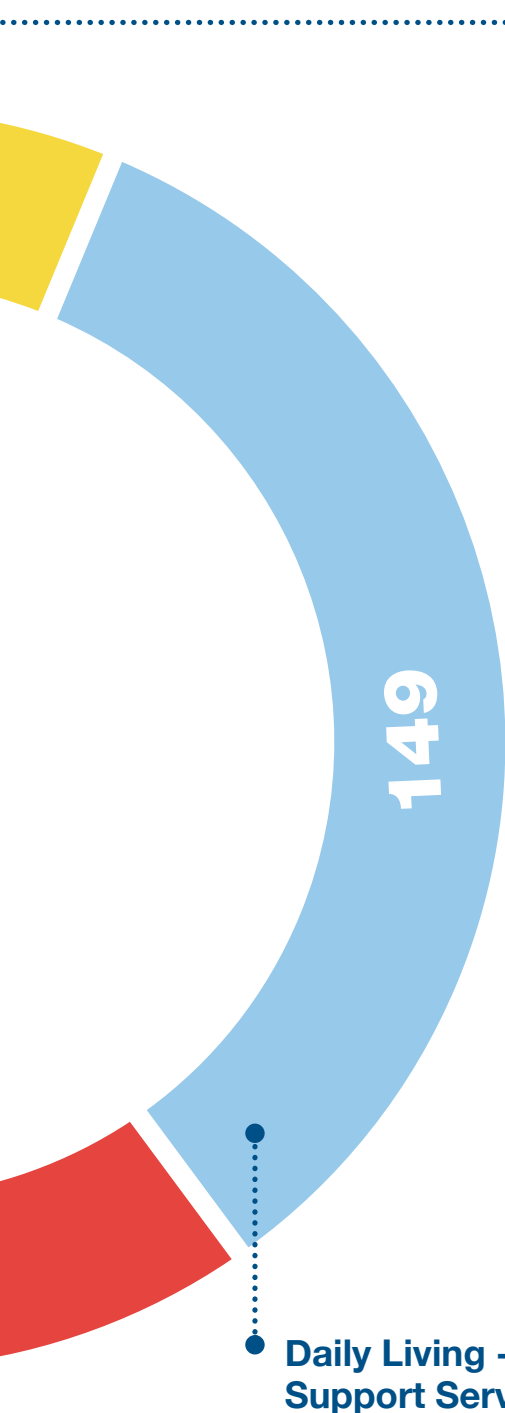
Other Services

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

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

- NDIS In Home and Community Support
- Short Term Accommodation and Assistance
- Transport Accident Commission (TAC) 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

Defined Programs, Social Enterprises & Group Programs

TOBY'S *Story*

Most of us fondly reminisce about our youthful days, especially when we were 21. But for Toby, a spirited young man, that dream is unfolding right now.

Toby, a 21-year-old, recently secured employment at a local restaurant. For the past 5 months, he has diligently worked behind the scenes, proving himself as a dishwasher extraordinaire. Armed with unwavering support from his team gathered by his Support Coordinator Liss, Toby has carved out a niche for himself in the busy kitchen.

Toby's employer - Radcliffe's Echuca, stated "Having Toby on board has been a breath of fresh air. He quickly adapted to his role, and his infectious sense of humour keeps everyone in good spirits during work hours."

Reflecting on his employment journey, Toby expressed his joy at being an important part of the team. "Everyone includes me," he said, "and they say I'm the best." His commitment and camaraderie have made him a favourite among co-workers.

Working towards his independence and new horizons, Toby's achievements don't stop there. Recently, he took a significant step towards independence by moving into his own place. And that's not all – through diligent saving, Toby became the proud owner of his very first car.



Toby at the front of Radcliffe's in Echuca

CLRS Support Coordination has been a vital partner in supporting Toby to build his capacity and make the right connections.

Since the inception of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Toby has benefited from the CLRS Support Coordination service. The team has witnessed his remarkable personal growth and his confidence build throughout his journey.

Toby's story serves as an inspiration to us all, a testament to resilience, teamwork, and the power of unwavering support. We celebrate Toby's achievements and look forward to seeing the next chapter of his life living independently.



Toby inside the Radcliffe's Restaurant

PATRICIA'S Story

Out of Home Care



Patricia came to live with CLRS in May 2023 as part of our Out of Home Care Services and needed highly specialised support due to her age, physical and intellectual disability. These factors became barriers to a suitable family-based foster care arrangement being found for Patricia. Being only 5 years old at the time, it was identified that a family-based placement would be best for Patricia and so the team got to work on improving her opportunity to access such a placement.

Our team spent time getting to know Patricia when she first arrived, making sure she had all the support she needed.

They participated in large amounts of training and learnt new skills in a very short timeframe to make sure Patricia had structured supports that helped build her capacity. During this time, the team never lost sight of Patricia in the middle of all this change.

By working to gain her trust and collaborating with specialists, the team was able to support Patricia to improve her mobility and communication skills exponentially. So much so, that after only seven months, Patricia's care team were able to reduce the barriers so that a suitable family foster care placement became an option. Her team were thrilled when she was able to spend Christmas with her new carers.

The support our team at CLRS and Patricia's wider care team were able to provide in those seven months has been recognised as an excellent success story.

Micheal Farrell, the Manager of the Agency Performance and Systems Support Team at the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH), stated in a recent meeting that the support provided to Patricia during her stay at CLRS has been circled widely at DFFH as a best practice model and outcome, including at very senior levels.

He said that the work was very commendable and thanked us for the significant impact our support had in changing the life trajectory for Patricia.

Working in our Out of Home Care Team can be equally rewarding as it is challenging and outcomes like Patricia's are a fantastic example of how important the work our Residential Team Leaders and the Direct Support Staff do every day.

**Clients name has been changed to maintain confidentiality*

As a child or young person in care I need:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be safe and feel safe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to stay healthy and well and go to a doctor, dentist or other professional for help when I need to <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be allowed to be a child and be treated with respect <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if I am an Aboriginal child, to feel proud and strong in my own culture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to have a say and be heard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be provided with information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to tell someone if I am unhappy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to know information about me will only be shared in order to help people look after me <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to have a worker who is there for me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to keep in contact with my family, friends and people and places that matter to me <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> careful thought being given to where I will live so I will have a home that feels like a home <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to have fun and do activities that I enjoy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be able to take part in family traditions and be able to learn about and be involved with cultural and religious groups that are important to me <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be provided with the best possible education and training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be able to develop life skills and grow up to become the best person I can <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> help in preparing myself to leave care and support after I leave care.
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Charter for Children in Out-of-home Care

JAYMEE-LEIGH'S *Story*

Jaymee-Leigh has been a participant at CLRS for over 10 years and is involved in our social enterprises at Recyclability and the Murray River Tea Rooms. Jaymee-Leigh also accesses weekly support through our Daily Living team whereby support workers assist Jaymee-Leigh to fulfill her goals in her home and within the community.



For several years, Jaymee-Leigh has been working with her support team and her family to ensure her NDIS plan reflected her goals and prepared her to one day live independently in the community in her own home.

For the past couple of years, Jaymee-Leigh has been working with Daily Living support workers to build her independent living skills as per her NDIS goals.

Jaymee-Leigh has been supported by some of the Daily Living team's key Direct Support Professionals including Leanne, Cathy, Olivia and Alex. Jaymee-Leigh worked with her support workers to find recipes to cook her meals and do her grocery shopping to get her weekly supplies and ingredients. She would then prepare her meals and share them with her family to enjoy for dinner. Jaymee-Leigh was also supported to learn how to maintain her bedroom, bathroom and living room by doing general household duties to prepare her to maintain her own home in the future.



For several years, Jaymee-Leigh's CLRS support coordinator Shelley, worked alongside Jaymee-Leigh and assisted her to work towards her long-term goal of independent living. With this support and commitment to Jaymee-Leigh's goals, Jaymee-Leigh successfully moved into her very own unit on her family's property in May 2024.

