

**flourish**<sup>®</sup>  
AUSTRALIA

Where mental wellbeing thrives



# EMPLOYMENT

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020



### OUR VISION

is creating communities where everyone's mental health and wellbeing flourishes.

### OUR PURPOSE

is supporting people to flourish, believe in their future and their place in the community.

### OUR VALUES

hope, inclusion, partnership, diversity, integrity, respect, trust.



We are very honoured that Her Excellency the Honourable **Margaret Beazley AC QC**, Governor of New South Wales is our Patron.



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.

# EMPLOYMENT

## The theme of this report

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Finding employment is life changing for everyone. None more so than for people with a lived experience of a mental health issue. Employment can be an important part of someone's mental health recovery journey so at Flourish Australia we provide a range of employment supports and opportunities.

Employment can be a pathway to living independently, giving someone the reason they need to get up in the morning and the freedom to pay for things that they want to have or do in life. Being engaged in meaningful work can bring a sense of purpose and with each completed task, a feeling of achievement. It can be a chance to develop new skills and the confidence to move forward in life. The work we do also plays a part in feeling that we are contributing to our community and a valued member of it.

In 2019/20, despite the most challenging of circumstances, we have substantially increased and diversified the employment options we offer. We've grown our successful Community Businesses and branched further into regional areas to provide more employment opportunities for people with lived experience. To safeguard jobs, we retrained and re-assigned staff displaced by COVID-19 restrictions.

Our pursuit of new cleaning contracts created by the pandemic paid off and our Disability Employment Services were sustained.

We're proud to share our stories of the many jobs done well by everyone at Flourish Australia in this report.

# UNDERSTANDING & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## The purpose of this report

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Representing part of our accountability to the people we support, their families and carers, as well as our team, the members of our organisation, our funders and the general community, this annual report offers important insights to the work we do and recognises the many achievements of the people we support, our team members and the organisation as a whole.

Reflecting the person-led, recovery-focused approach we are known for, it is woven together by the touching and inspirational stories of changed lives, courageously shared by several of the incredible people who access our services and some of the dedicated team members who deliver them.

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CHAPTER 1

# YEAR OVERVIEW

# FAST FACTS

About the people accessing our services



# 9324 PEOPLE

accessed Flourish Australia services in the 2019/20 financial year

During this time our services supported:



## 4686

people to make friends, get involved and learn new things



## 2039

people to find a home of their own



## 1013

people to find employment that suits them



## 1942

people to access headspace centres across NSW



## 319

people to access clinical services



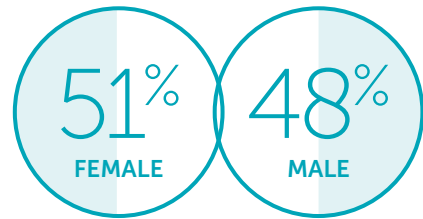
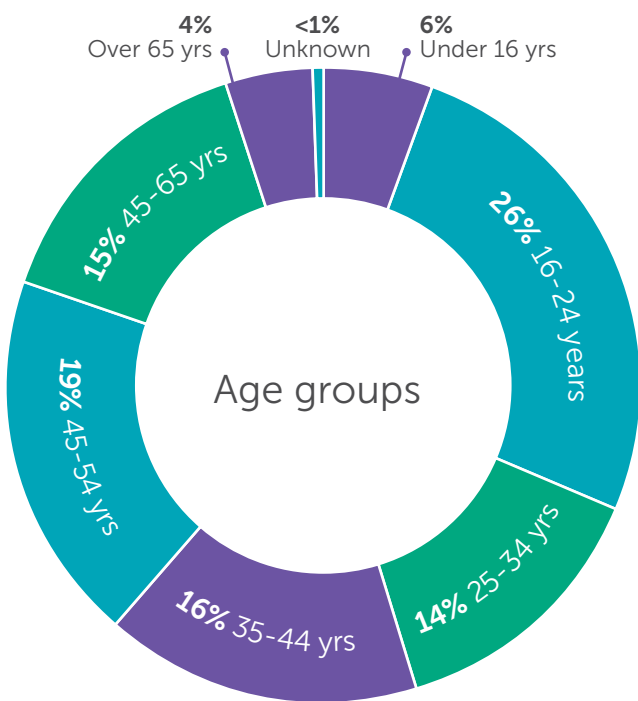
## 271

people in the National Psychosocial Support (NPS) Program

# WHO WE SUPPORT

## Demographics of people accessing our services

At Flourish Australia we celebrate diversity. The data below is an overview of the people we supported in the 2019/20 financial year.



0.41% Other / 0.61% Not Stated



### From inner city to remote areas

72 locations across NSW, QLD, VIC & ACT.



17%

are Culturally & Linguistically Diverse



12%

are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



6%

identified as LGBTI

# DID WE DELIVER?

2019/20 financial year

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## Peer Worker Supervision

Our Peer Worker Supervision Framework was finalised and a training module for Peer Worker supervisors was drafted. We also did further development of our approach to providing Peer Workers with access to supervisors. We plan to roll out consistent training in 2020/21.

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## Reconciliation Action Plan

This year, a working group consisting of staff, including staff from Aboriginal communities, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Community Advisory Council, drafted what they propose to call a Cultural Responsiveness Plan, to support our work. The plan will be finalised and approved early in the new year.

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## Practice Standards

We achieved certification against the NDIS Practice Standards and the National Standards for Mental Health Services. Due to COVID-19 certification against new Aged Care Quality Standards and Australian Service Excellence Standards has been delayed.

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## Pilot SLESS

We developed and commenced our pilot of a School Leavers Employment Supports Service in Liverpool.

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## Customer Experience

We did some preparatory work for the commencement of a customer experience program, focusing on understanding someone's journey with us from service entry to service exit. We also continued discussions with a specialist provider of customer experience measurement services with a view to commencing a pilot program in 2020/21.

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## Employment Opportunities

COVID-19 impacted our ability to pursue opportunities for employment in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. This remains on our agenda.

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# CHAIR'S REPORT

Professor Elizabeth More AM

No one could have imagined how much of an extraordinary year 2019/20 would be when we started the journey on 1 July 2019. Despite everything that has occurred – fires, floods, drought and COVID-19, I am pleased to advise that Flourish Australia has risen to the challenges through commitment and resilience, and ended the financial year positively.

Our teams in the fire and drought affected areas responded wonderfully, supporting people with lived experience who access our services, whilst facing the challenges of feeling personally worried about family, friends and property.

In the face of COVID-19 most of our services quickly changed, our offices closed and supports for thousands of people transferred onto telephones and online. We continued limited outreach and our accommodation sites and Community Businesses continued operating, in COVID-safe ways.

Throughout all of this, our teams' selfless concern for continuing to provide support to people has been remarkable. Those who do not provide face-to-face supports have worked hard to provide the supports needed to keep the organisation operating. Many did this while also dealing with home schooling, or other caring responsibilities, often isolated and without the usual help from friends and families during restrictions.

At the helm, leadership of the Flourish Australia Team by Mark Orr and the Senior Leadership Team has shone through, characterised by a capacity and willingness to deal with rapid changes wrought by the pandemic. It is because of what they did that the organisation is still able to deliver recovery-oriented, trauma-informed and COVID-safe supports, this far into the pandemic. They have kept us all connected and maintained an unwavering focus on our commitment to supporting people with lived experience of a mental health issue, their families and carers.

We are proud of the way our teams transitioned so efficiently to online and phone supports for thousands of people, and kept our Community Businesses going in COVID-safe ways.

The Board has also played an important role in leading the organisation through this difficult period. Managing risk and keeping everyone safe has been a more important focus than ever, throughout. I would like to thank each Director for their personal commitment to the organisation and their wise counsel as we navigated this challenging season together. It has been inspirational to see the close collaboration between the Board and Senior Leadership Team, helped by the CEO's frequent reports on progress and special out-of-session meetings as required.

The organisation continued to flourish and the year end outcomes showed wonderfully that we had supported more people, grown significantly and continued to walk alongside people as they have pursued their recovery journeys. The characteristics of the Flourish Australia culture – compassion and care, endured.


We have continued to focus on physical health for people with lived experience during this particularly challenging period. Highlighting that goal, we were delighted to have Associate Professor Simon Rosenbaum as the keynote speaker at our AGM 2019. Simon is an internationally recognised researcher and leader in the field of physical health and the important impact of exercise for people with lived experience. He shared with us some research that is crucial for this important area of our service delivery and inspired us to continue to develop our approach, which we have done.

A significant part of this year has been devoted to the development of a new Strategic Plan. This plan will guide our work and development over the next three years as we move forward in what may become a new normal. We have engaged in a very inclusive process and sought feedback from people accessing our services, staff, other community managed organisations and our funders, to ensure the plan reflects a wide variety of views about what the future holds. Due to this approach, the plan was not completed and approved by 30 June. However, feedback to date suggests that the next three years will see us increase our focus on digital service delivery and corporate systems, develop a



**54%**  
of Flourish Australia's  
workforce has a  
**LIVED EXPERIENCE**





People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out but when the darkness sets in, **their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.**

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Professor Elizabeth More AM

consistent model of service delivery across all sites and programs, and develop a new monitoring and evaluation framework, as well as lifting our efforts in research and thought leadership. All of this will be built on a strong foundation of continued collaboration with people with lived experience, our sector peers and funders. Our thanks to our friends at Social Ventures for their assistance with the development of the Strategic Plan.

Our thanks to the Community Advisory Council, led by Mozy Wilkinson, Chair, and Scott Gourlay, Deputy Chair. The Council has, once again, provided very important advice and guidance to us on a range of issues, including the Strategic Plan. We are grateful to the members of the Council who agreed to meet monthly throughout the pandemic period to ensure we remained well informed about people's experience and challenges in a COVID-19 environment. They have rightly challenged us to move more swiftly in relation to technology delivered support.



Associate Professor Simon Rosenbaum, Flourish Australia AGM 2019

My thanks to my fellow Directors who brought their talent, experience and knowledge to our important work this year, with a most considered and collegial approach. Thanks also to Mark and the Senior Leadership Team for everything they have done to keep the organisation working so effectively and safely throughout the year. We acknowledge and appreciate the extraordinary devotion our many teams have shown to their work in the midst of many challenges.

Finally, thank you to everyone who chooses Flourish Australia to walk beside them on their recovery journey. We are deeply honoured that you entrust us with your hopes and dreams, especially in the challenging circumstances listed at the opening of this Report.

**Professor Elizabeth More AM MAICD**  
Board Chair



Mark Orr AM

# CEO'S REPORT

Mark Orr AM

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We end the financial year in the midst of a global Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Flourish Australia team has risen to the challenge, as they do with every challenge, with a clear focus on continuing to provide supports to people with a lived experience who access our services. They have been creative, committed and connected in their response.

This has meant that people who access our services have been supported through a very difficult period. That is no small feat, given that moving to telephone or online supports has been a totally new experience for many people who have attended our centres in person for years.

The relative success of these new approaches is in no small part due to the hard work and flexibility of people who access our services. We could not have continued to deliver supports and been true to our purpose without their generosity of spirit and their trust in us.

I am proud to lead Flourish Australia in usual times. I am even prouder to have had the privilege of leading the organisation this year through some

very unusual and difficult times. We end the year in good shape, services have continued, people have stayed connected and safe, and financially things have held up. All of these things are the direct result of the efforts of everyone connected to Flourish Australia, including our funders who have demonstrated a very flexible and person-centred approach to our partnership and contract deliverables.

In terms of other achievements, this year we had a large contingent at the TheMHS conference in Brisbane, presenting nine papers. An important workshop session the team ran was about our new Co-design Guidelines. The session, presented by members of the Community Advisory Council and staff, challenged people's thinking

about co-design and being true to its principles. Co-design is an essential part of quality mental health services and supports and the great work our team has done in this area has, once more, highlighted Flourish Australia's commitment to engage in the process, in partnership with people with lived experience and to embrace the inherent challenges.

As highlighted in my report last year, we pursued and achieved accreditation against the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Practice Standards and the National Standards for Mental Health Services early in the year. These were important accreditations, to add to our growing list, that are part of our commitment to high quality services and independent assurance of our policies and practice.



This year we have continued to develop our Social Citizenship Framework, seeking to build on the concept of mental health recovery, to engage others in creating more inclusive and supportive communities and providing thought leadership within the sector. We have been greatly assisted in this work by many people who access our services, staff and partner organisations who have engaged with us in the exploration of the issues. My thanks to everyone who has been part of these important conversations.

We also commenced research and an organisational conversation about digital peer support, supports delivered using technology that enable access to peer support no matter where someone lives. Who would have guessed that this work would become even more important so quickly in the face of COVID-19 which required physical distancing and the limitations imposed in relation to face-to-face supports?

Leading the organisation would not be possible without the support of the Senior Leadership Team. Once more they have shown remarkable ability to respond to whatever challenge they encounter. The extraordinary requirements to temporarily close sites and transition most supports to telephone or online were met with a can do attitude and successfully executed. Their leadership has meant that services continued, organisational support functions have worked seamlessly and everyone's mental health and wellbeing has remained a focus.

