

annual report

achieve
australia

inclusion comes to life



2020 | 21

acknowledgement

Achieve Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise the enduring relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Country and that sovereignty was never ceded.

Achieve is also proud to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We accept the invitation from the Uluru Statement to all Australians to support constitutional and structural reform so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can take their rightful place in our nation including being a voice to our Federal Parliament.



Our Passion is social inclusion for people with disability.

Our Purpose is to build extraordinary lives, supporting people with disability to be well, have a home, choose a career, learn new skills, participate in their community and enjoy a full life.

We live by **our Principles** of inclusiveness, stewardship, extraordinary outcomes and ethical practices.

welcome to the Achieve Australia Annual Report for 2020-2021

COVID continued to keep us on our toes over the year, but we were well prepared after developing robust procedures and practices across all our services and functions in the first few months of the pandemic. The safety of our clients was paramount for everyone.

This was made more challenging by the fact the government did not follow through on its promise to ensure people with disability, their families and carers and the people who support them would be a priority for COVID vaccination. Lobbying for access to COVID vaccination was one of our areas of advocacy throughout the year. We provide more details of our advocacy efforts later in this report.

COVID meant our staff had to navigate a continually changing environment and without the support for vaccination, they were even more vigilant about COVID safety and infection control. We prioritised training for our staff to protect everyone and teams could request refresher training during the year. We are proud of the way our frontline worked with purpose and determination to keep our clients at the centre of all our actions while also considering the welfare of our team.

We made great use of the My Life at Home program of activities developed in March to keep our clients engaged during periods of lockdown. Frontline staff supported our clients to face life's difficult milestones such as missing a

family event or being unable to attend a much-loved job for a period of time due to lockdown. We took Global Talks for families online for COVID safety but also to make it easier for families and carers to attend and talk directly to me and other members of the team.

Staff also made the most of those times when the government lifted lockdown to get our clients out and about in COVID safe ways. Examples include a trip to Queensland for our Achieve bowling team, The Lachlan Tigers, as well as a 90th birthday party for a much-loved client. We hope you enjoy reading about these and other occasions and events further in this report.

We also completed a restructure process for our frontline management with input from the people we support and their families and carers. A restructure of the rest of our frontline staff is now underway to provide our people with greater supervision and training.

There have been many other high points this year. We saw the opening of a Central Coast store and warehouse for The Sewing Basket and the team

at AchievAble Enterprises win new business. We also worked through the NDIS Accreditation process and won praise for our policies and procedures. Another major highlight was developing our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. Developing the plan has been a collaborative effort led by a Strategy Planning Committee that included members of our Board, the Executive and Senior Leadership Team. Here too we asked for input from our clients, their families and carers but also our staff and thought leaders in disability.

We also acted on a decision by our Board to support disability scholarship and thought leadership by establishing The Achieve Foundation. You will find more detail about the Foundation in this report.

We brought on other new colleagues at all levels of the organisation with each recruit bringing fresh perspectives to Achieve while sharing our commitment to delivering great services to our clients.

It's been such a productive and inspired year on all fronts.

Thank you to the Achieve Australia Board of Directors for providing us with guidance and enthusiastic support, particularly in developing the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan.

We also thank the Executive, Senior Leadership Team, our staff, and volunteers for forging such a professional path through the uncertainty created by COVID to deliver so much excellent work.

Thank you to our clients and their families and carers for working with us so positively this year.

And finally, big thanks to The Ian Potter Foundation for a community grant that helped us open a new store and warehouse for The Sewing Basket. And our heartfelt thanks to our wonderful volunteers at The Sewing Basket who do such a great job mentoring our employees.



Jo Anne Hewitt
CEO Achieve Australia



Richard Dinham
Chair, Achieve Australia



our year in review

Riding the COVID roller coaster

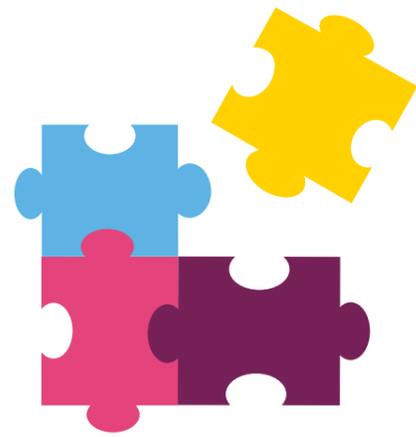
Achieve Australia deployed well developed COVID tools including safety procedures, infection control, exposure responses, running My Life at Home to keep the people we support engaged and much more. Read more from page 8.

