

Annual Report 2022





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Report from NDS President and CEO

Message from Rohan Braddy, NDS President and
Laurie Leigh, NDS Chief Executive Officer

The 2021-2022 year began with large parts of Australia in lockdown and the sector facing the demands of working through an ongoing pandemic, with COVID-19 exacerbating the existing challenges the sector faced with workforce shortages and pricing concerns.

Frustration, uncertainty, and confusion were the main themes of our 2021 State of the Disability Sector report. However, we're pleased to say we have achieved an improvement in the outlook for providers in 2022, and that the year finished on a more optimistic note than it started out on.

The NDS Board established a new strategic direction for the organisation in 2022 with our new NDS Strategy – Towards 2025. This included a commitment to driving sector change through effective and smart advocacy on behalf of our members, and ensuring that the NDIS delivers on its promise for all Australians.

We also created a new staffing structure to help us pursue our new direction. Designed to beef up our lobbying efforts and give State and Territory Managers more time for members, the new structure integrates our work on policy, projects, and advocacy in our priority areas. New appointments in the communications, and policy and advocacy areas were designed to support these efforts.

NDS's advocacy around our submission to the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price

Limits 2022-23 bore some significant results with a 9.1 per cent average-price-increase announced in the review. Our advocacy for compensation for the additional costs that providers had to bear in the pandemic also helped secure an extra \$514 million in one-off payments announced with the pricing review.

Even more important for the long-term health of the sector was our highly successful Teamwork Works campaign. Launched six months before the federal election, this nationwide campaign called on all candidates to clearly commit to a strong NDIS, with proper planning, fair and independent pricing, and a genuine partnership with participants and providers.

Research commissioned by NDS to support the campaign showed that, far from being an economic burden, the NDIS actually boosts the Australian economy by over \$52.4 billion a year. This research has reset the narrative about the economic impact of the NDIS.

NDS worked together with members and our partner Every Australian Counts in a joint campaign to Defend Our NDIS and were successful in achieving significant commitments from parties ahead of the election.

With the election of the Albanese Government reforms have already commenced with a Review of the NDIS being brought forward, and NDS representing providers in discussions with government.



In what was a difficult operating environment for our sector NDS remained financially strong, with a positive operating result. However, over the year, we invested in improving our member services for the future with our digital transformation program, and due to the downturn in global markets we saw a decrease in the fair market value of the investment portfolio (unrealised loss). The combination of these two activities resulted in an overall financial deficit of \$1.54m for the year.

We continued to provide a full range of member services, adapting to the need to conduct many of our conferences, events, and learning and development programs online. We are pleased to see many members are now back to enjoying the face to face opportunities once again.

2022 also saw NDS move away from closed national policy committees to a more inclusive model of communities of practice for our national forums. Open to all members, these communities help members talk to each other about the challenges they're facing, and to us about how we might solve them.

We look forward to having continued, productive discussions and consultations with you, our members. Please keep coming to us with your thoughts, ideas and concerns. You are, after all, why we're here, and we thank each one of our members for your ongoing support and participation.

We would also like to thank the members of our Board, our State and Territory Committees, our former National Committee members, and everyone who has contributed volunteer time and effort to the governance and policy work of the organisation.

Our staff have worked tirelessly throughout the past year as they've continued to provide vital support and services to our members and the sector, and we thank them for their commitment, dedication and contribution.

We look forward to working together in the year ahead to continue to drive impactful change across the disability sector.



Rohan Braddy

Rohan Braddy
President



Laurie Leigh

Laurie Leigh
CEO

About National Disability Services

National Disability Services (NDS) is Australia's biggest and most diverse peak body for disability service providers. From Margaret River to Mission Beach, our membership of over 1,200 organisations support all types of people with disability and do so in all sorts of ways.

But whatever their different services involve and wherever they might provide them, our members often face the same challenges. The NDIS's focus on flexibility has been its greatest asset, empowering people with disability to have far more choice and control. But the scheme still presents our members with obstacles – from fragmentation and financial uncertainty to confusion and tangled red tape.

That's why NDS offers members the chance to bring about change and explore ways to improve the sector. We believe that we are stronger together; that when all of us speak with one voice we create a message certain to be heard by governments.

And we believe that speaking to each other is important as well. NDS members enjoy regular opportunities to pool resources, exchange ideas, and generally talk, learn, teach, network and listen. The collective experience of our members has been this organisation's heart and soul for over 75 years, filling and shaping the body of knowledge that the sector as a whole now relies on.

We also work hard to keep our members informed about day-to-day issues, so they can anticipate and rectify problems when they arise. Along with access to our ever-expanding range of professional and business development tools, members receive regular updates about policies, programs and funding contracts, as well as service delivery and management issues.

Bottom line: NDS helps disability service providers to develop capability, be informed, voice their needs and collaborate to build high-quality and sustainable disability services for people with disability.



Our year in review



Teamwork Works

Fighting to defend the NDIS in the lead up to the federal election

The Teamwork Works campaign led by NDS called on all candidates in the lead-up to the federal election to commit to the integrity of the NDIS and to oppose moves that weaken the scheme.

The campaign also aimed to show the benefits of a strong NDIS by celebrating the partnership between people with disability and the team-members who support them.

The campaign was launched in November 2021 with strong media coverage of Per Capita's False Economy report commissioned by NDS, which showed an annual financial value of the NDIS to the Australian economy of \$52 billion, on top of its social value in providing support for people with disability.

In the months before the election, NDS members worked together with Every Australian Counts (EAC) to show support for the campaign in local communities across Australia, under the joint banner of 'Defend Our NDIS'.

Representatives from NDS, EAC and Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) visited Canberra for the Federal Budget on 29 March to present our campaign open letter and hold meetings with politicians from across the political spectrum.

The campaign launch received widespread media coverage with interviews on The Project and TV news in Canberra, in the

Guardian Australia and the Canberra Times. The launch was advertised in the lead-up to the budget, with targeted Sky News TV ads in Canberra and Facebook advertising promoting the open letter.

In early April, the campaign held a series of 10 virtual Town Hall events focusing on key regions across Australia. NDS members participated in the speaking panel for all these events, which were successful in generating community participation in the National Day of Action activities that followed and raising the profile of the campaign.

The National Day of Action was held on 28 April to rally support for our message to 'Defend Our NDIS' at a crucial time before the May election. People with disability, families, providers, advocates and workers held public events across Australia in more than 20 key federal electorates.

'Defend Our NDIS' events were held in Sydney, Brisbane, Darwin, Perth, Canberra, Hobart and Melbourne, as well as regional areas such as Cairns, Geelong, the Central Coast and the Illawarra.

Around the nation, we sent all candidates the clear message that we need leaders who are committed to ending the cuts to plans and getting the scheme back to its original vision.

On the evening of the Day of Action, the 'Big Night In' virtual event featured guest



appearances from big names like Julia Gillard, David Pocock, Jordon Steele-John, Bill Shorten and Dylan Alcott, and a written response from Linda Reynolds.

In its final two weeks, the campaign focused on online engagement, with a website action for supporters to email their local candidates, and social media content featuring videos from Dylan Alcott, Clare Bowditch and Ben Law, localised data on the economic value of the NDIS in targeted electorates, and a countdown to election day.

Emails were sent out to members and supporters to promote the online activities and a report card on the party policy commitments was sent out to members and promoted on social media in the week before the election.

The campaign set out to make the NDIS an election issue. Two weeks out from the election, the NDIS was rated as the fourth leading election issue by media monitors iSentia. There were 8,660 media mentions for the NDIS in the formal six-week election period alone.

The budget day events in Canberra, the virtual Town Halls, the National Day of Action, the online engagement, and the media coverage

of the campaign all helped put disability policies at the centre of this election.

The economic report from Per Capita had a significant impact in shifting debate during the election to a focus on delivering the benefits of the NDIS.

The campaign also built a network of 94 provider communications and marketing staff, strengthened partnerships between organisations representing people with disability and service providers, and saw a range of providers collaborate around joint activities.

NDS would like to thank everyone who contributed to this successful campaign, including the amazing team at Essential Media who worked tirelessly to produce and promote the campaign events and messages, our 'Defend Our NDIS' partners EAC and AFDO, and most importantly all our members who hosted or supported campaign activities and made the campaign a reality on the ground.

NDS looks forward to consolidating the gains from this campaign as we continue to collaborate across the sector to advocate for government policies that deliver high quality, sustainable services for people with disability.