Since moving into her unit, Jaymee-Leigh's Daily Living supports have increased to six supports fortnightly where the Direct Support Professionals continue to actively support Jaymee-Leigh to live in her unit and complete all the household tasks that go along with living independently: laundry, tidying up and general household cleaning.

Jaymee-Leigh has also had to navigate managing her routines, balancing a good night's sleep and to consider her use of technology at night-time. As a busy young woman, Jaymee-Leigh accesses the gym each week, plans a meal for the family, grocery shops and prepares the meal, increasing her independence more and more as the months progress.



A SUPPORTIVE *Community*

Not for profit organisations like CLRS, rely on the generous support of individual donors, trusts and foundations, corporate partners, local businesses, community groups and our community to enable us to deliver the services and activities we do. The support we receive has enabled us to build our fifth Opening Doors Project, deliver our social enterprises and other group programs. This support we receive also enables us to deliver fundraising initiatives, which in the past year have included our Riverboats Raffle, 16th Annual Fundraising Dinner and Johnno's Run. We are delighted that our fundraising has raised \$178,000 with all proceeds supporting our Opening Doors Project.

In this financial year, we had 40% of staff employed 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 to continue to deliver supports to people with disability in our community.

This past year has again been very challenging for everyone due to another year of COVID-19 impacts and floods. Every area of our community has once again been impacted heavily by these challenging times and we are even more grateful to those who have continued to support us.

We also want to acknowledge the Commonwealth Bank who for many years have supported our clients through their Operation Plum Pudding program each Christmas, provide essential items to people who are vulnerable in our community. We were also nominated by CBA Echuca staff, as one of two local community organisations that CommBank Business customers could vote for, to determine which organisation would receive a \$500 donation. We were the lucky recipients of this donation for our Opening Doors Project.

Thank you to each person who has volunteered at events, supported our Riverboats Raffle, Fundraising Dinner and Johnno's Run, 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
Murray River Council

JOHNNO'S RUN

Participants, sponsors and donors

16TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER

Event sponsor, major sponsors, donors and ticket buyers

RIVERBOATS RAFFLE

Donors and ticket buyers

WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAM

44 CLRS staff members

DONORS

A & L Morrison, Noel Maughan, Shaun Millett, Ryan Moorhouse



L-R: Jenny Townrow, Branch Manager CBA Echuca, CLRS Staff, Leah Taaffe - CEO and Gill Noelker - Executive Assistant and CBA Area Manager Donna Doyle



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

COLLABORATIVE *Practice*

On Friday 2 February, CLRS Residential Services Manager – Rosemary Hermans, and Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Darren and Kaz, supported a residential client to attend Bendigo Health to have some dental work completed.

This client has previously had very negative experiences when having work completed, including having restrictive practices employed. He is non-verbal and has limited physical mobility. It was really important for the team supporting him, to ensure that his experience this time was a positive one.

The planning and preparation that went into enabling the dental visit to be successful, was extensive. In the week before the procedure day, Darren, Karen and CLRS Residential Team Leader Colleen, did a dry run of how the day would go.

This involved the client and the staff driving to Bendigo where they met the Bendigo Health Disability Liaison Officer; Shelli and the anaesthetist; Reuben in the underground car park at Bendigo Health.

After speaking with Shelli and Reuben, a small amount of lemonade was poured into a cup and handed to the staff, who was seated in the front of the car with the client. The client was given the lemonade to drink, which they did. Darren and Karen then supported the client out of the car to have some fun doing laps of the car park in the wheelchair.

This allowed the client to see many different people coming and going, visitors, office staff and doctors in their blue scrubs. This allowed the client to experience the environment before the day of their planned procedure.



Bendigo Health Building



Dentist Chair

When the day of the procedure arrived, all the planning and preparation meant that the day went like clockwork. There was an Esky packed with food for the client on the way home, a bag packed with items to support the client when they wanted to be calm, changes of clothes, wet face washers and towels in case they were needed.

As the team drove into the underground car park to the designated parking spot, Shelli and Rueban met the team. Reuben then provided the anaesthetic, which the client took just as practised. He was then assisted into the wheelchair and walked around the path in the underground car park outside the theatre's back entrance. Within 10 minutes the client, supported by Darren and Kaz, headed to the theatre with members of the theatre team.

The client successfully received the treatment they required. He was able to have this completed with no negative impact to him. He remained calm throughout the whole experience and did not experience any form of restrictive practice which had happened previously.

The experience for the client, the staff and the Bendigo Health team was very positive. This is thanks to the excellent planning over the 2 months leading up to the procedure. It is also thanks to the cooperative teamwork between the Disability Liaison Officers, Shelli from Bendigo Health and Candy from Kyabram Regional Health, and the whole CLRS staff.

This is a great example of how barriers to health care can be reduced for people when everyone works together with the person's best interests at the heart of the work.

AARON'S *Story*

Most of us wouldn't think twice about going out to a café for breakfast or lunch. For Aaron, it hasn't been that simple. But recently, CLRS staff who support Aaron, arranged for him to visit Fuzion Café in Echuca. This provided him with the opportunity to eat out in the community and engage socially with others, something he had not done for some time.

CLRS staff who support Aaron, liaised with Fuzion Café owners, Veronica and Darren Berg, about this experience and they went above and beyond to be accommodating. They advised of quiet trading days and arranged for the café to be accessed by the client and his staff after closing.

Some modifications were made to the dining area to ensure it was a safe environment for both Aaron and the staff in the outdoor courtyard. Aaron and his support staff meals were pre-ordered, so the kitchen could prepare them before closing. CLRS staff supported Aaron in choosing their meal using the Fuzion Café online menu, which provided pictures of the different food options.

CLRS Direct Support Professional, Marydas, supported Aaron in traveling to the café where they were then met by CLRS Residential Team Leader, Michelle, and together the group of three went to the dining area.

Aaron enjoyed eating his hot chips and a New York milkshake. He then enjoyed some delicious waffles with all the trimmings.

They stayed at Fuzion Café for an hour and a half eating, singing and investigating the surroundings in the sunshine. The staff engaged Aaron in activities when the meals were being delivered to the table.

Once Aaron was ready to leave, he expressed this and they headed home. Some great photos were taken of the outing and shared with his family.

It was great to see Aaron happy, smiling and being very vocal with excitement during his lunch outing. It was a really positive experience for Aaron and more outings are being arranged for the future.

This improvement in Aaron's quality of life has been enabled by living in an environment that meets his needs. Aaron moved into our most recent Opening Doors Project in December 2023. Since the move he has been noticeably more relaxed and open to engaging in his community.



Aaron enjoying waffles at Fuzion Cafe

OPENING DOORS *Project* SPOONBILL STREET

The 2023/2024 financial year has been another productive and rewarding year for our Opening Doors Project.

On the 1st of December 2023, our fifth Opening Doors Project was officially opened in the Dhungala Estate in Moama and a couple of weeks later the two residents moved in.

Our fifth Opening Doors Project was made possible through the generous donation from a local couple in August 2022. We have once again worked with Alastair McDonald and the team at EDG.Space to create a 2-bedroom unit design that enables a flexible approach to support. The team at EDG.Space delivered a design that has the flexibility to enable two people with disability to live together or one person with disability supported 24/7 by a staff member. The team have been great to deal with and again delivered an excellent design.

This project enabled a young person, who has been in the care of CLRS since the age of six, to remain in his community as he aged out of the Child Protection residential care system. As a result of being able to remain in his community, supported by staff who supported him for many years, along with some new staff introduced to his team, he has thrived and has begun engaging in activities in his community. It has been wonderful to see the benefit of living in a place where he is comfortable and can continue to access all that is familiar to him.

The other resident had also lived with CLRS for many years and was at risk of homelessness due to the property he lived in being sold. He has settled in incredibly well and is also now accessing activities in his community he has been unable to access for many years due to his high support needs. His team have supported him to create a warm, safe and homely space where he can fully relax and feel at home.