Maintaining a strong house

On page 14 we discuss the important work completed over the year beyond COVID. This includes NDIS accreditation, a restructure of our frontline and launching new programs including Quality Champions. We also held our awards recognising great staff performance and even picked up external awards for being a great employer.

CEO marks first anniversary

In August, Achieve Australia CEO Jo-Anne marks her one-year anniversary at the helm.



Bringing inclusion to life for the people we support

Throughout the year we worked with the people we support to create activities in their homes when people were told to isolate from COVID and to get back in the community safely once lockdown lifted. We tell you more on page 12.

Speaking in support of people with disability

We don't speak for our clients, but we do speak up about issues that impact their rights, health and wellbeing. Our advocacy agenda over the year included speaking directly to political leaders as well as making submissions to important work impacting people with disability. Learn more on page 22.

Spring marks new beginnings

In September we launched the Strategic Plan 2020-2023. Walking our talk on inclusion started with including the voices of the people we support, their families and carers, our staff and key industry thinkers in developing the plan (see page 18). We also welcomed Dr Kirsty Nowlan to lead the work to establish The Achieve Foundation (page 23).

Going virtual

We launch Global Talks in September as an online event for clients and their families and carers to hear from our CEO and other Executives and Managers about service delivery for their loved ones. Major events in our sector such as the annual Sydney Disability Expo also move online, and we learn how to become a virtual exhibitor. In October, participants at our Community and Lifestyle Program at Araluen help out the AchievAble team by packing showbags for a client to sell online after the Royal Easter Show cancelled its live event but made merchandise available for sale online.

A world of colour and sound at Summer Hill House

A colourful self-guided walk past large installations representing well-known global destinations in Europe, Africa and the Americas is set up at Summer Hill House in November for clients and their families and carers. Summer Hill's World Adventure also features a soundscape to reflect the images. It's a big success and lots of fun attracting 50 bookings and a lot of smiles. See the images on page 12.

Celebrating our people

The annual Performance and Culture Excellence (PACE) Awards were held in December to recognise outstanding performance from staff. The PACE Awards recognise those who live our values and deliver on our passion and purpose through their work. You will find more detail on page 14.

The Sewing Basket opened a new store on the Central Coast

A new store and warehouse open at Kincumber in October creating 25 new employment opportunities and 20 volunteering roles but the event was only part of a strong year for The Sewing Basket as you'll read on page 15.

Royal Commission delivers its interim report

In October the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) releases its more than 570- page interim report detailing its first 15 months of work. It also formally asks for an extension of a year. Achieve Australia welcomes the report for review by our own teams as part of our work to always strive to model best practice in the sector.

Marking International Day of People with Disabilities

In December, we worked with the Sydney Olympic Park Authority to create a truly accessible outdoor display sharing the travel stories of people with disability and our Paralympians. Enjoy this wonderful event on page 22.



our year in review continued

Wow, how do our gardens grow

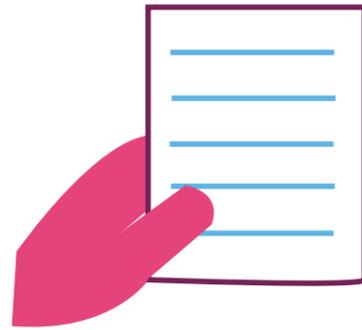
In January our Northern Rivers team worked with the people we support to plan ambitious produce gardens in the yards of two houses. See the photos of how the plan bore fruit – and veges – on page 12. Our clients in Guildford Cluster also got their garden groove on aided by a fruitful shopping trip to Bunnings.

Happy 90th birthday Beris

In March we held a wonderful birthday party for much loved and long-time client Beris – 90 years young. See the photos on page 12.