Membership survey 2022 highlights

Almost 400 members across Australia responded to our annual membership satisfaction survey. The results tell us that NDS is respected in the sector and our members value NDS's unified and collective voice. Our greatest asset, the staff of NDS, are held in high regard, with more than 80 per cent agreeing NDS staff are friendly and helpful and offer credible information and advice. The presence of managers in every state and territory is critical to supporting our members, bringing strength and understanding of the local context in which our members operate.

NDS is committed to driving sector change through effective and smart advocacy on behalf of our members. Our survey tells us your key advocacy priorities for NDS are influencing legislation, policies, and funding at a national and state level, acting as the peak body for disability service providers and providing members with information on key issues.

NDS values our members' commitment and contribution to the disability sector and the Australian community. Together our united and diverse voices influence decision-making and produce stronger outcomes for a thriving and more inclusive disability sector.

What NDS members value

- Unified and collective voice
- NDS is respected in the sector
- NDS staff understand the needs of members
- Membership gives us a voice on issues important to the sector

Strategic member priorities

1. Ensuring the NDIS lives up to its promise (planning, pricing and partnership)
2. Workforce
3. Quality and Safeguarding
4. Future focus (service design, good practice, innovation)
5. Employment of people with disability

Advocacy and policy priorities for NDS members

1. Influencing legislation, policies and funding at national level
2. Acting as the peak body for disability service providers
3. Providing information on key issues
4. Influencing legislation, policies and funding at state level
5. Assisting members to respond to changes in policy and regulation



Conferences and events

NDS events, conferences and e-learning sessions have been attended by more than 70 per cent of NDS members. Ninety per cent of NDS members recommend NDS training, events and conferences.

Communications, most relevant updates

- NDS News Updates
- Royal Commission Updates
- CEO Updates
- COVID-19 Updates

Our members prefer to receive information and updates via email but are split, with half preferring to receive information as it comes to hand and half preferring a weekly digest.

Most valued NDS products and services

1. Learn, Development and Training Hub
2. Quality and Safeguards Hub
3. Royal Commission Hub
4. Zero Tolerance Resources
5. COVID-19 Hub
6. Workforce Hub
7. State Committees
8. NDS Helpdesk

Benefits most used by members

1. Free NDP membership
2. Discounts for NDS or partner events and services
3. NDS Quality portal
4. Salary packaging and payroll

Our focus following your feedback

1. Adopting a more integrated approach to our policy and advocacy work, focused on member priorities
2. Ensuring NDS's member base is representative of the sector
3. Improved tailoring of member benefits to meet the needs of a diverse membership
4. Tailoring communications to meet member needs for concise, accessible, relevant and timely information
5. Returning to more in-person events and training

Policy and advocacy

Trade wars, actual wars. Bushfires, floods. Rising inflation, a raging pandemic. Border closures and recurrent lockdowns. 2021-22 was an extremely tough year, not just in Australia but all over the world.

It seems pretty fair to say, however, that those of us who work in the disability sector have been doing it tougher than most. As Australia's peak body for disability service providers, it's our job to speak up about sector issues on behalf of our members, and push policy makers to tackle them however they can.

To that end, we pursued a busy agenda throughout 2021-22, working with governments, the Agency and the NDIS Commission to implement day-to-day policy and procedural improvements as well as systemic change. We have developed a good working relationship with the new federal government since the May election and feel cautiously optimistic that we'll soon see progress on a wide range of policy fronts.

Relationships with State and Territory Governments

Interacting with public officials is NDS's daily business, as we seek to raise issues on behalf of our members and find solutions to sector concerns. We have developed strong and

productive relationships with governments for many years and worked harder than ever throughout 2021-22 to translate them into results for our members. Our state and territory offices played a key role in several public sector initiatives, working groups and peak bodies, working particularly closely with:

Victoria

- Disability Vaccination Committee
- Department of Health Reform team
- Sector Reform Advocacy Network
- Mental Health Victoria
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Disability in Education Committee
- Office of the Public Advocate
- Transport Accident Commission
- Department of Justice and Community Safety

Tasmania

- Department of Health
- Office of the Senior Practitioner
- Department of Communities
- Department of Skills and Training
- Department of Education

Northern Territory

- Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities – Office of Disability
- Minister(s) for Disability
- Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics



- Department of Health – Senior Practitioner
- Department Health – CHO
- Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs Councils
- NTCOSS

Queensland

- DG and DSDSATSIP (Dept of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships)
- DESBT (Department of Employment, Small Business and Training)
- QDRIC (Queensland Disability Reform Interdisciplinary Committee)
- Qld Health
- Queensland Western Public Health Network
- QDN
- QCOSS

Australian Capital Territory

- ACT Community Services Directorate
- ACT Senior Practitioner
- ACT Health
- Housing Solutions Innovation Group
- Disability Reference Group
- Disability and Carers Policy Group
- Industry Strategy Steering Group
- Restrictive Practices Oversight Committee

- Oversight Group: COVID-19 Plans for People with Disability
- Community Sector Careers Gateway Project

South Australia

- Department of Human Services
- Department of Innovation and Skills
- Department for Environment and Water
- Office of the Public Advocate
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- SACOSS
- Industry Skills Council

Western Australia

- Department of Communities – Office of Disability
- Department Training and Workforce Development
- Local Government Authorities
- Community Skills WA
- Public Sector Commission
- Lotterywest
- Department of Transport, Metronet
- Council of Regional Disability Services
- Peaks Forum
- Delivering Community Services in Partnership Working Group

- Department of Communities Commissioning Working Group
- Curtin School of Allied Health Advisory Board
- Disability Health Network – Executive Advisory Group
- Department of Health – Chief Allied Health Office

New South Wales

- JAS-ANZ
- NSW Health
- NSW Dept of Community and Justice
- Hunter Health Care Working Group
- Council for Intellectual Disability
- ACI Intellectual Disability Network
- NSW Training Services
- NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner
- NCOSS NSW Council of Social Service
- ACWA (Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies)
- Community Housing HIA

Pricing issues

As always, pricing matters were prominent in our discussions with the Agency.

For NDS’s submission to the annual price review, we obtained data on the additional costs service providers have had to bear during the pandemic, as well as the likely costs of the NDIS reform processes being led by Minister Shorten. Particular attention was given to the real costs of delivering attendant care and community participation-type supports, support coordination, plan management, and therapy and nursing support, as well as the Disability Support Worker Cost Model and the Temporary Transformation Payment.

NDS’s submission was well-received by the federal government, which went on to announce a nine percent increase in prices and an additional \$514 million in funding

for registered providers. Funds remaining in participant budgets were also increased by the relevant indexation rates, and transitional arrangements for the pricing of group supports were maintained for another year.

While NDS welcomes these announcements, we remain concerned about the lack of indexation for several support services that leave service providers out of pocket. In the coming years, we will continue to push for prices and funding models that reflect the true cost of service provision

Workforce issues

A shortage of frontline disability support workers, as well as a dearth of allied health workers, was a major issue throughout 2021-22, with low unemployment rates, limited migration, competition from other industries and growing numbers of participants exacerbating an already significant shortfall. COVID-19, of course, played a role too, with limitations on staff working across multiple services, and some workers leaving the sector due to border closures or vaccination concerns.

With an extraordinary 70 per cent of our members already finding recruitment difficult, it’s been estimated that an additional 83,000 workers will be required by 2025 for a skilled, competent and engaged NDIS workforce to ensure people with disability can receive high-quality services and support. We need to entice more suitably skilled people with the right values into the disability services sector, through providing longer contracts, higher wages and free vocational training and other initiatives to turn disability jobs into disability careers.

Throughout 2021-22, NDS didn’t just push for a more a coordinated approach to achieving this goal. We led the way co-chairing a



working group comprised of governments, employers, training and employment service providers, workers and people with disability.

In our submission to the Joint Standing Committee, we also highlighted the need to ensure that NDIS prices better reflect industrial relations contexts and fund training outside participant plans.

SCHADS Modern Award Review

Throughout the year, we made a strong case for greater workforce flexibility in relation to the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Industry Awards, which included minimum of two-hour engagement and new rules around broken shifts and remote work. NDS is now working hard to communicate the impact of these changes to members and adjustments that will need to be made.

ACT New Workforce Service Launches

NDS collaborated with the ACT Office for Disability to provide a service that links community organisations that have excess

workforce with organisations that are having workforce shortages, so they can continue to provide quality services. The program is distinct from a labour hire arrangement: it will be a condition of participation that staff are hosted by only one alternate employer.

NDP Workforce Virtual Conference 23 May 2022

There is no doubt that the NDIS presents one of the largest job creation opportunities in Australian history. It’s been estimated that the NDIS workforce will need to grow by an additional 83,000 full-time equivalent staff to support participants by 2025, while a further 213,000 workers will be needed to replace those leaving the industry due to high turnover.

