



The
SBcare
Group

Annual Report

2020 - 2021



Our Service in Numbers

→ About Us



198
total staff member



881,963
kilometres travelled client service
vehicles travelled 2020/21

→ Aged Care Services



563
clients



26,077
hours Commonwealth
Home Support Program
support

→ NDIS Services



471
clients



139,149
hours of support

→ Meals on Wheels



370
clients



36,297
meals produced by
Meals on Wheels

→ Our Services

Are we responsive to concerns?

98%

of clients indicated we are
extremely responsive to very
responsive to concerns



How would you best describe our services:

GOOD VALUE | HIGH QUALITY

RELIABLE | RESPONSIVE | USEFUL

→ Our Staff

100% extremely helpful to helpful
98.5% very important to important



8.8 overall case management



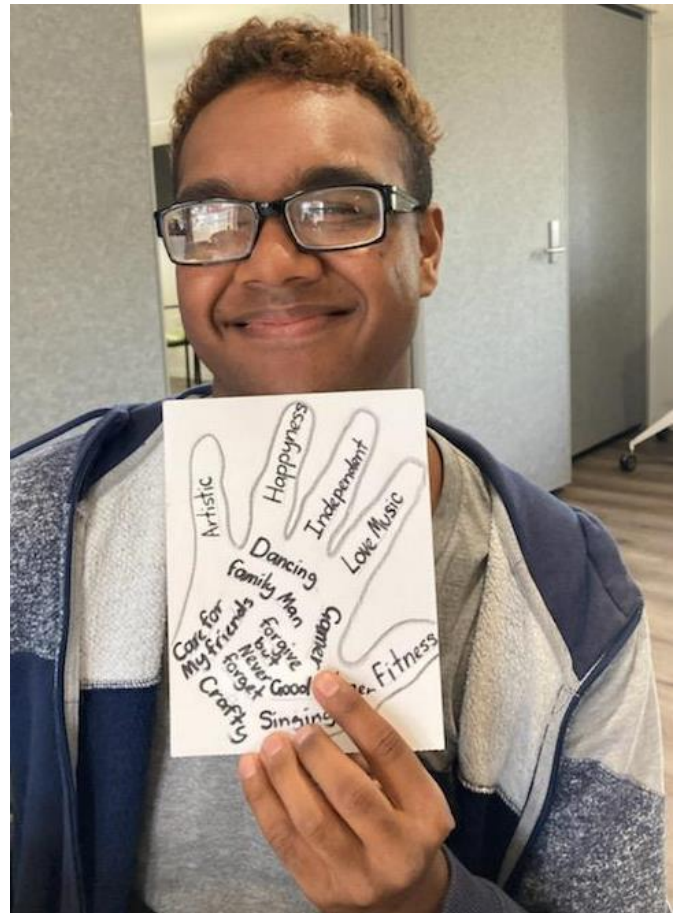
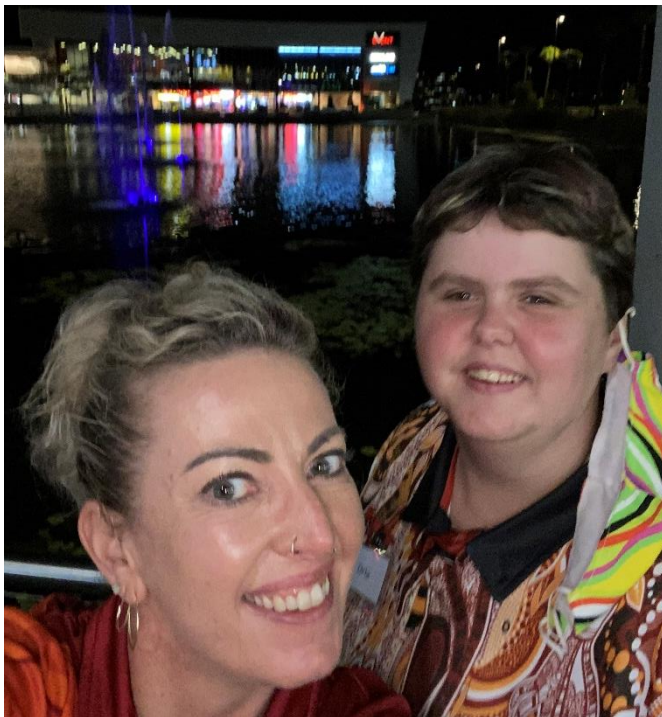
8.6 overall performance



8.6 overall service delivery

What Our Clients Say

"Our case manager does a wonderful job in ensuring the support worker is a good fit. The support team are proactive in understanding the needs, they listen and this makes a difference. The support workers are always on time and do a fabulous job in maintaining a relationship and have an innovative approach to supports with open communication."



