

anowah

2022 Annual
Report



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Annual Report 2022

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Looking Forward

I think we can all agree that FY22 was a year like no other, a lifetime of challenges packed into mere months.

Anowah, like the rest of Australia and in fact the world, was undoubtedly tested. The Board and the CEO recognized the implications of the emerging crises early on, moving swiftly to protect the health and safety of clients and staff. Thanks to a solid foundation, built over many decades, the profound dedication of Anowah staff, the resilience of the clients, the support of the families and a committed Board, we have not only kept the organisation standing but continued to implement measures to ensure the safety of clients and staff. This will always be our priority.

As an organisation we want to shape the way for authentic social inclusion of people with disability supporting and walking with them as active and engaged citizens. The way we work will continue to respect the rights of the clients, support innovation, improve our technology and systems and build a resilient workforce as we continue to serve the clients of Anowah.

I am optimistic about the future of Anowah, we have a clear vision as expressed in our most recent Strategic Plan and an Anowah community dedicated to realizing it. We have recently welcomed two new Board members to the Anowah Community, Robert McCotter and Steven Lowrie.

I take this opportunity to express our thanks. Thank you to Anowah's CEO, Debbie Eisenhower-Rodney, your leadership and commitment through a very challenging time on all fronts is to be commended. Thank you to all Anowah staff who has been tireless in the safeguarding of clients and turning up every day. Thank you to the Anowah Board for staying the course. Thank you to the families for your support and holding us to account. Thank you to our donors for your faith in us.

On a final note, I am honoured to be Board Chair. I am hopeful and look forward to working with Board Members to support Anowah's Purpose and serve Anowah's clients and their families and promote equity within the Anowah Community.

Sincerely,

Caron Rooks, Board Chair

Message from the CEO

Most disability services agree that the 2022 financial year has been one of the most difficult years the sector has experienced. The ongoing COVID pandemic created many significant and often unresolvable issues for the sector, despite the planning and preparation that all disability organisations were required to undertake. Various rules and restrictions issued by NSW Health, the NDIS Commission and all levels of government changed frequently and were often unclear. The initial support that was verbally committed to the disability sector was not provided in most instances as the health sector and other government services struggled with the extent of the COVID outbreak.

Staffing was and still is a major issue as the pandemic continues. As staff become unwell with COVID or the seasonal flu, or are a close contact of someone with COVID, they cannot be rostered on a shift to support Anowah clients. At times a significant portion of the entire disability sector has been on personal leave, making it difficult to fill shifts with Anowah staff or agency staff. The agency staffing resources promised by the NDIS Commission never eventuated as they too struggled to find available staff to work in the disability sector. Anowah's support staff and Team Leaders have had to work many overtime hours. This has presented a significant financial cost to Anowah as the NDIS only funds support at normal working hour rates. More significantly, it has come at a personal cost to our staff many of whom are physically and mentally fatigued.

All staff within the disability sector have had to work in personal protective equipment (PPE), and in periods of client COVID isolation, full PPE with plastic masks and gowns. Most of us find it difficult and unpleasant to wear a mask in the supermarket or on public transport, so you can only imagine the discomfort of wearing PPE for an 8 hour shift, or longer if overtime is required. Staff have also had to be very adaptable, with changing guidelines around community access for the clients

they support, and what is safe and not safe to do. It has been challenging to come up with continual engaging and interesting activities for our clients that will also keep them safe from potential exposure to COVID.

With the social distancing and isolation rules that were in place until recently, administrative staff and Team Leaders when not on shift were required to work remotely. This meant that front line workers had less hands on support and supervision. To support their ongoing learning and development, Anowah implemented an on-line training system called Iinduct, which includes 11 training modules on various aspects of disability support. All staff completed the Iinduct modules during the 2022 year. Even though COVID case numbers continue to climb, we believe it is important to move back toward more hands on training and support for our front line staff, and have been doing so since March of this year.