Even at the best of times, it is difficult for the sector to attract and retain suitably skilled, qualified, resilient and valued workers. So how can these sorts of numbers possibly be achieved during a time already challenged by COVID-19 and the ‘great resignation’?

That was the theme of NDP’s Workforce Virtual Conference, a one-day event designed

to help build and deliver the disability sector workforce of the future. Speakers included:

- Tracy Mackey, NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commissioner
- Renae Lowry, Boosting the Local Care Workforce
- Mel Schlaeger and Cath Mahony, Let's Talk Disability
- Jo Grissard and Kim Windsor, NDIS Quality & Safeguarding Commission
- Dr Kim Atkins, Laurel House
- Andrew Marty, SACS Consulting.

Think Support

In WA, NDS continued to contribute to ThinkSupport, a social media campaign designed to entice young people into careers in the sector and learn more about what employers are looking for.

While the WA Skills Passport was also completed, it will be superseded by a new National Skills Passport platform being developed by DSS.



Job Matching Service

In WA, NDS also led the NDIS Job Matching Service, brokering relationships between providers and employment and training agencies, and working to build sustainable pathways between them.

Extending to remote and regional areas up and down the state, the Service involves:

- workforce planning consultancy services
- identifying and resolving local barriers to recruiting
- providing up-to-date information on state and federal training and employment schemes
- brokering strategic relationships with local training and employment providers.

Gateway to Industry Schools project

Funded by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, this project builds partnerships between schools and industry to expose Queensland school students to a range of learning experiences that will assist them in their career choices and pathways to employment. The project has 29 participating schools operating out of Bundaberg, Logan, Maryborough, Toowoomba, North Brisbane, Bayside and Ipswich.

Victorian Workforce Network

In Victoria, NDS's Workforce Network continued to meet throughout 2021-22, hosting forums and seminars on how to attract good candidates, retain good workers, and use teamwork to encourage resilience.

We contributed to the Government's Skills Plan by advocacy resulting in a comprehensive appendix describing the Disability Sector needs. A partnership with Dr Susan Nancarrow from the AHP Workforce was also established to gather data on workforce shortages and solutions.



WorkAbility

Throughout the year, NDS worked with other organisations in the WorkAbility consortium to examine whether current, emerging and future skills needs might be better addressed through 'micro-credentialing' – an ongoing series of shorter, just-in-time training responses taken throughout a career when and where there's a need.

Housing issues

Safe, accessible, affordable housing is in increasingly short supply all over Australia. And even more investment will be required to address some of the projected shortfalls in partnership with state and federal governments.

That's why NDS and other stakeholders will be holding a major housing summit in early 2023. With experts from all over the world, its speakers and discussion panels will explore new way to address:

- that only six percent of NDIS participants receive SDA in their NDIS plan, leaving

providers to make up the housing cost gap

- the lack of suitable housing in desirable locations (most well-situated government-owned SDA stock is aging, which is resulting in significant vacancies and an existing property portfolio that does not meet the needs of people with disabilities)
- the many vacancies due to plan-approval delays or the difficulty involved in finding other suitable participants with whom one can share supports.

We are also pushing for state and territory governments to:

- provide the private sector with incentives to fast-track the delivery of accessible housing
- recognise that voluntary standards have not resulted in more accessible properties, so there may be a need to make changes to the National Construction Code for Minimal Accessibility Standards
- change tenancy arrangements which prevent non-SDA NDIS participants and others with disabilities from living with SDA participants while still having a higher level of tenancy protections.



SIL issues

NDS has been pushing for improvements to Supported Independent Living (SIL) processes for years now, with a growing number of members rightly feeling concerned about the sustainability of the supports they provide.

In 2021-22, many of those efforts bore fruit. Some of the changes announced throughout the year included:

- a return to a weekly claiming process (aimed at reducing the administrative burden)
- the introduction of a step-down process for managing material reductions in SIL funding (allowing time for the participant and provider to transition to a new funding amount)
- the introduction of a new SIL payment to providers when a participant unexpectedly leaves shared accommodation (to provide a period of continuity for shared supports).

But while such reforms go some way to improving SIL arrangements for participants and providers, they do not address the significant cuts to plans experienced or the general failure of the Disability Support Worker

Cost Model to accurately reflect the real price of supports.

NDS is also still working hard to redress:

- the reduction in funding when participants support needs are reclassified from 'complex' to 'standard'
- the length of time it takes to connect participants to SIL (leaving a vacancy with no ability for the provider to offset the cost of 'running the household').

Disability employment issues

While a great many people with disability still want to work, there has been a concerning decrease in employment rates in recent years. On the supported employment front, numbers have come down by about 20 per cent since 2019.

The number of NDIS participants in employment has stagnated at around 22 per cent in recent years, which is significantly less than the NDIS Participant Employment strategy target of 30 per cent for the end of 2022.

While COVID-19 has obviously been a major factor, it has certainly not been the only one.

In 2021, for example, a new pricing model was introduced for NDIS employment supports, which moved from a flat rate per person to an hourly rate. While most supported employment services have adapted to the new pricing model, some remain concerned that they are facing commercial pressures caused by the increased costs of doing business and a high level of administrative burden imposed by NDIS processes.

NDS has done significant work in WA on this issue to influence a better outcome for supported employees and also remained actively involved in the DES policy reform agenda throughout 2021-22, largely through our role on the DES Reference Group.

Fair Work Commission – review of the SES Award

NDS continued to represent members wage-setting before the Fair Work Commission (FWC) throughout 2021-22, making the case that there needs to be reform, but it should not be rushed.

The year also saw the FWC release the latest directions in its four-yearly review of the Supported Employment Services Award Review and new wage structure. Providers support in principle an increase in wages under an approved wage determination mechanism by the Fair Work Commission. However the increased cost of wages needs to be subsidised during the transition period to ensure that providers remain commercially viable while refining their business and support models.

We have clearly expressed to the FWC that we are keen to be involved in a conference of the parties to narrow any differences and expedite the introduction of a new wage structure. We will keep members informed of any developments in the SES Award review as they arise.

Industry Vision for Supported Employment

Anticipating the need for a better managed process, NDS has developed an Industry Vision for Supported Employment to guide Disability Enterprises through full transition.

To make this vision a reality, a transition assistance package is needed from the federal government to support the business systems required to manage the new processes and the administration of a more complex business model. Without such assistance, we risk a repeat of the recent market failure in Western Australia, with the flow on impacts on affected employees, their families and communities.

For people with disability who want to work or are already working, it's also important that their NDIS plans include sufficient funding to support their participation in employment, as well as other activities. This will help ensure that supported employment remains a viable option for those who choose it.

Industry Vision Reference Group

In the coming year, we will be working with a broad range of stakeholders in our Industry Vision Reference Group on a more comprehensive strategy for employment supports, addressing many of the common concerns in the Group.

Community Practice Webinars

Throughout the year, NDS's Industry Vision Communities of Practice webinars explored a range of employment options in mainstream and community-based settings. We also offered workshops on some of the many commercial benefits of social enterprises.

NDS helping to design a new DES

With the Department of Social Services currently consulting on the design of a new



Disability Employment System, NDS spent much of 2021-22 drafting a new model for its consideration.

Developed in partnership with the National Committee of Open Employment, and a number of members who are DES providers, our bold new direction for DES would include more targeted participant eligibility, a new funding model, new outcome measures, and a new quality and performance framework.

Disability Jobs Connect

In WA, where workforce shortages are particularly pronounced, NDS secured funding from Lotterywest to develop a portal to connect people with disability who are seeking employment with employers who recognise the unique skills and attributes they possess.

Building the Talent Pool

In WA, NDS continued to work with more than 20 public sector agencies to build disability employment confidence in the WA public sector.

The project has established best practice policies and processes and built the knowledge and skills within the public sector to create sustainable culture changes to improve employment pathways and participation for people with disability.

COVID-19 issues

NDS continued to work with members throughout 2021-22 to minimise the commercial and operational impacts of COVID-19.

These impacts were particularly severe at the start of 2022, a period which saw a steep rise in cases and sharp decline in workforce numbers combined with a shift in testing procedures from PCR to RATs. Already reeling from a reduction in income and unable to raise their prices, many NDS members struggled to retain staff in this tight labour market, let alone meet the costs of providing critical overtime supports and a steady supply of PPE.

The financial strain was particularly pronounced for members who offered day or community access supports or who had vacancies in their accommodation supports (which it seemed inappropriate to fill in a pandemic).

While NDS welcomed the federal government's recent one-off crisis funding boost, we will continue to push federal, state and territory governments to provide disability organisations with the ongoing and consistent financial support that they need and deserve to manage such crises.

