

## CEO Report – Stephanie Gunn

It goes without saying that 20/21 was a challenging year for Gateways as it was for most other areas of the community. Each lockdown saw different scale, evolving risks and changing service design and staff needs. I am proud of our staff resilience and commitment to absorb these changes and just keep keeping on.

During this topsy-turvy time, readiness for the next 5 to ten years direction signalled by our strategic plan, and to ensure we are well placed for the changes expected and needed by our participants became even more important. In response we continued a comprehensive organisational design process.

Organisational design is much broader than just the restructure that you may have heard of. The organisational design process aimed to maximise our capabilities to achieve our strategy. It has engaged us in a deliberate process of configuring structures, processes, system and people practices and policies to create an effective organisation capable of achieving our strategy.

It has helped us articulate the capabilities we need to build and skills required to do this and the scale of gaps in our systems and processes that are required to enable us to meet the NDIS expectations going forward. It has also shown us some remarkable small pockets of capabilities that we will look to grow during 21/22.

At the same time we have made some remarkable contributions to the lives of participants that we support and to the sector more widely. You will see these documented in this report. These are stories that show the endless courage, commitment and creativity of our staff in responding to the needs of our families. This will be what continues to drive us.

It was with much excitement that in May 2021 we officially received our accreditation with the National Quality and Safeguard Commission with strong recognition from the Auditor as to our governance, processes and quality of focus on our clients.

But importantly we have had the pleasure of feedback along the lines below:

- “Micheala is probably the most competent and confident support worker I have ever interviewed in relation to enteral feeding and management”.
- Against Module 1 we were higher than average service.
- It is clear that Gateways is a strength based, evidence based, family and client centered service with a very mature & robust support system.
- All staff showed enthusiasm for what they do and were very informed in their work place practices.
- They found the ISR and Rec teams to have “planning, assessment, individual risk – highest quality”.
- Participants were “positive, happy and linked closely to our service.
- The Behaviours support team and support worker connection was “extremely strong” and of the highest quality.
- We have “very mature governance which has progressed well and improved more (from the last audit).
- Staff files were structured, clear and good quality.

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We have also slowly increased our externally focused engagement - providing submissions to enquiries on SIL and ECEI and the Masterplan for the sales yard and we drove an initiative to drive procurement efficiencies across the sector. We have provided our expertise to a new project exploring how best to support parents of children with complex disability and expanded our program assisting parents with disability in size in Barwon and to expand to Western Melbourne.

We also welcomed our second sub-tenant at Thompson Road – MACS and are excited by the shared vision of research, programs and expertise into aging, dementia and intellectual disability. Our expansion of activities for those over 65 including through the development of a program of reminiscence therapy in Western Melbourne foreshadows a growth in our commitment in this area.

We commenced construction of our ‘Learn to ride’ track at Thompson Road. We expanded both our office space and our housing solutions in Barwon and Warrnambool. We have completed the implemented Riskman to ensure more consistent recording of risks and incidents and to allow for more comprehensive continuous improvement.

We saw the first ever jumble sale organised by our Auxiliary and had the honour of many sponsors continuing to contribute to the Gateways Auxiliary Golf day.

However, on top of COVID changes in demand, our financial performance has not been as strong as it has been in recent years which has identified a clear pathway for improvement going forward, including:

- A focus on sustainable financial charging practices.
- Increased responsiveness and flexibility to client demand.
- Investing in our staff to build capability in future priorities such as enhancing outcomes for our clients.
- Investing in systems, processes and practices so that we are more efficient enabling resources to be targeted back to participant need.
- Building on our expertise and passions for great outcomes for those with complex needs and those with autism and intellectual disability in partnership with others.
- Finding more ways to mitigate the impact of COVID including ensuring our risk assessments are aligned to others in the sector.

**I am grateful to those staff who have embraced the need for change and who are excited by what 2021/22 will bring as we move forward to celebrating our 40th year.**