Whilst operationally Anowah has struggled to cover labour costs with the NDIS funding received, we have been very lucky to receive some capital grants for specific improvements to Anowah's properties. These funds have been used to create a client social hub, paint all the buildings on the Anowah Horsley Park site, and purchase a new vehicle for our Yamba House clients. We also have funds available to create a sensory garden at the Horsley Park site, but we need the rain to stop so the ground can dry out before we can start this work! Anowah also upgraded the administrative facility at the Horsley Park site with borrowed funds, as detailed in our strategic plan.

Our new administrative site includes a well equipped training room, hot desks, some offices and meeting rooms. Our staff are enjoying coming back into the office and working in this new space. Attached to the administrative area is a large client kitchen, dining room and lounge area that clients and families are welcome to use at any time. Clients and their support staff are starting

to use this space on a regular basis and are really enjoying the area.

Our old administrative building has had a huge face lift and now has a (mocktail) bar area, pool table, juke box, lounge area and dance floor, and looks amazing. We will be commencing a Friday evening social club in this space as we move in to the warmer weather, as well as other day time activities. We've already had a number of clients using the pool table and juke box, surprising us with how well they can play.

We have commenced regular weekly news updates on the Anowah web site and the Anowah face book page. We find that this is a good way to provide regular and timely news to those who are keen to know what is happening at Anowah and within the sector.

So, in summary, it has been a very challenging year but also some great things have happened. We are getting used to the fact that there is no post COVID "new normal", and that we are likely to continue with a level of uncertainty and are expecting a few more curve balls to be thrown our way.

We are optimistic about our uncertain future, with the current government seeming to offer a great deal more support to the NDIS and the disability sector as a whole.

Anowah made it through the 2022 financial year because of the great staff that we have – amazing support staff and Team Leaders who are resourceful, who care about our clients and are always going the extra mile. We also have a fantastic

administrative team who have the backs of our support staff and Team Leaders, and are always ready to pitch in and do whatever it takes to keep the Anowah wheels turning.

I would like to say a BIG THANKYOU to all Anowah staff, and forward my best wishes to families and carers of our Anowah clients.

Please stay safe and take care.

Debbie Eisenhauer-Rodney
Ceo



The year that was

Anowah continues vigilant safety practices and adheres to all guidelines and directives as advised by the Ministry of Health to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of our very valued clients. It remains a requirement that all staff working in direct care and external visitors to our sites, wear a mask.



New building renovations



New building renovations, comprising an administration area and a client “Hub” were completed in April 2022. We are settled in and are all enjoying the functionality and pleasing aesthetic of our new office space with clients and staff regularly dropping in for a chat and a catch up



Stay Tuned!

Our website and Facebook social media platform were established and we are now up and running with lots of exciting and informative content about the organization and client activities. Please check us out, our regular updates will keep you well informed of our journey.



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Supporters we thank you

We Are Anowah.... and we would not be who we are without the wonderful assistance of some incredible staff, family members and community members who continually bolster the organisation with their ongoing support and encouragement. We thank you all for your belief in us which drives us to strive to provide the best service we can for our amazing clients.

We were delighted to host Tanya Davies, MP for Mulgoa, who visited in April 2022 to present a cheque to Anowah as recipients of the NSW Governments 2021 Community Building Partnership Grant as well as the Social Sector Support Fund. This funding was used for a new vehicle purchase and the new building upgrades, including kitchens and bathrooms.



BIG THANK YOU



We were successful with our 2021 Club Grants Submission for the Establishment of a Sensory Garden at the Horsley Park site. Thank you to St Johns Park Bowling Club who supported this submission.

Although the Carol's at Horsley Park event for 2021 was cancelled, the Rotary Club of Wetherill Park still conducted a raffle and netted almost \$19,000. As Anowah was one of the major beneficiaries of the event, we received a cheque for \$4,500. We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of the Rotary Club of Wetherill Park,

Thank you once again to the members of the St Johns Park Bowling Social Club for their hard work and efforts in raising funds to purchase items on behalf of Anowah. This year we were delighted to receive two generous donations of furniture in December 2021 and June 2022. Both lots of furniture were selected by clients and staff for use in the Client Hub areas of the new building upgrade. These were a lovely addition and fit perfectly into the space.