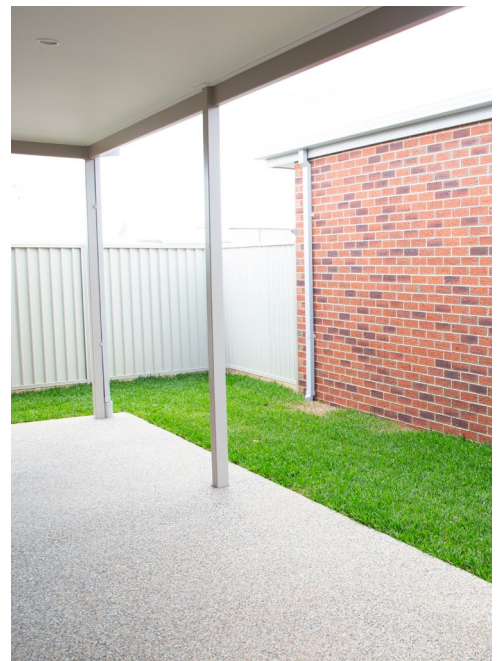
Alistair Morrison, our fantastic Project Manager, delivered this build for us in six months and on budget. He was supported by an internal Project Control Group, involving CLRS Board members, community members and CLRS staff. As well as managing the project incredibly well, Alistair also did an outstanding job of working with our local businesses and trades, with 36 businesses supporting this project through further donations.

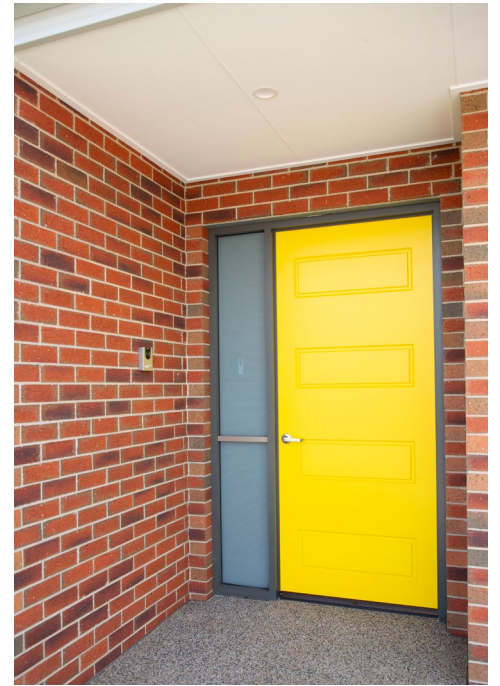
These 36 local businesses contributed to this project through providing items at cost, reducing the cost of their labour and providing labour and materials for free. These donations amounted to \$550,000 of support and enabled the build to be delivered within the \$750,000 donation we received in August 2022. We are incredibly grateful to these generous businesses and community members for their support and they are acknowledged in the next pages.

These projects are building Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) homes in our community and are 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 also makes these homes more affordable.

The Opening Doors Projects continues to enable people to live in their community, move out of home or 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. We are excited about working with our next clients on our sixth Opening Doors Project once we have secured the land to develop.







DONORS

- Ausure Insurance
- Advance Computing
- American Hotel Echuca
- AWM Electrical Echuca
- Blaze Essential Services
- BM Civil Engineers
- Border Real Estate
- Buildpro Echuca
- C&D Tiles Echuca
- Choices Flooring
- CIB Constructions
- Clydesdale Roofing
- CompleteComs
- Coolabah Turf
- Cosgriff Lawyers
- Cumming Mobile Cranes
- D & L Fences
- Dahlsens
- Dawes & Vary Riordan Lawyers
- Eagleview Kitchens & Joinery
- Echuca Locksmiths
- Echuca Metaland
- Echuca Moama Plant Farm
- Echuca Moama Signs
- EDG.Space
- F.A Petzke & Co
- Garage Doors R Us
- Glass Vision/Windowtech
- Goodyear Moama
- Green Azz Turf & Irrigation
- Jenola Oaks Pty Ltd
- John Guinan Steel Constructions
- Josh Dunen Concreting
- JVC Concreting & Mini Excavations
- Kennaugh's Garden Centre
- Lockwood Partners
- Lyndale Plastering
- Marshalls Bobcat
- Mawsons Concrete
- MHP Painting & Maintenance
- Milner Plumbing
- Murray River Council
- Northern Hire Group
- O'Brien Plumbing Echuca-Moama
- P&D Roof Trusses
- Reece Plumbing Echuca
- RGM Elec Services
- Ridleys Pest Control
- Sean Solar Bricklaying
- T&W Tiling & Waterproofing
- The Thomson Group
- Think Water Echuca
- Tony Clarke (Silverfox)

OUT OF HOME CARE *Services*

Therapeutic Support

CLRS has been delivering Residential Care for children and young people in Echuca for many years now and we are deeply committed to delivering the best possible support to the young people we have in our care.

We were delighted that in the 2023-24 State Budget, announced in May 2023, there was \$100.4 million over four years and \$35.3 million ongoing, allocated to provide all children and young people in residential care with access to therapeutic supports in residential care.

Therapeutic residential care is an intensive intervention for young people. It is a purposefully constructed living environment which creates a social environment that is the basis of positive, safe, healing relationships and experiences designed to address complex needs arising from the impacts of abuse, neglect, adversity and separation from family, community and culture. Therapeutic care is informed by current understandings of trauma, attachment, socialisation and child development theories, which are translated into practice and embedded in the therapeutic care program.

Having access to therapeutic supports means that our children and young people will have access to a therapeutic specialist and additional staff support. The support of the Therapeutic Specialist will build on the existing Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention which all staff are required to have completed within their first year of employment.

The Therapeutic Specialist role purpose is to ensure:

- Each young person receives care that meets their individual needs, promotes healing from trauma and supports their wellbeing
- Residential care staff are equipped and enabled to meet the needs and promote healing for each young person, including the provision of reflective practice
- Young people are referred for additional supports as required, and support is provided in an integrated way with professionals working together to support the child or young person
- Each young person receives behavioural management support to promote positive interactions within the home
- Young people are supported with high quality, individualised assessment, treatment planning and transition support planning.

CLRS has been included in the first tranche of organisations being given additional funding and support to move our services to a Therapeutic Support model. We are excited about the improved support this will deliver to our young people and our staff teams.



OUR Board

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

- President: Nov 2020 - current
- Vice President: Nov 2017 - Nov 2020
- Treasurer: Nov 2016 - Nov 2017
- Member of CLRS Governance Committee
- Admin at Opteon Valuers - Shepparton



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)
- GP Obstetrician - Echuca Moama Family Medical Practice
- Visiting Medical Officer - Echuca Regional Health



Treasurer: Erin Langman

Appointed to the Board 2016

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



Michelle Allan

Appointed to the Board 2018

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



Elaine Hamilton

Appointed to the Board 2020

- Member of CLRS Finance Committee
- BAppSc (Family Studies)
- Dip Disability
- Dip Community Services (Case Management)
- Project Manager at CFA, specialising in Volunteer Sustainability



David Wilkins

Appointed to the Board 2022

- Member of CLRS Governance Committee
- MBA
- GAICD
- Business Development Consultant – Executive Coaching
- Chair of St Mary of the Angels College, Nathalia



Jacinda Herrett

**Appointed to the Board 2022
(Resigned April 2024)**

- Member of CLRS Finance Committee
- Business Banking Manager at CBA
- 26 years in banking and finance



Michael Maloney

Appointed to the Board 2023

- Employed 50 years in HR/IR roles including disability services
- Grad. Dip. IR
- Grad. Dip. Dispute Resolution
- Dip. IR
- Cert. IV OH&S
- Cert. IV T&A
- Semi-retired

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr Jack Squire

Mrs Fran Glavin OAM

Mrs Glenys Kennedy

Mrs Jan Rankin

Mrs Kathy Kostoglou

Mr David Callanan

PATRONS

Mr Noel Maughan OAM

Board Meeting Eligibility and Attendance

During the financial year, various meetings of the Board of Management, including committees, were held.