Rapid Antigen Tests

Throughout 2021-22, NDS lobbied state and federal governments to provide people with disability and the disability workforce with priority access to free or funded RATs, as well as work with providers to establish a distribution system for when such RATs become available.

We also delivered practical health and safety information to disability service providers via:

- videos, webinars, podcasts and social media campaigns to promote vaccines to workers
- a suite of social scripts in 11 languages advocating vaccinations and providing advice on topics such as infection prevention, outbreak management and social isolation
- disability-specific training around preventing infection and managing outbreaks.

Vaccinations

Right from the start of the pandemic, NDS strongly pushed for mandatory vaccinations for disability workers and sought to make it as easy as possible for people with disability to be vaccinated.

In Victoria, we continued to lead the Victorian Disability Vaccine Collaborative, a group of eight disability advocacy organizations working to overcome barriers to vaccination for people with a disability.

In NSW, while NDS welcomed the government's decision to make vaccinations mandatory for frontline staff, we also recognised that its proposed two-week timeframe would have caused some significant issues. NDS therefore worked with NSW Health to enable an extension.

Workforce advocacy

In NSW, we successfully advocated with NSW Treasury for the threshold for JobSaver

payments for not-for-profit organisations to be reduced to better reflect disability service operating models.

In Victoria, where the government's approach to NDIS worker screening requires all new workers in risk-assessed roles to have secured a check before they commence work, we successfully fast-tracked more than 500 applications.

In the ACT, we collaborated with the ACT Office for Disability to provide a service that links community organisations with excess workers to organisations that were having shortages.

News and info

Throughout 2021-22 NDS worked with state and territory governments to keep our members up to date with day-to-day developments and equipped with the latest advice. Our COVID-19 news update, newsletters, online hubs and consultation guides covered:

- mandatory vaccination
- public health orders and extensions
- mask-wearing orders
- free flu and covid vaccination
- free rapid antigen tests
- snap lockdowns
- travel restrictions.

We also continued to host monthly COVID-19 webinars, providing a forum for providers to share information, learn from each other, and discuss the latest issues at hand. Our national COVID-19 Vaccination, Infection Control and Outbreak Management Community of Practice also brought together providers from across the country to discuss and build on best practice.

Meanwhile, a series of NDS webinars – some conducted with the DSS, DEH, NDIA and NDIS Commission – provided attendees with up-to-date, disability-specific guidance and an opportunity to put questions directly to government officials.

Royal Commission issues

NDS kept our members informed during what was another busy year for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Along with well-publicised hearings on the UNCRPD, open employment, supported employment and the experiences of women and girls with disability, the Commission also held hearings on preventing and responding to abuse in disability services.

In April, NDS gave evidence to the Commission on our work with supported employment providers, the challenges facing them in the provision of employment supports, and NDS's Supported Employment Industry Vision. NDS noted the sector has the will to transition to provide greater options for employment for people with disability, but that this transition process will need to be supported by government.

Throughout the year, NDS continued to distribute regular Royal Commission newsletters and provide our members with concise summaries of each hearing as it unfolded. We also expanded our online information hub, adding new material and recruiting expert panellists, to help our members continue to improve current risk-management practices, and look at what they might need to do from a legal and insurance perspective.

A Royal Commission is always going to be challenging. While it might not always feel like it, there are many positives about the Disability Royal Commission. Abuse being uncovered, where it is occurring, is unquestionably a good thing. Gaps in the design of the National Disability Insurance Scheme have been identified, the research arm of the DRC has explored ways to improve community attitudes towards disability, and people with disability have been heard.



Attention on the sector also can mean resources are attributed to issues in a way they haven't been previously; we've seen the beginnings of this in aged care. It's also an opportunity for the sector to reflect about the way things are done and how they could be done differently.

There continue to be many lessons, but three key questions for providers are:

How do providers give choice and voice to people with disability in their organisations and service provision?

Do providers take a proactive approach, are they open and transparent, and do they apologise when they get things wrong?

Do providers constantly reflect on how they provide supports and how this could improve?

Business support

Throughout 2021-22, NDS remained committed to lowering the costs of business and ensuring our members can access all the professional services and resources they need.

Professional Advisory services

NDS's range of free professional advisory services continued to grow in 2021-22, with members enjoying:

- discounts on management consulting services, such as cost optimisation programs, supplier management, process efficiency, contract risk mitigation and specialist knowledge
- exclusive access to NDS's free WHS member-only advice line
- exclusive access to NDS's free legal helpline
- exclusive access to 30 minutes of free advice from NDS's IR/HR advisory service
- a complimentary 20-minute over-the-phone NDIS consultation for small businesses and sole trader members
- 10 minutes of free financial advice.

Member discounts

NDS remains as committed as ever to cultivating partnerships that lower the cost of business and provide our members with expert advice. Thanks to partnerships formed over 2021-22, our members can now enjoy:

- discounts across a range of office products with WINC

- discounted Qantas Club membership
- salary packaging and payroll with AccessPay
- discounts on online recruitment reference checks
- a free fleet appraisal and fleet management discounted services
- access to specialist insurance and risk management advice
- discounted access to NDS Management Support Online (MSO), providing access to hundreds of resources on all aspects of running an organisation
- discounted access to Emprevo, a digital workplace platform for filling shifts.

National Disability Practitioners

Throughout 2021-22, NDS continued to work closely with National Disability Practitioners, NDS's Division of more than 13,000 disability support workers, allied health practitioners, sole traders, leaders, educators, and business support roles and students that aims to 'empower, support and develop the Australian disability workforce'.

All staff within NDS member organisations continued to enjoy access to free NDP membership and its many resources and professional development opportunities.

News and advice

As a member-focused organisation, NDS works hard to keep our members in the know about day-to-day issues, and equipped with all the information, analysis and advice they might need to make good business decisions. Throughout 2021-22, this process involved emailing our members well over a thousand pieces of digital content, including news updates, CEO messages and newsletters.

Among the most popular items were CEO Laurie Leigh's messages about our major pre-election campaign and the National Day of Action. All of these campaign updates harvested high open and engagement rates, reflecting our wide agreement on the importance of the NDIS to the disability sector.

Also highly popular were news updates about our industry vision for supported employment, developments in the Fair Work Commission's SES Award review, and some of the pop-up vaccination clinics that appeared in September.

NDS Help Desk

This was another big year for the NDS Helpdesk, which hosted more than 6000 member visits about a wide range of issues, including employment support, housing support, the NDIS, quality and safeguarding, and travel and transport.

A member benefit accessible via the NDS website, the NDS Helpdesk provides a forum

for members asking questions about the NDIS and disability employment, with expert advice provided by NDS staff. We also continued to use the Helpdesk to post news and policy updates and share information about new resources.

Newsletters

2021-22 also saw NDS distribute several regular newsletters, including:

- Victoria in Focus (Victoria)
- Tasmania in Focus (Tasmania)
- Capital Catchup (Australian Capital Territory)
- Fast Facts Online (Queensland)
- NT News (Northern Territory)
- NDIS Quality & Safeguards Sector Readiness Newsletter (Western Australia)
- State Committee Update (Western Australia).

Nationally, we provided:

- **Events Updates:** fortnightly rundowns of events and training opportunities coming up in each state and territory
- **Royal Commission Updates:** newsletters spotlighting what service providers can do to ensure gold standard practice
- **Training newsletters:** rundowns outlining the webinars, workshops, courses, and conferences coming up from the Learn and Develop team



- **Connections:** roundups of opportunities around the care sector for HR managers
- **Community Services Gateway:** Queensland-based roundups of all the aged, disability, and other community initiatives to recruit school leavers
- **Disability Digest:** a monthly newsletter for our 'Industry Supporters' (organisations that are not disability services but whose market is disability services)
- **News in 90 seconds:** a fortnightly round-up of the latest news, events and collaboration opportunities from NDP.

NDS Website

With almost 1.5 million unique page views, the NDS website remained a vital resource for disability workers all over the country throughout 2021-22.

The most popular pages covered events and training, disability information, COVID and Zero Tolerance.

Social Media

With a 33 per cent increase in followers, it was another big year for NDS's social media profiles on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn (along with our many YouTube accounts for training and projects).

Australian of the Year Dylan Alcott featured in some of our most liked, shared and read social media, with his video calling on candidates to Defend the NDIS especially popular in the run up to the federal election.

The top Facebook post of the year, however, was September's announcement of the Workmate of the Year, while the second-most-popular announced this year's Workmate of the Year competition. These were cross posted from NDP.

On LinkedIn, our post with the most engagement was the handing of the Open Letter to leaders in Parliament House.



