



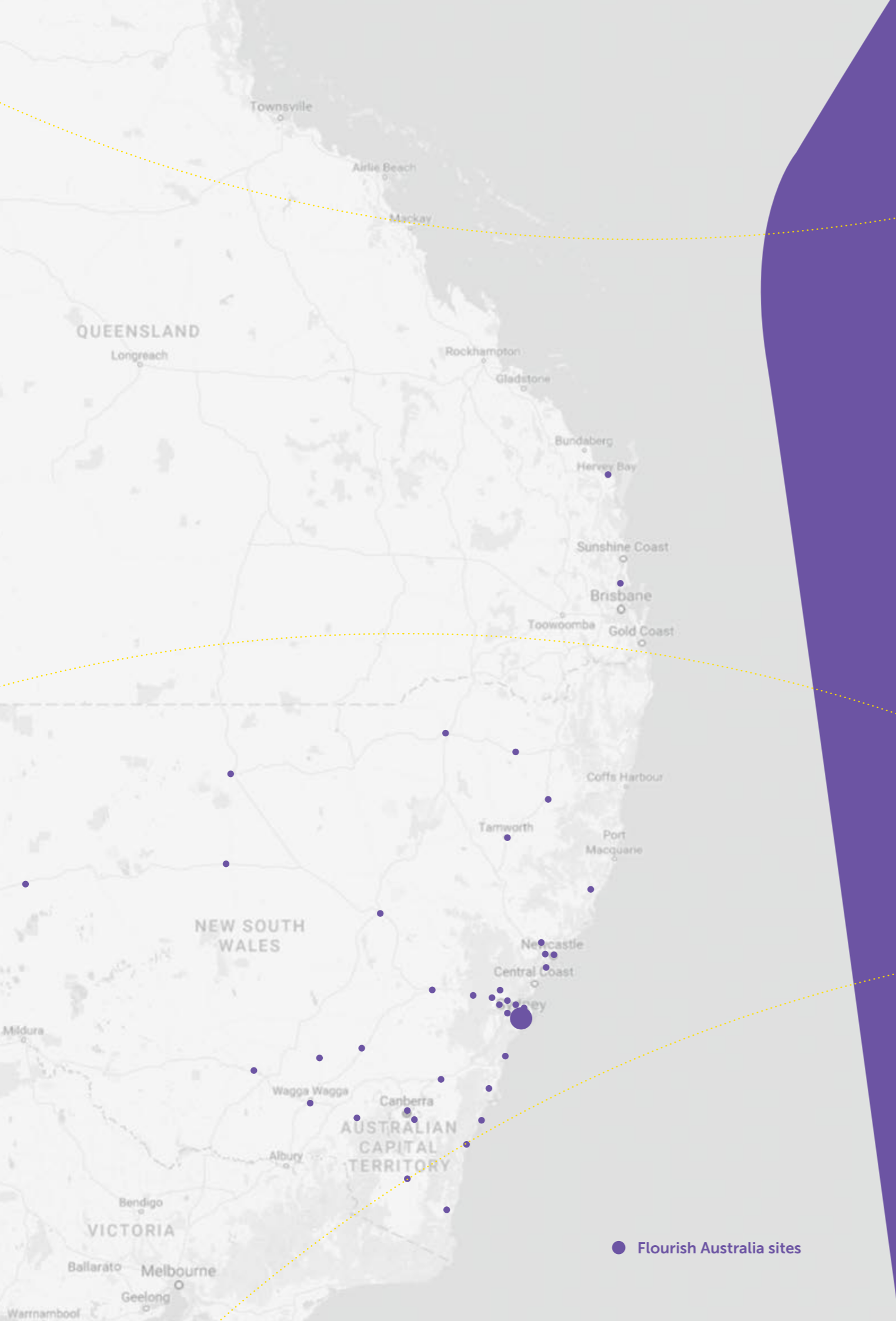
**flourish**<sup>®</sup>  
AUSTRALIA

Where mental wellbeing thrives

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# pathways to citizenship

2017 Annual Report



resources

rights

purpose of this report

Flourish Australia is one of Australia's most experienced not-for-profit mental health organisations. For over 60 years, we have worked in local communities to support people on their mental health recovery journey.

We are continually responding to community needs that are identified through our local consultations, service delivery, research and advocacy.

This report for the year 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, provides a record of our activities, performance and financial position. In reviewing our outcomes and achievements for the year, we acknowledge our Board, senior leadership team and our highly professional staff, people with a lived experience of mental health issues, their families and carers, all of whom have contributed to these results.

This Annual Report will be printed in limited numbers, and is also available online at [flourishaustralia.org.au/annual-reports](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/annual-reports)

Pathways to Citizenship

This year, we have been working towards increasing our participation pathways for people with a lived experience, across all areas of our work. These take many forms, but the ultimate goal is for people to live a contributing life and regain their full citizenship as a member of the community. Re-engaging, connecting and participating is at the centre of our journey, and we encourage and support all those around us to achieve their own idea of citizenship.

Professor Michael Rowe from Yale University who has written about the 5 Rs of citizenship for many years, has developed programs to support people to gain or regain their citizenship in local communities. The Five Rs are Rights, Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships and Resources.

Our Patron

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales.

relationships

roles

responsibilities

● Flourish Australia sites

## contents

05	CHAPTER 1. Year overview
12	CHAPTER 2. Our highlights
26	CHAPTER 3. Our organisation
36	CHAPTER 4. Our services
48	CHAPTER 5. Our financials
50	CHAPTER 6. The next twelve months



Flourish Australia is committed to providing equitable access to services for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and/or people who experience a hearing or communication disability. If you would like support with anything within this annual report, please contact us on **02 9393 9000** and we can arrange an interpreter or translator to assist.


## fast facts


During 2016/17 Flourish Australia provided services and programs around New South Wales and South East Queensland.

  
**4905**  
people accessed our services

**Our vision** is to enable full participation within a diverse and inclusive community

Our major services supported ▲

  
**2756**  
people to make friends, get involved & learn new things

  
**431**  
people to find a job

**Our mission** is to work together for optimal mental health and wellbeing

  
**645**  
people in the **ndis**

**Our values** hope, inclusion, partnership, diversity, integrity, respect and trust

**1105**  
people where they live

**513**  
people in **headspace**

We employed



**673** people

**52%** with a lived experience of a mental health issue

▲ Some people may attend more than one location and program



## resources

I'd been living in Cronulla for 27 years, and had a good group of friends around me who I knew well, so we would socialise, bike ride and shop together, and generally be quite busy. But then my partner and I moved to Batemans Bay, and our relationship broke down. I became homeless, which resulted in me having a crisis and ending up in hospital.

When Flourish Australia collected me from the hospital I was so scared I ended up driving back to Batemans Bay and stayed a night, before I returned to Bega. Thank goodness I did return. I have really changed in the time I've been with Flourish Australia.

One of the main changes was gaining my independence. I had not driven for more than a year, and the team at Flourish Australia encouraged me to practice to make perfect. So I'm able to access the community now by driving, and that makes life much easier. I have no excuse to not be able to do things, because I can!

I spend time taking care of my mental health, by doing exercise and getting out into the community as much as I can. It's important to keep my head in the right space. What's really great is I have a best friend now, and it makes me feel good that I can help by driving her places and then we socialise together with other friends.

I also shop – well I love shopping and if I could, I would shop all day long! That makes me smile. I have other activities that I enjoy too – like going to TAFE, Ricki's Place for lunch on Wednesdays and dinner on Fridays, plus Monday social group. I also collect vegetables from the women's resource centre and cook for my friends – it's a full week now.

I've learnt that I'm a positive force to be reckoned with. I do good deeds whenever I can, and surround myself with good people. I'm known around town as a nice person, and I suppose you'd say I'm quiet achiever.

I'm on the Community Advisory Committee at Flourish Australia and this gives me a real sense of importance, and allows me to experience and understand different communities. I feel I can contribute positively to this group due to my lived experience.

**“I love cooking for my friend with the vegetables I collect from the local womens resource centre”**

 **50+**

**physical health & wellbeing promotions delivered across delivered across 30 Flourish Australia sites**

**Kim**

Bega





## chair report

**Professor Elizabeth More**  
AM, MAICD

**The last year has been one of change and growth for Flourish Australia. As foreshadowed in the previous Annual Report, we changed our name this year and marked that with a launch event at our Figtree Conference Centre in August. The new name is receiving positive comments from many, and most importantly, people with lived experience of a mental health issue. It is also gaining recognition across Australia. The new name has set the organisation up well for its continued development.**

This year we were one of many service providers that continued the journey into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Our experience in the Hunter trial site provided a sound foundation for that journey. In a relatively short space of time the NDIS has become a significant part of our work, with an ever-growing number of people seeking our support.

This has provided further opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to walking alongside people with a lived experience of a mental health issue, and their families and carers, as they pursue a contributing life in their local community, whatever that means to them. The depth and breadth of experience of Flourish Australia's staff, with over 50% having a lived experience, means we can truly say our supports are provided by people who have been there.

An important development this year has been the establishment of the Community Advisory Council. I am delighted that Larry Billington, the Chair of the Council, has

written about the work of the Council for the Annual Report. We are honoured that 24 people accessing our services from across our large service footprint have agreed to come together to provide guidance to Flourish Australia about our operations. We are totally committed to valuing lived experience and co-design, and the Council is another way in which we have embedded this into our governance structures. I thank the Council members for their time and advice this year.

A key initiative this year has been the Resolve Program. As mentioned last year, we had entered into a joint development phase with the New South Wales Government for the program and associated Social Benefit Bond. The program was approved by the New South Wales Government and the bond launched to the market in May 2017. The Social Benefit Bond is a new way of funding programs, involving government and private investment, with stringent outcome measurement.

As a mark of our commitment to the Resolve program and this new approach to funding much needed services, Flourish Australia has invested some of its own funds in the bond. The bond has been fully subscribed and we look forward to the program commencing in October 2017. Our thanks to our partner organisation, Social Ventures Australia, for joining with us to propose the Resolve program and to make it a reality. More information can be found in the Annual Report on page 20.

Another important development has been our focus on workplace mental health. Flourish Australia has a great commitment, and extensive experience in employing people with lived experience.

This a significant asset for the organisation. The Strategic Plan 2016-2019 commits the organisation to sharing that knowledge and experience with others through our various communication channels and our consulting team. This year, I was pleased to chair a forum on workplace mental health in my role as a New South Wales State Councillor for the Australian Institute of Company Directors. I was able to highlight Flourish Australia's work in this area, alongside the Chair of the Black Dog Institute Board, Peter Joseph AM.

During the year, Pamela Rutledge, our Chief Executive Officer, informed the board of her intention to retire at the end of December 2017. There will be lots of opportunity to comment about Pamela's important contributions to the organisation over the next 12 months. However, I would like to thank Pamela for the enormous amount of work she has undertaken this year, and the way in which she has led the organisation, with a strong commitment to people with lived experience, their families and carers. Her contributions are truly remarkable. The board has commenced recruitment for a new Chief Executive to ensure a smooth handover before Pamela departs.