"SBcare have changed my life. They are fantastic and the support I receive is wonderful."

"I enjoy going to the Centre, they are all lovely and we all have a great time there."



Customer Focus



→ Callum's on the Road Again!

Callum has been accessing a variety of supports with SBcare and this year has taken an opportunity to volunteer in our Meals on Wheels delivery run. Callum is an enthusiastic person who enjoys meeting and helping others and he has enjoyed and excelled in his volunteer role. Callum assists with packing the meals into the truck and delivering them to customers before checking and signing off that they have been delivered. Callum enjoys driving around in the refrigerated delivery truck and meeting all the MOW customers. Callum's contribution to the MOW service is greatly appreciated. Callum said "The part I like the best is delivering meals to all the people and seeing all of the old buildings"

Innovation

Integrity

Making a Difference





NDIS Group Programs

Over the past year the NDIS Group Programs have grown to a point where we provide services to over a hundred individuals. We offer group activities seven days a week and most evenings covering an extensive range of activities and client interests.

We aspire to create and continue to refine a campus like atmosphere where clients and support workers explore and learn together while following their passions and interests. This client focused approach means we can tap into an individual's natural enthusiasm to create opportunities for them to work towards their NDIS goals.

Some highlights from the last year include:

- The expansion of our children's program to include after school activities four days a week
- We redeveloped our school holidays support program and took on ambitious and rewarding challenges for the participants like wall climbing at Camp Cooby and the Toowoomba school holiday group is flourishing.
- A VIP group trip to see the Titans play at Cbus Stadium on the Gold Coast that included time spent with players and club staff. This was the establishment of a very positive relationship between the Titans NRL club and South Burnett Care which both parties want to continue growing into the future. The outcomes in socialisation, community participation and capacity building were amazing as well as providing some carer respite.
- The commencement of our hospitality teams that are supporting groups to develop skills needed when working in the hospitality industry, including the completion of Safe Food Handling Certificates.
- The establishment of our own vegetable garden on site at the Kingaroy Centre and the growth of our gardening teams to include providing a rotating indoor plant service and volunteering to update and maintain gardens at other South Burnett Care facilities.
- At the core of our programs, we have developed a team of support workers and logistics' staff who have finely tuned skills focused on the sustainable delivery of rewarding group activities. In the past year the team have established modular and scalable client focused systems that have us well placed to cope with future challenges.

More clients are joining our programs every week as word spreads about our vibrant, enthusiastic, and empowered community. This continuing growth, our skilled team, and new facilities on the way lay the foundation for us to become a regional hub for group supports in the years ahead.

Quality Programs

2020 NDIS Audit

September 2020, we had our first audit under the NDIS system and were amazed at the results which included the following comments

Feedback from participants/family confirmed a positive consultative approach to service delivery. This was described as including regular communication, involvement in all decision making and regular discussion and review of participant needs and service effectiveness to meet those needs.

The Service Delivery Model Policy indicates SBcare's approach to quality, person-centred care will deliver care that is tailored to meet an individual's diverse needs and preferences and will ensure that the dignity and human rights of everyone is embraced and the diverse characteristics and life experience of the individual, that may influence their care needs, will be met.

Interview with participants confirmed they felt staff respected and supported them to make decisions, including decisions that involved risk. Participants stated they had been informed of their right to access an advocate.

Interview with Board and Management confirmed there is a defined structure within the Board and processes to ensure that all financial, legislative, regulatory, and contractual responsibilities are met. The Corporate Governance Manual contains various policies which supports this.

Staff described their understanding of the importance of collaborating with participants, families, communities, and other providers. This included allowing all parties to have input into the service to ensure supports are relevant, appropriate and in line with the service agreement. Participants confirmed an active involvement in the development and review of supports.

Four Best Practice Achieved

- ✓ *Governance and Operational Management*
- ✓ *Continuity of Supports*
- ✓ *Support Planning*
- ✓ *Responsive Support Provision*

The NDIS provider can clearly demonstrate conformity with best practice against the criteria. Best practice is demonstrated through innovative, responsive service delivery, underpinned by the principles of continuous improvement of the systems, processes and associated with the outcomes.