The post read:

We handed our open letter directly to leaders in Federal Parliament! Yesterday NDS CEO Laurie Leigh GAICD and Every Australian Counts spokesperson Elly Desmarchelier launched our election campaign activity, before delivering our open letter directly to MPs from all sides of politics - including the Opposition leader Anthony Albanese, Shadow Minister for the NDIS Bill Shorten, Senator Hollie Hughes and Senator Jordon Steele-John.

We told them about the cuts to NDIS individual funding people with disability are experiencing every day, and the pressure workers are under to ensure they can still deliver the support people with disability need to live with dignity. We called on them to defend our NDIS - and it's safe to say, they heard us loud and clear.

Thank you to each and every MP who took the time to meet with us, to every person who signed the open letter, and to all of the people with disability, advocates, and workers who were part of yesterday's event.

#DefendOurNDIS #TeamworkWorks
www.teamwork.org.au

Annual Market Survey

Throughout the year, NDS continued to provide members and policy makers with reliable, evidence-based research and data about the disability sector. Our most important work in this field remained the Annual Market Survey,

Above: 'Defend Our NDIS' campaign representatives from NDS and EAC presenting our open letter to Anthony Albanese and Bill Shorten.

the results of which were again released in our flagship State of the Disability Sector report.

Widely covered in the Australian media, this year's report found that frustration, uncertainty, and confusion are widespread throughout the sector. Survey respondents cited financial hardship, workforce shortages, uneven pricing and an uncertain policy environment as major factors in that malaise.

The report was launched at the CEOs' Meeting in December 2021 and received widespread and ongoing media coverage, particularly in relation to workforce shortages.

National Disability Research Partnership

Throughout 2021-22, NDS continued to participate in the NDRP, a world-class disability research and policy hub which seeks to bridge the gap between research, policy and practice. In its first funding round, the NDRP distributed a million dollars to nine collaborative projects involving academics, advocacy groups, governments and service providers.

Learning and development

Professional development has never been more important. But COVID restrictions and rising costs, meant NDS has had to pivot its offering to continue to meet the needs of our members. Throughout 2021-22, we continued to offer (and update and refine) a wide range of online business and professional development tools, resources and products to assist disability workers with their day-to-day needs.

Throughout 2021-22, we continued to make it affordable and easy for members and their workforce to develop and expand their skills online – and able to do so anywhere, any time.

eLearning

Carefully mapped to the NDIS Practice Standards, NDS's comprehensive suite of online professional development resources continued to build the capability of disability service providers to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality and safe supports for people with disability.

Along with sector-specific topics, many of the modules explore the general challenges of running a business and doing well in a modern-day workplace. Some of the subject areas include:

- Workplace health and safety
- Safe driving
- Mental health
- Personal development

- Emotional intelligence
- Human rights
- Employee rights
- Identifying and responding to suspected abuse
- Quality and safeguarding
- Working with diverse people
- Resolving conflict
- Communicating well
- Managing risks
- Safety and risk management.

Some of the new eLearnings for 2021-22 included modules on Mealtime management, Emergency Management, PPE, Professional Boundaries and Positive Behaviour Support.

Some of our most popular modules were Understanding Abuse, Human Rights and You, Manual Handling and Assist with Medication.

Workshops

NDS ran 36 separate workshops throughout the year, mostly for individual organisations in house, and facilitated a further 31 with our partners. Some of the most popular included:

- Right on Board, facilitated by Alan Hough, Purpose at Work
- Defensible Documentation, facilitated by Donny Raet, PHI
- Let's Talk Disability, facilitated by NDS's Lived Experience Network (LEN).

Networking and events

One of NDS's most important roles is to facilitate sector-wide collaboration and dialogue. Our conferences, events and Communities of Practice provide a platform for members to exchange ideas, foster networks, pool resources and hear from – and talk to – thought leaders.

With online gatherings becoming more common, 2021-22 provided all sorts of opportunities for our members to connect.

Communities of Practice

In a major reform, to better meet the needs of our members, NDS replaced our National Committees in 2021-22 with a series of groups called 'Communities of Practice'. Open to all NDS members and led by subject matter experts with support from our staff, these communities provide members with a regular forum to discuss policy issues within the sector and identify common needs and trends.

A powerful voice for progress, change and continual improvement, the National Communities of Practice were arranged around the following topics:

- children and young people
- housing and support
- NDIS intermediaries
- Disability Employment Services
- quality and safeguarding

- remote and very remote services
- employment supports (social enterprise)
- workforce.

Essential Briefing Series 2021

In September and October, NDS continued to run our Essential Briefing series online, giving members the chance to network with colleagues and subject matter experts from across Australia, and speak up about their priorities and concerns.

While it continued to cover both day-to-day topics and broad themes, this year's briefings and masterclasses also showcased choice and control by giving providers the opportunity to choose their own content.

Disability Hot Topics

2021-22's NDS's Disability Hot Topics events provided members with information about the latest issues facing the sector and, with a relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions, an opportunity for NDS CEO Laurie to meet in person with members.

WA Disability Support Awards

In WA, NDS held the annual Disability Support Awards, attended by 840 people including the Honourable Don Punch MLA, Minister for Disability Services. Designed to recognise and celebrate the significant contribution of individuals and teams who support people



Above: NDS WA Lunch in celebration of International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD)

with disability to achieve their goals, the 2021 awards received widespread publicity, showcasing best practice in support work and promoting the sector as a great place to have a rewarding career.

CEOs' Meeting

Held over two days in December, NDS's annual flagship conference for CEOs and senior leaders presented an extraordinary line-up of speakers, from disability's leading decision-makers and world-class thinkers to innovators and challengers.

The NDIS Support Worker Professional Network

A pilot program that ran through to June 2022, the NDIS Support Worker Professional Network provided a space for disability workers to seek advice, ask questions, share experiences, offer ideas and develop professionally.

NSW Virtual Conference

Attended by over 200 members on 6 April, this year's conference was 'Beyond the bounds' and looked towards the future of disability service provision.

NDP's Workforce Virtual Conference

NDP's workforce conference attracted more than 300 delegates and featured 23 presentations on delivering the disability sector workforce of the future.

Disability at Work Summit

Attended by 280 delegates, this one-day virtual event examined innovative ways to inspire and engage people with disability to embrace employment opportunities in a fast-evolving environment.

NT Disability Services & Inclusion Awards

Held at the Darwin Convention Centre, this year's Awards were another great opportunity to celebrate exceptional individuals who work in the disability sector, as well as some of the other services, organisations, businesses and programs that are committed to improving the lives of people with disability.

Lunch in celebration of International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD)

Co-hosted by Broome broadcaster Sandy Dann and Geraldine Mellet, the NDS Lunch in celebration of IDPWD was attended by more than 700 people at Crown Perth on 3 December. Co-designed by people with disability, the event centred around the theme *Koorl naral naral dandjoo* – ‘on a journey side by side together’ – and highlighted the culture, achievements and stories of Western Australia’s Aboriginal community and people with disability.

The event also showcased the importance of increasing employment opportunities for people with disability through the popular Marketplace, which hosted eight fabulous micro-enterprises.

CEO Roundtables

NDS CEO roundtables provide a platform for senior leaders of local service providers to share their experiences, troubleshoot NDIS-related problems and collectively engage with the NDIA.

NDS and Aged Care Intersect Virtual Forum

With some aged care providers no longer able to operate under a dual legislative system across aged care and disability, NDS partnered with Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) to facilitate its NDIS and Aged Care Intersect Virtual Forum in March 2022.

Member subcommittees

NDS continued to run subcommittees to help members progress issues related to housing, workforce planning and supports for young people and families.



NT Disability Services & Inclusion Awards



NSW Disability Hot Topics Breakfast



SA Disability Hot Topics Breakfast

Disability support

All over the world, people with disability face an unacceptably high risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, along with a raft of attitudinal and systemic disadvantages. That’s why NDS continued to work with disability organisations, service providers, academics, businesses and statutory bodies throughout 2021-22 to put these issues on the public agenda and do all we can to address them.

Above all else, we remained committed to ensuring that disability support workers, families and practitioners have all the resources and training they need to safeguard the rights of the people they support and provide them with first-class care. We continued to develop training aids to that end, including e-learning programs, practice guides and a well-received series of films.

Zero Tolerance resources

Throughout 2021-22, NDS continued to expand and update our Zero Tolerance resources hub.

Run in partnership with the Australian disability sector, this collection of more than 150 online resources now includes an e-learning program about human rights and a webinar exploring the important role that disability service organisations have to play in preventing the abuse of children and vulnerable adults. NDS’s Zero Tolerance resources hub has been visited over 108,000 times since it launched in 2013.