Stan Brogan and Professor Dan Howard SC resigned from the board in 2017. Dan brought great legal skills to the work of the board, and I thank him for the many hours he devoted to his role on the board and its committees. Stan Brogan, our longstanding Treasurer, had been on the board since the merger in 2012 and was a Director on the PRA board for many years prior to that. We benefited greatly from his organisational knowledge and commitment to Flourish Australia's work. I thank Stan for sharing his extensive financial management and good governance experience at the board table for over 20 years.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge and thank the many partner organisations and funders who assist us to do the work we do. It would be impossible for us to have the reach and impact we do without their assistance. We were, therefore, delighted to have the New South Wales Minister for Mental Health, the Hon Tanya Davies MP, visit our Head Office in April to discuss our work. We look forward to meeting with Dr Helen Nugent AO, Chair of the National Disability Insurance Agency Board early in the new financial year.

As we head into Annual General Meeting season once more, our thanks also to Alastair McEwin, the Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner who was the keynote speaker at our Annual General Meeting in November 2016. Given Flourish Australia's strong focus on employment opportunities for people with lived experience, it was great to hear Alastair also speak about the importance of employment for people with disability.

To our very talented and committed staff and Senior Leadership Team, our debt of gratitude. You are "Flourish Australia" in the places you work and in the relationships you establish in local communities. You continue to inspire the organisation to focus on its values, and remain true to its commitment to being person-led and strengths-based.

To the people with lived experience who seek our support, thank you for allowing us to walk alongside you and to learn from you. Our work and our lives are richer because of your trust and the generosity with which you share your life with us.

I look forward to working with you all to continue to create and inspire a world where everyone's mental wellbeing flourishes. I hope you enjoy reading the many stories of achievement contained in this Annual Report.

**Professor Elizabeth More AM, MAICD**  
Chair

**“The Social Benefit Bond is a new way of funding programs, involving government and private investment, with stringent outcome measurement”**



**58**  
locations Flourish Australia provide support to people



## a letter from our CEO

**Pamela Rutledge**  
FIPAA, MAICD

**Welcome to our first Annual Report under our new name, Flourish Australia. A milestone was achieved this year with the launch of our new organisation name by our Patron, the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC (Retd) on 16 August 2016.**

We were delighted that the Governor was able to undertake that important task, and that Olympian Matthew Mitcham, OAM, provided the key note address which spoke, amongst many things, about his own lived experience and journey. Our new name truly sums up what we focus on in everything we do, support people with lived experience, their families and carers to flourish.

As an organisation that values lived experience and is committed to delivering person-led services, this year we have continued to focus on improving our recovery-oriented practice to support pathways to participation. We continued to implement our Recovery Action Framework (RAF), and implemented the Recovery Oriented Service Self-Assessment Tool. The RAF Roadshows were held for the third year in 12 sites and provided an opportunity for staff to share how they have implemented the RAF and used the three vital behaviours.

An important development to these workshops this year, was the inclusion of people with lived experience who access

our services. This has been an important demonstration of our organisational commitment to valuing lived experience, and in removing barriers between staff and people who access our services. It has been a great exercise in promoting mutuality in relationships and learning, and has positively impacted on the quality of discussions.

As part of our commitment to valuing lived experience this year, we also established the Community Advisory Council. The Council has been established to provide advice to the Senior Leadership Team and Board about Flourish Australia's operations. Its membership is drawn from people accessing Flourish Australia's services across New South Wales and South East Queensland, and delegates are elected to represent 12 regions. The Chair of the Council, Larry Billington has kindly provided a report outlining the work of the Council which is found on page 44.

I'd like to thank the Council members for their important contribution to Flourish Australia, and the time they spend seeking input from people locally and in deliberations when they meet together at Head Office. We are so fortunate to have people who devote so much time to assisting Flourish Australia to be the best it can.

In February, we were very pleased to host an International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership Exchange. Entitled "Recovery, Wellbeing and Citizenship", the Exchange was an opportunity for mental health leaders from Australia, the Netherlands, the United States, United Kingdom and Canada to come to Figtree Conference Centre in Sydney, to discuss these important topics

for mental health services. We were inspired by the work of Professor Michael Rowe at Yale University around citizenship and how, what he refers to as the 5 Rs of citizenship – Rights, Responsibilities, Roles, Relationships and Resources, intersect with mental health recovery and the development of recovery-oriented practice. I'd like to acknowledge and thank all who participated in the Leadership Exchange, especially those who travelled across the world to join in the discussions.

Over the next twelve months we will be considering how the concept of citizenship can help develop and extend mental health recovery and our recovery-oriented practice. Our challenge is to consider how we support people to reclaim their citizenship and their rightful place in local communities. This will form the basis of a revision of the Recovery Action Framework, and the next round of RAF Roadshows.

Citizenship is an important concept to consider as we participate in the national roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The NDIS's goals of providing reasonable and necessary supports that people need to enjoy an ordinary life, such as supporting greater independence, community involvement, employment and improved wellbeing, fit well with the 5 Rs and enabling them to become a valued part of their local communities.

This year has seen significant growth in our NDIS service delivery, and substantial effort has been devoted to training staff and educating people with lived experience, their families and service providers about the opportunities the NDIS brings. Being an NDIS service provider continues to challenge us to redesign our systems and approaches to managing resources and delivering support. We welcome the challenge as integral to being a person-led organisation.

This year Marty Golding, our General Manager, Employment decided to retire after eight years with the organisation. Marty brought extensive experience in the employment arena, first to PRA and then Flourish Australia, and made a great contribution to the organisation. Marty also provided her expertise to the Ostara Australia Consortium as a board member, and Chairperson. I thank Marty for her contribution to the organisation and her

commitment to developing employment opportunities for people with lived experience. We also farewelled Joanna Quilty who over the last eighteen months has contributed greatly as General Manager, NDIS Transition to our understanding of and capacity to meet the challenges of the NDIS environment.

In closing, I would like to thank our Board, led by our Chair, Professor Elizabeth More AM, for its outstanding contribution to the organisation this year. Being able to draw on the extensive knowledge and experience of board members is an invaluable resource, especially in a time of great change. We are so fortunate to have such a talented group of directors governing and guiding the organisation.

My thanks to Flourish Australia's amazing staff who work so hard to support people to achieve the lives they wish for themselves. Without their passion and commitment Flourish Australia would not be what it is.

And finally, to the people with lived experience who ask us to walk alongside them on their recovery journey – thank you. You are the reason for our existence and your trust in us is very humbling. Thank you for demonstrating what resilience and determination means. You are an inspiration to us all.

I hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report, and especially of the many achievements of people with lived experience, who access our services and have embarked on pathways to citizenship.

**Pamela Rutledge FIPAA MAICD**  
Chief Executive Officer

**“Our new name truly sums up what we focus on in everything we do, support people with lived experience, their families and carers to flourish”**

 **169%**

**growth in our NDIS service delivery**

 **88%**

**increase in colleagues engaging in recovery conversations, up from 76% in 2014**

## our highlights



### Minister for Mental Health visits

On 11 April, 2017 we were very pleased to host the Hon. Tanya Davies, MP, Minister for Mental Health at Figtree Conference Centre. Figtree Conference Centre is one of Flourish Australia's social enterprises that provides opportunity for people with lived experience to develop hospitality industry skills. The Minister met with people working at Figtree Conference Centre to discuss the importance of employment and then with the Senior Leadership Team to hear about Flourish Australia's work.

### Rainbow Network (LGBTI) established

This year we were pleased to launch our Rainbow Network which is to help further develop our LGBTI organisational culture - one in which everyone can bring their whole selves to work, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, gender or sex diverse. Amongst other things, the Network provides opportunities for people to connect and share information. It also contributes to Flourish Australia's ability to attract and retain engaged and motivated staff while openly drawing on their unique backgrounds, experience and networks to help us attract others to work with us and to seek our supports. Establishment of the Network followed approval for all Flourish Australia sites to participate in the ACON LGBTI Safe Place Program.

### NDIS

This year the NDIS began to roll out nationally. Two important Government Inquiries occurred during the year: Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme's Inquiry on the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition and Productivity Commission's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Costs Inquiry. We provided submissions to both Inquiries.

### New headspace Centre in Broken Hill

Having been appointed the Lead Agency for headspace Broken Hill we have worked hard this year to establish the Centre. Fit-out of the centre has now commenced.

### Community Advisory Council in action

The Community Advisory Council under the Leadership of Larry Billington (Chair) and Elana Glasic (Deputy Chair) met twice this year. With 24 members from around New South Wales and South East Queensland including youth representation, the Council plays an important inclusive role. Members of the Council also participated in consultations regarding our Strategic Plan, the review of our Mission, Vision and Values, and participated in discussions around: the 2016 Feedback Survey Results; Development of a co-design framework; and a website review and development.

### Physical Health and Wellbeing on track

Flourish Australia is committed to supporting people with lived experience to manage their physical health and wellbeing. We have a longstanding, and award winning, Back on Track Health Program that provides an overarching framework and resources for staff. This year we developed new resources for people accessing our services and staff to facilitate conversations about physical health and wellbeing that support people to take action about their health. These included discussion cards and a new microsite to host information about health providers and health information sources. Work was also undertaken to specify changes to our service database to capture better data in this area.

### VOICE Staff Engagement Survey 2017

This year we engaged the Voice Project to undertake our bi-annual staff engagement survey. This is the fourth time we have used Voice Project to facilitate independent feedback on our performance as an employer. This year's results mirrored the very positive results from two years ago.

This year we had 472 responses - a response rate of 71% (2015: 74%). We exceeded the Voice Project's All Industries and Disability Services benchmarks (within the margin of error of 2.2%). For the first time we added new questions about whether people identified as LGBTI?, as a carer of someone with a lived experience of a mental health issue? or have a lived experience of a mental health issue?. We also provided better for those with a non-binary gender identity, including "I identify in another way" in addition to Male, Female and Trans\*. Seven (1.5%) people said they identified "in another way" in relation to gender identity, in addition to one person identifying as Trans\*. 40 people identified as LGBTI (8.5%); 220 (47%) identified as a carer of someone with a lived experience of a mental health issue; and 261 (55%) identified as someone with lived experience.

Areas highlighted for specific focus over the next two years are:

- Learning and Development
- Career Development
- Recognition
- Involvement
- Safety
- Cross Unit Co-operation
- Leadership

### Lived Experience Staff Target Achieved

During the reporting period we achieved and even exceeded our strategic goal of 50 per cent of our staff telling us that they have a lived experience of a mental health issue, achieving 52 percent at the end of the financial year. This was a long-term strategic goal that was set in 2012 at the time of the merger between Richmond Fellowship of NSW and PRA.

### Recovery Action Framework (RAF) Roadshow

For the third year, the RAF Roadshow was organised. This year the focus was on the three Vital Behaviours and eight Organisational Accountabilities in: individual recovery planning; face-to-face support time; advocacy with partners; and interactions within the team. In addition, team reflections on the feedback from people accessing our services; how it has changed their approaches; and how they are learning from the lived experience of both staff and people accessing the service. Plus discussing the implications for the team's engagement with, and planning for, the NDIS.