The following is a summary of meetings held and board members attendances.

Board Member	Committee Meetings					
	Board Meetings		Finance		Governance	
	No. eligible to attend	No. attended	No. eligible to attend	No. attended	No. eligible to attend	No. attended
W. Jenkin	11	10	-	-	4	3
C. Goodman	11	10	-	-	-	-
E. Langman	11	11	10	7	-	-
M. Allan	11	11	-	-	4	4
E. Hamilton	11	9	10	8	-	-
D. Wilkins	11	10	-	-	4	4
J. Herrett	8	6	7	4	-	-
M. Maloney	6	5	-	-	-	-

SENIOR LEADERSHIP *Team*

The Community Living & Respite Services senior leadership team consists of 10 people who work collaboratively with clients and staff to ensure safe, effective, high-quality support and positive outcomes for clients and their families. During this year we established the new role of Business Manager, which supports our continued focus on ensuring our organisation is operating as efficiently and effectively as possible. This enables us to continue to focus on delivering supports that meet the needs of our clients and supports our staff.



Lauren Davy

Commenced with CLRS: June 2012

Position Title: Executive Director - Operations

Qualifications/Training: Diploma in Community Services and Business Management, currently studying Graduate Certificate in Business Administration

Experience: 14 years working in community services and another 11 years working in quality systems

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Being part of many positive outcomes for clients and staff”.



Leah Taaffe

Commenced with CLRS: April 2016

Position Title: Chief Executive Officer

Qualifications/Training: BA (Hons) Applied Social Care & GAICD, currently studying a Masters in Leadership

Experience: 16 years in leadership roles in the community services sector in Ireland and Australia

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Receiving a donation from a local couple which enabled us to get the 5th Opening Doors Project underway and then the incredible support we received from our local trades and business community which enabled us to deliver a project that should have cost \$1.2 million for \$750,000. We live in an incredible community”.



Rosemary Hermans (Retired March 2024)

Commenced with CLRS: October 2001

Position: Services Manager - Residential

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

Experience: Disability sector for 40+ years, having worked and trained in an institution to sourcing and setting up homes for people with disability within the community

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Retiring this year and making a lasting difference throughout my career”.



Anna de Vrieze

Commenced with CLRS: June 2015

Position Title: HR Manager

Qualifications/Training: Masters of Business Administration, Bachelor of Business (HR/ Marketing) Certificate IV Investigations

Experience: Over 10 years' experience in Human Resources, leadership and the not-for-profit/ community industry

Highlight of the last 12 months: "It's been such a fun and exciting year for our team in HR. Our long-time goal of moving to a human resource information system finally came to fruition late in 2023. This has changed how we do everything from recruitment, right through to the offboarding of a staff member. To top the year off CLRS was award the Xref Best Employer Award, recognition of all the hard work over the last few years".



Rod Cairns

Commenced with CLRS: February 2017

Position Title: IT Manager

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

Experience: 15years Minister of Religion/Chaplaincy; 24 years IT Engineering/Consulting/Systems Support & Admin

Highlight of the last 12 months: "My time over the last twelve months has been focused on using our technology and systems to increase the efficiency of our internal processes. This includes replacing our Client Management and Workforce software. I have the privilege of working with some very dedicated and engaged colleagues. It is encouraging to see how improving our business systems allows us to deliver more quality services to our clients".



Carl Durnin

Commenced with CLRS: February 2024

Position Title: Business Manager

Qualifications/Training: Master of Business Administration, Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors

Experience: 20+ years in general management positions, within service industries and community sector. Company Director of a regional community services provider

Highlights in the last 12 months: "The warm welcome I have received from the CLRS team. Getting up to speed with our technological changes that will improve our efficiency and ability to provide excellence in service standards".



Alison Halloran

Commenced with CLRS: November 2020

Position Title: Services Manager – Support Coordination and Business Analyst – 'Connecting with Purpose' CMS Implementation Project

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

Experience: Over 22 years in leading teams in customer service community based roles

Highlight of the last 12 months: "Over the past year, I've had the opportunity to apply my existing skills while also developing new ones within the Connecting with Purpose team. I'm excited about the changes and improvements we'll see in our customer services and efficiency as we roll out these initiatives. The Support Coordination team is adapting to changes brought about by the introduction of a new program and shifts in NDIS expectations. Fortunately, our experienced and engaged team is eager to embrace these changes and drive continuous improvement".



Sally Brennan

Commenced with CLRS: July 2020

Position Title: Services Manager – Daily Living & Defined Programs

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

Experience: 18 years of leadership in local government and not-for-profit supporting children, youth, family, family violence and persons with a disability across Melbourne and Regional Victoria

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Unifying the daily living and defined programs divisions has greatly enhanced process and efficiency and maximised opportunities for improved service delivery. Additionally, its pleasure to work in such a supportive, collaborative and positive team of Team Leaders and Business Support Officers”.



Cris Stevens-Todd

Commenced with CLRS: February 2006

Position Title: Services Manager – Residential

Qualifications/Training: Diploma Community Services

Experience: 18 years working across different divisions, Residential, Respite, Defined programs, Quality & Safety, Support Coordination, aged care & Disability Services

Highlight of the last 12 months: “Our last Opening Doors project in Moama being finished and the clients moving in last December and thriving in their new home”.



Nicolina Devitt

Commenced with CLRS: June 2016

Position Title: Services Manager – Residential

Qualifications/Training: Diploma Community Services

Experience: 8 years working in Disability Services – 2 years as Direct Support Professional and 5 years as Team Leader and 12 months as Services Manager

Highlight of the last 12 months: “It has been a busy year learning all areas of my new role. I have enjoyed working alongside my team to improve and streamline processes to ensure we are delivering a quality service to our clients”.



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

- Leah Taaffe, CLRS CEO

STAFF Profiles



Bianca Cole

Bianca joined CLRS in 2019 as a Rostering Officer after hearing great things about the organization. She holds a Bachelor of Business and has experience in banking, retail, and holds a real estate licence. Although new to the disability sector, Bianca now can't imagine doing anything else. Since joining CLRS, she has advanced to Team Leader in Daily Living, Defined Programs, specifically Club Teen, and most recently, Residential, while completing a Diploma in Community Service. She values CLRS's focus on seeing clients succeed and live their best lives and celebrating every success.



Hayden Wing

Hayden joined CLRS in 2023 as a Direct Support Professional in Daily Living after 20 years as a health, safety, and security manager in Melbourne. Inspired by a close family member who relies on support workers, he felt this was something he could do. Hayden finds the role meaningful, with each day offering new experiences. "This job gives back in many ways—not only does it make me feel good, but I've also learned so much about a part of society I was previously unaware of." Hayden hopes to further his career by completing a Certificate III in Individual Support or similar.



Tim Cosgriff

Tim's journey began in 2020 when he started as a DSP with CLRS, inspired by his dad, a former CLRS Board Member, and Nicolina Devitt, now Services Manager. Though disability wasn't his initial focus, three years later, he earned a Bachelor of Health Science, majoring in Disability and Inclusion - Family, Society, and Health. After his degree, Tim became the Victorian Regional Manager for What Ability, a disability provider, for two years.

At CLRS, he found his passion working with complex behaviours, calling it the "launch pad" for his career. Now, as a behaviour support practitioner with Community Solutions, he supports 15-20 clients and their care teams annually. Tim advises others in the industry to stay true to their values and ethics, as confidence and integrity are key to success.

WORKFORCE STRUCTURE & *Recruitment*

Community Living & Respite Services Wins Prestigious Workplace Award

Community Living & Respite Services (CLRS) is delighted to announce that we have won an Xref Best Workplace Award for 2023. The prestigious award recognises the best workplaces with excellent management practices and a highly engaged workforce.

In 2022, CLRS engaged Xref Engage (formally the Voice Project) as a way to gather confidential data to make informed data driven decisions and empower staff to have voice.