We would also like to give a shout out and a huge thank you to Brian Zammit and his building company BAMS who were responsible for our recent building upgrade and Ernesto from Torres Painting and Decorating Services. Thanks so much Brian and Ernesto, you both went above and beyond to assist Anowah and we are sincerely appreciative of your support and the way you looked after us.



A word from the Anowah Team



Anowah is a Koori word meaning “to give” and I would like to thank the clients of Anowah for giving back to us as much as we give to them. I am currently nearing 40 years of service with the organisation and during that time I have seen Anowah transform through many models and stages of development but the one constant for me has been my life long relationship with the clients of Anowah who I have watched grow and progress. I consider them not only friends but family and it has been my absolute pleasure to have them in my life. The genuine love and appreciation the guys give back is heart warming and endearing and the rewards of watching them achieve their goals and move on in their lives has been endless. I am proud to be part of the Anowah family.

Bev Ward – Administration Manager



I have over 25 years experience in the health and disability sectors including 20 years with Federal Health and the Primary Health Network, working on projects targeting disadvantaged groups. Mental Health and Aboriginal Health were key projects that I have been fortunate to lead in the Liverpool, South West Sydney area. I moved into disability 7 years ago to Down Syndrome NSW advocacy service as the Operations Manager. I continue to support the Down Syndrome community as a volunteer for the UPclub (18+ Adults with Down syndrome) working one weekend a month on outings and camps. I value the strengths of this community and have a keen interest in providing supports to empower people with a disability to lead meaningful and productive lives. I commenced as the NDIS Administrative Coordinator with Anowah in April 2020, moving into the Client Services Manager role in August 2022. My personal values align with Anowah's EPPPIC Core Values and I'm looking forward to serving and making things more accessible and possible for all of our wonderful clients in the coming 12 months.

Jennifer Weatherstone – Client Services Manager



I am now into my 5th week working at Anowah and I have loved every minute of it. The highlight of my time is meeting the clients and being made to feel part of the Anowah family. In my role, one of my responsibilities is to ensure our clients safety and wellbeing as this is at the core of what we do. As HR, my focus is to maintain and foster a dedicated, well trained and professional workforce to ensure our clients have the stability and support they deserve that enables each of them to play an active part in society and to live life to the fullest.

Gerry Grech-Matthews – HR and Compliance Manager



I started working as part of the Anowah team approximately 2 years ago. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here as part of the leadership team as well as working on the floor directly with our clients. Anowah has provided me the opportunity in growth and development within my passionate career. There aren't many other industries where you can say it's your job to help someone live life to their fullest! Working in the disability sector, I am often working with regular clients on a regular basis. This enables me to form strong relationships as I have gotten to know the clients on a more personal level. Having a strong bond with our clients has added true purpose to my job, it has helped me become more passionate about seeing them achieve their goals. Working in the disability sector has been an incredibly rewarding job. My highlight in the recent year was assisting my clients in organizing and achieving their goal of booking a luxury week long boat cruise.

Sherona Barrett – Team Leader



I choose my career in disability because I enjoy supporting people to reach their goals and to succeed in their everyday life. Working so closely with people with a disability, I have realised that physical and mental limitations are not a barrier to understanding someone and as Robert M. Hensel once said, "There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more." It is a very rewarding job working for Anowah and I love that they offer a very collaborative, inclusive, and rewarding work environment.

Briarna Arnold – Team Leader



"It has been 23 years since I started working for Anowah and I have seen many changes, challenges and growth within the organisation during this time. The Anowah clients are like family and seeing their smiles and sharing their excitement gives me a great sense of purpose and warms my heart. All the clients are very special to me and it is a privilege to be part of the wonderful Anowah family"

Chris Clark - Payroll & Finance Officer

I have been working for Anowah for the past 10 years. The reason I enjoy my job is that every day is different and I love assisting my clients in their achievements and to reach their full potential.