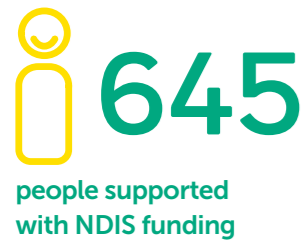
The Roadshow, led by our CEO, Pamela Rutledge and General Manager, Inclusion, Fay Jackson, travelled around metropolitan and regional centres to facilitate conversations about recovery oriented service, and how we use our three vital behaviours in supporting people on their recovery journeys. This year we also included people who access our services to gain first-hand feedback about how Flourish Australia is recovery-oriented.

### Disability Discrimination Commissioner visit

We were delighted that Alastair McEwin the Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner was able to give the Key Note Address at our Annual General Meeting in November 2016. Alastair highlighted the important role community managed organisations play, and emphasised the need to pursue employment opportunities for people with disability.



staff believe in the work done by Flourish Australia



people supported with NDIS funding



Community Advisory Council members

2 meetings this year



### Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras

Following on from our participation in the Pride in Diversity Entry in the 2016 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade, we established a Mardi Gras working group consisting of staff and supported employees to investigate whether we should have our own entry in the 2017 Parade. Enthusiasm to participate was high and 40 people who access our services and staff, led by our CEO, Pamela Rutledge, marched up Oxford Street on 4 March with the message "Freedom to Flourish".

### Mental Health in the Workplace

With over 50 per cent of our staff identifying as having a lived experience of a mental health issue, we know the importance of supporting people's mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. This year we developed and piloted mental health workshops for people managers and staff with an aim to increasing knowledge and skills for identifying and responding appropriately to mental health issues in the workplace. The feedback we have received about the workshops has been very positive.

### Why not a Peer Worker?

Our innovative approach to Peer Work has continued to attract attention this year. Our Peer Operated Service in Hervey Bay, run completely by Peer Workers, was featured in the Social Ventures Australia Quarterly. The article highlighted the results of our Social Return on Investment evaluation of the Peer Operated Service. In addition we were invited to submit a paper for the journal, Mental Health and Social Inclusion, edited by Dr Rachel Perkins and Associate Professor Julie Repper.

### Satisfaction Surveys developed

As part of the fourth National Mental Health Plan two new Satisfaction Surveys were developed: one for people accessing services, the Your Experience of Support (YES) survey; and the Carer Experience of Service survey. Both surveys had been developed in partnership with people with lived experience, and carers, and their psychometric properties tested as part of the development. These surveys have been distributed to public mental health services. A "community-managed organisation" version of these surveys became available in 2017. After discussing these surveys with our Community Advisory Council, we adopted them for use in Flourish Australia services as one of our annual survey tools. The first round of surveys using the YES survey occurred in June 2017.

### Reconciliation Action Plan

This year we also focused on addressing our commitment set out in the Reconciliation Action Plan. Supported by our Aboriginal People and Communities Community Of Practice we finalised an acknowledgement of country for use in emails and websites. People accessing our services and staff participated in NAIDOC Week celebrations across NSW and South East Queensland. In excess of 50 different activities were either hosted or attended. The Community of Practice met monthly throughout the year.

 96%

rated our service, good very good or excellent (YES Survey)

YES

first round of surveys using the YES (Your Experience of Support) survey occurred in June 2017



why our work is important



One in two people will experience a mental health issue in their lifetime.





# Jeremy

Wagga Wagga

## rights

I'm 35 years old, and I used to rely on my parents for everything, which meant I did very little by myself. Living on a small family property outside of Wagga Wagga meant that accessing public transport was difficult. But once I moved into Wagga Wagga, I was closer to facilities and shopping centres and this helped with my independence. But more importantly, having people around me for support was reassuring, and built my confidence to live the life I want to live.

When the local Community Mental Health team referred me to Flourish Australia, I didn't know what to expect, it was all a bit new to me. I was nervous and uncertain about living out of home and because I had relied on my parents for so long, I was unsure about a lot of things and didn't have the confidence to do much for myself.

The biggest challenge for me was to gain courage, and be able to look after myself. I started in the Housing and Accommodation program with the Flourish Australia team around 10 months ago. They helped me to get set up in my new home and establish a daily routine. They also helped me link into the local community gardens, where I volunteered each Tuesday morning, and got to know some familiar faces.

Then I was encouraged to be one of the first people to commence in the supported employment program as it rolled out in Wagga Wagga. It's exciting because as it's a new program, there are a number of new business contracts which the team has created, and for the last six months now, we've been working really well. I'm washing cars and cleaning offices with one of our community businesses.

Working with supported employment has helped me feel I'm part of the community. I'm contributing and doing something good, and this makes me feel fantastic!

I have developed good working relationships with my colleagues, and with the support and encouragement from the Flourish Australia team, I now live independently in a one bedroom unit, close to shops and clinical services. This means that I can now attend appointments on my own, when I need to, and I can buy my groceries without having to rely on my parents to take me. I've also learnt a thing or two about cleaning my unit and preparing meals for myself.

I got to this point in my life by staying positive and accepting support from people around me. Letting people know when I needed help was vital, and they were there.

In my free time, I like to be with my family, listen to music and do a bit of fishing. It's here that I can reflect and think about how far I've come in less than 12 months. I'm a happier, better, stronger person now, and I'm really positive about my future.

**“Working and volunteering has helped me feel part of the community”**

one of the **1st**

**to commence in Wagga Wagga's supported employment program**



## our highlights

The IIMHL topics discussed challenged us to consider a larger purpose – that of people developing skills that enable them to truly be part of the communities of their choice.



25

leaders from international and Australian mental health sectors attended the 2017 IIMHL exchange hosted by Flourish Australia

## 5Rs

Rights  
Roles  
Responsibilities  
Relationships  
Resources

### IIMHL Leadership Exchange

In February this year, Flourish Australia hosted an International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) Leadership Exchange at our Head office. IIMHL organises an event every 16 months to develop leadership in the mental health sectors in Australia, England, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, USA and Sweden through innovation sharing, networking and problem solving.

We were delighted to welcome mental health sector leaders from Canada, the United Kingdom, USA, The Netherlands and Australia to Sydney Olympic Park. We spent two productive days discussing a range of topics associated with the theme. We discussed how we could improve our services and support people with lived experience of a mental health issue, their families and carers to achieve contributing lives.

The theme of the Leadership Exchange was “Recovery, wellbeing and citizenship”.

We chose that topic to stimulate debate about three important and interconnected concepts for people with lived experience of a mental health issue, their families and carers. These topics challenge us, as service providers, to review and rethink our approaches to providing support that is truly person-led. They challenge us to consider a larger purpose – that of people developing skills that enable them to truly be part of the communities of their choice.

We were grateful to hear from Janet Meagher, AM who opened the session with a challenge about being truly recovery focused and not leaving anyone behind. Each organisation present provided an outline of their service and current innovations seen through a recovery, wellbeing or citizenship lens.

To encourage discussions, we invited people to speak about relevant work being done in Australia. We were fortunate to be able to hear from Dr Jackie Curtis who presented on her work in physical health and wellbeing, and Dr Kristoff Miki-Liu and colleagues from the St Vincent’s Open Dialogue Project who spoke about Open Dialogue. In addition, Flourish Australia staff spoke about their areas of work - Christine Miniawy, Manager, Workplace Peer Support Projects spoke about workplace mental health, and James Herbertson, Senior Manager, Community Business spoke about employment opportunities. These presentations provided an opportunity to reconsider and reimagine recovery, wellbeing and citizenship.

This inspiration provided opportunity for deeper reflection and discussion about the Five Rs of citizenship and how they related to Recovery. We discussed factors that facilitate people truly achieving citizenship including choice, connection with self and others, commitment to each other, feeling safe, feeling engaged, mutuality, having meaning and purpose, empowering actions and being who you want to be. Implications for services were also identified including, developing initiatives to address basic rights, peer support and peer run services, family and carer inclusive policies and practices, population health and community wellbeing strategies, and senior level engagement of people with lived experience in policy and practice discussions and development.

At the conclusion of the Leadership Exchange the group moved to the IIMHL Conference in the Sydney CBD, which brought together participants in Leadership Exchanges from across the country. Our General Manager, Fay Jackson, who is also a Deputy Commissioner at the Mental Health Commission of NSW, was one of the key note speakers at the conference.

### Families and Carers Action Plan

Families and carers play an important role in the lives of many people with a lived experience of a mental health issue. Their relationship enables them to provide a range of supports and encouragement that assist people to live successfully in the community and stay well. In reflecting on our work with families and carers we identified that we could do more to support them, and this became a strategic activity in Flourish Australia’s Strategic Plan 2016-2019.

This was inspired by *A Practical Guide For Working With Carers Of People With A Mental Illness*, an Australian publication released in March 2016 that sets out 6 partnership principles for services looking to improve their family and carer practice.

This year we formed a steering committee of staff who identify as family or carers, or who have a special interest in developing services to support families and carers, to assist with a review of our family and carer practice and the development of the action plan. We undertook a comprehensive review of our policies and procedures, our data collection and surveyed sites about the work they do with families and carers. We asked staff how we could improve our family and carers practice, and specifically how we could use technology to provide better education and supports to families and carers.

To hear directly from families and carers of people who access our services, we ran five focus groups with families and carers – in Dubbo, Penrith, Tamworth, Nowra and Newcastle. We used the information derived from those focus groups and expressed in evaluation forms to identify key actions to improve our practice.

The reference group reviewed data from the 2016 IT Survey which asked staff to identify ways in which we might use technology better to support family and carers. The project was completed in June 2017 and delivered a position statement, a comprehensive report and an Action Plan. This work provides a great roadmap for improving our family and carer focused work.

### Position Statement Family and Carer Strategy 2017 – 2020

Flourish Australia is committed to working closely with families and carers in their important role of supporting people close to them with a lived experience of a mental health issue.

Using a family inclusive approach, we work directly and in partnership with specialist organisations to provide support and education services for families and carers.

Flourish Australia’s family inclusive approach will enhance relationships between individuals and their families and carers, while providing an opportunity for the voice of families and carers to be heard in, and influence, the operation and development of Flourish Australia’s services. Flourish Australia’s Family and Carer Strategy outlines four important areas of work:

...we identified that we could do more to support families and carers



we ran focus groups in these locations so we could hear directly from families & carers of people who access our services

**Position Statement**  
**Family and Carer Strategy 2017-2020**

VISION	MISSION	VALUES
To enable full participation within a diverse and inclusive community	Working together for optimal mental health and wellbeing	Hope, inclusion, partnership, diversity, integrity, respect, trust

Flourish Australia is committed to working closely with families and carers in their important role of supporting people close to them with a lived experience of a mental health issue.

Using a family inclusive approach, we work directly and in partnership with specialist organisations to provide support and education services for families and carers.