KPI Outcomes for 2020 – 2021

Goals 2020-2021	Outcomes
Infrastructure	- Grant received to increase Avoca Street Infrastructure - Commencement of Day Centre 2 Kingaroy - Renovation of two units completed - Commercial building purchased and renovated
Operational Systems	- New software (Plan Management) integrated to support effective operations - Fleet software in place and travel claim projects in development - Staff Intranet operational and traffic increasing
Build new community partnerships in and external to our region	- Progressed the Gunter partnership to an outcome - Fleet software in place and travel claim projects in development
Supported accommodation	- Two new houses purchased for Supported Living - Renovation of one SDA house completed
Grow our customer services	- Two new houses purchased - Renovation of one SDA house completed

Desired KPI's for 2021 - 2022

Goals 2021-2022	Desired Outcomes
Clients	- Increase services in aged care - Build access to Allied Health Services
Infrastructure	- Completion of Day Centre 2 50% progress on CIIP Project Renovation and Re-build Kingaroy - Final Stages Planning Toowoomba site expansion - Build Supported Independent Living portfolio
Operational Systems	- Introduce new Accounting Software - Maximize fleet utilisation - Implement client service software solutions
Governance	- Workforce Plan development - Full review of quality system - Commence succession planning processes for Board
Employees	- Increase employee development opportunities - Develop Human Resource technological solutions

"The attention to detail our Case Manager provides is wonderful. He matches the support worker to suit and he goes well above and beyond our expectations. The support workers bring a mixed skillset and all enhance the services received. I have assurance that SBcare are there for us."



"I'm extremely happy with SBcare and I hope it continues well into the future."



Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024

Our Vision

To be trusted by our communities as the premier community care service.

Our Purpose

To provide and manage a wide range of services and facilities for the community with a focus on those that enhance the quality of life for people who are aged, frail, people with a disability and their carers.

Our Values

- Customer Focus
- Making a Difference
- Innovation
- Supporting Our Employees

Key Success Factors

We will do this by:

1 Excellence in Person Centred Services:

Be an organisation that leads by ensuring that the person is at the centre of what we do.

- Embedding person centred principles and service delivery design across the organisation
- Being evidence informed and continuous improvement focused organisation
- Building our capacity to meet the needs of our consumers
- Promoting high quality customer service experiences
- Developing appropriate services and facilities for and with our communities
- Sharing our knowledge and expertise with our consumers

2 Boldness and Innovation:

Demonstrate boldness and innovation in our work.

- Developing and operationalising a hub and spoke model of business
- Ensuring business design and delivery meets the needs of our different communities
- Structuring our business with reliable, integrated, cutting edge organisational systems
- Building a recognisable and trusted brand in our communities
- Challenging traditional thinking



3

Sustainable Development:

Grow and develop our business through sustainable and new opportunities.

- Building a strong financial position for re-investment in our services and community
- Growing relationships across the sector at all levels of government and in our communities of interest
- Increasing services and facilities in line with community needs
- Identifying and responding to key business opportunities
- Ensuring robust systems are embedded in practice
- Managing consolidation and growth in a sustainable way
- Developing an organisation structure that will strengthen the delivery of consistent, high-quality services
- Delivering services in areas of identified need

4

Support Our Workforce:

Be an employer of choice in our community.

- Creating an environment of openness and transparency in our employer/employee interactions
- Providing professional development opportunities to grow the skills of our employees
- Developing career pathways and opportunities for growth and advancement
- Promoting a culture of safety, health and wellbeing
- Building resources and processes to support our employees
- Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Creating a flexible, adaptable and highly responsive workforce

5

Social Responsibility:

Promote and Influence positive social actions

- Practicing good governance and supporting best practice in our organisation
- Supporting our sector for success
- Advocating and supporting local connectedness through our service delivery
- Implementing and utilising environmentally sustainable resources and processes
- Embedding our values in all we do
- Engaging with the external policy and reform agenda

Chairman's Report



During the 2020- 2021 financial year we have had a lot of new challenges and with Covid-19 ever present we have had a trying but interesting year. We have been, and will continue to be, equal to the task that the reform of aged and disability care has brought to our community, clients, and to this organisation. My confidence lies in the fact that we have spent many years building our knowledge and capacity along with resources, appropriate policies and procedures and community support to navigate successfully through change. I am, along with my fellow Board Members committed to continue strong governance and transparency for SBcare to ensure the delivery of excellent service options for our community. I am proud and inspired by the dedication and professionalism of the whole SBcare Team; staff, volunteers and our Board of Management who all support our vision, aims, and translate this into practical community care.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Management Members and the Chief Executive Officer who have developed and finalised our

2016-2020 Strategic Plan. The SBcare Strategic Plan has five key success factors.