Invitation to join the Quality Champion Advisory Group

Our new Quality Champions program launches in March 2021 and in April we invite the people we support to be part of a new advisory group. As you will read on page 14, Quality Champions is an exciting new program that will employ a new team including members with lived experience of disability to talk to our clients about their experiences with our accommodation services. Advisory group members will provide feedback and ideas to make Quality Champions the best it can be.



NDIS Worker Screening check (NDISWC) introduced

From 1 February 2021, support workers must have an NDISWC as part of NDIS provider requirements. Achieve also requires the checks for corporate services staff who may interact with the people we support. The NDISWC is a consistent way for the NDIS to support the safety of people with disability.

Achieve named one of the best places to work

Everyone is thrilled when Achieve Australia is included on the 2021 AFR BOSS Best Places to Work List in April. Achieve makes the top 10 in the Government, Education and Non-for-profit category.

Ladies only night at Araluen

Friends, food, mocktails and music – these special ingredients combined to make a great night as Achieve held a ladies-only event on 16 April for people we support and our frontline and corporate services staff. Read more on page 12.

Clients, their families and our staff mark ANZAC Day

ANZAC Day in the time of COVID was no less moving as we came together on 23 April in a special event on Zoom featuring hymns, readings and remembrances. Read more on page 12.

Hearing into slow COVID vaccination roll out

On 17 May, the Disability Royal Commission holds a hearing into why only four per cent of people with disability are vaccinated despite government promises. More on page 22.

Achieve part of Casino's annual show

In May the people we support join staff in a range of festivities to celebrate Beef Week 2021 – the biggest public event in Casino.

Our champions compete in the biggest sporting event of 2021

In June, after dedicated weekly practice sessions and training and winning at local and regional events, Achieve's ten pin bowling team goes all the way to the National Disability Championships in Brisbane. See all the action on page 24.

A great name for the Achieve choir

Clients from the My Life program at Seven Hills and Araluen formed a choir supported by our staff and wanted a catchy name. We put the call out to all employees in June and our performers were happy with the result - the High Notes.

Our financial story for 2020-2021

Managing our resources responsibly is one of our strategic priorities. Our year-end financial results tell the story on page 26

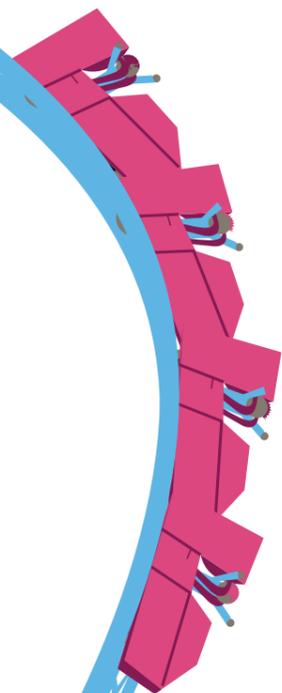


riding the COVID roller coaster

2020

COVID first hit Australia in January 2020 and Achieve Australia managed its first COVID case in March when a client is exposed to the virus while in hospital.

By the start of the new financial year in July 2020, Achieve had well developed policies and procedures in place to manage COVID safety, infection control and COVID exposures.



July

NSW Government allows up to 10 people to attend venues. Achieve's My Life programs and our head office at North Ryde reopen.

COVID safety protocols continue in the homes and sites where we provide services directly to clients. These include mask wearing, sign on procedures for staff and visitors to our sites, additional cleaning and hygiene practices, temperature checks and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

Achieve frontline staff also grew their skills and knowledge of infection control with additional mandatory training.

August

NSW remains on high alert for growing community transmission. Achieve head office closes again. We create a COVID Committee monitoring all aspects of the virus and advising our frontline team. Masks are recommended for the general community, but mandatory at Achieve.



November

The final and third stage of reopening My Life day program is complete. Our My Career program also resumes. Frontline staff slowly reintroduce clients to community activities using COVID safe venue plans.

September

The EVERYbody Dance Now Discos goes virtual via Zoom catering to all abilities and inviting people who don't live in Sydney's Ryde area to join in the fun.

The NSW Government list of venues and suburbs considered "hot spots" keeps growing after hitting nine in August.

December

A COVID outbreak on the Northern Beaches of Sydney leads to a lockdown there until January. Victoria closes its border with NSW.