Flourish Australia’s family inclusive approach will enhance relationships between individuals and their families and carers, while providing an opportunity for the voice of families and carers to be heard in, and influence, the operation and development of Flourish Australia’s services. Flourish Australia’s Family and Carer Strategy outlines four important areas of work:

Strategy 1
Workforce and resource development

Strategy 2
Communication with families and carers

Strategy 3
Partnership development

Strategy 4
Review and monitor strategy

For more information visit [flourishaustralia.org.au](http://flourishaustralia.org.au)

[/FlourishAus](https://www.instagram.com/FlourishAus)
[/FlourishAus](https://www.facebook.com/FlourishAus)
[@FlourishAus](https://www.twitter.com/FlourishAus)

**The Resolve Program draws on Flourish Australia's extensive experience in supporting people with lived experience of a mental health issue and assisting them to identify the resources they need to live successfully in the community.**

**530**  
people to be supported  
over a **7** year  
period

**\$7M**  
in private  
investment

**Resolve**

For Everyone's Mental Wellbeing



**Resolve Social Benefit Bond**

Last year we spoke about moving into a co-development phase of the Social Benefit Bond focused on preventing hospitalisations of people with lived experience of a mental health issue. For over six months of the year we worked with NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Treasury, NSW Ministry of Health, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District and Western NSW Local Health District, along with Social Ventures Australia to develop the details of the Resolve program.

The discussions resulted in a rigorous framework for the way in which the program will operate and the metrics that would be used to measure outcomes that ultimately lead to identifying savings to government and payments to Investors.

The Resolve Program draws on Flourish Australia's extensive experience in supporting people with lived experience of a mental health issue and assisting them to identify the resources they need to live successfully in the community. It brings together elements of short term accommodation, outreach support, access to specialist alcohol and other drug services, and a warm line. Consistent with our commitment to growing the Peer Workforce, the majority of the supports will be all delivered by Peer Workers.

Working closely with Local Health Districts the program has been designed to receive referrals of people who have been in hospital in the last twelve months for between 40 and 270 days or more. Participants will spend up to two years in the program but will not be eligible for re-enrolment after they exit. The program will support 530 people, over a seven year period, diverting them wherever possible from hospital and leading to a reduction in the consumption of acute health care.

Just prior to the end of the financial year, on 5 May 2017, the prospectus for the Bond was released to the market and \$7 million in private capital was fully subscribed prior to the financial close on 30 June 2017. Believing in the strength of the program, Flourish Australia has invested \$500,000 of its own funds as part of the Resolve Bond.

It is envisaged that the program will accrue \$30 million in savings to the NSW Government through reduced use of health, social support and justice services.

The Resolve program will commence operations in Orange and Penrith, NSW on 1 October 2017.



**"Flourishing"**

Artist  
Marlene Symco  
Penrith

Medium  
Acrylic paint  
on canvas

250

people attended the 2017 Recovery Forum across

16 NSW & South East QLD locations



### Recovery Forum

Each year, Flourish Australia coordinates a recovery forum for people who access our services. The forum is a one-day program, reinforcing Flourish Australia's recovery-oriented practice. It is closely aligned to the Recovery Action Framework, meeting no less than 20 aspects of the organisational accountabilities.

The recovery forum is an outstanding, practical example of how Flourish Australia supports local services to deliver mental health support in the communities in which we operate.

Travelling to a diverse range of locations across New South Wales and South East Queensland, the forum was accessible to many people, especially those who reside in rural and remote locations. Places that hosted the forum include Broken Hill, Cobar, Bourke, Moree, Parkes, Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Queanbeyan, Sydney Olympic Park, Hervey Bay, Bega, Newcastle, Tamworth and Wollongong.

To support Flourish Australia's inclusive approach, this year's forum was open to a broad audience, including family and carers, staff and local community partners. This initiative was well received, with a number of people taking advantage of the opportunity to participate. From this, we welcomed a number of peer workers from partner organisations, who participated in the forum.

One Sydney-based session was dedicated to young people, creating an environment that supports young people to express themselves in familiar company. Young people from headspace Broken Hill, headspace Bankstown, the Young Peoples Program, Emu Heights, the Young Peoples Outreach Program, Kogarah and the Youth Community Living Support Services, Newcastle were invited to participate.

The recovery forum was a great success, with over 250 people attending the event. Everyone who came enjoyed the day, which involved sharing stories of recovery, learning about diversity, hearing from other people's experiences and trying our hand at peer work.

A major aspect of this year's recovery forum was to reinforce our commitment to diversity. Participants were encouraged to create artworks containing relevant language relating the Flourish Australia official Diversity policy. This interactive and creative delivery enabled a friendly, supportive and inclusive learning atmosphere for all participants.

### Primary Care Psychiatry Liaison Service (PC-PLS)

This year we were successful in securing funding from Western Sydney PHN (WentWest Ltd) to develop and deliver an innovative approach to liaison psychiatry in primary care. The program will employ a psychiatrist, peer support worker and support co-ordinator that provide capacity building and linkages to 10 General Practice sites and practice staff in Western Sydney.

The program recognises the importance of primary care, and specifically GPs and practice staff, in delivering holistic care and support to people. For many people, their GP is the first point of contact to discuss mental health issues, so it is essential to ensure GPs have the knowledge and skills required to respond effectively. This program is built around the recognition of the importance of people self-managing their health issues, and develops and supports GPs and practice staff to work in ways that support that goal.

The psychiatrist will undertake mental health reviews, provide education and support GPs to develop GP skills in mental health assessment, treatment and support within the Practice. The peer support worker and support co-ordinator will provide support to the person, their family and carers assisting with education, access to other support services and demystifying mental health issues. By providing support to families and carers, the program recognises the important role families and carers play in supporting someone with a mental health issue.

This program is inspired by the work of Dr David Codyre, a Consultant Psychiatrist and Clinical Lead, Mental Health at East Tamaki Healthcare, Auckland, New Zealand. David's work has shown that such a model has positive outcomes including improvements in measures of mental health and wellbeing measures of health literacy and self-management capability, and improvements in physiological measures. We are delighted that David has agreed to share his insights with us as we co-develop the program with local GPs, Senior Clinicians, Western Sydney PHN, Western Sydney Local Health District and people with lived experience of a mental health issue.

We look forward to working with Western Sydney PHN and local GPs in Western Sydney on this important and innovative program.

## the last twelve months - how did we go?

### Employment Pathways

The internal transformation of our Community Businesses has continued this year. A greater focus on recovery training and personal development has had a positive impact and we have been able to reorganise operations to reduce our costs. We have also increased the opportunity for people to learn new workplace skills through recognised TAFE qualifications. We had 33 people complete the Certificate III in Warehousing this year, with an amazing 85% completion rate.

### Flourish Learning Network

The concept of the Flourish Learning Network and its role in supporting people to develop their knowledge and skills to pursue employment and education pathways continued to be developed. Documentation of the network's processes occurred and a review of educational activities in the two pilot sites, Newcastle and Wollongong undertaken. We submitted a Round 2 NSW Mental Health Innovation Fund application to fund the development and initial operation of the network and await the results.

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

The NDIS is a rapidly growing part of our work. We continue to review and develop our services to meet the needs of people who access our services who hold a NDIS funding package. A significant amount of work continues to occur to develop our staffing, systems and processes, learning from our experience as the program rolls out nationally. More information about the NDIS is contained elsewhere in the Annual Report.

### Clinical Services

This year we were pleased to be chosen by WentWest Ltd (Western Sydney PHN) to co-develop and deliver a primary care liaison psychiatry service in Western Sydney.

### Benchmarking

We have continued discussions about organisational benchmarking this year. We benchmark our staff engagement using the Voice Survey, comparing our performance to All Industries and Disability Services Benchmarks, and outperform both. We also participate in the Australian Workplace Equality Index, and the National Disability Benchmarking Project.

### Guildford

The build of 41 units at Guildford continued throughout the year and was nearing completion as 30 June 2017 approached. Practical completion is now forecast for Quarter 1, 2017-2018, and sale of a portion of the properties for use as part of the National Rental Affordability Scheme has commenced.

### headspace Broken Hill

We have spent many months this year working on the establishment of headspace Broken Hill. At the end June 2017 we have resolved the challenges and fit out on the Centre has commenced. The establishment of a headspace Centre in Broken Hill is a great development that has been pursued by the local community for around eight years. It will be a great addition to local supports for the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Far West NSW. We have established a Youth Reference Group to help guide the establishment of the Centre, and they have already joined forces with the Youth Reference Group at headspace Bankstown, the other headspace Centre Flourish Australia is Lead Agency for.



participated in the Australian Workplace Equality Index and National Disability Benchmarking project



41

Guildford units nearing build completion



12

headspace Broken Hill consortium members



## resources

I've been with Flourish Australia for a little over two years now. During this time I have made lots of friends. People would describe me as friendly, with a cheeky laugh, trustworthy and reliable, funny and good to be around. I like to visit my friends too. I look after my son and do activities with Flourish Australia. I also look forward to seeing my daughter on a monthly basis.

I feel more connected to my friends, family and community now. My physical and mental health is much better, so I am more comfortable in my home, and not needing to go out all the time. When I go down the street, I am no longer paranoid, and I enjoy going out a lot more. I also love swimming, playing tennis, playing pool, going to coffee group and cooking group.

I'm pretty active, and this has really been a big part of getting 'me' back. The Transformers Group is also very educational, and beneficial for coping with daily obstacles and overcoming things. This is a group that is peer worker led, and made up of people who access the service. During this group time we discuss things we would like to put on our Monthly Activities Calendar, like the quarterly health promotions which I find really interesting. I participated in National Disability Day by playing in a basketball team.

This year I'm starting a parenting course in order to help me get my daughter back. I'm looking forward to seeing my sister who is coming down in September from Queensland. I'm also looking forward to saving enough money to buy a car as I now have my driver's licence.

I have learnt that I'm capable of doing things that I thought I wouldn't be able to do, such as obtaining my license, getting my son back, and leading an aqua aerobics group. I have grown, learnt new things and now I'm doing things I like. I have a real sense of belonging and feel part of a group.

**“Being part of a cooking group gives me a real sense of feeling connected to the community”**



**most popular health topic in sites**

**healthy lifestyle & being active**



**Jo**

Goulburn

## our organisation



**We are the mental health charity for people with lived experience, provided by people who have been there.**

**Our purpose is to create and inspire a world where everyone's mental wellbeing flourishes.**

### What we do

We help people with a lived experience feel supported and meet their everyday challenges. We want them to live ordinary – even extraordinary – lives.

### How we do it

- Valuing lived experience
- Supporting recovery
- Connecting families
- Connecting communities
- Challenging discrimination
- Connecting people

### Who we help

Those with a lived experience and those around them.