Practice Standards resources

With new NDS Practice Standards now in place, NDS was quick to revise our online guide to include the new Mealtime Management and Emergency and Disaster Management requirements along with changes to a number of other quality indicators.

We also partnered with Breaking New Ground, which provides the NDS Quality Portal, an online platform that helps providers understand and streamline their NDIS Practice Standards obligations.

Quality and Safeguards resources

Throughout 2021-22, NDS continued to help Australian disability service providers meet the requirements of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards (Q&S) framework with our extensive suite of online resources. We also continued to:

- disseminate newsletters
- answer queries
- host our Q&S Community of Practices
- deliver workshops, forums and in-house training in key areas such as incident management, complaints, behaviour support, continuous improvement, preventing abuse and neglect, and audit preparation
- provide one-on-one specialist consultancy to address specific needs.

Behaviour Support Training

In WA, NDS delivered two rounds of Behaviour Support Training, a 12-week online training course aimed at increasing the state's number of appropriately skilled behaviour support practitioners.

Let's Talk Disability

Let's Talk Disability is a fun, interactive, half-day workshop run and led by people with lived experience of disability. Workshops were delivered all over the country throughout 2021-22.

Office of Disability

In WA, an Office of Disability was established to implement and monitor the State Disability Strategy 2020-30. NDS was a strong advocate for this development.

ACROD Parking Program (WA)

In WA, the eligibility criteria for an ACROD Parking permit was expanded to include West Australians who are legally blind, including people with guide dogs. NDS is proud to manage the program, which has supported West Australians for over 40 years.

Ready to Go Home project

Many people with disability experience barriers to hospital discharge, despite being medically ready. In WA, NDS's Ready to Go Home (RTGH) project is a three-year project that aims to reduce such delays and smooth the transition to community settings.

Domestic and family violence training resources for the disability workforce

Disability service providers have an important role to play in the lives of women with disability who are experiencing domestic and family violence. To that end, NDS developed a set of resources designed to help staff respond to

disability and domestic and family violence, at both a worker and organisational level.

Regional and Remote Expansion and Development Fund

In WA, NDS's Regional and Remote Expansion and Development Fund helped 12 projects bring a broader range of sustainable, quality NDIS services to regional and remote areas of WA. The projects are being delivered over 12 to 24 months all over the state, from the Kimberley to the Pilbara.

Clinical Innovation Intellectual Disability Health Network

In NSW, NDS remained a member of the Agency for Clinical Innovation Intellectual Disability Health Network throughout 2021-22. The Network aims to help health services sector staff and other service providers to better understand and meet complex and multiple health needs of people with an intellectual disability and their carers.

We also continued to sit on the Council for Intellectual Disability working group, to deliver a program of activities that aims to promote and embed the right to decision-making and support for decision-making for people with disability.

Membership awards



NDS's Membership Recognition Awards acknowledge the loyalty, support and contributions of long-serving members. In December 2021, 37 such organisations were recognised for their long-standing and productive partnerships.

30 years of continued membership

Ability Works Australia
Brightwater Care Group
Castle Personnel Services
Chinese Parents Association
- Children with Disabilities Inc
genU
Kirinari Community Services
Macarthur Accommodation System
Our Voice Australia Inc
Seton Villa
The Flagstaff Group

50 years of continued membership

Deaf Children Australia
Help Enterprises

40 years of continued membership

Multicap Tasmania
Muscular Dystrophy Association of NSW
Nadrasca
Oak Tasmania
SensesWA
Spinal Cord Injuries Australia
Spinal Life Australia
Villa Maria Catholic Homes
Xavier Children's Support Network

20 years of continued membership

Ability Care Ltd
Albury Wodonga Community College
- Aware Programs
Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)
CONNECT GV
Distinctive Options
Elouera Association
Encompass Community Services
Headway Adult Development Program
Kurrajong
Langford Support Services
Marriott Support Services
Mental Health Association of Central Australia
Product Action Incorporated
Samaritans Foundation
Wesley Mission
Windarring Limited

NDS Board



Rohan Braddy
President
Chief Executive Officer
Mambourin Enterprises
Limited



Donna Bain
Vice-President
(to 5 Aug 2021)
Tasmania Chair
(to 5 Aug 2021)
General Manager
Self Help Workplace inc



Mark Kulinski
South Australia Chair
Chief Executive
Community Living
Australia



Nadia Lindop OAM
Elected Member
Chief Executive Officer
MJD Foundation Ltd



Annie Rily
Vice President
(from 17 Aug 2021)
Northern Territory Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Carpentaria Disability
Services



Cassie Atchison
Elected Member
(from 6 Dec 2021)
Chief Executive Officer
Broome Regional
Aboriginal Medical
Services (BRAMS)



Joan McKenna Kerr
Western Australia Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Autism Association of
Western Australia Inc



Philip Petrie
New South Wales Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Allevia Limited



Warwick Cavanagh
Elected Member
Chief Executive Officer
Bayley House



Chris Christodoulou
Elected Member
(to 6 Dec 2021)
Chief Executive Officer
Greenacres Disability
Services



Elizabeth Sutton
Queensland Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Ingham Disability
Support Services



Eric Thauvette OAM
Australian Capital
Territory Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Hartley Lifecare



Laura Collister
Victoria Chair
(to 18 Aug 2022)
Chief Executive Officer
Wellways Australia Ltd



Hayley Dean
Victoria Chair
(from 18 Aug 2022)
Chief Executive Officer
Melba Support Services



Gordon Trewern
Elected Member
(to 6 Dec 2021)
Chief Executive Officer
Nulsen Group *(to Jul 2022)*
Group CEO, PeopleKind
Group *(from Jul 2022)*



Julie Waylen
Elected Member
(from 6 Dec 2021)
Chief Executive Officer
Diversity South Inc



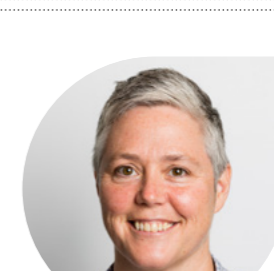
Mark Jessop
Tasmania Chair
(from 5 Aug 2021)
CEO
Nexus Inc.



Melanie Kiely
Elected Member
(from 6 Dec 2021)
Chief Executive Officer
Good Sammy Enterprises
(to Feb 2022)
Chief Executive Officer
MSWA *(from Feb 2022)*



Kirsty Minton
Company Secretary, NDS
Chief Operating Officer,
NDS



Laurie Leigh
Company Secretary, NDS
(from 17 Aug 2021)
Interim CEO, NDS *(from*
12 Jul 2021),
Chief Executive Officer,
NDS *(from 10 Jan 2022)*

Auditor: Ernst & Young



Board committees*

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee assists the Board to ensure that NDS is governed by its legal, constitutional, and ethical obligations as well as assisting the Board to establish and maintain its governance processes.

Chair:

Mark Kulinski

Members:

Eric Thauvette OAM
Joan McKenna Kerr
Mark Jessop

President:

Rohan Braddy

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer
Chief Operating Officer

Audit, Risk and Investment Committee

The Audit, Risk and Investment Committee assists the Board in managing organisational risk, compliance and overseeing NDS's financial reporting, internal control, audit processes, as well as the implementation and review of the Investment and Reserves, and Risk Management Framework policies.

Chair:

Nadia Lindop OAM

Members:

Julie Waylen
Laura Collister
Melanie Kiely

President:

Rohan Braddy

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer
Chief Operating Officer
Financial Controller

Auditor:

Ernst & Young

Communications Committee

This Committee provides advice to the Board on key communication initiatives that will strengthen the brand and affect the organisation's reputation within the market.

Chair:

Philip Petrie

Members:

Annie Rily
Cassie Atchison
Laura Collister
Warwick Cavanagh

President:

Rohan Braddy

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer
Head of Communications

*as at 30 June 2022

National committees

In accordance with NDS's Board Charter the Board determines policies and responses to issues affecting NDS's membership and the sector more generally. Such decisions on policies or issues may be delegated to a designated Committee from time to time. The nine NDS National Committees in 2021-22 were:

Children and Young People

The Committee seeks to promote the interests and wellbeing of children and young people with disability and their families in Australia through the exchange of information and the provision of policy advice that informs effective and quality service delivery.

Housing and Support

The Committee seeks to promote policy and practice across Australia that improves the accommodation support and housing options for people with disability consistent with the National Disability Strategy.

Supported Employment

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice in the area of supported employment; to represent the views of members; and to provide a national focus on supported employment issues within NDS membership, with the overall objective of improving effectiveness and quality in the delivery of these services across various jurisdictions, for the ultimate benefit of people with disability.