We were delighted to welcome Susan McCarthy as our Chief Operating Officer in January.

Of course, that was in the midst of the major fires across our service footprint, and quickly led into the COVID-19 pandemic. Susan has expertly co-ordinated our COVID-19 response and chaired our Pandemic Response Team, on top of learning about the organisation and keeping services running.

Similarly, we could not do what we do without the support of Professor Elizabeth More AM, our Board Chair, and the Board. The Board's leadership of the organisation and support of the Senior Leadership Team has been invaluable in a year which has continued to throw new challenges and uncertainties at us. The sense of security and collegiality the Board's support and guidance provides, has been an important part of helping us achieve what we have this year. My thanks to all the directors for bringing their expertise and passion to our work.

The theme of this annual report is employment. Flourish Australia has had a deep commitment to employment for people with lived experience from its earliest days, with the first employment opportunities created in the 1960s in Camperdown. This year, we provided employment opportunities in our own businesses for 268 people. In addition, we supported 611 people on their quest for a job with other employers.

Having a job can change people's lives. It gives a person a sense of purpose, a feeling of belonging and being valued, money to spend and freedom to do the things they want to do. Importantly, it is a significant focus of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We think employment is an important part of mental health recovery. It is part of being and feeling a valued member of the community.

In recent years the employment options we provide have grown and diversified in both location and type. The types of work available in our Community Businesses include packaging, lawn mowing, cleaning, document digitisation, document destruction, warehousing and delivery, a courier business and a waterless car wash. These opportunities are in Sydney, Goulburn, Tamworth, Leeton, and Armidale. We are constantly looking for new opportunities and are keen to expand access to employment to more people and locations.

The excellent quality and performance in these areas has given rise to a growing customer base. We are very grateful to our customers who entrust us with their business and by doing so, provide opportunities for people with lived experience to work and to live a contributing life.

This Annual Report outlines some of the many developments and achievements of this year. These achievements would be remarkable in an ordinary year. They are even more remarkable this year. I hope you enjoy reading the Annual Report and join with me in celebrating what the Flourish Australia team and people who access our services have done against the odds.

**Mark Orr AM GAICD FGIA FCG(CS)**  
Chief Executive



The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO with Flourish Australia team, TheMHS 2019

In 2019/20  
Flourish Australia employed  
**955 STAFF**  
working across  
**72 SITES**

# MARGIE'S STORY

## Caring meant letting go

Since my son William started working at Flourish Australia's Harris Park Community Business, seeing him establish a support network and grow in independence has restored my peace of mind and I'm reclaiming my own life.

The sun has come out for me since William has found the support and opportunities he needed through a job he loves. It gives me hope for his future to see him happily engaged in work while enjoying TAFE studies to become an electrician.

William was set on joining the Airforce until his mental health issues presented and changed both of our lives, overnight. The anxiety he experienced caused worry to set in for me and the recovery journey has been like being on a roller coaster ride together.

Every aspect of my everyday life, like getting the kids off to sports or working night shifts, was suddenly overshadowed by my concern for William's wellbeing. It's painful to leave home for work knowing your child is distressed. My professional responsibilities included assisting people with disabilities into bed but there were times I was called to drop everything because William needed me. I would show up to work with a happy face but inside, I was churning with anxiety.

Health and fitness became a saving grace for me; a way of venting my anxiety positively. My personal trainer was a wonderful listener. My friends couldn't relate to what I was going through. They didn't have the lived experience to understand what it's like to be a mum supporting her child through mental health issues. It means so much to have someone looking out for you who will keep you accountable for taking care of yourself and provide a safe space where you can share what's going on for you, without judgement.

This is what Flourish Australia does for people. William's work has taken him from dwelling in the doldrums to challenging himself positively. A weight has lifted from my shoulders knowing that his managers and colleagues are there for him. Meeting William's needs is now shared and not all on me anymore.

Letting go didn't come easily. When a tribunal first became involved in decisions about William's life, I felt I was losing my guiding role. With Flourish Australia's support, I've learned through the ups and downs that William has what it takes to cope with his own life challenges. I can focus on my own needs.

I've learned that slowly, slowly wins the race when it comes to mental wellbeing. At first I was frustrated with how slow the recovery process was and just wanted to move him through what needed to happen quickly so he could be back home.



If you put the cart before the horse by rushing someone into change, it can trigger anxiety. I've since completed a Mental Health First Aid course so I'm prepared to assist anyone experiencing mental health issues.

Health and fitness, with a personal trainer who's a wonderful listener, have been a saving grace for me. I believe every carer must find someone who will listen to what is going on for them.

19 years as a care worker taught me that while you're busy with work, there's no time to dwell on problems. William's employment changed everything for the better in both of our lives. He's motivated to think about his future and I trust him to do things his way. He once surprised me with lunch and a Gold Class cinema experience.

Together, we look forward to the One Door Wellness Walk for mental health each year. Walking with the other families helped me to move past feeling cut off from everyone else.

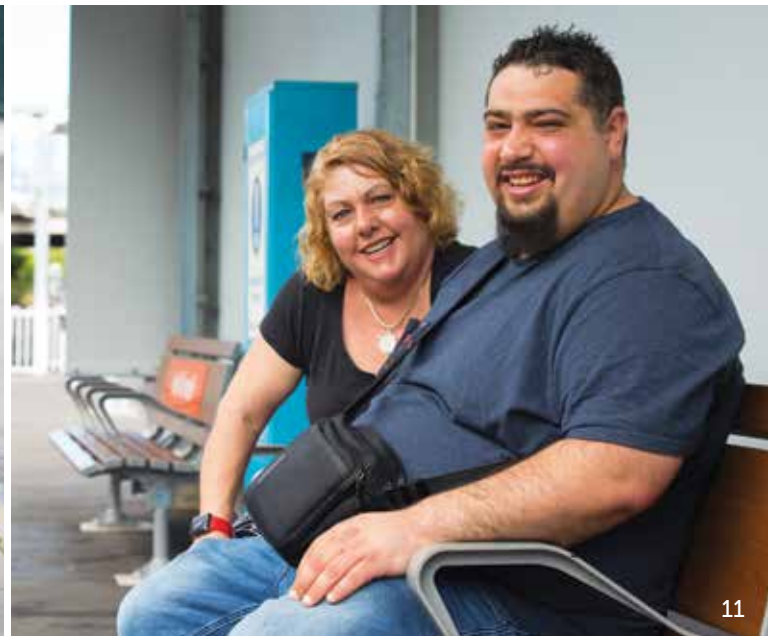
The greatest gift is when William says "I love you Mum." Before Flourish Australia he couldn't look me in the eye or hold a conversation. I have my son back and there's no stopping him now!



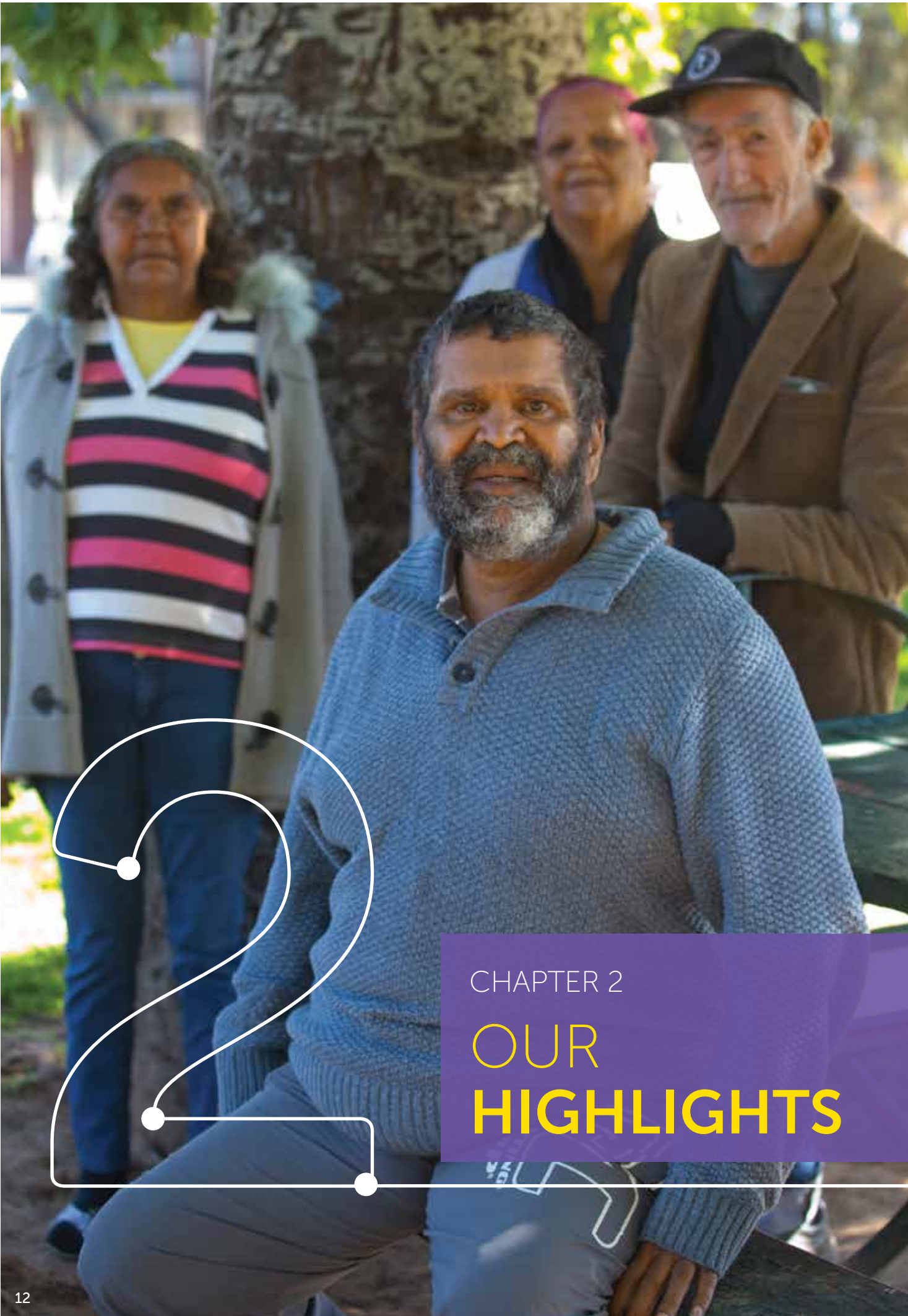
Females make up the **MAJORITY OF CARERS** representing **70%** of primary carers and 56% of carers overall



**Meaningful  
employment**  
brought my son  
back to me







CHAPTER 2

# OUR HIGHLIGHTS

# OUR HIGHLIGHTS

2019/20 financial year

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gathering gave rise to a Yarning Group and growth

On the 26th November 2019 Flourish Australia held its first gathering for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, in Sydney. 10 employees from across the organisation came together to share, learn and think about planning for the future.

Over three days, the group reflected on ways to improve services to support their people, communities and the workforce. A Yarning Group has now been formed as a way of staying connected and supporting each other. As it grows, this will be an integral part of the guiding work we do.

This landmark forum was followed by The NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Forum.



## The NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Forum

This two-day, annual event brings together Aboriginal mental health and wellbeing workers from Aboriginal community-controlled health services, community-managed mental health and public sectors. The goal is to improve service delivery to Aboriginal people by building knowledge and partnerships between sectors.

Our staff participated in sharing what is working well within the sector and where we need to focus supports.

## LGBTQ Inclusion Award

In June 2020, Flourish Australia were awarded Silver, in Service Provider of the Year category, for the Health + Wellbeing Index (HWEI).

The Australian LGBTQ Inclusion Awards are Australia's leading annual celebration of LGBTQ workplace inclusion.

They are an initiative of ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs, the national not-for-profit LGBTQ inclusion support program for employers, sporting organisations and service providers. The awards are based on the results of the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) and the Health + Wellbeing Equality Index (HWEI).

The AWEI and HWEI are rigorous and evidence-based benchmarking tools that annually assesses workplaces in the progress and impact of LGBTQ inclusion initiatives.

This award signifies Flourish Australia's continuous commitment in ensuring diversity and inclusion in our workplace.



## Chief Operating Officer

This year we created the new position of Chief Operating Officer, to take responsibility for leading all of our service delivery programs. Recruitment occurred late in 2019, and Susan McCarthy commenced in the position in January 2020.

## Technology

With the support of grants from the NSW Ministry of Health and Queensland Health we were able to support people to purchase technology so they could access supports. We also supported NDIS participants to seek funding in their plans to purchase technology.



# MORE HIGHLIGHTS

2019/20 financial year



## Flourishing Awards

We held our inaugural staff awards this year, to recognise an individual and a team that embodied our organisational values in their work. Nominations could be received from people accessing our services as well as staff. Awards also recognised length of service.

## Vision & Purpose Statements

We reviewed and revised Flourish Australia's Vision and Purpose statements. This revision provided a good foundation for the development of the Strategic Plan and a communications plan.