## organisation structure

30 June 2017

### INCLUSION

*General Manager, Inclusion*

**Fay Jackson**

- Engagement
- Advocacy
- Recovery Framework
- Peer Workforce Development
- Recovery Learning Network

### INFORMATION, EVALUATION & RESEARCH

*Chief Information Officer*

**Mark Orr**

- Workforce Development
- Service Development
- Evaluation & Research
- Information Services
- Consulting Services

### MENTAL HEALTH & EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

*General Manager, Operations*

**Andrew O'Brien (South/East)**

**Aidan Conway (North/West)**

- Individual Support Services
- Respite Services
- Structured Activities
- Residential Services
- NDIS
- headspace

*Senior Manager,*

*Community Businesses*

**James Herbertson**

- Ostara Employment Services
- DES
- Community Businesses (Australian Disability Enterprises)

### BOARD

### SENIOR INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE

**Annie Sykes**

### NDIS TRANSITION

*General Manager*

**Joanna Quilty**

- NDIS Strategy & Business Development
- NDIS implementation

### HUMAN RESOURCES

*General Manager, Human Resources*

**Tim Fong**

- Employee Relations
- Recruitment
- Wellness Program & Injury Management
- Performance Management

### BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

*General Manager, Business Excellence*

**Mohammed Alkhub**

- Risk Management
- Policy Management
- Accreditation
- Internal Audit
- Workplace Health & Safety

### FINANCE & COMMERCIAL

*Chief Financial Officer*

**Mike Smallsman**

*Deputy Chief Financial Officer*

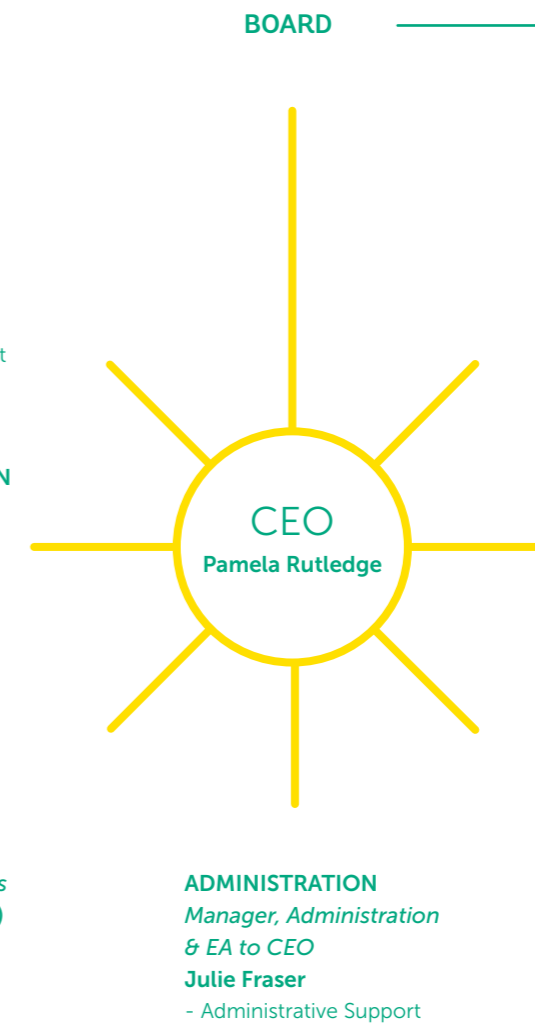
**Ashish Chawla**

- Payroll
- Financial Accounting
- Management Accounting
- Commercial Accounts

*Chief Development Officer*

**Peter Neilson**

- New Service Development
- Marketing & Communications
- Fundraising Strategy
- Social Enterprises



## senior leadership team

The Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the daily operations and administration of Flourish Australia.

Pamela Rutledge FIPAA, MAICD  
Chief Executive Officer

Mohammed Alkhub  
General Manager, Business Excellence

Aidan Conway  
General Manager, Operations North & West

Ashish Chawla  
Deputy Chief Financial Officer

Julie Fraser  
Manager, Administration and EA to CEO

Tim Fong  
General Manager, Human Resources

Marty Golding  
General Manager, Employment  
*Retired March 2017*

Fay Jackson  
General Manager, Inclusion

Peter Neilson  
Chief Development Officer

Andrew O'Brien  
General Manager, Operations South & East

Mark Orr  
Chief Information Officer

Michael Smallsman  
Chief Financial Officer

Joanna Quilty  
General Manager,  
NDIS Transition

IMAGE, LEFT-RIGHT  
BACK ROW  
Mohammed Alkhub,  
Peter Neilson,  
Andrew O'Brien,  
Joanna Quilty,  
Aidan Conway,  
Mark Orr

FRONT ROW  
Ashish Chawla,  
Julie Fraser,  
Pamela Rutledge,  
Tim Fong, Fay Jackson,  
Michael Smallsman

SLT bios can be found on our website  
[flourishaustralia.org.au/our-senior-leadership-team](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/our-senior-leadership-team)



## workforce development


Flourish Australia aims to be an employer of choice. We have a highly dedicated staff, and to deliver our services, and build our capacity we continue to invest and develop our workforce, which includes training and growing our staff and peer workforce.

This year, we have intensified our efforts to spread the benefits of peer work. We featured prominently at TheMHS In Auckland; at the International Mental Health Conference Sea World Gold Coast; at the World Federation of Mental Health Conference in Cairns; at the Australian Long Term Unemployment Conference Brisbane; at the IIMHL Conference in Sydney in February; at a ComCare conference and Brook Red conference Brisbane; MHFA Course facilitation with invited participants from the Physical Disability Council and Milk Crate Theatre.

Other notable activities include:

- We established a Peer Work Community of Practice;
- Our General Manager, Inclusion, Fay Jackson was keynote speaker at International Women's Day and at the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership Conference; and participated in a One Plus One interview on ABC TV;
- We published a 'Why not a Peer Worker' journal article in *Mental Health and Social Inclusion* a journal in the UK.

 40  
internal promotions

 4  
Certificate IV graduates from MHCC

 25  
new Certificate I, II, III, IV enrolments

 28  
hours, on average, per staff member in training

 115  
staff became certified in trauma informed practices

## governance

Flourish Australia is committed to implementing the highest standards of Corporate Governance, reflecting our belief that only by recognising and implementing these high standards can we fulfil our obligations to a wide range of parties, including, the people who use our services, their families, our staff, employees, funding bodies and the community at large.

The Board has adopted a formal Charter setting out the functions reserved to the Board and those delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Board's principle role is to govern Flourish Australia by ensuring that there is a proper governance framework in place to promote and maintain the services provided. Directors represent our stakeholders and oversee and appraise the organisation's strategies, policies and performance, taking into account its role in the community. The CEO is responsible to the Board for the management of Flourish Australia, for the implementation of the strategic direction set by the Board and the effective performance of the organisation.

Flourish Australia's Board currently comprises eight members, all are non-executive Directors. The Board renews its membership in a progressive and orderly manner, and Directors are elected or appointed for three-year terms. Staff members of Flourish Australia are not permitted to be a Director.

The Board of Flourish Australia has established four standing committees to assist in its governance and monitoring roles. As committees of the Board, they advise the Board on specific areas and make recommendations for the full Board's approval.

Each committee has a Charter, which includes Terms of Reference, clearly defining their role, procedures and functions, and these are ratified by the full Board. Committees may co-opt outside members from time to time in order to bring additional skills and experience to their deliberations.

From time to time the Board may establish special purpose committees or working groups to address a particular task or issue.

The four standing committees are:

### Audit & Risk Committee

This committee is tasked with assisting the Board in fulfilling its statutory obligations, implementing sound corporate governance, and overseeing the Board's responsibilities in relation to risk management, external and internal audit and internal control function.

### Finance Committee

This committee is tasked with overseeing the Board's responsibilities in relation to financial and commercial management and reporting, investment and borrowing policy and management and endorsement of the annual budget and underlying assumptions. Major investments and capital purchases are referred to the Finance Committee for review prior to approval by the Board.

### Services Committee

This committee is tasked with assisting the Board in fulfilling its obligations, and overseeing the Board's responsibilities and commitments in relation to service quality and client satisfaction, program development and innovation, and evaluation and continuous improvement.

Objectives of the committee include providing advice to management on systems and approaches for measuring the quality and effectiveness of the organisation's psychosocial programs and services, advising the Board on these important services, receiving reports from the Independent Advocate, and reporting on these to the Board.

The Board has processes in place to regularly review its composition, and annually evaluates its collective and individual Director's performance and development needs. This review covers a range of issues including the Board's role and processes, interaction with management, and Director's contribution to the ongoing performance and strategic direction of Flourish Australia.

Flourish Australia respects and values our members. Our Annual General Meeting provides an opportunity for members and other stakeholders to meet with and question the Board and management of Flourish Australia.

### Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee has been formed to identify, renew and propose to the Board candidates for appointment as a Director of Flourish Australia.

### Marketing and Fundraising Committee

The Marketing and Fundraising Committee is tasked with providing oversight to the organisation's strategic marketing and fundraising activities, ensuring compliance with charitable fundraising legislation and related requirements.

## our board

Our Board provides strategic leadership to the organisation and ensures the highest level of corporate governance is maintained.

### Chair

Professor Elizabeth More,  
AM, MAICD  
Appointed December 2015

### Treasurer

Stan Brogan FCA, FGI, FAICD  
Appointed January 1996  
Retired February 2017

Jeremy Thorpe  
Appointed October 2015  
Appointed Treasurer February 2017

Professor Dan Howard SC  
Appointed December 2015  
Retired May 2017

Dr Josey Anderson  
Appointed August 2015

Paul Clenaghan  
Appointed April 2009

Paula Hanlon  
Appointed February 2015

Rachel Slade  
Appointed August 2015

Robyn Carmody BAppSc  
Appointed July 2012

IMAGE, LEFT-RIGHT  
BACK ROW  
Jeremy Thorpe,  
Dr Josey Anderson,  
Rachel Slade

FRONT ROW  
Robyn Carmody,  
Professor Elizabeth More AM,  
Paula Hanlon,  
Paul Clenaghan

Our Boards bios can be found on our website  
[flourishaustralia.org.au/our-board](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/our-board)







**“Pathways to Paradise”**

Artists Jason Lambert & Rosemary Thornton Tamworth

Medium Mixed media and acrylic paint on board

**in the media**

This year, Flourish Australia made headlines in the media, with a range of informative stories that highlighted the important and life-changing work taking place in our communities.

With the name change from RichmondPRA to Flourish Australia, there was every opportunity to spread the word in media outlets. We achieved that with aplomb across our operational areas. From Bourke to Broken Hill and Blacktown to Batemans Bay, the Name ‘Flourish Australia’ was out there quickly in multiple news outlets.

The formal launch of ‘Flourish Australia’ at our Figtree Conference Centre was recognised nationally, with the ABC’s 7.30 Program attending. The program focused on our Women and Children’s Program at Blacktown, and the remarkable progress of former resident Donna Maki and her son Ishmael.

Mental Health Month provided a great deal of exposure for many of our services. Flowerdale Cottage at Liverpool was all over the local papers as it celebrated 20 years and announced plans to step up operations under the NDIS. The new Flourish Australia office in Moree received countless hits in the local paper and on radio. In Broken Hill word was out that Flourish Australia was the lead agency for the local “headspace” operation. Our ‘Caped Crusaders’ in Goulburn made front page of the local paper, heading up a Mental Health awareness campaign. Armidale Manager Jannelle Brandley led an extraordinary campaign from the New England, raising awareness of youth suicide, which included a major feature in The Land Newspaper.

Our Nowra and Ulladulla offices organised a walking challenge to promote exercise and social interaction. It was all over the local papers, local radio and local television. Our Newcastle drop-in centre was featured on NBN News Newcastle, giving locals insight into such an important mental health operation.

In April, CEO Pamela Rutledge and Lived Experienced Consulting Manager Christine Miniawy went live with Wendy Harmer on ABC 702, breaking the news that half of Flourish Australia’s workforce – 350 people – now identify as having a ‘lived experience’.

Our Riverina, Illawarra and Western NSW offices were all ‘out there’ promoting our NDIS information roadshow – great exposure for Flourish Australia and the fantastic work we do.