Workforce

The Committee seeks to provide a national focus to workforce issues as they affect providers and, as part of this, will facilitate the exchange of information and the development of strategies. This will include consultation with other National Committees on relevant matters.

Open Employment

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice in the area of open employment; to represent the views of members; and to provide a national focus on open employment issues within NDS membership, with the overall objective of improving effectiveness and quality in the delivery of these services across various jurisdictions, for the ultimate benefit of people with disability.

NDIS Operations

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice on operational issues faced by providers under the NDIS.

NDIS Intermediaries

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice on issues associated with the operations of local area coordinators, support coordinators and plan managers.

Quality and Safeguarding

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice on issues associated with the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework, and the operations of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Remote and Very Remote

The Committee seeks to provide policy advice on issues associated with the provision of disability in remote and very remote areas.



State and Territory Divisional Committees

During the Year 2021-22 until the 2022 Divisional Election

Australian Capital Territory	New South Wales	Northern Territory
Chair: Eric Chauvette OAM	Chair: Philip Petrie	Chair: Annie Rily
Vice-Chair: Hugh Packard Nadine Stephen	Vice-chair: Caroline Cuddihy	Vice-Chair: Lawson Broad Nadia Lindop OAM
Members: Pam Boyer Tracey Hall Wayne Herbert Dougie Herd Lisa Kelly Anne Kirwan Lisa McPherson Kylie Stokes	Members: Margaret Bowen David Carey Andrew Daly Stephen Doley Lewis Kaplan David Kneeshaw Deb Sazdanoff Julia Squire Brett Thompson Rosy Walia Allan Young	Members: Kerry Bosch Robyne Burrridge Anne Gawen Kim McRae Steve Vitone

South Australia	Victoria	Western Australia
Chair: Mark Kulinski	Chair: Laura Collister	Chair: Joan McKenna Kerr
Vice-Chair: Peter Stewart	Vice-Chair: Hayley Dean	Vice-Chair: Marina Re
Members: Kyp Boucher Liz Forsyth Michelle Holian Sue Horsnell Jenny Karavolos Cathy Miller Andrew Ramsey Simon Rowberry John van Ruth Helen Sheppard	Members: Drew Beswick Rohan Braddy Warwick Cavanagh Jennifer Fitzgerald Phil Hayes-Brown Kate MacRae Tom Scarborough Terry Symonds Natasha Williams	Members: Frances Buchanan Justine Colyer Paul Fleay Darren Ginnelly Kathy Hough Rosie Lawn Dawn McAleenan Justin O'Meara Smith Gordon Trewern Caroline Watt
	Ex Officio Members: Rohan Braddy Warwick Cavanagh	Ex Officio Members: Cassie Atchison Melanie Kiely Julie Waylen
Queensland	Tasmania	
Chair: Liz Sutton	Chair: Mark Jessop	
Vice-Chair: Brett Casey	Vice-Chair: Nigel Hill	
Members: Mariejan Bigby Brett Casey Kym Chomley Rachel Freeman Rob Galea Richard Littler Bryan McCormick Terry O'Toole Amena Reza Liz Sutton Mark Townend	Members: Donna Bain David Brennan Deborah Byrne Ruth Chalk Emily Daniels Melinda Ferrier Dee-Anne Kapene Russell Penman John Rowland Belinda Smith Allyson Warrington Keryn Welch	

Performance overview

Summary

For the financial year ending 30 June 2022, NDS achieved a net operating deficit of \$1.54M (2021: \$1.0M surplus).

The deficit from Company operations was \$772.2K, substantially better than the board-endorsed budgeted loss of \$1.14M. The budget position was established to support strategic expenditure & investment for Digital Transformation and to enhance the offerings under Learn & Develop.

During the year, the Company revisited its approach to investment to obtain improved returns from retained earnings, providing capital growth which can subsequently be used to support the strategic objectives of NDS. An investment portfolio of \$8M was established in December 2021. Soon after, there was a sharp downturn in global markets, which has resulted in a further deficit of \$766.3K for the year, representing a decrease in the fair market value of the investment portfolio. It is noted that this represents an unrealised loss as the Company has taken a long-term (5-7 year) view on this investment and has not made any significant alterations to the composition of the investment portfolio during the reporting period.

Net assets remain strong, despite decreasing to \$16.09M (2021: \$17.63M). The current ratio (current assets: current liabilities) was 1.57 (2021: 1.60).

NDS income 2021-22

Total income received in 2021-2022 was \$20.55M, compared to FY21 total income of \$22.89M, a decrease of 10.2 per cent. 49.9 per cent of revenue for the organisation was related to projects being undertaken by NDS to support the sector (2021:49.7 per cent).

NDS acknowledges the support of the Federal, State and Territory Governments and Philanthropic bodies that provide funding for these initiatives.

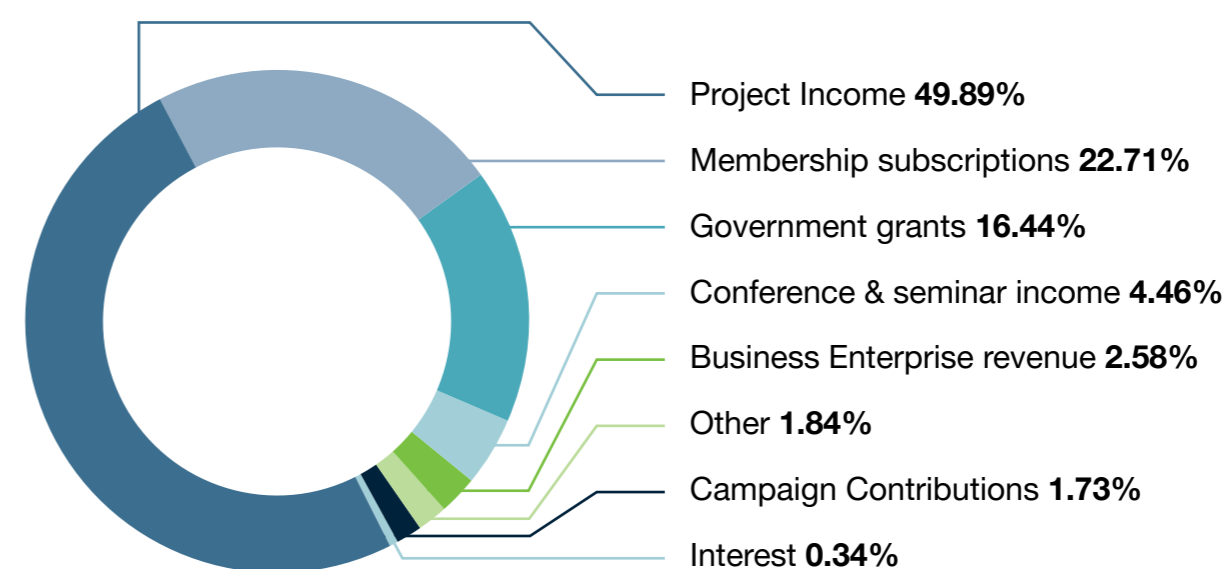
Other major sources of income were: NDS and NDP membership subscriptions (22.7 per cent; FY21 18.9 per cent); government grants (16.4 per cent; FY21 16.1 per cent); conference and events income (4.5 per cent; FY21 3.6 per cent), and member's campaign contributions towards the Teamwork Works Campaign (1.7 per cent; FY21 0 per cent).

A full set of audited financial statements is available on request, please email: nds@nds.org.au.