This survey is an important step in achieving the CLRS Strategic Objective of having an engaged, inclusive, and skilled workforce. It an important part of the work being done to ensure that every employee has an opportunity to have their say and voice heard about the organisation's performance and ways of working.

Following what was a very challenging period with COVID-19 and the floods, the 2022 survey provided exceptional results. While there were some areas of improvement, the overall results showed strong engagement, wellbeing, and progress, scoring moderate to high across the three areas.

Post the 2022 survey, CLRS worked with the staff to establish 'Voice Teams' to focus on priority areas and put

forward recommendations for consideration. "This was an important part of the process ensuring we understood our staff feedback and put these into action".

Less than 12 months after the 2022 survey, CLRS conducted a further survey to understand their progress and what additional work needs to be done. The survey results showed an overwhelming improvement across all areas, with staff reporting exceptional levels of engagement and satisfaction. CLRS exceeded the 80% or above staff satisfaction criteria to be awarded an Xref Best Workplace Award. "We recorded staff satisfaction of 85.54%, which was an amazing 12.46% above the Disability Services benchmark, enabled by the strong improvement in results since last year, with overall satisfaction rising 6.96%."

CLRS remains committed to working with staff through their 'Voice Teams' to empower and collaborate with staff to sustain excellent staff engagement, wellbeing and progress.



Leah Taaffe proudly displaying the XRef awards with CLRS HR Manager - Anna de Vrieze

HR Goes Paperless

The adoption of Employment Hero by CLRS late in 2023 marks a significant improvement in the management of recruitment and HR processes, addressing previous inefficiencies and enhancing overall workforce management. Prior to implementing this Human Resources Information System (HRIS), we faced challenges with manual recruitment processes, resulting in prolonged timelines and inefficiencies in meeting organisational staffing needs.

With Employment Hero's cloud-based platform, we have transitioned to a paperless recruitment and employment management system, streamlining processes and increasing staff engagement. The impact has been significant with benefits being experienced across all areas.

One of the most notable improvements is the significant reduction in the time required to recruit and onboard new employees. Previously, the process could take up to three months, but with Employment Hero, the average time to fill a position has been reduced to less than 20 days. This efficiency not only saves time but also provides a smoother and more positive experience for new employees.

Managers and team leaders have also reported benefits from the platform, citing easy access to employee information, including training and development records. This centralised access enhances their ability to support and manage their teams effectively.

Employees themselves have recognised the advantages of having a centralised HR system. Features such as payroll management, training, and overall HR information contribute to a more streamlined and organised work environment.

Expanding the use of Employment Hero to manage volunteers reflects our commitment to leveraging the platform's capabilities across various areas of the organisation.

Looking ahead, CLRS will explore additional functionalities, such as professional development reviews and automated workflows, further optimising our HR processes and enhancing employee experience.

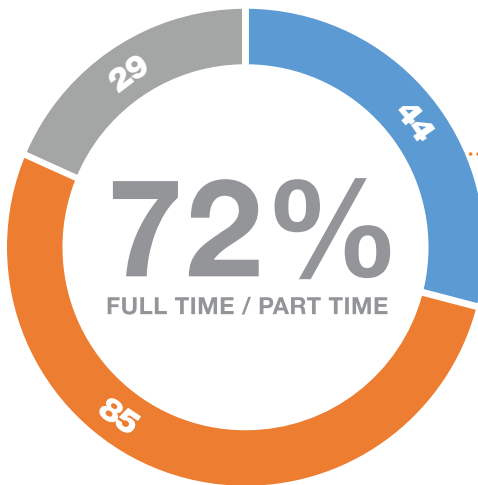


2023 - 2024 STAFF *Facts*



STAFF AGE PROFILE

- 28 STAFF - 20-29 YEARS
- 31 STAFF - 30-39 YEARS
- 31 STAFF - 40-49 YEARS
- 42 STAFF - 50-59 YEARS
- 26 STAFF - 65 + YEARS



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- CASUAL
- FULL TIME
- PART TIME



LENGTH OF SERVICE

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

851

EMPLOYED STAFF AS OF JUNE 30, 2024

51%
Staff with over 3 years service

4.7 Years
Average length of service

8%
Staff under 25 years

78%
Female staff

121
Direct Care

40-49 Years
Median age

OUR DEDICATED *Volunteers*

Another year has passed and our volunteers have once again contributed so much to CLRS.

From our community and supported volunteers who turn up, week in week out to help and support the Recyclability Social Enterprise, Op Shop, Upcycling and the Murray River Tea Rooms. The monthly commitment of our Fundraising Committee who work tirelessly within the community for our Annual Fundraising Dinner and other fundraising activities throughout the year.

To our Board of management who give critical support to make sure good governance and strategic leadership is in place for the organisation, and our Opening Doors Project Ambassadors who give their voices to help the organisation access funding, support with fundraising and raise awareness of the project within the community.

Fundraising is a big part of what volunteers do at CLRS and they are needed to join working groups, help deliver the events, or help out on the day.

For Johnno's Run 2023 we had over 70 volunteers doing various roles on and around event day such as set-up and pack down, marshalling around the course to registration and check-in. The working group also worked for months leading up to the event.

For Riverboats raffle 2024 weekend we had 30 volunteers who manned our stand and sold tickets over the weekend making it the biggest yet for sales.

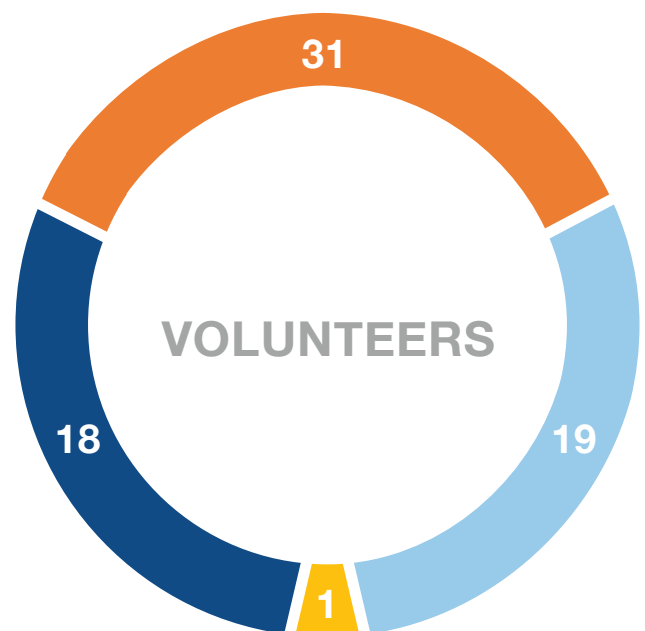
We could not put these events on without the help of our volunteers!

The theme for National Volunteer Week this year is 'Something for Everyone' - an invitation to explore the rich diversity of opportunities available through volunteering and we had an article in the Riverine Herald during that week to highlight some of the 'Something for Everyone' volunteering opportunities available with CLRS.

Volunteering has many benefits, including promoting wellbeing, learning new skills, meeting new people and gaining friendships. Volunteering is for everyone, regardless of your skills, abilities, or interests and can also be a pathway to employment.

We thank our volunteers who may have left us this year for their contribution to CLRS and we welcome our new volunteers. We also thank our staff who have volunteered throughout the year for the organisation and within the community.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering or would like to know more, contact the HR department on 5480 2388 or via the website <https://clrs.org.au/job/volunteer/>



- COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS
- SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERS (Including Recyclability)
- OTHER (Board, Ambassadors, Fundraising Committee)
- CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER *Profile*

Sheree Arnold has been a volunteer with CLRS since 2013. Sheree first started as a volunteer in our office, then she added being a volunteer at our social enterprise, the Murray River Tea Rooms.

Sheree has recently decided to finish up her volunteering at the office and when she finished with us, she had been volunteering in the office for 11 years, interrupted only briefly by COVID. This volunteering support has been a huge benefit to CLRS.