With our first foray into the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in March 2017, we generated some interest, and consequently we had the opportunity to be interviewed and featured in footage by media at the event. This included Joy 94.9, SBS on Demand, Channel 7 and to top it off, one of our marchers was featured in a photo that made it to digital media in Slovenia and the United Kingdom.

We also had significant media exposure in relation to our delivery of the ‘Resolve’ Social Benefit Bond investment program announced by the NSW Government in May.

**Supporting good health, wellbeing**

Flourish Australia is committed to supporting people with a lived experience of a mental health issue, and their families and carers, on their recovery journey.

port in other towns across our region,” Mr Booth said. “We employ a diverse staff with a wide range of life experiences and cultural backgrounds to reflect the

work with you to identify link in services we assist you to use your funding.” Mr Booth said For more info phone 1300 779 276.

**Rural mother standing up for suicide prevention**

All a provincial rural mental health support worker (Flourish Australia) who has been in the industry for 10 years. She has been a part of the team that has been instrumental in the development of the...

**Locals flourish on 70km walk for cause**

NOVA residents have been instrumental in the development of the...

**Get into right headspace**



The friendly team at Headspace include Tom Thase (clinical and operations manager), Jacob Wighton (psychologist), Nolen Singh (alcohol and drug counsellor), Belinda Sun (clinical psychologist), and Natal Zaslowska (admin).

**Mental health support to Flourish**

Local organisation merges offices and aims to expand its important community services

By changes on being for community based mental health and well-being support in the region. Flourish Australia is supported through funding contracts with the Federal, New South Wales and Queensland Governments.

press clip

**Sarah leaves behind life of trauma to help others**

Mum helps women in Flourish Australia program

And Khan

CONSTANT abuse by her partner was the reason for her...



# Brayden

Towradgi

In 2013, my GP recommended I try the New Outlook site in Wollongong. And, over four years I've learnt resilience through this process of recovery - bouncing back after a set back. I've learnt that my mental health issues are only a small part of me. Coming to New Outlook consistently has helped me a lot. Participating in the groups, completing my Certificate III in an Outdoor Recreation course, and connecting with people has been invaluable to me.

I feel connected and valued because I'm contributing. It's incredible really. I'm engaged with so many different groups now through my activities, learning new things and developing new interests, and I'm in a great place!

I'm looking forward to completing my Certificate III in Fitness and Certificate IV in Peer Work - studying keeps my mind active. My education takes place within the Flourish Learning Network, which is an organisational commitment to recovery and personal growth through supported vocational education and training.

Partnering with local community colleges and TAFE NSW, The Flourish Learning Network is being piloted at New Outlook and it offers all people accessing services an opportunity to learn, grow and achieve their hopes and dreams.

I realise I have a lot to contribute. I'm a much better person than when I first walked into Flourish Australia. I'm mentally stronger, and I can turn what's happened to me into a strength that can help others.

Mental health issues affect many families and places. I volunteer for the Red Cross. I call a different person every day for a month, to check in and have a chat to people that have a mental health issue and experience isolation. That's 30 people a month who identify with having a mental health issue.

My call can make all the difference. If people don't have friends or family in their life, I'm happy to just check in to make sure that person is OK. I can relate to the people I call, and when it was suggested I could do this in line with my peer work qualification I jumped at the opportunity.

I like to think that I can help, I can connect with people and make a difference. And my long-term goal for some time now is to be a Peer Worker. It will be a huge achievement for me, but I know it's the right fit for me.

**“Volunteering for the Red Cross makes me feel connected and valued because I’m contributing to the community”**



**New Outlook won an award for their reduce/stop smoking course**

roles



## building participation pathways

A major focus of our work is opening participation pathways for people with a lived experience.

These can take many forms, but the ultimate goal is for people to live a contributing life and regain their full citizenship as a member of the community.

In this chapter, we outline our programs which nurture and encourage participation, and our initiatives through the year that develop partnerships and open communication to do things better.

## demographics of people accessing our services


 **4905**  
people accessed our services

people identified as

**2566** | **2264** | **15**  
male | female | in another way

**514**  **973**  
indigenous | culturally & linguistically diverse

age groups

 **213** **758** **720** **992**  
<16 | 16-24 | 25-34 | 35-44  
**1057** **827** **194** **144**  
45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ | unknown

number of people we support in these regions

<b>1169</b> Hunter New England	<b>372</b> Illawarra Shoalhaven	<b>139</b> Murrumbidgee
<b>837</b> South Western Sydney	<b>367</b> South Eastern Sydney	<b>59</b> Western NSW
<b>553</b> Nepean Blue Mountains	<b>224</b> Southern NSW	<b>22</b> Far West
<b>570</b> Western Sydney	<b>222</b> Queensland	<b>4</b> Northern Sydney
<b>485</b> Sydney		

## our services

Flourish Australia works in local communities to support people create their own recovery pathways.

Accessing our services can mean different things to different people. Broadly, we offer support and resources to people with a lived experience, for them to make friends, learn new things, get a job, or find a new home.

### Support people to lead an active life

Flourish Australia offers people the opportunity to:

- be supported and resourced with reliable information;
- build a healthy lifestyle by participating in groups and engaging in activities that promote physical health, exercise, emotional wellbeing, addiction and disease management;
- learn new things in an informal setting like managing mental health, literacy and numeracy skills, tutoring, healthy cooking or making handicrafts (eg. jewellery, paper/cards, mosaics);
- access to the community; and
- explore further education.

### Services we offer to help people find a job

Flourish Australia helps job seekers identify their preferences and supports them to research the options available. These components include:

- curriculum vitae and resume preparation;
- interview preparation;
- negotiation of reasonable workplace adjustments;
- job analysis;
- career and further education planning;
- personalised job searching;
- on-the-job training; and
- on-the-job support and check-ins.

We also provide employment opportunities through our community businesses and social enterprises.

### Services we offer to help people find a home

Flourish Australia provides support to people searching for a place to call home under various programs around New South Wales and South East Queensland. We help people identify:

- whether they want to live alone or with others;
- how much support they want, and how that is provided;
- whether they want to live in a flat, villa, house, boarding house or some other dwelling;
- how much they can afford to pay;
- if they need to apply for additional help to get housing that suits them;
- what other financial commitments they have;
- which area they want to live in;
- what community facilities they want to be close to; and
- which people they want to be near (friends, spouse/lover, family etc).



## why not a Peer Worker?

We learnt early on that role clarity is paramount if peer workers are to be provided the best chance to succeed...

141  
peer workers

37  
people commencing Certificate IV in peer work

52%  
exceeded our strategic goal of 50 per cent of our staff telling us that they have a lived experience of a mental health issue

Peer support is an important part in any comprehensive and effective mental health organisation. It is an area of work that has undertaken a huge revolution in Flourish Australia, and other mental health services in Australia over the last decade.

At Flourish Australia we implemented our Why Not a Peer Worker? strategy to grow opportunities for peer workers to be employed, intentionally use their lived experience in a purposeful way to support people and improve our services.

This has not only been ground-breaking, it is making a tangible difference to our work. This outcome is supported by, and helped us this year to exceed our strategic goal of 50% of our workforce telling us of a personal lived experience of a mental health issue and recovery.

But the journey has not been simple. We learnt early on that role clarity is paramount if peer workers are to be provided the best chance to succeed and respectfully become integrated into existing teams. And importantly, people employed in peer work positions need to understand how to use their lived experience in an appropriate and effective manner to connect with people.

Just like all staff, peer workers must understand and also abide by ethical boundaries in relationships with the people they support, and assist the people to build healthy relationships with their families, friends - and to discover new relationships. This requires high quality learning and development and reflective practice activities with senior peer workers and mentors.

Peer workers, like all professions, are subject to the same workplace expectations that apply to all employees. Peer workers are appointed to roles because they meet the inherent requirements of the position and have demonstrated that they can be effective in using their lived experience in every day work. People are not chosen "just" because they have had a lived experience. Peer work is important work and they must have the capabilities required to support people on their journeys through recovery. There is no difference in supporting a peer workforce as supporting any other part of the workforce. All employees want to be valued for their work, and prove they are valuable members of the workplace and the community. Peer workers are no different.

The 'Why Not a Peer Work?' strategy has been extremely successful in growing Flourish Australia's peer workforce significantly over a relatively short period of time. The strategy has resulted in hiring managers developing a greater understanding of peer work and teams learning and incorporating peer work into their day to day practice.

Having embarked on this strategy in 2015 it is time to undertake a review. We are planning an evaluation of the strategy and our peer work program in 2017-2018.

## some of our peer workers



Bonnie Orange



Hime Tamworth



Samuel Wagga Wagga



Janet Moree



Molly Cobart



Kylie Batemans Bay



Anthony Newcastle



Dan Newcastle



Sam Orange



Kathy Harris Park



Michele Surry Hills



Ben Orange



Jake Newcastle



Rebecca Goulburn



Bruce Moree



Shane & Poppy Cranebrook



Joel Orange



Debbie Orange



Tim Cranebrook



**Joanne**

Mortdale

## responsibilities

I decided to stop university as I wasn't feeling "myself" anymore. I was introduced to a youth worker at Flourish Australia, and from there, I was really lucky because I connected with the team straight away. They made me feel comfortable and gave me a sense of belonging and being understood.

In the beginning when I first started the program, I really didn't think that anyone could help me overcome my problems. But by doing weekly visits and getting to know the Flourish Australia team, I was able to bond and build a great relationship with them. They were there for me – that was really important. I became more relaxed and comfortable when I talked about my background, troubles, thoughts, and ideas with them.

There were plenty of challenges and hurdles that I've faced, as you can imagine with severe anxiety. But now I have a great role working in Childcare and I love it. I've been doing a Certificate III Childcare course for the past six months, and I've found a job as an Educator at a Childcare centre. I enjoy singing with the kids, and when I bring out my ukulele we have a lot of fun!

I'm dedicated to being a caring and professional member of this profession, so that we can create healthy happy children in a safe environment, so they can succeed in life.

Through my partnership with YPOP I have learnt that I seek and value harmony. I'm open-minded, flexible, creative, passionate, energetic, dedicated and hard working. These qualities I'm using to make my life fantastic. I've got so many things I'm keen to do, like travelling to new countries and helping young adolescents with their mental health.

Since graduating from High School I feel more mature, and I have been able to buy a car with my own money, get a job with no help, budget my finances and much more. I've started to learn the positives and negatives about life: learning to accept and grow from my mistakes.

I've also started to sing in public, which is just incredible. I was always embarrassed, and just didn't have the confidence to go for it. Now for the last two years I've sung the National Anthem at the Royal Easter Show. There is no way I would have auditioned for that before I came to Flourish Australia.

And I have to acknowledge my cats. They have played a major part in eliminating my stress and decreasing my anxiety levels, especially when I'm feeling down or having issues. They also helped improve my wellbeing and boosted my mood.

Being part of YPOP has been transformative on my life. I have taken responsibility for myself and I am very grateful to be part of the program.

**“I've started to learn the positives and negatives about life: learning to accept and grow from my mistakes”**



**years in a row, performed the national anthem at the Royal Easter Show**



## community businesses

 **42%**

of Marrickville's packaging income was generated from document management services



 **33**

employees from Harris Park & Marrickville graduated with Certificate III in Warehousing

Community businesses form an essential bridge to open employment. We are very proud of the progress each business has made this year, with an increase in activity across all sites, highlighting the great work our teams are delivering.