Income 2021-22

Income	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Government grants - Operating	3,379	3,674
Membership subscriptions	4,668	4,328
Conference and seminar income	916	821
Project income	10,252	11,383
Business Enterprise / Contract management	531	788
Rental Income	72	33
Finance Income	69	81
Campaign Contributions	356	–
Other	306	1,776
Total revenue	20,550	22,885

Graph 1: Income 2021-22



NDS expenditure 2021–2022

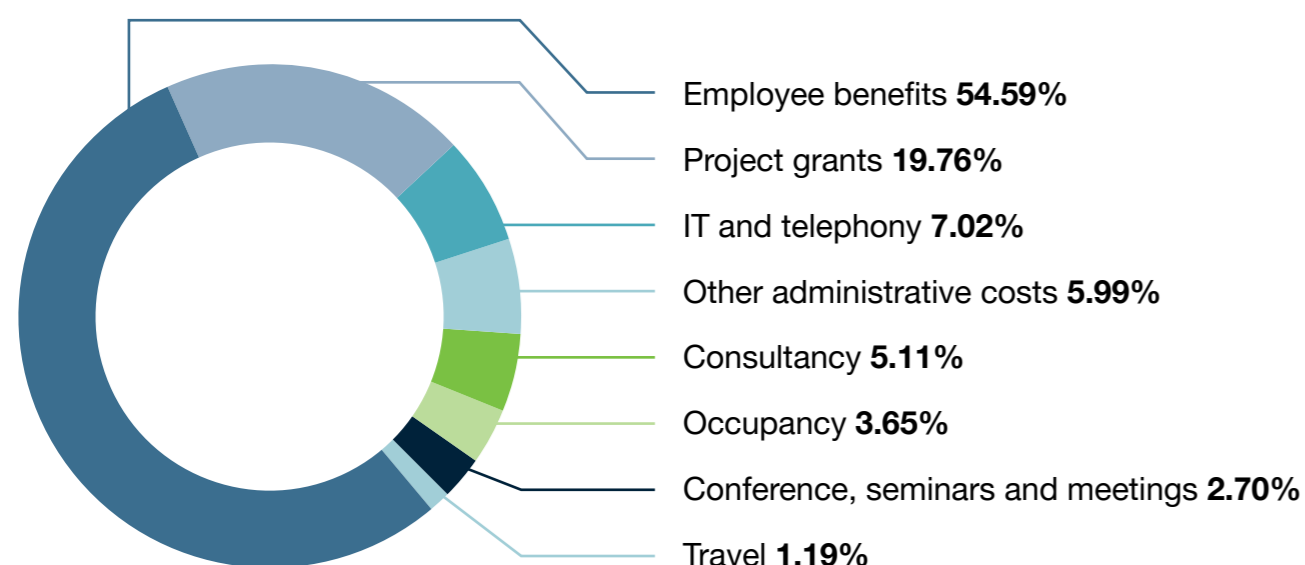
Total operating expenditure (excluding the unrealised loss on investment) for the year decreased by 2.56 per cent to \$21.3M (2021: \$21.9M).

Employment costs make up the largest area of expense incurred by the organisation (54.6 per cent; 2021: 58.8 per cent). Other principal expenses were: expenses related to grants and other project activities issued to service providers (19.8 per cent; FY21 14.1 per cent), and IT and Telephony (7.0 per cent; FY21 8.2 per cent).

Expenditure 2021-22

Expenses	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Employee benefits	11,640	12,866
Consultancy	1,089	808
Advertising	81	135
Conferences, seminars and meetings	575	325
Project grants and activities	4,214	3,075
IT and telephony	1,496	1,800
Occupancy	777	785
Travel	253	150
Other administrative costs	1,197	1,939
Total expenditure	21,322	21,883

Graph 2: Expenditure 2021-22



Assets and liabilities

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

Assets	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	25,886	33,426
Financial assets (excl cash) at fair value	7,064	0
Other current assets	1,845	2,545
Total current assets	34,795	35,971
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	3,697	3,959
Right of Use Asset	384	536
Total non-current assets	4,081	4,496
Total assets	38,875	40,467
Liabilities	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	2,147	1,392
Provisions	437	308
Employee benefit liabilities	821	1,019
Lease liabilities	55	548
Unearned revenue	18,717	19,217
Total current liabilities	22,177	22,485
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	32	32
Employee benefit liabilities	232	280
Lease liabilities	342	38
Total non-current liabilities	606	350
Total liabilities	22,782	22,835
Net assets	16,093	17,632

In memoriam

Vale Michael Sumner

NDS is saddened by the passing of Michael Sumner, a fierce advocate for quality service provision in the disability sector and a past President of NDS from 1997 to 2000 when the organisation was known as ACROD.

Michael was an industry leader, who worked hard and effectively on behalf of ACROD's members. He helped guide ACROD during a period of significant external and internal change.

Michael was a member of ACROD's Board from 1993 until 2001. During these years, ACROD benefited enormously from Michael's generosity of time and effort on behalf of members, his political astuteness and his leadership skills.

His term as President saw ACROD develop new governance policies, which represented an important step forward in the maturing of ACROD as a modern, professional and effective peak body.

As a former President of ADEPT (Association for Disability Employment and Training) in NSW, Michael was pivotal in initiating the successful merger of ACROD with ADEPT.

He chaired ACROD's National Committee of Employment and Training during a period of significant policy change for disability employment services. His commitment to disability employment assistance recognised that progress depended on creating a robust service sector.

For 11 years, Michael was also a very successful and popular Chief Executive of Disability Services Australia (then known as Amaroo Industries) where he oversaw significant growth in supported employment services and also provided open employment options for participants well before it was common practice.

Michael was elected as an NDS Life Member in 2003.

NDS passes on our condolences to Michael's family and recognises his important role in transforming NDS in a difficult time and improving service provision for people with disability.

Vale Michael.

Vale Chris Hawken

Our former NDS colleague and friend Chris Hawken sadly passed in May after a battle with cancer.

Chris was already a leader in the Victorian disability sector when came to work with us at NDS. He was hard working, hard driving, funny, intelligent, wise and a generous mentor to many.

We remember Chris as an absolute asset to the sector, service providers and people with disability, who he was committed to supporting in his work.

At NDS, Chris worked on the Buyability project and then as a very successful Workforce Connector, working tirelessly to help local providers find innovative solutions to disability workforce issues. On departing NDS, Chris continued to work in the sector with the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program.

While Chris enjoyed a competitive challenge, he was always willing to share information and support those of us who worked with him. He could always be depended upon to see the bigger picture and identify opportunities for partnership and collaboration for the betterment of our sector and the people with disability it supports.

Even towards the end of his life, Chris didn't waver from his positive attitude and bravery in the face of his battle with cancer. His concern was for his wife Julie and their children Siobhan, Liam, Rachel, Michelle, Robert, and Suzie along with grandchildren, Abbey, Noah, Jaxon, Ollie and Josie.

Vale Chris.

Vale Steve Daley

NDS was saddened to learn of the recent passing of our friend and former Tasmanian State Committee member, Steve Daley OAM, on 7 August.

Steve had a long and distinguished career serving the community – for 33 years working at Devonfield Enterprises, retiring in 2018. NDS was fortunate to have Steve serve on our State Committee for several years from 2013 to 2018.

In 2006, Steve was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community through organisations providing care, support and rehabilitation for people with disabilities and their carers, and to a range of sporting groups.

We pass on our condolences to Steve's family and friends.

Vale Steve.

Senior Leadership Team

CEO

Laurie Leigh (*Interim CEO from Jul 2021*)
(*CEO from Jan 2022*)

Kirsty Minton (*Acting CEO Jun 2021*
to Jul 2021)

Executive Assistant to CEO

Charlie Heywood

Chief Operating Officer

Kirsty Minton

Financial Controller

Gayle Reed

Human Resources Manager

Priya Subramanyan (*to Oct 2021*)
Katrina Hawkins (*from Mar 2022*)

Director of Member Services and Marketing

Belinda Allen

Director of Communications

Steven Gosbell (*Head of Communications*
to Oct 2021)

Carolina Pachioli (*Acting Head of*
Communications Oct 2021 to Jan 2022)

Andrew Beswick (*from Jan 2022*)

Director of Policy and Advocacy

Philippa Angley (*Head of Policy to Jul 2022*)
Emily Forrest (*from September 2022*)

Heads of Policy

Kerrie Langford (*Head of Employment*)

Sarah Nicoll (*Head of Quality and Safeguards*
from Jul 2022)

Dianne Hardy (*Acting Head of Workforce*
from Jul 2022)

Senior Manager, State and Territory Operations

Karen Stace (*to 30 Jun 2022*)

ACT Territory Manager

Kerrie Langford (*to Jul 2022*)
Jo Huxley (*from Jul 2022*)

NSW State Manager

Karen Stace (*to Aug 2022*)
John Yealland (*acting, from Aug 2022*)

QLD State Manager

Ian Montague (*to Apr 2022*)
Jason McKey (*from Apr 2022*)

TAS State Manager

Alice Flockhart (*to Feb 2022*)
Renee Malby (*from May 2022*)

WA State Manager

Julie Waylen (*to Sep 2021*)
Coralie Flatters (*from Nov 2021*)

NT Territory Manager

Stephanie Ransome (*to Jan 2022*)
Mick Fallon (*from Mar 2022*)

SA State Manager

Peter Hoppo (*to Aug 2021*)
Janine Lenigas (*from Oct 2021*)

VIC State Manager

Sarah Fordyce



National Disability Services Annual Report 2021–22

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Contact: comms@nds.org.au

Data used in this report is drawn from the most accurate information available at the time of writing.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many people who have agreed to allow photographs of themselves to be used in various NDS publications.

National Disability Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians across the lands in which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

nds.org.au