2021

January

NSW Government continues to list “hot spots” but also “Local Government Areas of concern” or LGAs of concern with specific requirements for those living or working in these areas. Many of our staff live in these areas and we provide services at some homes and sites that fall within LGAs of Concern.

My Life programs reopen to clients who don't live in LGAs of concern and or who have not visited a COVID hot spot in a two-week period. Staff living in LGAs of concern undergo additional COVID tests.

Mandatory face mask wearing in indoor venues such as shopping centres is introduced. People can be fined \$200 on the spot for not wearing a mask. Later in January, face masks are mandatory for NSW citizens when using public transport and at airports and places of worship but only “recommended” for indoor spaces such as shopping centres. The number of people allowed to gather indoors increases. Achieve maintains its own requirements to keep clients safe.

February

the first does of COVID 19 vaccine are administered in Australia.

Government promises to make specific groups a priority for vaccination including people with disability. Authorities also stipulate that anyone who has visited an area declared a hot spot within a two-week period must get tested immediately and then isolate until receiving a negative test.

The disability sector is told that dates and details of the vaccine rollout are still being finalised by NSW Health. In anticipation, Achieve develops policies and procedures to support the vaccine roll out.

Later in February, Phase 1 of the Government's COVID-19 vaccine rollout starts for the health, aged care and disability work forces, aged and disability care clients and quarantine border workers. Achieve carries out risk assessments on job roles to determine staff who need to get vaccinated as a priority. A \$50 gift voucher is introduced to thank staff for getting the jab. We share next steps with clients, families and carers including filling out the Australian Government's COVID vaccine consent forms.

March

We continue to wait for the vaccine rollout for our clients and staff.

Achieve relaxes the use of face masks for staff and visitors from 22 March but continues to monitor people for COVID symptoms. For the safety of our clients with complex medical needs, we may ask that staff and visitors continue to wear face masks at some locations.

April

Achieve is notified of significant delays in the vaccine rollout and that more advice will follow soon. Our COVID-19 committee continues to liaise with NSW Health about this and other issues.

May

Mask wearing is reintroduced for Sydneysiders on 6 May. Small numbers of people are allowed to visit a residence or café and some outdoor activities are allowed.

Three months after the start of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, disability service providers voice their concerns that government has not paved the way for the people we support to receive their jabs. On 11 May, Achieve Australia CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt, is interviewed by the ABC about the stalled rollout.

The same day, the Disability Royal Commission holds a one-day hearing to probe why only four per cent of people with disability have been vaccinated against COVID despite being vulnerable to the worst of its affects.

Our Wellbeing Team continue to give staff access to vaccination at the new hubs at Liverpool and Oran Park. NSW Health Vaccination Centre at Sydney Olympic Park also opens for bookings. Achieve staff are encouraged to get vaccinated but jabs are not yet mandatory. Northern Rivers staff are also able to book to get their vaccination with Northern NSW Local Health District.

June

NSW Government announces further easing of restrictions allowing more people to return to gyms, a reopening of children's sports and more. However, by the third week of June, people are told once again to wear masks on public transport and when out and about in a long list of hot spot locations and LGAs of Concern.

At Achieve, all staff in Sydney are required to wear face masks during their shift. Government rules for disability accommodation residents restrict visitor numbers to two a day and all visitors must wear a face mask. Achieve continues to press government authorities and politicians about vaccination for the people we support.

By 30 June, stay at home orders are less than two weeks away. We do experience a breakthrough on vaccination but not until the new financial year.

bringing inclusion to life with the people we support

Supporting our clients to experience life to the full encompassed an incredible range of activities, events, and high points over the year.

Here we share just a handful but we also feature highlights such as the Lachlan Tigers ten pin bowling triumph on page 24 and the success of our teams at The Sewing Basket and AchievAble Enterprises on pages 14 and 15.

My Life at Home

We continued to rely on our program, My Life at Home, to keep about 240 of the people we support engaged during periods of lockdown.

First developed in March 2020, the program remained an excellent resource for residents in all the homes where we provide services. An early step was to ensure more staff were rostered to work in homes usually empty during the week when clients went to jobs, day programs and community activities.