## COVID-19 Survey

Flourish Australia joined with a number of other mental health organisations, led by our friends at Mind Australia, to undertake a survey for people accessing mental health services during the COVID-19 crisis.



## Waterless Car Wash

Understanding the challenge of drought in rural communities, we established a new waterless car wash in Tamworth as an employment opportunity. This is providing employment for 12 people with lived experience.

## Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

As part of our commitment to being a child safe organisation, this year the Board approved a Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

## headspace Castle Hill and Parramatta

Committed to the mental health and wellbeing of young people, we took over responsibility for headspace in Castle Hill and Parramatta this July. This brings our headspace portfolio to four centres, including Broken Hill and Bankstown.



## Supports During COVID-19

We rapidly transitioned the majority of supports to telephone or online delivery in March in the face of coronavirus (COVID-19). These supports, informed by a new Health Plan developed by our Caboolture team, continued beyond the end of June. Our experience and feedback from people will see a hybrid approach to delivering supports become a standard part of our work.

## Suicide Prevention

Suicide prevention continued to be a major focus with training for frontline staff continuing. We also organised for three staff to be accredited as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) instructors and four staff accredited as Mental Health First Aid instructors.

## Strategic Plan

Work on the new Strategic Plan commenced in late 2019 and continued through the remainder of the financial year. Significant consultation occurred with people who access our services, funders, service delivery partners, and staff. The plan committed us to working solely with people with a lived experience of complex mental health issues, and will be the basis of our organisational development and growth strategy.





## High Touch Point Cleaning

We expanded our cleaning business in response to requests to undertake coronavirus (COVID-19) protective cleaning. This expansion continues with a growing number of customers interested in increasing their focus on cleaning high touch surfaces. This growth is providing additional opportunities for people with lived experience to gain employment. It has also provided opportunity to redeploy people from Figtree Conference Centre which had to close in response to COVID-19.

## Flourish Like Campaign

We launched our new Flourish Like campaign in targeted metropolitan and regional centres using print and digital channels. Early in the year, we developed two animations to increase engagement. Pleasingly, these achieved almost 200,000 completed views.

## Support Videos

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic our Community Advisory Council created videos of support and encouragement for people accessing services and for Flourish Australia staff. This was a great boost to morale in the midst of the challenges being faced.



## Essential Equipment

Our factories have continued throughout the pandemic period to pack N95 respirators and store and despatch protective equipment to Government sites. Great work has been done in providing a COVID-safe working environment, driven by the employees themselves.

## Enquiries Team Pilot

We trialled an enquiries team to more consistently respond to enquiries across both digital and voice channels. The pilot has gone very well, managing around 160 contacts each month. In an exciting development we introduced an online chat function which has proved very popular. We are currently considering the team's permanent establishment and an expanded, outbound call, role.



## Flourish Australia Website Enhancements

In 2019/20 we enhanced our website with new features and content to ensure people could easily find the supports they need and to provide clearer description of the range of supports we provide.

## Interim Community Advisory Council

The Community Advisory Council began meeting monthly using Zoom in order to provide more timely advice to the Senior Leadership Team, particularly related to COVID-19. We were fortunate to be able to invite a few previous experienced Alumni Council Members to return to help form an interim Community Advisory Council that could meet using technology.



## New E-Newsletter

We developed and launched a new electronic newsletter in April to connect more directly with supporters. The newsletter focuses on organisational news and stories of mental health recovery. It also provides opportunity to connect to our well established Panorama Magazine, created by people with lived experience for people with lived experience. This has now gone online.

# RFS & WATERNSW

## Win-win business relationships

Our culture of innovation, flexibility and resilience positioned Flourish Australia to successfully forge win-win business relationships with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and WaterNSW this financial year.

Growth in large scale cleaning and maintenance contracts with both organisations provided job security for supported employees and boosted community business revenue by \$120,000. This revenue increase is projected to exceed \$350,000 (for the base cleaning) in 2020/21 as our capacity builds in response to customer demand, particularly from the relationship with the RFS.

RFS also recognised the high standard of service delivery that our courier service contributed to their 2019/20 bushfire emergency response. The service was handled so efficiently that when RFS Headquarters at Sydney Olympic Park became the NSW COVID-19 Operations Centre, Flourish Australia was able to successfully tender for specialised cleaning of this important site. Flourish Australia was commended for our highly responsive and thorough approach to putting a comprehensive plan and protocols in place, quickly and efficiently.

Our dedicated cleaning workforce for this contract up-skilled in two point precautionary cleaning with disinfecting, including touch point cleaning. This is a big responsibility, with more than 300 people, including officials, coming and going each day. 100 hours of precautionary cleaning is undertaken every day of the week. The opportunity provides ongoing employment for 12 people.

As a result of RFS's satisfaction with our performance, Flourish Australia is in the final stages of negotiating regular base cleaning for both the

RFS Headquarters at Sydney Olympic Park and their Glendenning facility. This will increase employment opportunities by as much as 120 hours per week.

Unlike general office cleaning, which takes place after hours once employees are off-site, this contract calls for continual, high visibility cleaning to build staff confidence that all care is being taken to ensure their safety in the workplace. We receive encouraging feedback that our cleaners' meticulous attention to detail and friendly interactions puts people at ease in an otherwise stressful environment.

The arrangement is a win-win for RFS and Flourish Australia, supplying immediate, efficient implementation of essential cleaning that keeps supported employees in jobs. It brings welcome employment opportunities for hospitality staff who were displaced by the necessary closure of Figtree Conference Centre in response to COVID-19 restrictions. Seven employees were re-assigned to precautionary cleaning and one progressed to open employment as a result.

Excellence in our mowing and grounds maintenance services has similarly been acknowledged by WaterNSW who this year extended our longstanding business relationship. Our contract for maintenance of their Southern Dams has been renewed for a further two years. This will deliver \$128,013 of direct economic benefit to the Australian economy each year – based on revenue, Disability Support Pension recovered, day support



Our Community Businesses have so impressed the RFS and WaterNSW that both extended business relationships with us this year.

savings and workforce participation of employee carers, less operating costs, capital costs and supported employee wages.

The dams contract is a particularly popular work opportunity among supported employees and has provided up-skilling for six employees through completion of a Certificate IV in Horticulture. That Flourish Australia is resourced to complete large scale jobs to a high standard, across multiple and complex sites, presents a highly advantageous and cost effective solution for WaterNSW, helping them to streamline their site management process. The expertise developed over several years on this project positioned Flourish Australia for successful expansion to another large-scale contract at the NSW Police Academy in Goulburn.

A testimony to the pride our crews take in their work, WaterNSW report that visitors to the dams frequently compliment them on how beautifully the grounds are maintained. Attending to such vast areas of land provides supported employees with the opportunity to work independently and take on board the importance of punctuality, time management, a positive attitude and safety awareness.





Flourish Australia  
have successfully  
forged two  
**win-win business  
relationships**



# WILLIAM'S STORY

## My employment pathway

Employment with Flourish Australia has been a game changer on my road to recovery and put me on the path to a new career.



When I first started working on the packaging floor of Flourish Australia's Harris Park warehouse my self esteem was at an all time low and I lacked motivation.

Technology interests me and I hold a Certificate IV in IT, so when I was offered a more challenging role in the office, handling the scanning of bonds and leases for the NSW Small Business Commission, it gave me something constructive to focus on and I thrived. I grew stronger in my ability to make decisions as a result of having to think quickly on the job.

Realising that I was capable of achieving results gave me the courage to set my sights on a career as an electrician. Flourish Australia really want you to move forward in life. Just hearing them talk about how proud they are when one of the workers moves on to open employment opened my eyes to that possibility for myself.

My goal is to gain an apprenticeship and work toward full time employment so that I can live independently.

The encouragement of my Manager, Mihaela motivated me to enrol in TAFE. She would say to me 'This is not your forever job' and regularly complimented me on a job well done.

For three months now, I've been studying toward a Certificate II in Electro Technology and loving it!

The hands-on side of things is coming quite naturally to me and I've discovered that I'm very skilled at using hand tools. A lot of theory is also involved and I find that the discipline I learned working in an office environment helps me to apply myself and cope with that.

Gaining a real sense of achievement by making progress at work and in my studies has changed the way I feel about myself, for the better.

I made some solid friendships while I was working at Flourish Australia. Everyone was so friendly and willing to really listen. When they asked how I was each day, they genuinely wanted to know. Work was a safe space where I could open up about what was going on for me, knowing that I'd be accepted and supported.

Through that experience, I've become more confident socially. I'm getting to know people at TAFE and enjoy catching up with them after class.

Mihaela stays in touch and tells me that everyone at the warehouse asks after me and wants to know how I'm doing.

Having a job I loved to go to each day at Flourish Australia turned everything around for me. I know where I want to go in my career now and it feels good to be regaining my independence at last!

I feel so positive about my future now. Only a few years ago, the Airforce career I always believed I'd have had gone out the window because I was using anti depressants and I lived in denial about the mental health issues I was experiencing. Back then, I struggled to look people in the eye because I felt I was looked upon as someone who needed to be cared for.

Flourish Australia genuinely care about your recovery. Their NDIS support coordination is particularly helpful.

These days, when I do the Wellness Walk with my Mum, we write on our badges that we're walking for Flourish Australia. We're both so grateful to them.



Flourish Australia employ

**268**

**SUPPORTED EMPLOYEES**

within our Community  
Businesses





Proving to myself  
that I was capable in  
the workplace gave me  
the confidence boost

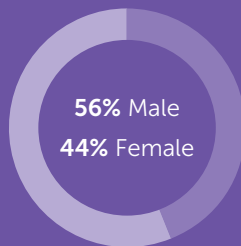
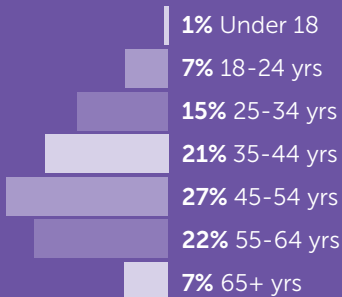
I needed to choose a new  
career path and take on  
TAFE studies



# HEALTH CHECK-IN

2019/20 financial year

Demographics of the 1820 people who completed the Health Check-In during the financial year...



11.5%

were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



14.8%

were Culturally & Linguistically Diverse



89%

reported that they had a regular doctor to talk to about their physical health



40%

were provided with information or support to connect with a doctor



52%

reported that they had seen a dentist in the last 12 months



76%

reported that they had had an annual physical health check by a doctor



The most popular physical activities that people participated in daily were:

1. Walking
2. Gardening
3. Gym

33% of people reported they currently smoke.

14% of people reported that they smoke, but are currently attempting to reduce or stop.

Flourish Australia provided information or support to access smoking cessation programs to 339 people.



58 health promotions were delivered across the organisation

We connected or partnered with 29 health services and community organisations to develop and deliver the promotions including local gyms and community sporting venues.

## Physical Health Cards

153 people who completed a Health Check-in used the Physical Health Cards to review their health.

70% of the people who reported using the Physical Health Cards also reported that it helped them identify a physical health issue.





# EVENTS UPDATE

Celebrations that engage, educate and give back

In 2019/20 it was more important than ever for Flourish Australia to walk our talk about staying connected and remaining resilient through challenging life experiences.

This year, we reached out to the wider community with two motivational events featuring inspirational guest speakers who embody the value we place on lived experience and have championed resilience in the workplace and the community.

In October 2019, for Mental Health Month, the Chair of the National Mental Health Commission, Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance and Australian Advisory Group for Suicide Prevention, Lucinda Brogden AM spoke at our annual breakfast at Figtree Conference Centre. Lucinda spoke about the important work of the National Mental Health Commission, and reflected on the importance of workplaces in promoting good mental health and wellbeing.

Our second event was a unique celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) in March 2020 which brought together more than 100 remarkable women and men from all walks of life.

We celebrated by hosting a High Tea with seven times world champion surfer, Layne Beachley AO, at our Figtree Conference Centre.

In line with the #eachforequal theme, guests from diverse backgrounds came together for the occasion, including members of the Sydney business community, school groups, the strong mums from Flourish Australia's Women & Children's Program and our team.

To help forge a more gender equal world, we created an #EachforEqual Pledge Wall and shared what gender equality means to us.

As the whole of Australia navigates this challenging time together, our events are a way of using shared experience to bring together our team, people with lived experience, our corporate clients, local businesses and the wider community, around important causes. It's about engaging, educating and giving back.

# BUSHFIRE SEASON

## Our response

Our staff on the frontlines of devastating 2019/20 bushfires reported that people became less anxious once they felt supported.

Bushfires are a part of life in Australia but this season was more harrowing than usual and gave rise to a prolonged period of anxiety for people in the areas affected. Dangerous levels of smoke and a constant stream of unsettling news updates deeply affected the wider community, well beyond the areas under immediate threat.

The unfolding crisis prompted our CEO Mark Orr AM to address its far reaching impact with Flourish Australia staff. "The news of fires can be quite distracting and even traumatising at times," Mark acknowledged. "I know some people are choosing not to watch or listen to any news because it is just too much."