### Harris Park and Marrickville

This year saw the successful amalgamation of the West Ryde site into the Harris Park and Marrickville sites. All supported employees transitioned to their workplaces, except for a couple who chose to retire. The result has been a full work program at both sites, with Harris Park now being the hub for our expanding contracts with 3M.

Work in our document management, scanning and destruction area at Marrickville continues to grow with new contracts coming in from a number of government departments including Education, Industry and Small Business. Document management services now account for 42% of Marrickville's packaging income, an increase of 38% on last year. The document management business offers varied and interesting jobs to our supported employees where computer and scanning skills are developed. We envisage continued growth in this area of the business as organisations continue to digitise their records over the next decade.

### Training

Training continues to remain a strong focus of our packaging and mowing sites with the aim of helping employees gain life and industry skills to support them meet their social and vocational goals. Our Recovery Workshops held at each site remain popular with the opportunity now arising to fund these previously unfunded sessions through the NDIS.

This year also saw the graduation of 33 employees from Harris Park and Marrickville in Certificate III in Warehousing. This is an outstanding achievement, especially in light of the fact that this is an industry recognised qualification that can be transferred to the

open employment market. A new intake for this course is set for September to October 2017. The mowing sites continue to offer the Certificate III in Horticulture as well which will be due for completion in 2018.

### New Businesses

This financial year saw the introduction of a number of new businesses which provide exciting opportunities for us moving forward:

#### Embedded Employment

In 2016, we won the contract to conduct cleaning services at the prestigious Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute at Menangle just south of Campbelltown. The operation of this contract began in October enabling us to create a mixed workforce of supported employees and staff working embedded in another organisation (Dept of Primary Industry).

This is an important model for us as it provides significant opportunity for our supported employees to experience highly skilled work in an environment akin to open employment. To date five supported employees have accessed this opportunity. Additionally, a further five employees have been placed in embedded reception and administration roles with various organisations in the CBD supported by a peer worker.

All these embedded employment opportunities signify a new model for Community Businesses where employees can be assisted into the open labour market, while retaining the appropriate supports funded through NDIS or Department of Social Services.

### Wagga Wagga

This year we also launched our first regional ADE in Wagga Wagga in close collaboration with Mark Stephens, the local cluster manager. The launch of this program saw us successfully apply to have four of our Sydney-based funded supported employee places transferred to Wagga Wagga in anticipation of the NDIS roll out there in July 2017.

We then developed a number of cleaning contracts and car washing services for the Departments of Industry and Primary Industry which have now been operating for over six months. The setting up of this program was assisted by the involvement of our Warwick Farm site manager, Darren Field, and has created a model of how we can expand ADE operations into any regional area where we have existing services.

#### National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Harris Park, St Marys and Warwick Farm sites are in the midst of the transition to the NDIS with nearly all of the current supported employees having been assisted to apply for the scheme. To date, over 60 supported employees have received funding for employment supports under the scheme. Marrickville is due to begin the transition in July 2017. We anticipate the transition to be completed by late 2018 and are developing further funding opportunities in the areas of training and community access under the scheme.

The transition to NDIS has created a heavy work load for our staff, with some difficulties in determining eligibility or having new participants gaining funding under the scheme. Overall however, the rollout has been positive and despite the initial difficulties should prove positive for our supported employees and program in general.

## social enterprises

A social enterprise is a business venture whose main purpose is to create employment for disadvantaged workers in a real time business. Flourish Australia operates the following social enterprises that aim to be financially sustainable, whilst providing much needed local jobs, training opportunities and services.

### Figtree Conference Centre (FCC)

FCC opened in July 2013 as a purpose-built function centre located in conjunction with RichmondPRA's head office in Sydney Olympic Park. The Conference Centre caters for corporate and social conferences, events and exhibitions and bookings continue to grow year on year.

During the year FCC implemented new systems and work practices that develop independent thinking and working. New menus were also created, and streamlined to make catering simpler and cost effective. FCC employees were also given training in a TAFE Food Safety Supervisors Course on-site.

In addition to our regular customers using FCC, we increased our volume with another 13 new customers this year, which has meant our 15 employees have had a good round of event exposure and experience.

### Kwik Kopy

Opening in Surry Hills, Sydney in August 2013, the Flourish Australia franchise was established as a social enterprise and offers printing services, graphic design and digital. Within 18 months of opening it was ranked in the top 40% of Kwik Kopy franchises nationally.

This year, the social enterprise won the award for the Highest Sales Growth in 2015/16 in their category Australia-wide. And with this achievement, comes new clients and collaborations, plus requirements for new production services.

Kwik Kopy, Surry Hills employs three people, one of whom is a supported employee.



**FIGTREE**  
Conference Centre

**15** **13**

employees new customers



**Kwik Kopy Surry Hills, won the award for Highest Sales Growth in 2015/16**

## community advisory council

**“My personal experience as being a Community Advisory Council Representative has given me an opportunity to regain self-respect, knowing that I have some involvement and the opportunity to give input.**

*This can only create a positive experience, which assists in wellness. When you look at professionals in the open market, they seek this too. They try to obtain positions that are paid -which gives a sense of self-worth and contributing, which gives a sense of accomplishment. This is also achieved as being member of CAC and attending the meetings.”*

**Matthew Stonier**, 2016–2018 Community Advisory Council Representative and Figtree Conference Centre employee

**As part of our 2014 Recovery Action Framework’s (RAF) Eight Accountabilities, the current standing Community Advisory Council was developed, consisting of 24 representatives from across our New South Wales and South-East Queensland services.**

Over the past financial year, the Community Advisory Council has gone from strength to strength in confidentially advocating for people who access their service, implementing strategies on how to improve the quality of supports we provide, contributing to the look and feel of organisational marketing and branding material in promoting Flourish Australia’s Mission, Vision and Values and the Strengths Based Language Guide.

Representatives regularly meet at Flourish Australia’s Head Office with the day professionally coordinated by the Chair, Larry Billington, who was elected by representatives in 2016. Larry holds many academic qualifications, is a consumer advocate, volunteers in his local communities and is passionate about innovative ideas for the future of mental health reform.

In his capacity as Chair, he has visited many Flourish Australia services including Penrith, Newcastle and New Outlook at Wollongong to promote the Community Advisory Council and to hear what people who access our services have to say. He values the importance of community inclusion as an aid toward recovery and coordinates many outings so people have the opportunity to engage socially. He is open to suggestions, provides an opportunity for everyone to speak and is more than capable of handling complicated situations when they arise. Representatives therefore feel comfortable and confident to express themselves, and share experiences while attending Council meetings.

Meetings provide an opportunity for representatives to not only to get to know each other, but to share their recovery strategies, learn what other services are doing, and provide feedback on a number of topics ranging from the Strategic Plan, to service design and surveys. Feedback enables representatives to draw upon their lived experience of mental health issues, to provide valuable suggestions and solutions during discussion. Throughout the financial year, the Community Advisory Council has attended the following focus groups:

### 2016 – 2017 Focus Groups

Flourish Australia has been able to implement the feedback provided during these focus groups, which cements us as being a true representation of a person-led service. The Council reminds us of the importance of staying true in providing information to everyone including; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning and Allies (LGBTIQA), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, family and carers, dual diagnosis and those who have sensory impairments.

We use plain English, ensure a positive focus on recovery, and offer various options on how people receive information, especially those who may not have computer access. Representatives also suggested adding the word “trust” to the Strategic Plan Values and “inspire” to The Book of Us, as they felt these words were important to help embrace the ethics of Flourish Australia.

Over the past year there has been a major focus on change in the health system with the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). We have appreciated the insight in how to implement these changes, what information to provide, and the best way to get this important information out into our communities. As a result, Flourish Australia is in the process of conducting an NDIS Roadshow across all services, and has modified the NDIS information brochure according to focus group recommendations.

In keeping with our Embracing Inclusion and Co-design strategies, people with a lived experience of a mental health issue were asked to be involved in the 2017 Recovery Action Framework (RAF) Roadshow which was held in 12 locations across Flourish Australia. Teams were asked to present on how they implement the Recovery Action Framework, the Eight Accountabilities and the Three Vital Behaviours into the work they do. People who access our services were able to highlight what we do well, and pin down areas that can be improved to the services we provide. Such valuable information will help us work toward providing stronger services.

Community Advisory Council meetings also provide the Senior Leadership Team with a chance to hear first-hand what people accessing our services need, how to reduce boundaries within communities, and work toward improving Mental Health approaches to our service locations. However, it is not all just work being on the Council. Representatives are also invited to attend many Flourish Australia events, enabling them to meet Board members, guest speakers and have an opportunity to meet staff from other services. Representatives have attended our Rebranding launch, International Women’s Day, Open Door art exhibitions, writing courses and an organised social outing in Sydney.

We wish to thank the representatives for their time, and for being so open in their feedback. We would not be the organisation we are today without their input, experience and knowledge.

What could they possibly do for me?  
Buckingham House Surry Hills NSW.

**“After having been welcomed into this family, I have come to greatly value the benefits accrued to me from peers, friends and empathetic staff.**

*On reflection, when I leave the Centre and venture into the inner-city for my other daily business, I handle the mini-crises better and social interactions with more confidence. I am less anxious in the queue at the bank. I don’t hassle the girl at the post office so badly. I am calmer and content in myself for the balance of that day. In a sense, I have ‘recovered’ and carry my composure better.”*

**Larry Billington**, Chair, Community Advisory Council and people who access the Buckingham House, Surry Hills NSW Service





Mark

Bondi

I live in Bondi, an iconic location in Australia, and I'm lucky enough to be able to bodyboard and swim at the beach during the summer. I'm a fun and social guy, and I've really enjoyed connecting with Buckingham House where I have worked. I've also been involved in bike riding, touch footy, yoga and the Pre-Employ program.

My journey began around seven years ago. I found out about some work opportunities at Buckingham House through a friend at my local church. I started as a waiter within the Buckingham House, looking after customers, taking orders, waiting on tables and setting up. If I ever needed help with anything I could turn to the peer workers for support. Before I knew it, I was promoted to kitchen assistant. Here I learnt basic food preparation like washing vegetables, mixing salads, making sandwiches, washing dishes, pots and pans, and cleaning the kitchen.

When my contract ended, I transitioned to Pre-Employ where I worked at Platform 10, which was a conference centre in Redfern. I had a range of duties like, setting up the conference rooms, food placement, coffee and tea organisation. From there I started at OSTARA (DES) to consider open employment opportunities in hospitality and food preparation. Then an opportunity at Prestige Packing, Marrickville, became available and I jumped at it. Here I'm learning new skills such as using the pallet jack, weighing products, stacking pallets and using the tape gun to tape boxes securely. I've been working here for around five years.

I continue to learn new skills. It was a peer worker that taught me how to operate the kitchen at Marrickville. I love working 2-3 days a week doing a variety of jobs like: preparing tea and coffee; taking orders for morning tea and lunch; money handling; distributing orders; washing kitchenware; cleaning kitchen tables and floors; and ensuring the kitchen is set for use for the next day.