1. Excellence in person centred services
2. Boldness and innovation
3. Sustainable development
4. Supporting our workforce
5. Social responsibility

The plan operationalises the higher-level strategic objectives and with goals towards achieving the plan, purpose driven action items and performance indicators, the plan aligns to our governance reporting and provides checkpoints to ensure we stay on track.

During the year we have achieved significant milestones, amongst the highlights are:

- Continuing to provide quality and customer focused services amidst the pandemic.
- Completion of a major upgrade to the Wondai Supported Independent Living home.
- Growth of aged and NDIS services across the South Burnett, North Burnett and Toowoomba.
- Awarding a tender to complete a new building to enhance client experiences in the group programs in Kingaroy.
- Success in a large grant application for \$524,000.00 from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to redesign and renovate our hall, amenities, and office space in Kingaroy.

- A yearlong investigation of a potential foray into residential aged care.
- The purchase of new infrastructure to support our clients including housing and a commercial building for allied health.

I have now been chair for five years and in that time I have seen incredible change in our organisation. I admire the resilience of our staff to work through the Aged Care and NDIS reform agendas including a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (ongoing) and the recently concluded Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety which was finalised with nearly 150 recommendations.

The highlight of the year was receiving Best Practice results in our NDIS audit, a commendable feat for SBcare and our teams. 2021-2022 will continue to be a busy year with an NDIS maintenance audit due in December and the changes to aged care funding.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Members for their expertise, dedication and genuine commitment to our organisation, this is a big role for a volunteer and much appreciated. I would also like to acknowledge the work that all our staff do to ensure the success of everything we do.

Paul Laurentiussen
Chair

Treasurer's Report

And then there was Covid 19.

This was not a normal year. As we commenced the year in July 2020, we were still coming to terms with the downturn in client activity. The clients were still, understandably, reluctant to allow non household members into their homes and markedly reduced using their services. SBcare were perfecting our changes to many services to give clients the confidence to resume their normal activities:

- Going online with Zoom meetings for many activities including art and cooking to avoid close contact
- Changing Meals on Wheels from a volunteer driven service to one we staffed with employees to limit how many people went into the homes of clients and also obtain a refrigerated truck to deliver meals throughout the South Burnett
- Finalising the many Covid 19 safety measures across all our sites and with all our staff-social distancing, check in, sanitiser, extra cleaning, masks if needed etc.



Following this, we saw an upsurge of client activity and then an unexpected increase in new clients coming to SBcare. This speaks well of our Chief Executive Officer and the SBcare teams, when our clients are again happy to have our staff help deliver the life they want and deserve.

Now, let's look at the year in figures:

HIGHLIGHTS

- We made an operating profit of \$2,578,909
- We increased gross income to \$21,744,941 which is outstanding considering the Covid driven downturn in income in the first months of this financial year
- We paid out \$6,614,291 in Contract Services to buy goods and services for our clients. We paid this out of SBcare bank accounts up front before we could claim it back from NDIA, Home Care packages etc. Many smaller Not for Profit organisations would not be able to finance these up-front payments.
- We received \$1,159,860 in ATO Cash Flow Boost and JobKeeper. SBcare easily qualified for these payments following the huge drop in income March 2020-July 2020. These payments allowed us to pay our staff and continue servicing our clients while drastically changing our services during this very stressful time.
- We committed to future spending of \$1,029,400 in the following years to expand our buildings at Kingaroy and Toowoomba to meet the needs of our clients and our staff
- We spent \$334,135 to renovate our Wondai housing to bring it up to the latest standards and give our residents a better accommodation experience
- We purchased and renovated two houses to provide Supported Independent Living for a number of clients. This will be life changing for those clients.
- We purchased and renovated a building in Kingaroy at a cost of \$420,806. We are using this as an Allied Health treatment centre as we found our clients could not get enough appointments at existing Allied Health services in the South Burnett.
- We renovated our James Street Kingaroy units as they fell vacant at a cost of approximately \$22,000.00 per unit. This allowed us to provide better disability access and services and a more modern standard of living.