Putting into action life skills learned while accessing Flourish Australia's mental health recovery services in Tumut, Nathan Davis, who now lives in Sydney, said "Concerns for the safety of my Mother at Bega and my Uncle from Batlow made these very anxious times but I didn't let the worry overwhelm me."

Back in Tumut, Manager Tim Owers is also a member of the Rural Fire Service and reported that seven people who accessed Flourish Australia services, along with two staff, had been displaced by fires. The Tumut team provided practical support by cooking and preparing food for distribution in RFS food bags.

Where there is fire, there is smoke and vast areas of Australia were shrouded in a hazardous smoke haze for weeks on end. Health warnings were frequently issued, advising people who experience breathing disorders or compromised general health to remain indoors and/or wear P2 masks.

Throughout the ordeal, Flourish Australia's primary concern was for the safety and welfare of people who access our services, staff and everyone's families. Over the Christmas/New Year period, members of Flourish Australia's Senior Leadership Team held teleconferences with local managers from the areas most affected, to discuss our response to the bushfire situation. Represented, were Cooma, Tumut, Nowra, Bega, Goulburn, Queanbeyan, Wollongong and the Blue Mountains.

Together, they considered how Flourish Australia's resources could be most effectively used to support the general community fire effort. Discussion addressed dealing with critical incidents, assisting displaced people and provision of trauma-informed mental health support where most needed.



Our teams showed great dedication during the bushfires by supporting many people in addition to family and friends affected.

Flourish Australia worked in partnership with Primary Health Network and Local Health Districts to optimise coordination of support services.

Andrew O'Brien, Flourish Australia's General Manager of Operations (South/East) said, "Our teams in Wollongong, Nowra, Ulladulla, Bateman's Bay, Bega, Goulburn, Queanbeyan, the Murrumbidgee and the Blue Mountains have done an amazing job of continuing to provide support to people during the bushfires. They checked to make sure that everyone was ok, put evacuation plans in place and helped people to evacuation centres if needed." Remarkably, this was all done on top of supporting their own families and friends affected by bushfires.

In our Sydney-based Community Businesses, staff including Mental Health Worker Boris Borissov ran workshops to support people affected by the bushfire crisis. "People think it is a horrible thing. They have relatives in the bushfire areas. We support them to stay in touch and ease their anxiety by letting them know they're supported."

These combined efforts have helped to keep hope alive for everyone impacted, directly or indirectly, by the experience of Australia's 2019/20 bushfires.



As of 9 March 2020,  
the fires burnt an estimated

**18.6**  
**MILLION HECTARES**  
across Australia





**Keeping  
hope alive**  
in the shadow  
of bushfires







CHAPTER 3

OUR  
IMPACT

# COVID-19

## Our response

In these unprecedented times our commitment to everyone's safety and wellbeing has not changed.



Over the last six months, we have implemented a number of measures to protect the health and safety of our staff and people who access our services whilst ensuring we can continue to provide people with high-quality support. This work was led by our organisational Pandemic Response Team.

As part of a comprehensive response to COVID-19 we developed an organisation-wide pandemic continuity plan, restoration of services transition plan, contingency plans and transition plans for all sites and programs. In addition, communication has been a major focus of our efforts to keep people accessing our services, families and carers, staff, partner organisations, funders and regulators, aware of what we were doing in response to COVID-19. In parallel we have developed additional resources such as training, signage, checklists and flyers to educate and support everyone.

We have actively trained everyone about how to engage in protective hygiene practices including how to implement physical distancing, how to use personal protective equipment, the importance of staying home if you feel unwell, how and where to get tested and to be prepared for changes in service provision.

The Board and Senior Leadership Team worked together even more closely between March and June (and continue to do so). A major focus has been on ensuring everyone's safety and the financial sustainability of the organisation.

Whilst it has been a challenging time, there have been some positives arising out of the changes that have been required.

It was a big change for staff and people accessing services, to rapidly adapt to working remotely and for many people, to transition to online delivery of supports. Building on a great idea developed by our Caboolture team, we developed a health plan which helped us understand a person's specific support needs if supports needed to change. This addressed things like, how they organised their food shopping or ordered their medication and whether they had pets to worry about. It also helped identify whether the person had a phone or other technology that could be used to connect with us. This planning was important as it gave the team key information needed to support each person to stay safe and connected.

Moving to remote supports presented some initial challenges. Not everyone had access to technology or a phone, some people had concerns about connecting online while others did not know how to use technology. To tackle these issues, teams delivered many innovative approaches such as supporting people to purchase technology, delivering sessions on how to connect online, providing people with the choice of connecting to video or phone based groups and delivering kits to people's home containing materials for use in online groups. All of these approaches have supported people to stay connected to each other and this is something we are keen to develop and grow.

Our accommodation sites stayed open. The teams and people living in houses worked hard to keep sites separated with no shared staff and a high focus on infection prevention activities. Our Community Business sites also continued to operate with

We appreciate the commitment that our team and people accessing our services have made to maintain a strong focus on health and safety.

COVID-safe plans in place including temperature checking, use of face masks, physical distancing, split shifts and physical barriers.

The enormity of these changes cannot be understated. We are deeply grateful for everyone's willingness to adapt and trial new ways of working and accessing supports. All of these changes have helped to reduce the chance of transmission of COVID-19 and keep everyone safe.

We appreciate the commitment that our team and people accessing our services have made to maintain strong focus on health and safety, and we thank everyone for their continued support.

As restrictions continue to ease we look forward to gradually welcoming people back to centres while continuing to provide technology based remote supports. Many of these new supports have been so well received that we intend to continue to offer these as our services resume.

A major outcome of this difficult period is a stronger focus on supporting people to develop their skills and confidence to use technology and exercise greater digital citizenship. This is a journey for people accessing services and the Flourish Australia team. Learning these new skills is not for everyone, but will help those who are willing to focus on this area to connect and participate more fully in a digital world.



# COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Adjusting to unexpected challenges

This year the Community Advisory Council experienced some unexpected challenges due to COVID-19 social distancing and travel restrictions. Like many, the Community Advisory Council had to quickly make adjustments in order to continue to provide a service to Flourish Australia.

As travel to attend meetings at our Sydney head office was not possible, an alternative to enable the Council to meet was necessary. This came in the form of using technology such as computers, laptops or smart phones to connect to internet conferencing platforms such as Zoom and to utilise email, a closed Facebook group, text and messaging.

To limit the risk of infection, it was important that people have access to this technology within their own home. Unfortunately, as many Council members did not have technology available, it was decided to call on Alumni Members who did have access to join the Council, therefore increasing service representation once more and forming the Interim Community Advisory Council.

‘People involved with the Council listen and allow me to have a voice, it’s great to be involved with like-minded people who understand where you are coming from. The Members are friendly, approachable and are here to support me in my own journey of recovery.’

Luke, Leeton

Many of the Interim Council members had not used these platforms before so there was a steep learning curve involved. It has been amazing how quickly the Interim Community Advisory Council came together and has successfully managed challenges head on during the pandemic.

In order for the seamless leadership of the Council to continue, the 2019 elected Chair, Mozzy Wilkinson and Deputy Chair, Scott Gourlay continued in their roles, providing innovative ideas, guidance and support to Flourish Australia, fellow Council members and to those who access their local services.

Since March, the Council and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have successfully met one day a month for three hours over Zoom. Being able to directly address arising issues with the SLT and receiving their immediate replies has worked really well and has helped to keep on top of issues or concerns on a monthly basis rather than having long periods of time between meetings. As a result the Interim Council has achieved a lot during the past year providing feedback to the Flourish Australia Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Local Champions Group Terms of Reference, media and website design.

The Council feel their biggest achievement has been co-writing the user friendly Zoom Training for people accessing services. Members found it necessary for people to know how to use this platform as it has been an integral tool for the Members to keep connected during the year. The Council members hope that all people will be able to access this training, acquire the technology needed to be connected in the 21st century and are able to ‘Zoom’ with family, friends, other members of the community and learning institutions such as, TAFE, universities and community colleges, as well as their Flourish Australia support staff.

The Council’s successes are also being recognised outside of Flourish Australia with universities and other mental health organisations approaching us to ask the Council to participate in forums for research, consultancy and co-design about mental health needs, including the needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, supports, suicide prevention and psychosocial disability.

‘It is a direct result of my experience of being on the Council that we were able to form the Parkes Friendly Social Group for people and family/carers who have been or are current participants of Flourish Australia. We are presently looking at having Zoom catch ups as well and since the Council have co-written the ‘How to Zoom’ instructions, it won’t be long before this is possible’.

Mozzy, Parkes

As more people accessing Flourish Australia services become connected through technology, the Council is planning to meet with local services within their clusters to hear others’ experiences and needs pertaining to Flourish Australia service delivery and community engagement. This feedback will not only assist Flourish Australia but will also go toward influencing positive changes with external stakeholders and communities.

The Council's Zoom catch-up has been my 'light' during the haze of darkness which is COVID-19. Seeing familiar faces and talking about whatever, has taken my mind off things.

Nathan, Bankstown



While the Council has been meeting to work towards improving the Flourish Australia service offerings and outcomes, it has been increasingly important to focus on supporting each other during COVID-19. The Council members, like the majority of other Australians, have experienced increased pressure on their mental health issues brought about by COVID-19. It was agreed the Council would meet every Wednesday for an unofficial Zoom get together to support each other. Unlike the official work of the Council, members are not paid to attend this voluntary support group and members only attend if

they wish. All attendees agree it has been great to chat about computers, cars, nature, sport, and literally anything can be discussed.

One of the great projects the Council worked on this year was to record and send videoed messages to staff, thanking them for all they do for people and also to people accessing services, providing encouragement and tips in managing mental health, keeping safe and well during the pandemic and subsequent physical distancing and lock downs.

At present, the Council Chair oversees these catch-up meetings but members are working towards

taking turns at facilitating them. This will provide further experience and hopefully increase confidence enabling members to apply for other Council positions, other committees, courses or employment.

Four members of the Interim Community Advisory Council are furthering their education or holding down jobs. While the thought of taking the first step to finding employment can be daunting, they feel working has helped with their recovery.

**Mozzy Wilkinson, Chair**  
**Scott Gourlay, Deputy Chair**

'On behalf of the interim Council Members, I would like to thank Flourish Australia for listening to its participants and for all they do from when we join the Council and throughout our term, as it is very daunting at first and they make it so much easier for us. Thank you.'

Mozzy Wilkinson, Chair, Parkes NSW



Mozzy Wilkinson



Scott Gourlay

# EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Megan, Warana, Community Advisory Council member

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I'm Megan and I am a part of the Warana service, up on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. I have been involved with the Community Advisory Council since May 2019 and have found it enjoyable connecting with others from different Flourish Australia services, while being able to provide input into the organisation.



I am also a third-year nursing student. It was challenging in the beginning and especially scary undertaking a big commitment while having mental health issues. Although overall, I feel it has helped my recovery a lot as it gives me a sense of purpose, achievement, self-confidence and an increased belonging in the community.

I have found along with furthering my education, working also helps. Working as an Assistant in Nursing (AIN) within Aged Care facilities, has not only helped reduce my financial stress, provided extra income and created financial independence, it has also given me an additional focus, distracting me from the issues that would usually bother me and cause a decline in my recovery journey.

I have been somewhat open about my mental health recovery journey with some of my peers and staff at the University, as it helps them understand my situation and what mental health recovery actually looks like; though, I find I am very cautious about who I share my personal journey and experiences with when at work.

Thankfully I am in an industry which is very caring and empathetic though I do get concerned about stigma surrounding mental health. I am concerned that if I share too much information about my personal mental health experiences, it may create barriers for future employment, so it is important to know what to share, when and with who, while continuing to advocate in reducing this stigma.

Sometimes study and work can have its challenges too, so it's very important to create a healthy work life balance that's right for you, as everyone is different. Having a balanced life with regular sleep, exercise and healthy eating helps as does being able to identify when you may need additional assistance in maintaining your wellness.

For me helping to overcome challenges means that I set aside time for myself to have fun and to socialise. I do this by accessing Flourish Australia activity groups as well as taking part in hobbies such as watching a movie, colouring in and crocheting which provide both down time and me time. I am also lucky to have pets who love me unconditionally, family, friends and my support workers to talk to if I feel overwhelmed.

Overall, although a bit scary at first, I find studying, working and being on the Community Advisory Council have helped with making new friends, increased my wellbeing and to be a mentor for others who are on their mental health journey to recovery. I would highly recommend you take the first step and think about what you would like to do and just go for it!

Other members of the CAC talk about what employment means to them:

'Having a job has helped my confidence and gives me money to buy nice things.'

Heidi, Harris Park Community Business

'Being employed gets me out of the house but it's been a bit scary working with people during COVID-19. We have maintained social distancing and use hand sanitiser regularly, so we are keeping safe and well.'

Caroline, Bourke

'Working with good people who treat you well really helps. I enjoy going to work and meeting new people.'