Work gives me a sense of purpose and I feel focused. It also gives me independence as I'm earning my own money, and I can save up to go on a cruise, which I've done five times! I've also completed a Certificate III in Warehousing. This program was run onsite, and I graduated in June 2017.

I have received a lot of support from Flourish Australia staff and they encourage me to continue participating. I've been involved in the Employee Advisory Committee over the last two years. I was the Chairman, and I represented the Marrickville worksite. This gave me an opportunity to contribute to the decision-making processes on the Committee. It gave me a real purpose and I felt confident participating. Recently I passed over the reins to a fellow peer worker at our Warwick Farm site.

I'm on my recovery journey, but I feel like I have a way to go. I still feel anxious, but I understand that it is bit by bit, and I'll get there. I feel more connected to the community now, I have a support group around me, and I have taken steps to build my confidence. By participating and contributing to the community, representing my colleagues in a professional manner, and maintaining friendships have all helped me become the person I am today.

**“Being the representative for my region in the EAC, I contributed to decision-making processes giving me a feeling of purpose”**



graduated with Certificate III in Warehousing





## our financials

### We have focused this year on cost control and tight financial management.



#### revenue

<b>\$32,296,363</b>	NSW Government
<b>\$18,652,215</b>	Commonwealth Government
<b>\$3,527,454</b>	Business Sales
<b>\$1,698,262</b>	QLD Government
<b>\$1,906,777</b>	Other Income
<b>\$1,418,916</b>	Gain on sale of PP&E



#### costs

<b>\$24,374,778</b>	Supporting people where they live
<b>\$21,257,422</b>	Helping people to make friends, get involved and learn new things
<b>\$8,970,812</b>	Working with people to find a job
<b>\$3,744,153</b>	Other

### This year continued to see Flourish Australia in a sound financial position.

We finished this year with a surplus of \$1,152,822.

We have focused this year on cost control and tight financial management given the challenging environment in which we operate. At the same time we have been able to increase the reach of our services through engagement with people receiving packages of support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The NDIS has challenged us to continue to review our internal systems and processes. At the same time, we have managed the challenges associated with employee related cost increases associated with the Equal Remuneration Order, and the National Wage Case, not all of which are covered by funders.

Our financial efficiency has been enhanced due to the sale of two properties which were surplus to our needs (West Ryde and King Street, Newcastle) which released a profit on sale of approximately \$1.1 million.

The completion of our development of 41 affordable housing units at Guildford has been delayed due to reasons beyond our control. However, at the end of the financial year, the property is close to completion and Practical Completion is expected by the end of September 2017. In 2017-2018 we will sell 21 of these units as affordable housing investment properties. The remainder will be kept and provide an income stream for the organisation.

Flourish Australia values its assets very conservatively, and consequently the underlying value of some of our assets is much higher than their book value (e.g. Buckingham House and Guildford). These assets underpin Flourish Australia's ability to fund future expansion by utilising this financial strength for creating future cash flow.

This year we also commenced implementing a new cloud-based Finance, Human Resources and Payroll system that will position us for future growth. Implementation will be finalised next year.

### Our sources of revenue 2016-17

		2016-17	2015-16
Comm	Commonwealth Government	\$18,652,215	\$14,922,987
State	NSW Government	\$32,296,363	\$35,264,761
Business	Business Sales	\$3,527,454	\$3,333,127
QLD	QLD Government	\$1,698,262	\$1,654,094
Other	Other Income	\$1,906,777	\$1,617,431
		<b>\$58,081,071</b>	<b>\$56,792,400</b>
	Gain on sale of PP&E	\$1,418,916	\$205,816
		<b>\$59,499,987</b>	<b>\$56,998,216</b>

### Costs summary

Supporting people where they live	\$24,374,778	\$28,185,982
Working with people to find a job	\$8,970,812	\$9,452,548
Helping people make friends, get involved and learn new things	\$21,257,422	\$15,826,765
Other	\$3,744,153	\$3,201,716
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$58,347,165</b>	<b>\$56,667,011</b>

### Our balance sheet at a glance

<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and cashable investments	\$13,904,732	\$10,228,611
Property, Plant and Equipment	\$24,1143,387	\$19,899,786
Receivables	\$1,903,353	\$1,339,240
Other assets	\$772,054	\$645,791
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$40,723,526</b>	<b>\$32,113,428</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$2,626,275	\$2,499,835
Accrued expense	\$3,576,104	\$1,196,601
Financial Liabilities	\$6,699,891	\$2,302,667
Provision for Staff LSL and Holiday Pay	\$5,777,503	\$5,391,708
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$18,679,773</b>	<b>\$11,390,811</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>\$22,043,753</b>	<b>\$20,722,617</b>

## looking ahead 2017-2018

### Retirement of Pamela Rutledge

Earlier this year Pamela Rutledge, our Chief Executive, announced her intention to retire at the end of 2017, after 9 years as CEO of Richmond Fellowship of NSW and then RichmondPRA and Flourish Australia. The board has commenced a recruitment process for the new Chief Executive and a handover will be an important part of the first half of 2017-2018.

### Resolve Program

We will continue to work with our partners to operate the Resolve Program to achieve the performance targets that form the foundation of the Social Benefit Bond.

### Peer Workforce

As mentioned elsewhere in the Annual Report, the number of Peer Workers we employ continues to grow, and will grow further with the commencement of the Resolve Program. In the next twelve months, we expect the peer workforce to expand further. We will undertake an evaluation of the Why not a peer worker? strategy and the way in which peer work is impacting on the supports we provide.

### Technology

The implementation of our ICT Strategic Plan will begin and will provide a sound platform for reviewing and updating the use of technology in our work. We will finalise implementation of new Human Resources, Payroll and Finance software. We will continue to develop new ways of delivering support to people with a lived experience using technology both at our service sites as well as remotely.

### Family and Carers

There will be an enhanced focus on family-inclusive practice over the next twelve months. We will develop additional resources aimed specifically at families and carers and investigate the use of the new Carer Experience of Service Survey.

### New Enterprise Agreement

We will implement a new Enterprise Agreement that harmonises employment conditions across the organisation.

## strategic plan 2016-2019

### Vision

To enable full participation within a diverse and inclusive community.

### Mission

Working together for optimal mental health and wellbeing.

### Values

Hope, inclusion, partnership, diversity, integrity, respect, trust

#### Strategic Priority 1



#### Valuing Lived Experience

- Co-designing and delivering person-led services
- Growing the peer workforce
- Actively recruiting staff with a lived experience
- Developing new approaches to engagement
- Actively engaging with advisory councils

#### Strategic Priority 4



#### Growth, reach and influence

- Diversifying our revenue streams
- Increasing our reach into regional, rural and remote communities
- Increasing supports for families and carers
- Using our experience to help other organisations' workplace mental health

#### Strategic Priority 2



#### Outcomes focused, recovery-oriented quality service delivery

- Supporting people to improve their physical health
- Supporting people to develop personal and social relationships that promote independence and citizenship
- Increasing transitions to employment
- Growing our research and evaluation activities
- Expanding our National Disability Insurance Scheme offerings

#### Strategic Priority 5



#### Governance and Resource Management

- Implementing a strong governance framework
- Maximising the efficiency of our services
- Benchmarking our performance
- Managing our risks effectively

#### Strategic Priority 3



#### Service innovation and co-design

- Establishing the Recovery Learning Network
- Co-designing new services and service offerings
- Engaging people in an National Disability Insurance Scheme environment
- Growing the use of appropriate technology

#### Strategic Priority 6



#### Developing our Workforce

- Being an employer of choice
- Developing accountable self-managing teams
- Accessing talent and providing accessible career paths
- Increasing learning and development opportunities

## relationships

“I’ve stayed focused on getting my children back & being the best parent I can be”



graduated with Certificate III in Hospitality and Barista

When I met the staff from Flourish Australia my life turned around. Through their consistent communication, and sharing stories, I realised that there was hope for a better life for my children, and it made me realise if you want something badly enough, you can achieve it.

About six months later, it was suggested I do a course, so that I wasn’t home all the time. I was nervous, but talking with the Flourish Australia team gives me confidence and I started to get into the swing of things. After the course, my doctor slowly took me off my meds, and I became medication free!

I’ve learnt I’m very strong minded – in a good way! You have to be strong to get through what I have been through. I’m worth a lot more than what I’d been told, and what I’d believed over many years. If I want to achieve something, I can do it, but I also know that I have supports to fall back on, and I’m not alone.

My children are what motivates me. With the support of Flourish Australia, Child Safety and the foster parent of my children, I’ve stayed focused on getting my children back and being the best parent I can be. It really helped that I could talk to Peer Workers at Flourish Australia, who were a similar age to me, express my thoughts and not be judged. I have full custody of my children now and I’m living again.

With my children back, I’m thriving – they’re happy and we can breathe again. Their foster carer was a big support to me, and still is. She taught me to take responsibility for my past, and to work with Child Safety who had the kids’ best interests at heart. I have now developed friends in the Child Safety industry, and admire them for the work that they do.

I can solve problems for myself now. At the same time, I have learnt that I need to have people around me to extend my happiness and help out when I need it. I have a driver’s licence, which gives me more independence. I’m managing my children, and I’m teaching them to be patient, kind and use their manners.

With the support of Flourish Australia, I completed a Certificate III in Hospitality and Barista course. This pushed me out of my comfort zone and I began interacting with people in a way that I had avoided for so long. I made new friends with people at the course and this gave me confidence to get out in my community more and get a job. Working has helped me to connect with people daily using the skills I developed through my recovery.

What I love most is that I’m doing everything that everyone else does now. I work, study, have a barbeque at the beach – I’m leading the life I want.

The game changer for me was that people listened to what I needed. They encouraged and supported me, rather than push me to do things that others wanted me to do. They were there when I needed them, and helped me stay focused on my goals.

Now I’m looking forward to pursuing a career in Child Safety and using my lived experience to help others in a similar position to me. I’m also thinking about the best pathways to build my career, as I want to be a role model for my children.



Shae-Lee

Bribie Island

## our funders

Flourish Australia acknowledges the significant financial support from the following funders that allows us to do our work:

### Australian Government

Department of Health  
Department of Social Services  
National Disability Insurance Agency

### NSW Government

NSW Health  
Department of Family and Community Services – Ageing, Disability and Homecare  
Department of Family and Community Services – Housing NSW  
Department of Family and Community Services – Child and Family Services  
Department of Sport and Recreation

Hunter New England Local Health District  
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District  
Murrumbidgee Local Health District  
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District  
South Eastern Sydney Local Health District  
Southern NSW Local Health District  
Sydney Local Health District  
Western Sydney Local Health District  
Western NSW Local Health District  
Far West Local Health District

### Queensland Government

Queensland Health

### Other Funders

EACH Social and Community Health  
Grand Pacific Health  
HealthWISE New England North West  
Hunter Primary Care  
Mission Australia  
New Horizons  
One Door  
South Western Sydney PHN  
WentWest Limited  
Wentworth Healthcare Limited  
Western NSW PHN

Flourish Australia receives funding from the Australian, New South Wales and Queensland Governments. For more information visit [flourishaustralia.org.au/funders](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/funders)

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We are a quality accredited organisation



Where mental wellbeing thrives

**Want more information?**

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