INCOME

Our profit of \$2,578,909 was nearly in line with the results for the previous year after allowing for the ATO Cash Flow Boost and JobKeeper of \$11,159,860. This give the Board confidence we have the financial strength to continue operating as well as having reserves to commit to improving our services and facilities for our clients. We had another strong year of income with Government Subsidies and Grants (NDIS, CHSP etc) of \$13,215,795 (+\$2,152,246). We continue to see more clients come to us each week and we are supporting our clients to utilise their funding so they live the life they want to. Meals on Wheels continues to grow as more people ask us to supply the food on the new menu and in the new packaging. This year we received Meals on Wheels grants of \$126,848 and Food Sales of \$315,598 from MOW. This essential service continues to grow using our new specially built Meals on Wheels kitchen and new chilled food delivery truck. SBcare earned \$936,178 from

Treasurer's Report

Queensland Plan Management Service as more people approach us to manage their package for them so they don't need to do the bookwork and financial management required for an NDIS Plan. We give these clients a fully itemised account, not unlike a bank statement, so they can see how their package is going. We thought this would be a small service, but it has grown significantly as more clients see it suits their needs. The catch is SBcare has to find the money to pay for all the goods and services for these clients. Only then could SBcare lodge a claim to get the money back from Government funders. This is one of the reasons the Board needs to retain so much cash in our Balance Sheet.

EXPENSES

No business can operate without expenses. Our Board and Chief Executive Officer look at this closely to make sure we spend SBcare money responsibly and get "bang for bucks". The most important of these was salaries \$8,853,665 (+\$2,881,495). As we know, this will always be a huge portion of our expenses, so it continues to be managed very critically. We now have 2,000 clients on our books. We are being approached by new clients each week at all our sites. We can't service the client needs without enough really good staff, so we have grown our staff to 240 people. We look at this growth closely to make sure SBcare continues to provide excellent services while making sure we get full value from our staff. Among other changes, we have placed vehicles at all our offices to avoid unnecessary travel to and from a central site. We also use remote tablet access, so staff don't have to travel to offices just to do "book work". We also have various internal measurement methods to track effectiveness of our services. Electricity & gas, insurance, rates, repairs and maintenance all went up with more properties and increased tariffs. We review these services regularly to make sure we get best value for money.

BALANCE SHEET

SBcare is in an enviable position.

We have Total Members' Funds of \$7,392,277. We have a very strong Cash Assets of \$4,621,804 and can be confident we are a "going concern" as we have the ability to pay our bills as they arise and pay out all our liabilities should we need to. We have reduced our Trade Debtors dramatically to \$96,562 (-\$543,777). This is money SBcare has had to pay on behalf of clients for goods and services and then claim back from funding bodies. The improvement from last year's figure of \$640,339 is due to very good work by CEO and Finance staff to improve our claiming process to more quickly recover money from NDIS, HCP etc. but we have still had to allocate more staff hours to this essential job. Our assets held as Property, Plant and Equipment are now valued at \$4,530,752 reflecting our new building purchases and our renovations listed above. Our Current Liabilities are \$1,082,003. The low figure of \$66,551 for Trade Creditors this year reflects our CEO's drive to pay suppliers as soon as possible to develop a good reputation with them that SBcare is an organisation to do business with. SBcare uses as many local businesses as possible and quick payment greatly benefits our communities. You will also see in Current Liabilities-Provisions of \$547,867 which covers accrued benefits for staff (AL & LSL and Superannuation). This means we put money aside each year to pay for these benefits rather than be surprised in later years when staff utilise them.

Non-Current Liabilities of \$786,006 consist of two parts:

- Financial Liabilities of \$524,799 show our Bank Loan for the Centre Building and the balance is to finance our expanded vehicle fleet which is needed to service our increased number of clients.
- There is another Provision in Non-Current Liabilities for Long Service Leave Entitlements of \$261,206.

In summary, our strong Balance Sheet and cash position has allowed the Board to commit to future building and renovation work of \$1,029,400, cover all our liabilities, have the confidence to continue planning for other expansions of our services and still pay for all our clients' goods and services before we can claim them back from the funders (NDIS, Home Care Packages etc).

As Treasurer for SBcare, I have pleasure in presenting this report for adoption.

Bruce Jay
Treasurer

Chief Executive Officer's Report

"Plans are useless, but planning is everything."

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

Occasionally I see a quote that resonates with me, and I believe that during the last year this quote epitomizes the state of play at SBcare. Who could guess that Covid would have such an impact on Australia and the way we live? Who could guess in these uncertain times that we could and would increase our business and the number of clients we service? This has been an interesting year for me, and my team, we do spend most of our time planning but very little time developing plans, which has meant we were nimble and prepared in ways that more rigid organisations might not have been.