Angela Lopez – Team Leader



I have been working at Anowah for close to 6 years. I love my work in the disability sector because I am supporting the clients to have a better lifestyle and to be more independent and confident in their own abilities. I enjoy seeing the clients achieve their goals.

Hani Naguib – Team Leader



I have worked at Anowah for the past 23 years. I am passionate about my involvement in the disability sector and making a difference to the lives of the clients I support. I have enjoyed watching my clients progress in their lives and look forward to their future achievements.

Sanjai Krishna – Team Leader



Client Stories

Hi my name is Debbie and I live at Yamba House with my friend Sheryle, I have lived here for a very long time. I like living here. I like when staff assist me on outings, my favorite place to go is Stocklands at Wetheril Park.

I enjoy having cappuccinos and lunch whilst I am there, I also love to shop for things to decorate my bedroom and make it smell nice, and for clothes. I go to my day placement YADA on Tuesday's and Thursday's where I have heaps of friends. My best friend is Geoffery, I hang around with him the most.

I was recently on A Current Affair, they did a story on YADA. I was excited seeing myself on TV and I enjoyed the cameras being around and talking to the cameraman. When I am at home I relax in my bedroom listening to my CD's, my favorite ones to listen to are Abba and Elvis.



Hello, my name is Peter and I have lived at Anowah for many years. I like living in my small flat and I enjoy doing my housework, especially the washing up. I like all of my support workers and they all help me to live my best life.

I enjoy weekend visits to spend time with my brother Chris and his family on the Central Coast and my support workers assist me with travelling. I spend a lot of time listening to music on my iPod but I also like to watch music videos on You Tube.

Lately, I have been regularly visiting the Anowah Hub where I like to dance to the music playing on the Jukebox and play a game of pool. My favourite bands are Jimmy Barnes and Cold Chisel, Elvis and Olivia Newton John. I am a real sports fan and my favourite NRL team is Penrith Panthers. Liverpool is my favourite English premier league soccer team. I am looking forward to watching the upcoming summer series of cricket.



DEBBIE

PETER

JOHN



Introducing John John has been part of the Anowah community since 1974. John resides in our Bossley house within the Fairfield community with his lifelong friend and house mate Sheryl.

John thoroughly enjoys dancing and singing like a rockstar. His favorite bands are ABBA, Michael Jackson and Bon Jovi. John likes to use our new Juke box within our Anowah Hub where John attends weekly. The Hub is part of Anowah's internal day program and you will often see John beating everyone in a game of pool! John expresses his affection and interest in animals.

He has been engaging in regular animal therapy and lots of cuddles with our 2 Anowah Golden retrievers. John enjoys regular visits to the western Sydney Zoo as well as our local Calmsley Hill City Farm where John enjoys feeding the nursery animals.



Some Important Numbers

\$4.99 million

Supported Independent Living Income

\$688 thousand

NDIS Community Support Income

\$319 thousand

CAS / DAY Program Income



152,000
Number of support hours



67
Number of Staff



22
Number of clients



Plans to implement our innovative program of supports

To achieve our purpose of Authentic Social Inclusion, we need to be innovative and think beyond what has been done in the past and start to defy expectations for the future, when developing our community access and social activities for the people we support. We plan to move away from a static day program model, and to develop a variety of programs of support. For diversity in approach and increased access to service we will have time limited activities with different focuses, duration and locations. Some will be based in our new client hub, some in the community, and some a combination of both. Some will have a social focus, some will be focused on building capacity, and some will be about pursuing a participant's very specific individual goals. A person with disability may choose to sign up for one, some or multiple support programs, based on whether they meet their interests and goals.

Providing the client with choice is the first step in Authentic Social Inclusion as it empowers their voice in decision making. Each program will be explained and marketed to internal and external clients, so they have enough information to make decisions on what activities they would like to participate in. We are very excited to see how this new way of delivering these programs will evolve in response to participant preferences and requests.

Grow our Supported Independent Living Service.