Sheree has completed countless jobs over the years and if she hadn't done them for us, they might have taken weeks to complete. A regular job included labelling and "stuffing" the Community Newsletters into envelopes so they could be distributed to those clients and subscribers who don't have email. Her volunteering has made a great difference to our team.

Everyone who works, or worked in the office, has gotten to know Sheree over this time. She has grown from a shy and quiet person who was reluctant to make eye contact with people, into a warm, open, and engaging person.

Her confidence in her own ability has developed and she has warm relationships with many people she sees every Thursday in the CLRS office.

A lovely example of this is that when she first started, Sheree struggled to come past the reception desk on her own. More recently, she was knocking on staff's office doors to say hello to people as she hadn't been in the office the previous week.

Sheree has decided to stop coming into the office on a Thursday afternoon because she is choosing instead to volunteer more often at the Murray River Tea Rooms. She is doing this because she really enjoys the Tea Rooms and wants to build her hospitality and customer service skills.

While we will miss her company, and the work she did, we are delighted that Sheree is making this choice. We hope it allows her to make more choices and who knows, possibly get a job working in hospitality locally. She is an asset to any team.



FUNDRAISING *Activities*

In the 2023/2024 financial year we have been delighted to hold four fantastic fundraising activities.

In August 2023 we delivered our second Johnno's Run event at home in our beautiful twin towns of Echuca Moama. This was also our tenth anniversary of Johnno's Run and what a wonderful celebration it was. We had over 350 people register to complete the event, and a brilliant day was had by everyone. It was great to see so many of our clients completing the 5km event, supported by families, friends, staff and community. This wonderful event raised \$36,000 for our Opening Doors Project.



CLRS set up for the Riverboats Festival

The Riverboats Music Festival once again took place in mid-February 2024, and we had a wonderful weekend as community partner. This year for the first time, we were inside the festival venue, had snippets of our video 'Opening Doors to Independence' showing on the big screen and we sold raffle tickets online throughout the weekend. All these changes made a significant difference to our fundraising efforts. It also made it a much more fun event for our volunteers who were in the thick of the action all weekend. CLRS is grateful to all of those who supported us to raise \$5,170 and saw \$1,508 in donations over this weekend.

2024 is a leap year, so on Thursday 29th February, we held our 16th Annual Fundraising Dinner with the incredible Janine Shepherd as our Guest Speaker. Janine, a walking paraplegic, shared her story of resilience and gratitude for her community of support. We were all lucky enough to attend and hear Janine tell her story.

Radiant Media again delivered a great video 'Generosity Multiplied; The Power of Giving', which highlighted the incredible support of our local tradespeople and community in enabling the donation we received last year for our Spoonbill Street Opening Doors Project, to go as far as possible. With \$79,938 raised at our dinner, we continue to be humbled by the generosity of our guests who support us on the night and all the people and businesses that donate to the dinner each year.

This year, for the first time, we partnered with We are Vivid (Vivid) to host a fundraising dinner in June, at Rich River Golf Club. Titled 'Blind Speed' the event gave our community the opportunity to hear from Ben Felten, 'the world's fastest blind man on a motorcycle' and his navigator, Kevin Magee, former Grand Prix motorcycle racer. Our MC for the night was Tiffanee Cook, podcaster and boxer, and John Moyle donated his time and expertise to auction off some items to help raise funds. CLRS and Vivid came together to deliver this event to highlight that we are the only two not-for-profit, NDIS registered organisations in our local area with a strong history of delivering high quality supports to people with disability in our community.

The event raised \$15,335.37 which was evenly split between both organisations.

This year we also farewelled one of our Fundraising Committee members, David Callanan. Dave has been an integral part of our committee and made a significant impact on the success of our Annual Dinner in particular. We will miss his input next year and wanted to say thank you to him for all his support.

We are also incredibly grateful, to you, our community, for your support which has enabled us to raise just under \$138,000 this year through fundraising events alone.



JOHNNO'S *Run* 10th ANNIVERSERY

A perfect August morning greeted a record number of 350 participants for the 10th anniversary of Johnno's Run, held on Sunday 6 August 2023.



It was a brilliant day celebrating the 10th year of Johnno's Run, which has now raised a collective total of \$445,342 for our Opening Doors Project – building homes for people with disability.

What started as a small team of people heading to the Run Melbourne event, has grown into a fully-fledged running event of its own right here in our beautiful twin towns, continuing to make a huge impact on the lives of people with disability and their families.

It was also nice to have the 'Johnno' of Johnno's Run, Brady Johnson join us for the event. Brady is the reason Johnno's Run started and he let us know that he was proud to see what a little idea can grow into.

We had on display the Johnno's Run singlets from each year from the inaugural year of 2014 right through to the 2023

event and they looked fantastic! It was a great reminder of all the hard work and dedication that our community has put in over the years in supporting Johnno's Run and our Opening Doors Projects.

We were thrilled with the response from our community and to have 350 people registered to participate was a brilliant result and confirms the decision we made to bring it home. We also had over 70 people volunteer their time to marshal on course, set up for the day and hand out medals, fruit and water.

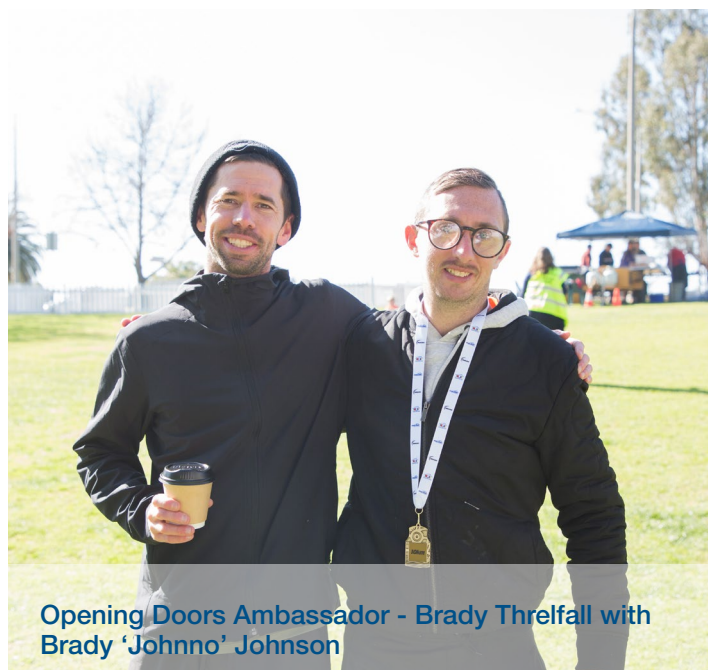
While the growth, in terms of people participating in the event, has been a fantastic result, the money that continues to be raised for the Opening Doors Project has had a tangible impact on the lives of people living with disability in Echuca-Moama. The fact that we have 20 people now who live independently in their community, being well supported and able to do all the things that they choose to do is huge, for a small town like Echuca-Moama it's an impressive result.

We would like to say "Thank You" to everyone who registered, took part in the event, volunteered and to everyone who donated. Just over \$36,000 was raised which is a fantastic result.

Thank you to our generous sponsors; Moama Bowling Club, Riverine Herald, Worklocker, Cosgriff Lawyers, Revolution Print, Edge FM, Radiant Media Productions and Fast Finish Event Timing.