We pivoted quickly, frequently redesigning our teams, structure and building our skill sets and offerings, this was relatively easy for us due to that perpetual state of change we are becoming accustomed to. It is heartening to know that our strategic plan has been the anchor for us to design our future with, not just a plan sitting on a shelf. This approach has set us up for continued success.

We had projects and new services already in the development pipeline – some ideas directly from our strategic planning efforts and some from the amazing teams we have. So, when the pandemic hit and the ramifications crystalized, we were and still are ready.

We have been able to focus on more support to our clients through rapid staff growth which creates its own challenges but turning away a client in need is not what we do and therein lies the quandary. Do we grow or do we settle, in a consumer driven market? I do not think we have had a choice in this decision, it's how we meet that change and need that sets us apart from the rest.

As you know, even planning is useless without the people to make it work and I truly believe we are surrounded by some of the best people around. I have been here 8 years and have seen the workforce develop exponentially and despite challenges and growth having a team that has been so focused, so cohesive, and so able to deliver on the immense challenges we put in front of them is wonderful.

For this I want to say thank you to all of the staff from Toowoomba to Blackbutt, Murgon to Proston, Gayndah to Kingaroy and everywhere in between. Our workers make a huge difference in many lives, and all supports delivered with care and dignity in an interesting time in not only Australian but world history.

This year has seen growth in all our service regions and our support staff has grown 23% in the last twelve months meaning we are not only providing much needed client services but supporting our communities by



employing people and purchasing more in our respective communities.

I am in awe of the work the support staff do and admire their dedication and care for the people we work with, it is humbling to be a part of a team that is so committed to making a difference in our community. Along with the frontline team we have developed a capable, dedicated, and efficient administrative team and their roles are very busy and this is a recognised pressure point that we are working on.

We have commenced planning for new infrastructure in both Kingaroy and Toowoomba and this will be a big focus in the new financial year, the buildings will encompass client service spaces and administrative space as we really have no wriggle room, and every nook and cranny is now populated with staff and clients.

A highlight of the past year was the purchase, renovation and opening of our Allied Health building in Mary Street. We are growing this service to meet community need and build the capacity of our community by providing locally based allied health services. Thank you to the Allied Health Team who have worked hard towards sustainable success.

Queensland Plan Management services sits to the side of our core business but has become another community service driven by client need, the team have innovated and created efficiencies and are now able to spend more time focusing on their clients. They have introduced a client application (APP) to support them in tracking, approving, and managing their NDIS budgets. This was an accidental business but has proved to be invaluable in our communities and will continue to grow into the future. Thank you to the Queensland Plan Management team who

work in isolation to the main group but kick goals for their clients.

This year we planned and worked with The Kingaroy Senior Citizens Club and South Burnett Regional Council on a renovation project which will see the Senior Citizens move offsite in late 2021 to the Town Common Hall for two years while we upgrade the hall and facilities, a much-needed project. The Queensland Government has contributed over \$500,000.00 to this project through the Community Infrastructure Investment Program and for this we are very grateful.

Our purpose drives all we do and supporting our communities and the people in them who are aged, frail, have a disability and the carers is the mandate we all work by. Thank you to the Board to again entrusting me and my team to deliver on this mandate, thank you to my Executive Team and the organisations leadership who work around my "planning"

and thank you to all of the teams who make it possible for us to be trusted by our communities to deliver responsive, flexible and quality services.

On a finishing note, our planning didn't just help with responding to the pandemic and the shifting needs of our clients, it was also critical for the organisational change we needed to have and did make during 2020/21. Our planning will see us continue to serve our community responsively well into the future. I think we all must be mindful that owning and embracing change is in our hands by and by making change happen instead of waiting for it to happen to us we will continue to prosper, reinvest in our communities, and then make a difference.

Cheryl Dalton
Chief Executive Officer





Client Stories

→ Orla loves sport!