Daniel, Marrickville





Social Citizenship is not about legal recognition, it is about the people **belonging, contributing and being valued in the communities in which they live.**

# SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP

## Our concept of what it means

In the 2018/19 Annual Report Flourish Australia introduced the concept of Social Citizenship, a new way of focusing our efforts in supporting people with lived experience.

Social Citizenship builds upon the Recovery Action Framework we published in 2014 and the concept of Recovery. It is anticipated to broaden people's experiences and opportunities by supporting them to become more engaged in their communities, employment, education, the arts and relationships.

Realisation of Social Citizenship, and commitment to it, supports people to build a greater sense of belonging, of being valued and contributing to their community, family, kin and neighbourhood. It is another step in the pursuit of true social inclusion. Social Citizenship sees us supporting people to hold conversations and educate community stakeholders about this, about human rights and the value of lived experience. They will create and utilise opportunities to awaken communities to recognise their responsibility in opening doors for people to provide safe, inclusive communities where all people can contribute to the best of their abilities.

It will de-stigmatise lived experience, carefully and strategically exposing discrimination in nuanced ways. This in turn will create opportunities for people to enter volunteering, open employment, education, social clubs and community groups.

The Social Citizenship Framework and Implementation Plan are being developed through a major co-design process involving a large number of people. Flourish Australia serves unique and diverse individuals and communities; therefore it was important for us to engage people from communities including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- First Nations people from other countries
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities
- The Community Advisory Council
- People who identify as LGBTIQ
- Young people
- People who have been impacted by their involvement in the Justice system
- Older people

We are deeply grateful for the contribution of many partner organisations to this process including ACON, National LGBTI Health Alliance and The Gender Centre.

Through this project we hope that all people we support will be able to speak about and recognise themselves as valued Social Citizens.

# JOEL'S STORY

## A new outlook on learning

Experiencing a supportive approach to teaching at Flourish Australia's New Outlook program gave me fresh perspective on my potential and the possibility of a new profession in Personal Training.



As part of my NDIS plan, I accessed training modules offered by Flourish Australia's New Outlook centre at Wollongong, in collaboration with Kiama Community College. A rolling enrolment meant that I could choose to join in or opt out of classes at any time. For me, learning became a way of quieting my mind, so I enjoyed taking several short courses in Sport & Recreation and completed quite a few units of competency in the Fitness and Training Package they offer.

When I first started, my confidence was at an all time low. The mental health issues I experienced had led to extended hospital stays and resulted in the loss of my teaching career, my marriage and my kids. I had managed to complete a Masters Degree in teaching in 2015 but now struggled to focus on the most basic tasks. Thankfully, I found the whole approach of my Course Coordinator, Emma, to be incredibly supportive and helpful. She explained things in ways that I could easily understand.

Small class groups of about eight people create a safe space for learning and scope for one-to-one mentoring. I achieved good results and began feeling good about myself.

By providing me with so many opportunities to build on my skills and self esteem Flourish Australia opened my eyes to new possibilities for what my future can look like.

In February 2019, I made the leap to act on encouragement from Emma and Flourish Australia and enrolled in a full Cert III in Fitness, on-site at Kiama Community College. This meant making my way from Wollongong to Kiama each week which would have seemed overwhelming to me without the benefit of first building my confidence through Flourish Australia's training pathways. The progress I made with my studies at New Outlook grew my determination to attain even more.

I'm proud to now say that I'm their first participant to have completed a full qualification with Kiama Community College. It was unexpected and so rewarding to be nominated for Student of the Year in 2020 and receive a Certificate of Recognition as a finalist.

Occupying my mind with study keeps me from dwelling on past disappointments. I've learned to stay focused on my future goals. I'm committed to pursuing a Certificate IV in Fitness next year so that I can establish myself as a Personal Trainer and gain the financial freedom to do more with my three wonderful kids. I hope to take them on a holiday to Daydream Island for a start!

Even after 16 years in my former career, I still love teaching and see Personal Training as a chance to do that again in a new way. I'm drawn to helping others improve their lives through fitness while staying physically active myself which helps to clear my mind. I'm also looking forward to meeting interesting clients from all walks of life. I miss the feeling of belonging I once had down in Gerringong and being connected with my community is important to me.

My goal is to enjoy my life more and with Flourish Australia's support I'm taking steps to do that. Refocusing on fitness motivated me to get back into Karate which I practiced for 35 years. On weekends, I enjoy reading adventure books by my favourite author, Matthew Reilly.

Working again will provide me with the means to do even more of what brings me joy.



Flourish Australia provided  
**NDIS SUPPORTS TO**  
**2803**  
people in  
2019/20



I'm so focused on studying to become a personal trainer that **it quiets my mind and my efforts are being recognised**





# COMMUNITY BUSINESS

## Resilience and growth in times of crisis

Flourish Australia's Community Businesses increased sales by more than 20% this year, to almost \$3.4million.

Flourish Australia's Community Businesses have achieved impressive growth during one of the most challenging years on record for Australian businesses. Across the board, productivity and revenue have increased, creating additional job opportunities for supported employees.

Pro-active management, adaptability and commendable team performance have contributed to making our Community Businesses excel.

As the COVID-19 crisis unfolded, and following a devastating bushfire season, our packaging warehouses at Harris Park and Marrickville were inundated by requests for urgent distribution of masks, PPE equipment and sanitiser. Management mapped out a plan to acquire as many packing jobs as it was physically possible for the teams to complete while maintaining on-going contracts.

New contracts secured since the onset of COVID-19 represent revenue growth of around \$170,000.

The whole team has gone above and beyond to deliver significantly increased output under complex conditions, packing as many as 20,000 units per day on just one of many new projects. As a result, one three month Pick & Pack trial has been converted to a 12 month contract.

The challenge now is managing growing demand while implementing substantial modifications to workplace health and safety protocols, in compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. This includes

reducing the number of workers onsite at any given time by as much as 70%. Everyone has been totally committed to staying safe whilst retaining the opportunity to work.

Large volumes of work meant we had to purchase a flow wrapping machine for each site to equip the teams to meet all customer deadlines. We also achieved our goal of securing a scanning opportunity for Harris Park this financial year, commencing with a 3 month trial for NSW Small Business Commission (SBC), which we converted to an on-going contract. The IT skills involved create amazing opportunities for supported employees, one of whom has progressed to open employment.

### Cleaning up during COVID-19

Equally impressive outcomes have been achieved by our cleaning business facilitated by its ability to adapt in uncertain times. Several large scale contracts for touch point cleaning of important buildings were secured, including the NSW COVID-19 Response Headquarters. Hospitality staff from Figtree Conference Centre, which suspended services during the pandemic, have retrained for specialised, high visibility cleaning. A high standard of service delivery has since led to additional contracts being secured including with the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute, an important research facility.

Revenue growth has similarly been achieved by our Mowing and Grounds maintenance teams with our long standing WaterNSW contract being renewed after modeling showed \$128,000 of direct economic benefit to the Australian economy.



All of these opportunities are supporting our growth into the NDIS, understanding that a key outcome for the NDIS is employment for participants.

This year we also expanded employment opportunities further, this time through expansion into Tamworth with our Waterless Carwash.

Flourish Australia's history in providing employment opportunities and supporting people to secure jobs makes us well placed to support growth into the NDIS.

The collective success of Flourish Australia's Community Businesses reflects the high capability of our supported workers who are frequently commended for their exemplary performance and meticulous attention to detail. Contrary to early expectations, the COVID-19 pandemic has created sustainable growth opportunities for our Community Businesses because of the inroads that have been made to healthcare, utilities and other sectors deemed 'essential' in times of crisis. In turn, this has led to greater opportunities for supported employees.

We're particularly proud of the contribution of supported employees and our support team to the COVID-19 response.

# WORKFORCE CAPABILITY

Developing our skills and capacity

In 2019/20 Flourish Australia integrated a new Learning Management System (LMS) into our new Human Resources Module in TechnologyOne.

Designed to streamline access to learning and development, the platform places a diverse range of training content at staff fingertips and equips Flourish Australia to more effectively manage capability and training gaps within our workforce.

Customised to our needs, the new LMS integration has taken two years to develop. Since November 2019 we have expanded our eLearning offering from 6 to 40 online modules, creating a new e-Learning library.

The new LMS functionality gives Flourish Australia the flexibility to deliver training content directly to employees and to set alerts to remind staff of important training updates, such as mandatory training. Uptake and completion is easily monitored.

To date, around 8,000 online training sessions have been completed by staff.

Growth in learning continues as further content is developed. Staff can search and identify areas of interest by category or keyword and set personalised notifications of new courses and events.

Among the 40 modules currently offered are:

- Rights of People with Disability
- Drug & Alcohol Free Workplace
- Cultural Awareness Foundations and Work Ready Courses
- Coronavirus COVID-19 Awareness Video
- Intergenerational Trauma Animation
- Complaints Management
- Home Visits
- Mental Health First Aid
- Understanding Resilience
- Remote Work

Content ranges from video and interactive content to traditional PowerPoint presentations with voiceover, webinars and quick practical training video demonstrations, such as our TechOne Tutorials which cover tasks such as accessing payslips or completing an incident report.

Investment in online training has proven timely in light of COVID-19 restrictions which present practical challenges for conventional, face-to-face training.



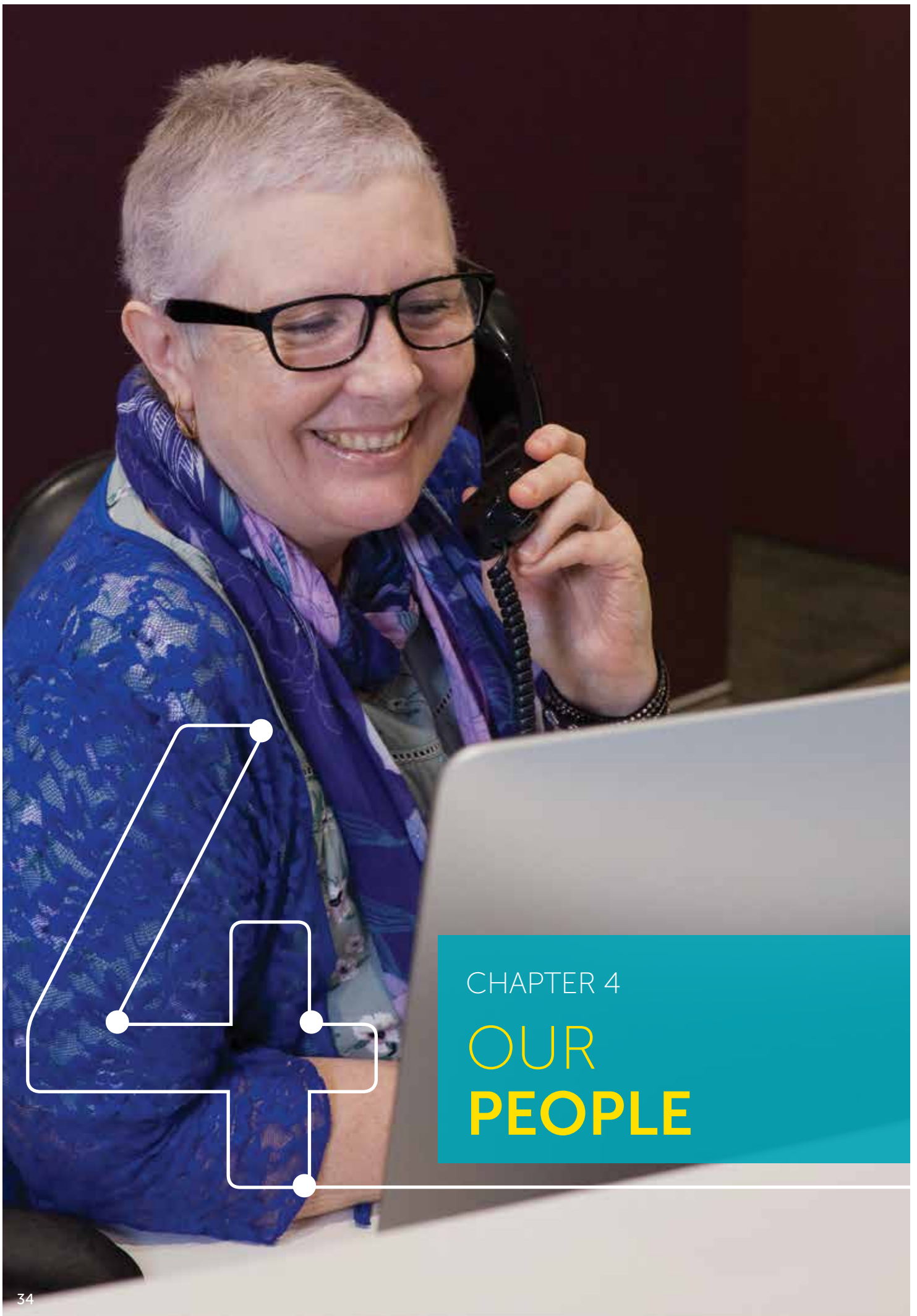
The platform has made it possible for training to continue in a pandemic environment when remote operation and online learning options are essential.