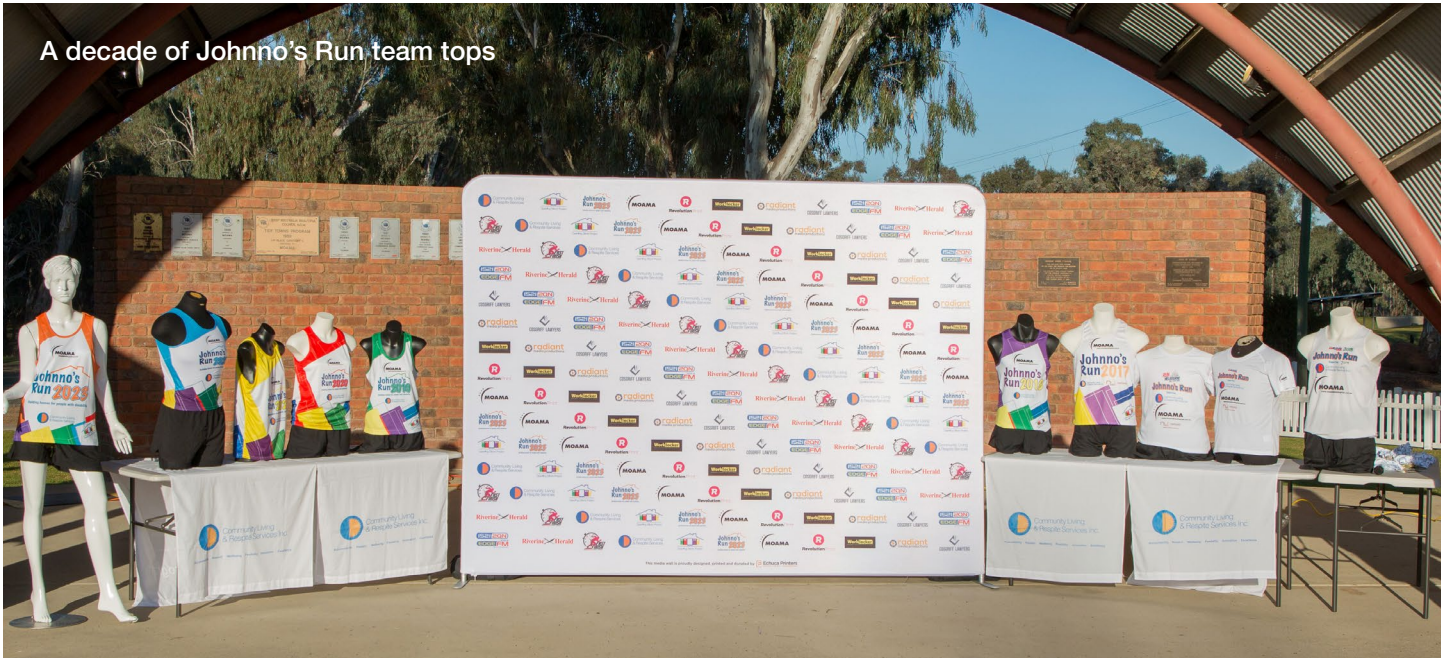


CLRS staff and clients enjoying the day



Opening Doors Ambassador - Brady Threlfall with Brady 'Johnno' Johnson

A decade of Johnno's Run team tops



L-R: Helen Main, Jan Joseph, Deb Lee, Melissa Clark and Andrea Johnston

Thank you to our generous sponsors; Moama Bowling Club, Riverine Herald, Worklocker, Cosgriff Lawyers, Revolution Print, Edge FM, Radiant Media Productions, Squires Air Conditioning Electrical & Refrigeration and Fast Finish Event Timing.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Kathy Kostoglou and David Callanan

Awards

Over the past 14 years, Kathy has demonstrated exceptional leadership and ‘can do’ attitude within her role on the CLRS Fundraising Committee and as an ambassador, which has benefited CLRS both through reputation and financially. Kathy radiates an infectious spirit in all that she has been involved in, always putting her hand up to help in any way she can or through the offer of support.



Kathy Kostoglou

and has been an incredible support in the delivery of the Annual Fundraising Dinner each year.

Kathy puts in a huge amount of her personal time in getting auction items donated and introducing new people to the supports that CLRS delivers. Kathy regularly assists with raffles and events including the annual Johnno’s Run event and Riverboats Raffle and never misses an opportunity to discuss with a potential supporter how they could also get involved.

If there is anything needed, all you have to do is ask and Kathy will do her utmost to help out. She is an incredible bundle of energy and positivity. Her support as a fundraiser for CLRS has been invaluable but her support to our community is also immense, both through her businesses and through her personal effort.

Kathy is a very deserving member of the CLRS community, and we were delighted to present Kathy with a Life Membership.

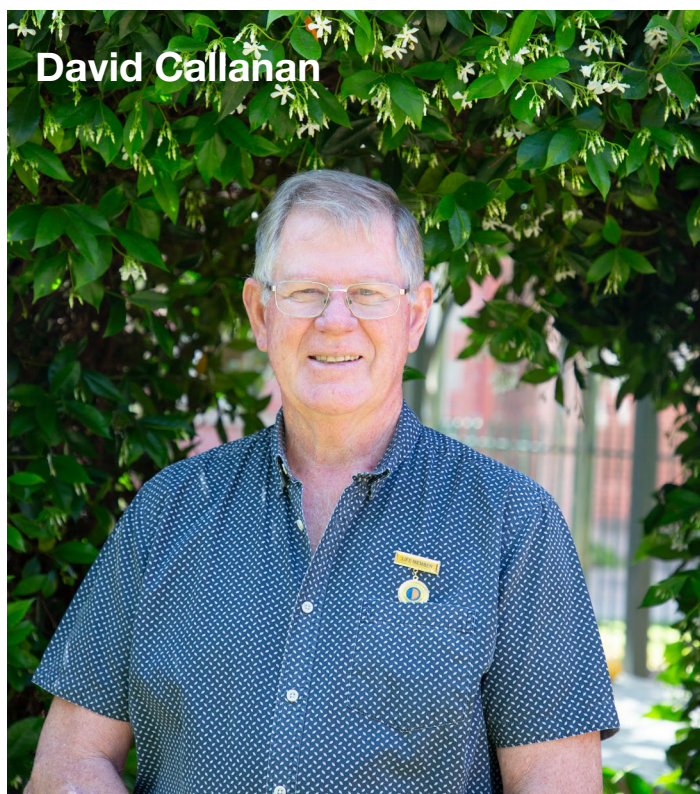
Kathy has been a member of the CLRS fundraising Committee since 2009. She assisted to organise the fourth Annual Fundraising Dinner in 2010 and following this event, wanted to further contribute and so went on to organise six Greek Luncheons. The first of these events was held in Melbourne in 2010.

These were vibrant events, with great food, Greek music, lively entertainment and a competitive auction, which required a lot of effort to deliver. Overall, the events raised \$124,520 for CLRS housing projects. Kathy contributed an enormous amount of personal hours and energy to the Greek Luncheons.

Kathy continues to be active on our Fundraising Committee and as an Opening Doors Ambassador



David Callanan and Kathy Kostoglou with their Life Membership Awards



David Callanan, or Dave as he is known to his friends, has been a member of the CLRS fundraising team since 2014.

In 2014 Dave answered an ad in the Riverine Herald for volunteers at CLRS. It was in a voluntary fundraising position, working alongside Cletus Gilmour and Kathy Kostoglou, they planned and developed the Greek Luncheon in Melbourne in 2014 and worked together on the Minor Street Project. After Cletus sadly passed away, Dave continued to volunteer in this role. He eventually took up a contract position with CLRS as Volunteer Coordinator and was a member of the working party which set up “Recyclability”.

Three Greek Luncheons in Melbourne and the now famous “Stuff Sale” were also among his many involvements.

After “retiring” from CLRS in 2015, Dave has remained a volunteer member of the fundraising committee, for a short period as Chairman, and he has coordinated many activities, including the initial Rivergums Fun Run, the Riverboats Music Festival raffle, the Community Raffle and various other raffles.

Dave has also had a long association with “Johnno’s Run” since it commenced in 2014, both as a competitor in 2015 and as a volunteer fund raiser since its inception. A highlight for Dave was the ‘Friday 13th Trivia Night’ in 2018 which he organised and ran. It raised over \$3,000 for the Opening Doors Project.

His volunteer activities for the CLRS Annual Fundraising Dinner, have seen him expend countless hours requesting support in cash or kind from many local businesses. He has made many great new contacts in Echuca/Moama.