During the development phase, a library of activities was created and resourced and then tested by managers over 16 weeks. By the

new financial year, the program was well accepted by clients and staff. A timetable of activities provides three plans a day, five days a week with a corresponding shopping list. Clients choose what they want to do across eight different categories.

The categories cover outdoor activities, creative pursuits, home skills such as cooking, being connected to family and friends such as making cards, writing letters, phone calls and video chat plus activities to get everyone up and moving. People can mix and match as they choose. Plus, we built a great photo library of everyone participating.

Applauding Hannah's well-deserved award

In July we celebrated client, Hannah Ostle, receiving The Fred Hollows Foundation's 2020 Helping Hand Award in recognition of her outstanding commitment as a volunteer for more than 18 years.

Hannah has been volunteering with The Foundation since 2002 through Achieve's My Life program alongside other people with disability and support staff. The group play music while sorting letters The Foundation receives and sends.

The Foundation, CEO Ian Wishart described Hannah as an expert and bright and bubbly. "We love having her and the Achieve team around." She was also the subject of a lovely story in the Sydney Morning Herald.



Hannah Ostle with her Fred Hollows Foundation 2020 Helping Hand Award.

Music helps friends come together

During the year we created the Achieve Choir made up of clients from Community and Lifestyle programs at Araluen and Seven Hills.

The choir sang at our end of year staff party and in return for their fine performance, staff collaborated on giving them a new name – the High Notes.

Music was also key to the success of our first Ladies Only Night event held at Araluen in April.





Attended by clients and frontline and corporate services staff, the event combined a DJ and dancing with friends, food and mocktails. COVID stopped a second event, but we hope to repeat its success in the future.

Garden gurus to the north and south

Working the soil to produce vegetables and fruits was a popular pastime at many of the houses where we provide services.

Residents of two houses in Casino – Frances Street and Hickey Street – took gardening to a whole new level. Four clients living in Frances Street began their work by removing an old hedge. Supported by staff, they then prepared the rich Northern Rivers soil to create a series of garden beds. Seeds were planted, watered and a secret ingredient dug in – alpaca dung from a staff member’s farm.

A bounty of seasonal fruits and vegetables was their reward including zucchini, tomatoes, squash, cabbage, pumpkin, watermelon, strawberries and much more.

The vege garden at Hickey Street, which first started during Achieve Australia’s ‘Creating Home Competition’ in 2018, provided a bumper crop of fresh produce clients used to cook with to try out new recipes. Many hands dug into the soil, but client Matthew Lohman was its champion working in it daily.

Meanwhile, in the Sydney suburb of Guildford, a simple plan to grow chillies in the backyard of one the houses where we provide services led to something far bigger.

Clients and staff worked together to create a “green thumb experience” for all four residents. Two clients made the trek to Bunnings to purchase supplies that included four planter boxes so each resident would have his own to transform into an edible garden. Best of all, they each grew a different mix of herbs and veges in each planter so they could share their bounty.

March 2021

A very special 90th birthday party was held at Asquith Golf Club for much loved client Beris Collins with flowers, balloons and lunch. Popular in the Hornsby community with neighbours, her church group and our staff, Beris loved her party. Guests included Beris’ long-time friends and housemates, Pauline and Janice and our CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt among them.

Beris has been a client of Achieve Australia for 60 years. Her parents were among the founders of Mt Own, a home for people with disability in the 1960s that later became Hornsby Challenge and then Achieve Australia.

Speaking to Enable magazine Beris said: “I was excited for quite a few weeks before and loved getting dressed up in my best party clothes and special hat. I was thrilled to see all the decorations, especially the balloons, and my friends on the day.”

One of our Community and Lifestyle clients, Felix Wong, who attends Araluen, gave a stirring reading of the Ode of Remembrance at Achieve Australia’s ANZAC Day event held via Zoom on 23 April.

Felix was one of the presenters at the service, which also included The Sewing Basket founders Jo and Don McKerrrell who gave the commemorative address remembering the service of their fathers. Achieve’s Creative Director,

David Barnes, read the poem, The Fallen and CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt shared recollections of her Great Uncle Tedda Brookes who fought at Gallipoli – the battle that created the ANZAC tradition – devoting most of his post war years until 101 to the RSL and the importance of peace.