Significantly more cost effective than our previous system, the new LMS provides assurance that mandatory training remains up to date. Training can be more readily rolled out and tracked, strengthening Flourish Australia's compliance activities.

The new LMS integration with TechnologyOne provides Flourish Australia with tools for enhanced evaluation and reporting so that we can formulate a clear picture of workforce capability. It supports data informed decisions without the need for manually crunching spreadsheets and comes with metrics to streamline reporting.

Development is ongoing and there is potential to on-sell training content to other organisations.





CHAPTER 4

# OUR PEOPLE



# ABOUT US

What sets Flourish Australia apart

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We are the mental health charity for people with a lived experience, provided by people who have been there. **Our purpose is supporting people to flourish, believe in their future and their place in the community.**

## 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 people  
Connecting families  
Connecting communities  
Challenging discrimination.

## Who we support

People with a lived experience and those who support them.

# DEBRA'S STORY

## A sense of belonging



The loss of my career was devastating for me. Feeling understood by my Peer Worker gave me a real sense of belonging for the first time. Flourish Australia helped shift my focus from what I'd lost to what I wanted in life and who I wanted to be.

A successful career had been the centre of my life since I was told in my 20's that I was unable to have children, so to lose the career I loved in my 40's was devastating for me. I was hospitalised and lived with deep shame. I had a mortgage at the time so I also lost my home and most of my relationships followed.

I remember sitting on a sofa bed in mum's shed wondering how things had come to the point where I felt so completely isolated and alone. I had gone from a high paying position to a situation where I would go to bed hungry and after 10 months of unemployment, I started to question my own abilities and worth and struggled to see a way forward.

As an outpatient, clinical support felt like compliance. Then a health worker started to come around and spend time with me each day. With her encouragement I started taking better care of myself and began feeling less anxious about leaving the house. I eventually went with her to a PHaMS – Personal Helpers and Mentors group where I connected right away with the Peer Workers.

They really got it at a personal level, like they knew from experience what I was going through. I felt understood for the first time in my life so it felt safe to start opening up.

When I first shared my story, my Peer Worker laughed which seemed cruel, until she challenged me to think about it in the grander scheme of my life. That was the 'aha' moment for me. I found I was able to laugh at myself and I felt it at my core. I've always had a quirky sense of humour and laughing reminded me of the person I was deep inside.

My own experience of how powerful peer support can be, to bring about positive change, opened up a whole new career path for me.

I started out volunteering as a Peer Worker with Flourish Australia's Peer Operated Service in Hervey Bay before moving into a casual role and ultimately full-time employment.

Flourish Australia taught me to continually challenge myself; so when the opportunity for a senior position became available I applied and surprised myself by succeeding. I have since trained dozens of Peer Workers in Intentional Peer Support and love being part of an inclusive and supportive work culture. I feel very fortunate to work in such a unique team and privileged to have the people I work with daily share their incredible individual journeys.

I work with some remarkable people throughout the organisation. Having meaningful work helped build my confidence and hope, so I soon aspired to having my own home and living a fulfilling life as an independent woman. To do that, I had to push through my fear of being on my own. I now feel blessed to live in a beachside Queensland where I once had to challenge myself just to go out on the veranda. I have a loving partner and I'm more grateful now for things I once took for granted – like feeling the sun on my face.

At times I still experience internal distress, and can visit some very dark places, however it is during these times that I remind myself how I survived and got through the loneliest times of my life. I am living a life I could only have imagined and doing things that I never thought I would do again, like working, paying a mortgage, travelling overseas, and sharing it all with a beautiful soul, my partner Sue.

I've flourished by learning to communicate in the purest, most transparent way possible.

These days when I share my story I can sense the unspoken 'me too' in others. That's changed my worldview completely.

There was a point when I realised I didn't want to get back to being the person I was and that I was already creating the life that I'd always wanted. I promised myself that from now on, I would be 100% Deb – my vision, my values, my voice!



**26%**  
of the Flourish Australia  
workforce are  
**PEER WORKERS**



For Debra,  
flourishing is  
finding a sense of  
**belonging for the  
first time**

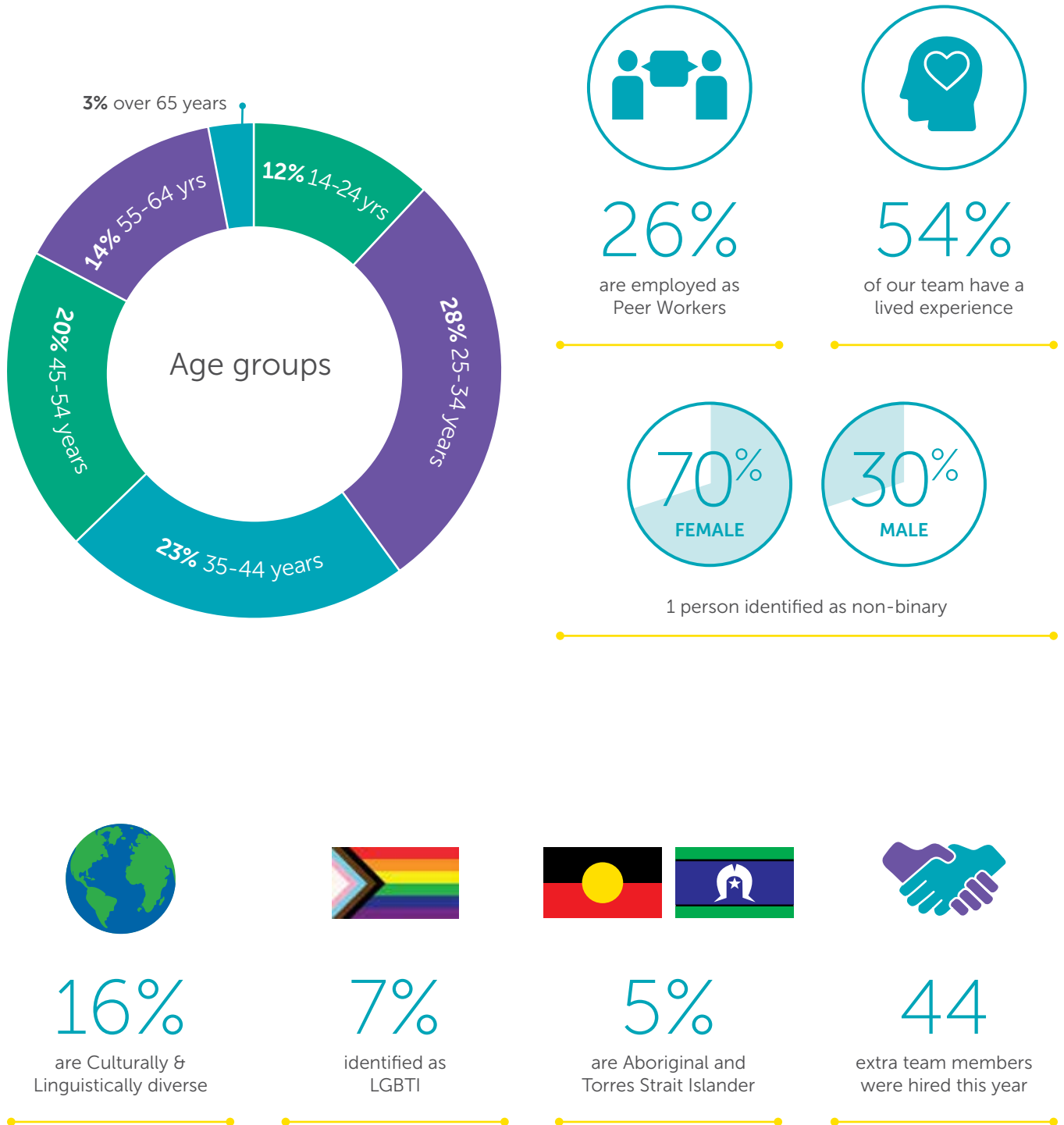




# WHO WE ARE

## Demographics of our team

Flourish Australia is proud of the diversity we have amongst our team members who work across our many Community Businesses, within our centres, as Peer Workers and at our head office.





# WHERE WE ARE

72 locations across eastern Australia

To see a complete list of our locations visit [flourishaustralia.org.au/find-service](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/find-service)



## Acknowledgment of Country

Flourish Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, sea and waterways upon which we live and work.

We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and recognise their strong and continuing connection to land, culture and spirit.



# PROGRESS & RECOGNITION

## People and culture in 2019/20

We couldn't be prouder of the praise poured out for our team this year.

The Flourish Australia team have shown great resilience and innovation in response to the challenges of 2019/20. Flourish Australia's on-going commitment to investing in our people and culture will continue to benefit those who seek our support, when it counts most.

This year, we expanded opportunities for staff to grow and thrive by supporting Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). We demonstrated the value we place on each employee through our inaugural Flourishing Awards, recognising and celebrating the contribution of individuals and teams.

### We advocate embracing technology to connect

We regularly remind staff to mix it up with technology to stay connected through phone calls, SMS, emails, Zoom or Teams video conferencing.

All staff are actively supported to access the necessary technology as required and encouraged to discuss the flexibility of supports they need through My Plan sessions. To balance increased use of technology, we encourage staff to regularly take time out from it and get out in nature.



### We are building a MHFA skilled workplace

- 13 staff completed MHFA Training
- 203 staff completed MHFA Refresher Training
- 98 staff completed ASIST Training
- 4 Staff attained MHFA instructor accreditation
- 3 Staff attained ASIST Instructor accreditation

Flourish Australia is working toward recognition through the MHFA Skilled Workplace Program.

### More supports for staff wellbeing

This year we increased our investment in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and we redoubled efforts to provide regular reflective practice.

A new, Understanding Resilience e-learning module was made available and we promoted access to the free, MyCompass, evidence-based online mental health support program for reducing symptoms of mild to moderate stress, depression or anxiety.



### Flourishing Awards

**2019 Award Recipients**  
Natasha Jones & Team Windsor

**Highly Commended**  
Brooke Turner & Team Marrickville

**25 Years of Service**  
Carla Pineda

**15 Years of Service**  
Rynnette Gentle & Martin Waddick

### Monthly Town Hall Meetings keep us connected

Staff feedback tells us these monthly organisational check-ins are highly beneficial for connecting, contributing and staying updated. Facilitated by videoconferencing, Town Hall Meetings have been an opportunity to connect across the organisation, to hear important information and to raise questions or topics of interest with the Senior Leadership Team and CEO. Cluster Managers began using the same approach within their clusters. This has been particularly important for the whole organisation during rapidly changing pandemic conditions.

# HUSSEIN'S STORY

Striving for excellence in serving others



I established myself in the international hotel industry as a top ranking regional director but my heart has always been to work with an NGO. By stepping into a management role with Flourish Australia, I've made that career aspiration a reality.

Before joining Flourish Australia, my career path took me to Dubai where I was responsible for hotels in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Through my success in the hotel industry I learned the value of striving for excellence in serving others, something I've felt compelled to explore since my teenage years in Lebanon. At 15, I volunteered during a Civil War with the Red Cross and a Lebanese Association that cared for people with disability, particularly those wounded in the war. We connected them with various support services so that they would gain access to wheelchairs or whatever was needed to adapt to their new life. I told myself that, one day, I would do this for a living.

As my professional career flourished, while based in Montreal I volunteered at night, supporting young people who were living on the streets. I took them food, listened without prejudice and talked with them about the risks of drug and alcohol abuse, using shared needles and practicing unsafe sex.

I was so driven to make a difference that I wasn't getting enough sleep. My health suffered, so I made the decision to stop.

This experience opened doors for me when I came to Australia. I worked with an education centre in Parramatta that addresses domestic violence. Training was provided for me to become a bilingual support worker.

It was in Sydney that I met my partner who worked with STARTTS supporting refugees; mainly Middle Eastern men who speak Arabic. The language barrier contributes to challenges they face in starting a new life and domestic violence is common in these situations. I became involved in educating these men to understand that violence is not only unacceptable in this country, it's a crime.

Fortuitously, I was introduced to Flourish Australia when I went along to their Christmas party with my partner, who was doing casual work there. I really liked everyone I met and when I talked with them about the work I was doing, they recommended a recruitment day to me. I decided to give this a go and felt so inspired that I applied for a position. 18 months later, here I am!

I leave work each day knowing I've made someone's life better by supporting them to keep moving forward.

Many years of experience managing teams and setting up procedures for opening hotels has given me skills that I apply to serving the people that Flourish Australia support.

I absolutely love working in a role that gives me the opportunity to make a real difference.

Knowing that someone was sleeping happier at night because of the effort my team invested was extremely satisfying for me during my time in the hotel industry. It means even more to me in my new role with Flourish Australia. I love every one of my 45 team members. They do such great work. I'm committed to setting them up for success by ensuring they feel supported and take breaks during the day. The support I consistently receive from my Manager and the Senior Leadership Team is a big help.