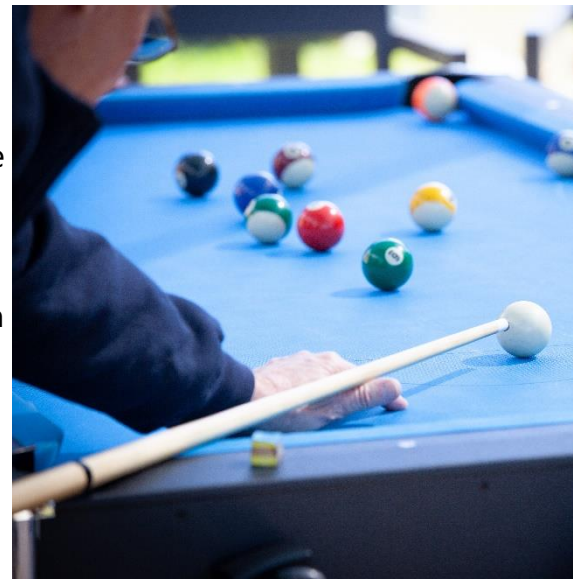
Be it the cricket in summer or the footy in winter Orla loves to chat about her favourite teams. Orla participates in the Sports Groups held on Sunday's and enjoys the friendly banter among her peers about her favourite footy club.

Orla especially enjoys the outings to the games held at Suncorp Stadium or attending the special State of Origin nights at the Kingaroy Centre.

→ Participating in our communities

We have Pool Competition groups that meet regularly and go out to play pool and socialise, these groups have people of all ages joining in. The group are not as competitive as they are social and a good time is had by all.

On occasions our groups have been approached by community members asking if they could join their group for a game of doubles in pool and this interaction over a game of pool, included sharing conversations and enjoying camaraderie. This was a positive outcome for our clients as they were made to feel welcome in a community environment with no judgement, the opportunity to live an ordinary life and just enjoy a fun activity.



→ Garden Club

Our Garden Club consists of a team who are all willing to get their hands dirty in the garden. Monday's start with the club check of the plants in their garden. The garden is brimming with vegetables, flowers, herbs, and indoor plants. Watering and weeding are completed along with tidying up the garden each day of activity. The Team has instigated an indoor plant rotation program and cultivated and designed pot plants which are in turn delivered to desks in the offices weekly. Members of the team visit the various offices and chat with the staff whilst changing out the plants. All clients work really well together as a team and all demonstrate a passion for gardening.



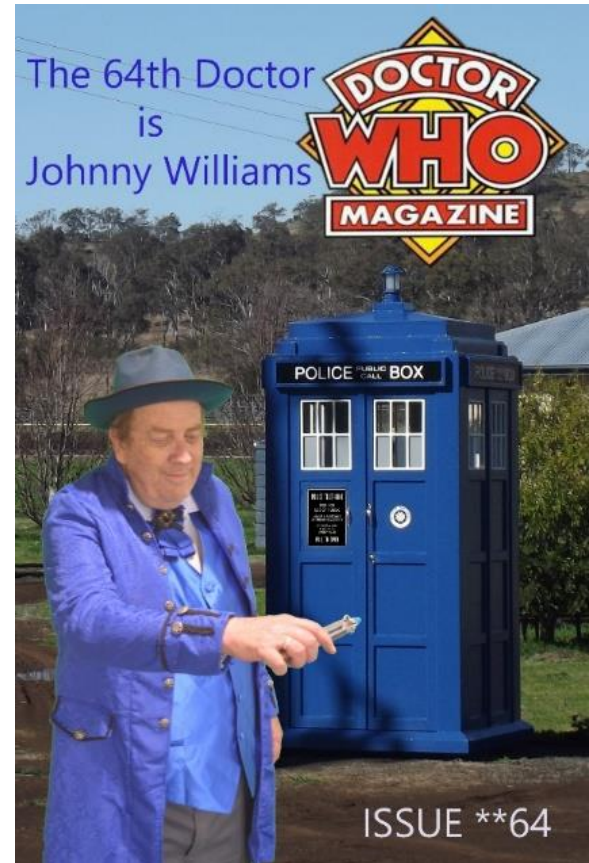
Client Stories

→ John's got talent!

This magazine cover was created by one of our clients through several of the NDIS Groups he attends. To create this piece John combined work and skills developed in our Photography, Cosplay and Movie Making teams. The magazine cover is to promote an entire pilot episode of Dr Who that John plans to make.

→ Michael (AKA Michelangelo)

Toowoomba resident, Michael, sparked his inner creative soul when he participated in the Create and Share Program which was hosted online, alongside his South Burnett peers. Michael enjoyed sharing his artwork and learning more about his creative instincts. Since this program has been completed Michael continues to follow his passion for painting and he now sells his art to members of the community and church groups.