Our plan is to stay a niche provider with a very personalised approach for our supported accommodation service. However, we do need some growth to fill a few current vacancies, and ensure we can continue to deliver this service sustainably. Over the coming year, we will be focusing on developing strong referral pathways and building connections with support coordinators and other community organisations.

We will also be reviewing the new NDIS Independent Living Options framework and guidelines when confirmed, to determine how best Anowah can work with this new model. This model is intended to deliver person centered services to people with disability who are looking for alternate models to support them to live independently in the community.



Developing our Workforce

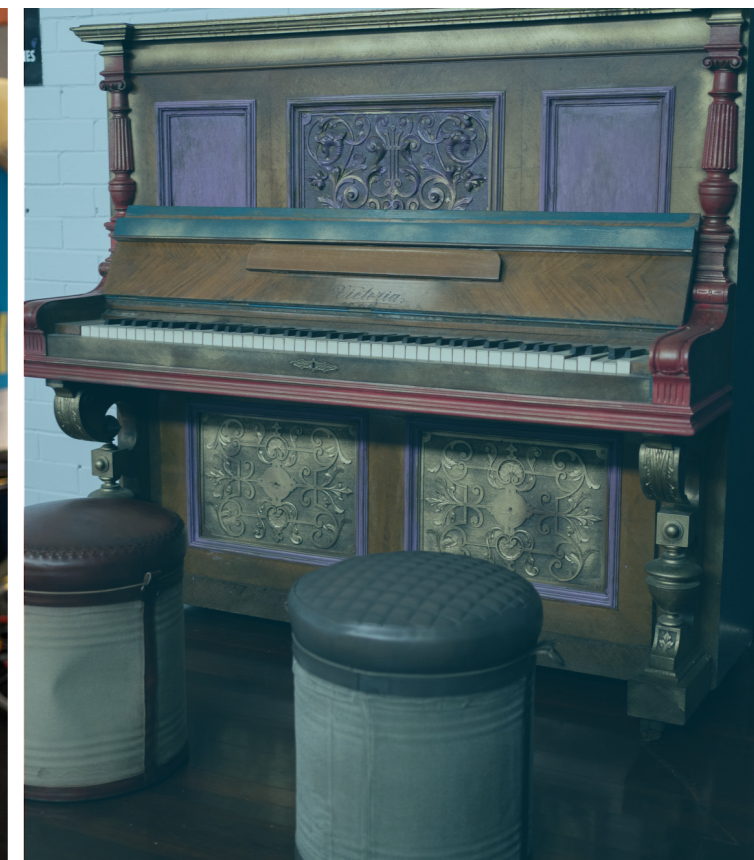
High quality person centered service delivery will only happen when an organization has an engaged and skilled workforce.

Over the coming year, we will be expanding our learning and development opportunities. During the last 18 months in response to varying isolation requirements and group activity restrictions, we implemented an on line learning platform called Iinduct to support our workforce learning and development needs. Over the next 12 months, we will be increasing our face to face learning opportunities for all staff. We will take advantage of our new training facilities and dedicated HR resource to plan and schedule training for our staff, targeted to the various needs of our clients.

We will also be developing Training Pathways to ensure our support workers have a career progression opportunity within the disability sector and within Anowah available to them. Workers at all levels within the organization must be skilled, and they also need to be engaged with clients, the organization and its purpose. We will be exploring various ways of engaging our staff and in particular our support workers with the broader Anowah team. This is a difficult challenge in our sector, with NDIS pricing assumptions allowing very little non direct client facing time for support workers. However, we will innovate to engage all our staff so they feel connected to Anowah people, the Anowah purpose and Anowah's values.

Continued upgrade of buildings and services

Some exciting property restoration and upgrades are on the drawing board for the coming year. Along with painting and personalization of our client bedrooms, one of our major goals is to restore the patio/terrace area at the back of the new client Hub area. The refurbishment will provide an exciting outdoor living space with new toilet block, flooring, BBQ facilities and large sensory walls with stairs flowing down into the sensory garden.





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