I've learned so much since coming into the Mental Health sector. Training is on-going because there is always more to learn about the many different experiences of mental health and ways that we can support people. In addition to providing mandatory training, Flourish Australia support me with external training too. Today I'm a certified negotiator for ASIST suicide intervention.

In my own lived experience, Flourish Australia's Rainbow Network has shown me how vital connections like this can be for LGBTQI people facing cultural or religious stigma. Being French-Lebanese, my marriage to a man was not something I felt safe talking about. Finding freedom to express this openly within the network has been life changing for me.



**16%**  
of Flourish Australia's  
workforce are from a  
**CALD**  
community



The satisfaction  
of supporting  
people to  
**sleep better  
at night**







CHAPTER 5

# OUR ORGANISATION

# OUR BOARD

## Flourish Australia

Our Board provides strategic leadership to the organisation and ensures the highest level of corporate governance is maintained. Board member bios can be found on our website [flourishaustralia.org.au/about/leadership](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/about/leadership)



**Professor Elizabeth More AM MAICD**  
**Board Chair**

BA(Hons), Grad Dip Mgt, M Comm Law, PhD  
*Appointed December 2015*  
Marketing & Advancement Committee Chair  
Remuneration Committee Chair  
Finance, Audit & Risk Committee



**Jeremy Thorpe**  
**Treasurer (to December 2019)**

BEd, LLB (Hons)  
*Appointed October 2015*  
Finance, Audit & Risk Committee



**Dr Josey Anderson**

BA, BMed(Hons), M Med,  
M Health Law, Cert Child Adol Psych,  
FRANZCP  
*Appointed August 2015*  
Service, Quality & Risk Committee



**Paul Clenaghan**

M Nurs, PG Dip Nurs Mgt  
*Appointed April 2009*  
Service, Quality & Risk Committee



**Paula Hanlon**

BA  
*Appointed February 2015*  
Service, Quality & Risk Committee



**Robyn Carmody**

*Appointed July 2012*  
Service, Quality & Risk Committee Chair  
Marketing & Advancement Committee



**Diane Robinson**

BA LLB (Hons), LLM (Hons)  
*Appointed November 2017*  
Marketing & Advancement Committee  
Remuneration Committee



**Andrew Pryor GAICD**  
**Treasurer (from December 2019)**

CA, BComm  
*Appointed February 2019*  
Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Chair  
Remuneration Committee



**Dr Phillip Wing**

CA, BEcon, M Econ, PhD  
*Appointed February 2019*  
Marketing & Advancement Committee

# OUR GOVERNANCE

## Flourish Australia corporate governance

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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 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 nine members, all of whom are non-executive Directors. The Board renews its membership in a progressive and orderly manner. 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 five 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. 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 five standing committees are:

### Finance, 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 financial and commercial management and reporting, investment and borrowing policy, management and endorsement of the annual budget and underlying assumptions risk management, external and internal audit, and internal control functions. Major investments and capital purchases are referred to this Committee for review prior to approval by the Board.

### Service Quality & Risk 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 safeguarding, 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, overseeing the management of service delivery risks, advising the Board on services, receiving reports from the Independent Advocate, and reporting on these to the Board.

### 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. The Committee meets as needed.

### Marketing & Advancement Committee

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

### Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee is tasked with the oversight of the organisation's employment, rewards and recognition arrangements to ensure Flourish Australia is an attractive place to work, and that we continue to support the Flourish Australia team to feel valued and to deliver high quality, recovery-oriented, trauma informed supports.

### Performance Review

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 Directors' contribution to the ongoing performance and strategic direction of Flourish Australia.

### Annual General Meetings

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.

### Director Remuneration Committee

The Members have established a Director Remuneration Committee to independently make decisions about remuneration and other related benefits of the Directors. This is to ensure strict compliance with our Conflicts of Interest policy and the NSW Charitable Fundraising Authority.



# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## Senior Leadership Team and their functions



# SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

2019/20 financial year

The Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the daily operations and administration of Flourish Australia. SLT bios can be found on our website [flourishaustralia.org.au/about/leadership](http://flourishaustralia.org.au/about/leadership)



**Mark Orr AM**

**Chief Executive Officer**

BSc (Hons), M Hlth Serv Mgt, M e-Hlth (HI),  
Grad Dip Spec Ed, Grad Dip ACG, Grad Cert App Fin  
and Invest, GAICD, FGIA, FCG(CS), Registered Psychologist



**Megan Hancock**

**Chief Financial Officer**

CA, B Bus, Grad Dip App Fin  
and Invest, GAICD



**Susan McCarthy**

**Chief Operations Officer**

BSc (Nutrition and  
Physiology), MPH



**Mohammed Alkhub**

**General Manager,  
Business Excellence**

BSc Eng (Hons), M Eng,  
MBA, M Law, JP



**Tim Fong**

**General Manager,  
People and Culture**

MAppPsych, BSc(Psych),  
Registered Psychologist



**Fay Jackson**

**General Manager,  
Inclusion**

B Crea Vis Arts, Dip Ed



**Peter Neilson**

**Chief Development  
Officer**

B Comm, CPA



**James Herbertson**

**General Manager,  
Employment**

Grad Diploma in Business



**Aidan Conway**

**General Manager,  
Operations North & West**

MBA



**Andrew O'Brien**

**General Manager,  
Operations South & East**

B Ed (Econ & Geog),  
Dip Comm Mgt



**Julie Fraser**

**Manager, Administration  
and EA to CEO**

BA in Professional Writing

# JOHN HALL AM HONOURER

## Former Board Chair

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We are delighted that former Flourish Australia Board Chair, John Hall was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours List. His citation was for significant service to community mental health and to business.

John was a director of Flourish Australia and one of its founding organisations, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia (PRA), for 20 years, 17 of those as Board Chair. This was a significant period of expansion in the organisation's operation.

John was an important part of leading the merger of PRA and Richmond Fellowship of NSW in 2012 to become what is now known as Flourish Australia.

John was elected the Board Chair of the merged organisation, a position he held until the 2016 AGM.

John's contribution to Australian business has been extensive. He was Chair of Bank of China (Australia) and the CEO of both the Australian Institute of Company Directors and Austraclear. He was also a company director at Hockey Australia between 2007 to 2012.

We congratulate John on this greatly deserved recognition.



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# WE ASKED & STAFF RESPONDED

## Pulse Survey results

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To gauge how well we are doing with supporting our staff at work we developed a series of targeted, 7-point Pulse Surveys which could easily be completed in under five minutes.

Understanding how supported our staff are feeling is particularly important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic which brings a whole new level of challenges.

**Over 90%** feel supported by their manager and connected to their team despite working in new ways.

**Over 95%** knew where to seek help when needed.

Responses indicated that there is room to do better in some locations and this is being addressed directly by local managers.

**More than 95%** of respondents agreed that Flourish Australia is continuing to provide appropriate supports to people with lived experience while continually adapting to changing conditions.





# JULIE-ANN'S STORY

## Working for financial freedom



I have a heritage of strong Aboriginal women. Though I've lived a hard life, I've made big changes so that I can create a positive future for myself and my two kids.

Since my kids were removed from my care, my number one priority has been to regain my independence and bring them back home.

I feel frustrated that the NSW Trustee and Guardian oversees my finances so I strive to be the very best at my job as a way of showing that I can achieve the stability needed to take back control of my life. To me, my job is about more than just money. The guys I work with are like brothers to me and we look out for one another.

Losing my Mum when I was 20 triggered my lived experience of mental health issues. Then the breakdown of my relationship with my daughter's father left me feeling lost and hopeless. I self medicated with drugs and alcohol.

I told myself it was time to wake up and become someone my kids can feel proud of. I can never give up on my kids.

My twin sister and I were taken from our family when our Mum struggled to cope with caring for us. I want better things for my kids. At the moment, they live with their Grandparents but I have a spare room set up in my home, ready for the day I can bring them back to live with me.

I knew that I needed to find work and earn enough money for all of the things that I want to make happen. When I talked to my Case Worker about this, they connected me with Flourish Australia's Waterless Carwash where I've now been working for about six months.

I joke around with the guys I work with while we're getting the job done and if I feel angry or depressed about something, they encourage me to take time out and calm myself before reacting.

Being able to talk to them about what's going on for me helps me to manage my emotions and cheers me up. My sense of humour has helped me through hard times in my life and sharing silly jokes with my Supervisor still makes demanding day seem easier and faster.

I have a soft heart for people and will remind my co-workers to wear the right safety gear or give them a hand to do something really well which they appreciate. Maybe I'll progress to a supervisor's role at some point.

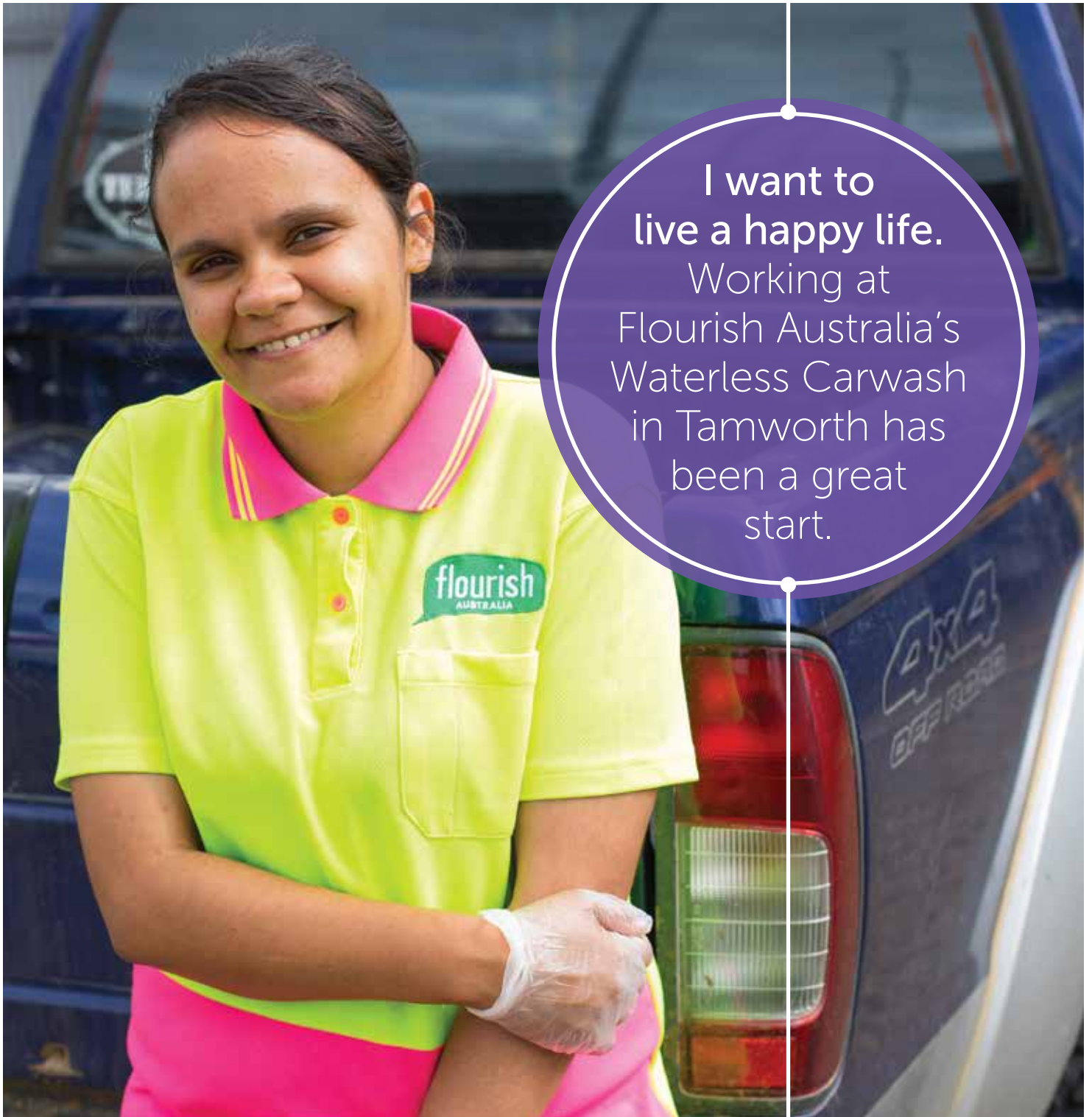
Having work to go to gets me out of the house each day and motivates me to take better care of myself.

My daughter would be proud of the progress I've made since I was unwell. I eat well and stay healthy now and hope to inspire my son and daughter to make healthy choices in their own lives, like finishing school and going to college.

I'm mindful that I turn 30 this year. Time passes quickly and I'm determined to achieve financial freedom while my kids are still young and there's time for us to rebuild our relationship. I'm still alive because of my love for them. After soldiering on alone for such a long time I feel proud that I never gave up. I'm staying positive and I've found my way to being happy, every day.



Flourish Australia's Waterless Carwash in Tamworth provides  
**EMPLOYMENT FOR**  
**12**  
**PEOPLE**



I want to live a happy life. Working at Flourish Australia's Waterless Carwash in Tamworth has been a great start.