Dave is also an Ambassador for the Opening Doors Project, and he has made a significant contribution to the building of these homes. Being an ambassador is a role he loves because, as he says, “it enables others to see that you are prepared to back up with action, what you talk to others about.”

Dave is very active on the Fundraising Committee, as an Opening Doors Ambassador and has been an incredible support in the delivery of our Opening Doors Project MEGA DRAW in 2021 and, every other year, our Annual Dinner and any fundraising activities that are occurring.

Dave puts in a huge amount of his personal time into getting auction items donated and introducing new people to the opportunities that CLRS offers. Dave regularly assists with CLRS raffles and events including local Farmers Markets, the annual Johnno’s Run launch, Riverboats Raffle and never misses an opportunity to discuss with a potential supporter how they could also get involved.

He supports us with proofreading our annual report, adverts and flyers, speaking to local schools and other groups about getting involved in Johnno’s Run and other events and being MC wherever and whenever needed. Dave’s thoughtful approach and willingness to share his knowledge, experience and views are invaluable.

If there is anything needed, all you have to do is ask and Dave will do his utmost to help out. He has been a wonderful support and resource, always willing to help. His support as a fundraiser for CLRS has been invaluable.

REGISTRATIONS & ACCREDITATION

At Community Living and Respite Services (CLRS), we are committed to delivering safe, effective, and respectful services. This commitment is reflected in our various registrations and accreditations, ensuring we deliver exceptional services while upholding the rights of our clients.

As part of our processes, we adhere to relevant government regulations, which are regularly audited and assessed. These include:

- **NDIS Registration and Audits:** CLRS undergoes a rigorous audit process every three years, with an 18-month maintenance check. Accredited auditors review our policies, procedures, and records, and meet with clients and staff to ensure compliance with the NDIS Act 2013. The modules cover areas such as participant rights, provider responsibilities, governance, operational management, High Intensity Support and the delivery environment. This process helps us maintain high standards of service delivery and continuous improvement.
- **Social Sector Act Registration:** We are registered under the Social Sector Act for the supports delivered in Out of Home Care and TAC services. The Social Service Standards outline the obligations that social service providers must meet to ensure safe and effective service delivery. These standards include safe service delivery, service user agency and dignity, safe service environments, feedback and complaints mechanisms, accountable governance, and a safe workforce. Our registration underscores our commitment to providing safe and effective social services.
- **Continuous Quality Improvements:** CLRS consistently invests in evaluating and enhancing our services to ensure high-quality, person-centred outcomes. This includes systematic processes for feedback, incident management, and practice reviews to identify opportunities for improvement. This ongoing cycle of internal assessment and improvement promotes better support for our clients.

Additionally, our staff undergo continuous training to stay updated on compliance matters, reinforcing our dedication to quality.

This approach ensures our services remain in line with evidence-based practices and we safeguard that our services are delivered in a manner that upholds the rights and dignity of our clients. Our rigorous audit processes and continuous improvement initiatives help us maintain a safe and supportive environment for all individuals using our services.



CLRS Staff Member, Brooke with Recyclability Volunteer, Arianna

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
- Bendigo Health Primary Care and Population Health Advisory Committee
- Campaspe Cohuna Local Learning & Employment Network
- Campaspe Family Violence Action Group
- Campaspe Murray Mental Health Network
- Campaspe Shire Council
- Campaspe Youth Partnership
- Communications Access Network Meeting
- Echuca Community for the Aged
- Echuca Community Mental Health
- Echuca Moama Tourism
- Echuca Regional Health
- Loddon Mallee Disability Alliance
- Loddon Mallee Mental Health Network
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit – Murray Primary Care and Population Health Advisory Sub Committee
- Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership
- Murray River Council
- Network of Disability Service Providers
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Out of Home Care Operations Group
- We are Vivid
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit – Murray Primary Care and Population Health Advisory Sub Committee
- Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership
- Network of Disability Service Providers
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Out of Home Care Operations Group

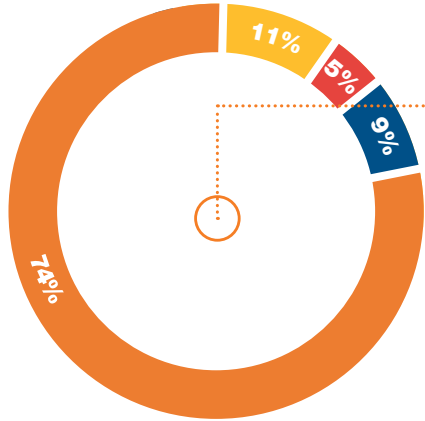


L-R: Leanne Dynon, Lauren Pritchard, Deanne Armstrong (RRGC), Laura Buckley (Riverine Herald), Scott Alexander (VIVID), Ben Felten, Kevin Magee, Angela Parker (Ace Radio/EdgeFM), John & Emma Merritt and Leah Taaffe (CLRS)

Photo credit – Aiden Briggs – Riverine Herald

**FINANCIAL
2023/24**

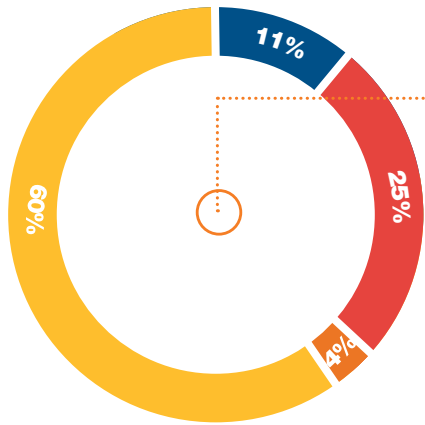
Highlights



ASSETS

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

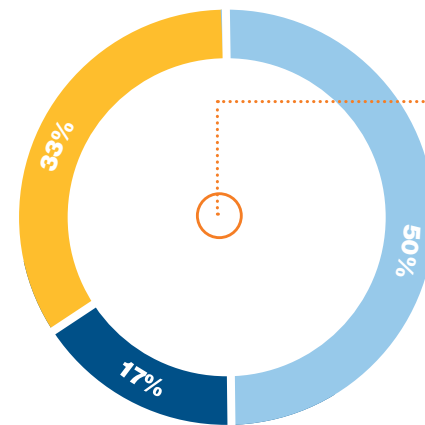
✓ **\$13,488,064**



LIABILITIES

- TRADE & OTHER PAYABLES
- EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
- LEASE LIABILITIES
- BORROWINGS
- OTHER LIABILITIES 0%

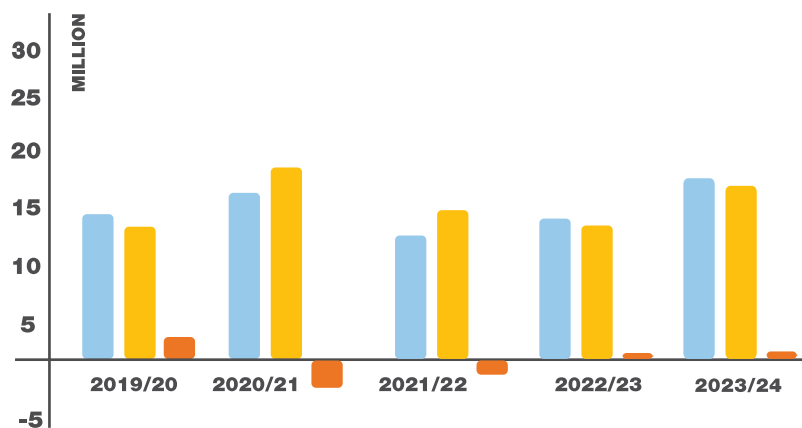
✓ **\$5,730,460**



BALANCE SHEET

- TOTAL ASSETS
- TOTAL LIABILITY
- EQUITY

✓ **\$8,832,982**
EQUITY



PROFIT & LOSS

- INCOME
- EXPENSES
- OPERATING PROFIT

> **\$17.7M** TOTAL REVENUE
> **\$1.6M** OPERATING PROFIT
> **\$12.2M** NDIS REVENUE