→ From our family to yours – a carers story

"My father now has dementia and my mother is his carer and they live out of town. The transition into dementia has been hard on them both over the past few years, that is until last year when they discovered SBcare day program services. My parents have always been hard workers running a small business, being involved in Rotary, CWA and many other community groups, running the farm and raising their family rarely taking time for themselves. I would like to say a huge thank you to SBcare to you and your staff for supporting our family. The services SBcare provide are a true blessing and make a huge difference to my parent's quality of life. Every week the program days are looked forward to as Dad gets to have a day out and mix with others (he smiles and calls it day care), these days for him give him back a purpose and a joy that I haven't seen in him for some time. Before attending the groups, dad was listless and had been withdrawing from us with little interest in conversation or leaving the loungeroom. Now things are much different, when he finishes the day he is full of talk about who was there, what they said and did, the exercises, the games, the excursions and the food of which he always tells me is wonderful but way too much for him to eat. Mum now knows dad is safe and happy at his program and she can resume her life outside caring responsibilities enjoying visits with friends, take time out to get the shopping and bill paying done. These are things that we all take for granted until dementia hits your home and leaving your loved ones alone is no longer safe and if they refuse to go with you there is no talking them out of it. Your program and your staff mean the world to us. Everyone is so lovely and caring. Mum was amazed on her first visit to talk with your staff who totally understood Dad's stage of dementia and her concerns and daily problems.

From our family to yours, Thank you"



→ Be Connected Stay Connected

To care for a person with dementia or a neurodegenerative condition takes great love and courage. It can be a full time job. Although it doesn't start out as a full time job, the disease process can proceed quite quickly and changes in the person seem to be happening each day and become more noticeable to the carer and others. Carers make the promise that they will look after the person forever. They take on this duty with genuine commitment and nothing will stop them from seeing this commitment through. However, all too suddenly there are so many changes and so many things the person cannot do anymore that staying home is the safest place to be. Often the carer does not seek help until they are almost totally at their wit's end and exhausted. They believe they should be able to manage and describe feelings of guilt and embarrassment for seeking assistance.

The offer of the aged care centre program and blocks of 6hrs where the carer can have a break seem unbelievable at first. It can be all too much for some carers who again feel pangs of guilt, but exhaustion is leaving them sapped of every ounce of energy and they gratefully accept the support.

The Aged Care Centre program is a place where the people attending can be themselves and the carer takes solace knowing the person will receive the care and support they need in a relaxed, happy and safe setting. Carers don't realise that other people are living a life very similar to them. They feel isolated and cut off from their 'normal' life. None of their friends really understand and the kids are busy in their own lives. It can be a very lonely existence.

This is where Be Connected Stay Connected comes in. This service provides an opportunity for carers to come together and 'debrief' with each other in a safe and confidential setting. Initially offered as a six-week program to connect with each other, the carers wanted more of the same and continue to attend and enjoy great rewards from sharing their 'caring' stories with other like-minded people. This is not an education session. This is a chance for carers to speak about how they are feeling, how they are coping and to share strategies for successful caring experiences with others. Feelings of frustration, exhaustion, sadness and guilt are commonplace, however so are feelings of happiness, reward and returning sanity. We choose a common theme to begin the group and allow the conversation the flow.

Carers have asked that this group continue. They just love the opportunity to be together, and although they are not friends, not family, they are connected to each other in a very special way. The life of the carer is one to behold and respect. It is one of great courage and love. Carers need to know they are amazing and that the 'work' they are doing is fantastic.

"After a long discussion around the struggle to secure IT support for their home phones, mobile coverage and computers coverage, the team at Be Connected Stay Connected decided that although living with and dealing with dementia is difficult, it is not as difficult as dealing with TELSTRA!"

Staff Supporting Our Community



Australia's Biggest Morning Tea



International Women's Day - #ChooseToChallenge

Each month we fundraise for different charities as well as supporting things like International Women's Day. These days are a great way for our teams to have some fun in the office and raise some much needed funds for worthy charities.



National Pyjama Day - Toowoomba



National Pyjama Day – Kingaroy

MS Brissie to the Bay



Rob Langford has been working at SBcare as a Community Support Worker for just over 2 years and his goal this year is to be "Fit and 60". He started riding a little over 12 months ago and set his sights on a special ride supporting Multiple Sclerosis.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a chronic disease that affects the central nervous system. There is currently no known cure for MS although there are treatment options. MS affects different people in different ways, and treatment often involves managing symptoms. (<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/multiple-sclerosis-ms>)

The MS Brissie to the Bay took place on 13th June and is a 50km ride from Musgrave Park to Wynnum and back. Towards the end of the journey, there is some decent sized hills which gave Rob's legs a real good workout. Go Rob!

The
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