CHAPTER 6  
**OUR  
FINANCIALS**



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Flourish Australia is in a strong position

At 30 June 2020 our financial position is strong.

Our operating result for the year was a surplus of \$651,732.

On 12 March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a pandemic. In response to Government and expert health advice, in March 2020 we implemented a number of changes to how we deliver support, but remained committed to continue to provide support for people.

We changed the way we do things so we could protect the people we support and our staff. We were able to continue to increase the services we provide with our overall revenue from ordinary activities increasing by 16% from \$72.3m in 2018/19 to \$84.1m in 2019/20.

We continued to support people through government service contract programs. As more of our support arrangements transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and as the NDIS continues to roll out, our NDIS revenue as a proportion of our overall revenue from ordinary activities continues to grow. NDIS revenue as a proportion of our overall revenue from ordinary activities grew from 35% in 2018/19 to 40% in 2019/20.

We believe that having meaningful work, and the social connections that come with it, are beneficial to mental health and wellbeing. During 2019/20 we continued to increase our support working with people to find a job, with associated expenditure increasing by 23% from \$13.6m in 2018/19 to \$16.8m in 2019/20.

The sluggish Sydney property market negatively impacted our sales program for the Guildford units this year. We were unable to sell any units but continued to pay down and refinance our bank loan.

OUR SOURCES OF REVENUE	2019/20	2018/19
NDIS	33,841,224	25,539,295
NSW Government	28,206,827	25,631,681
Commonwealth Government	13,448,378	12,059,598
Business Sales	4,135,357	3,660,980
Other income	2,440,816	3,062,697
Queensland Government	1,981,076	2,374,158
Subtotal – Operations	84,053,678	72,328,409
Gain on sale of non-current assets	320,956	442,369
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>84,374,634</b>	<b>72,770,778</b>

COSTS SUMMARY	2019/20	2018/19
Supporting people where they live	28,696,684	26,432,528
Helping people make friends, get involved and learn new things	27,159,225	22,746,328
Working with people to find a job	16,796,609	13,642,953
Other expenditure	11,070,384	9,929,220
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>83,722,902</b>	<b>72,751,029</b>

OUR BALANCE SHEET AT A GLANCE	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and cashable investments	14,808,887	14,725,076
Investment properties	11,007,422	11,236,234
Property, plant and equipment	19,620,408	19,655,995
Intangibles	582,302	678,599
Receivables	8,432,213	5,125,580
Right of use assets	3,219,471	–
Other assets	3,723,271	1,857,009
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>61,393,974</b>	<b>53,278,493</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	2,810,014	3,674,766
Other current liabilities	13,448,872	9,678,186
Financial liabilities	1,684,666	2,300,000
Provision for staff LSL and holiday pay	8,476,069	6,818,202
Lease liabilities	3,260,592	–
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>29,680,213</b>	<b>22,471,154</b>

<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>31,713,761</b>	<b>30,807,339</b>
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# LOOKING AHEAD

2020/21 financial year



## New Strategic Plan

Early in the new financial year we will finalise our Strategic Plan 2020-2023. This will provide guidance to our work and help direct our investment of time and money, enabling us to prepare for the future and maximise our impact.



## Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

A formalised consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation is an essential foundation to quality mental health services. We will codesign a new monitoring and evaluation framework with members of our Community Advisory Council. This will enable us to identify and discuss more effectively the impact of our work, and the outcomes people with lived experience achieve as a result of our support.



## Fundraising & Philanthropy

Our Fundraising and Philanthropy Program will be turbo boosted with the employment of a Fundraising Manager. This additional specialist resource will help us finalise and execute our plans and to establish a fundraising foundation.



## Increasing Digital Capabilities

A significant insight from COVID-19 has been the importance of digital capabilities for people who access our services and staff. The next twelve months will see us significantly increase our focus on access to technology and the skills to use it effectively. It will also mean we review how our corporate functions are best supported by integrated technology.



## Data Analytics

We will start to focus on understanding the large amount of data we collect as part of our service delivery, and gaining insights from it. This will help us make better organisational decisions and enable people accessing our services to make decisions about the supports they seek for their recovery.



## Physical Health & Wellbeing

We will continue to develop our approach to supporting people to manage their physical health and wellbeing. This will include further developing resources, making them available to others in the sector and partnering in research projects in order to add to the evidence base. We will also develop a new staff wellbeing program.

# OUR FUNDERS

and consortia partners

**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

- Department of Communities and Justice – Child and Family Services
- Department of Family and Community Services – Housing NSW
- Hunter New England Local Health District
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
- Murrumbidgee Local Health District
- Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

- NSW Health – Justice Health and Forensic Hospital Network
- NSW Ministry of Health
- South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
- Southern NSW Local Health District
- Sydney Local Health District
- Western NSW Local Health District
- Western Sydney Local Health District

## Queensland Government

- Queensland Health

## Other Funders

- Capital Health Network
- Central and Eastern Sydney PHN
- EACH Social and Community Health
- Grand Pacific Health

- HealthWISE New England North West
- Hunter New England and Central Coast PHN
- Hunter Primary Care
- Mission Australia
- Murrumbidgee PHN
- Nepean Blue Mountains PHN
- New Horizons
- One Door Mental Health
- South Eastern NSW PHN
- South Western Sydney PHN
- SVA Nominees Pty Ltd as trustee of the Resolve SBB Trust
- Western NSW PHN
- Western Sydney PHN

Flourish Australia receives funding from the Australian, New South Wales and Queensland Governments.

**Flourish Australia Consortia Partners include:**

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

## headspace Bankstown

- Dr Josey Anderson (Chair) Clinical Director – Black Dog Institute
- Black Dog Institute
- Canterbury Bankstown City Council
- DAMEC At Work
- One Door Mental Health
- Salvation Army – YouthLink
- South West Sydney Local Health District

## Supporting Organisations

- ACON
- Arab Council of Australia
- City of Canterbury Bankstown Council

- FYRST – a part of The Salvation Army
- Lifeline Macarthur
- Transcultural Mental Health Centre

## headspace Broken Hill

- Broken Hill City Council
- Black Dog Institute
- Far West Local Health District
- JobLink Plus
- Lifeline Broken Hill
- Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Service
- Mission Australia
- Nachiappan Surgery
- Neami National
- Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS)

## Supporting Organisations

- ACON
- Police Citizen Youth Club (PCYC)

## headspace Castle Hill & Parramatta

- Interrelate
- Northmead Uniting Church
- Ability Options
- Salvation Army – YouthLink
- TAFE NSW
- Wise Employment

## Supporting Organisations:

- Twenty10
- ACON
- Western Sydney Local Health District
- Parramatta Mission
- CanTeen

## PIR New England

- Benevolent Society
- Challenge Community Service



# REBECCA'S STORY

## Flourishing through work-life balance

I liked the sound of the name Flourish Australia as soon as I heard it. To me it sounded like healthy growth and that's been my employment experience with their support.



The easy going approach of Flourish Australia's employment supports has been wonderful as I've eased back into employment. They're always there for me when needed but are never pushy or demanding. I'm supported to do things in my own time at my own pace.

Now that I have a bit of social contact outside of the home, I deal better with the anxiety and depression I experience.

I was referred to Flourish Australia by Centrelink at a point in my mental health recovery when I felt ready to look for work. I'm a single mum, raising three wonderful kids and since my youngest was diagnosed with autism, I've done my best to balance the demands of caring for my children with earning an income.

In my 20s, I started working nights so that I could care for my young family during the day but this wasn't sustainable. I chose to stop working until my youngest son started school. Through my sister, I then found a temporary position with an accounting firm during the holidays which turned into a full time role. I absolutely loved that job but after four years of steady employment, my son began experiencing challenges again.

The pressure of trying to juggle caring for my son with work responsibilities overwhelmed me at the time and I experienced a total breakdown. I took time out from employment for a few years and moved in with my parents to focus on my recovery.

Once I felt ready to look for work again, I started the search but it soon became apparent that my mental health wasn't yet up to it. I took some more time to grow stronger in myself then reached out again to Flourish Australia.

This time, things have fallen into place for me. Flourish Australia put a few job opportunities to me and my Employment coordinator checked in with me from time-to-time to see how things were going with my search.

The flexibility my workplace provides is a bonus! My colleagues all have kids and our employer is very understanding when any of us need to pop out for family commitments.

Now that I've settled into a role, she still calls to ask how things are going at work and how I'm feeling in myself. Flourish Australia genuinely care and want things to work out for me. I'm so happy in my new job. It's a customer reception position with a bio medical repairer who maintain equipment for businesses that use medical equipment, such as hospitals, life saving clubs, dental surgeries, patient transport and defence. Every day is different which keeps the work interesting.

For a long time, just getting up each day and out of the house seemed confronting to me. Now I look forward to showing up at my workplace each morning. I've also placed my son in a special needs school where he's relaxed and supported. A work-life balance has become so much easier for me to manage.



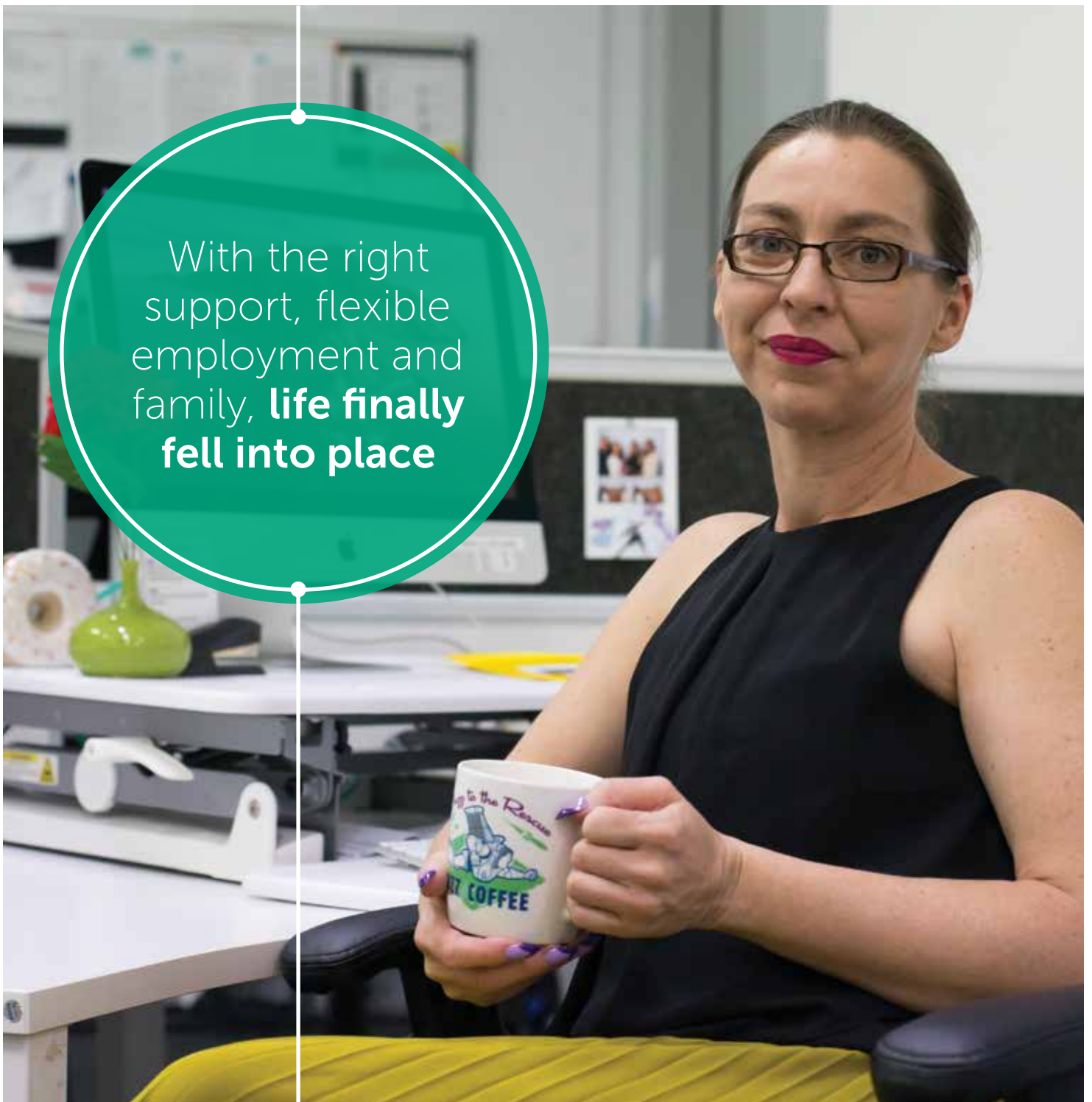
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people accessed Flourish Australia's

**DISABILITY  
EMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES**

in 2019/20

With the right support, flexible employment and family, **life finally fell into place**





Where mental wellbeing thrives

Want more information?

Freecall 1300 779 270

Email info@flourishaustralia.org.au

www.flourishaustralia.org.au

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