Bringing the world to Summer Hill House

In November we create a colourful and accessible outdoor installation in the grounds of Summer Hill House for clients and their families, carers and friends.

The outdoor space was transformed into a colourful exhibition depicting countries and cultures across South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Travellers explored the world through interactive displays, sensory activities and a soundtrack to suit each culture along the wide pathway that wound around the exhibits.

Beris Collins celebrating her 90th birthday with friends.





sailing to success over the challenging waves created by COVID

The team at AchievAble Enterprises navigated difficult waters over the year with skill, much heart and great success with unflapp-able Operations Manager, Leanne Larche, at the helm.

In recognition of this extraordinary effort, AchievAble were named Team of the Year for 2020 in our annual staff Performance and Culture Excellence (PACE) Awards.

AchievAble supports 65 employees with disability at its premises in Newington not far from Sydney Olympic Park. The training, mentoring and daily collaboration has seen the social enterprise win impressive clients for its packing and assembly services as well as business partners, printers Finsbury Green and audio company, Rode Microphones.

The Team of the Year accolade was well-deserved after AchievAble faced down one of the toughest times in its history due to COVID. The first calendar quarter had seen business drop away by as much as 80%. Work related to airlines ceased by April 2020 and the Easter Show had been cancelled, which initially halted showbag packing work until the selling of showbags moved online.

On the bright side, business partners, Finsbury and Rode, remained on board making a big difference.

Finsbury has worked with AchievAble since 2016 and Rode since 2018.

When employees were at home during periods of rising COVID numbers, Leanne kept in touch with them to keep their spirits up and maintain the team connection. Back on site, COVID safety measures were in place including sign in procedures, social distancing, infection control and extra cleaning.

By September 2020 business was starting to bounce back and rosters were devised to enable as many of the team as possible to resume working. By October, business levels had strengthened further and most of the team were back in their roles.

Clients told us being back at work meant relieving 'stay at home' boredom and the enjoyment of getting to see colleagues again who are also friends.

After February, trying to get people vaccinated became a big focus. Mask wearing was re-introduced for citizens in NSW more generally.

Business continued to operate smoothly despite these challenges until a second much longer lockdown began in June 2021. The upbeat ending to that lockdown is a story to be told in the Achieve Australia Annual Report for 2021-2022.

The 2020-2021 year was challenging for AchievAble Enterprises but being a tight knit group helped the business meet those challenges and enjoy some wins together.



a big year for The Sewing Basket



It's been a dazzling year for The Sewing Basket. Launching a new store and warehouse, hosting visits from media and managing COVID safety, all while delivering excellent customer service with a smile.

The Sewing Basket achieved record sales over the year as people looked for more home-based activities to suit our new COVID-19 way of life. All stores followed strict COVID safety measures, which included limiting customer numbers in store at any one time to maintain social distancing and arranging additional specialised cleaning.

Expanding to the Central Coast

Opening the new store and warehouse at Kincumber was a

big event for The Sewing Basket. We were able to offer 25 new NDIS employment positions and 20 volunteering roles. Plus, we introduced our wonderful array of fabrics and supplies to a new community of sewing and craft enthusiasts. When the Kincumber store officially opened its doors in October, there was a queue of eager shoppers waiting.

We also had an opportunity to help the local community by donating fabric for a Country Women's Association sewing workshop on the Central Coast in January.

Kincumber was made possible through a community grant from The Ian Potter Foundation and lots of hard but joyous work from The Sewing Basket team and other Achieve Australia colleagues.

The Sewing Basket began more than 20 years ago when Don and Jo McKerrell and friends held annual fabric sales to raise funds for Crowle Home. Over the years it has built a growing and loyal customer base who love browsing the pre-loved, 100% donated fabrics, threads, yarns, buttons, patterns and more. All proceeds from sales go back into the operation to support people with disability by providing them with great jobs and training and mentoring.

The Sewing Basket is too good a story to keep under wraps

From a front-page story in a Central Coast publication to a visit from ABC Radio to our Kincumber store and live Channel TEN broadcast from our Newington store, The Sewing Basket attracted attention for all the right reasons in 2020-2021.

In January, ABC Radio host Scott Levi described The Sewing Basket as an Aladdin's Cave of colour when he visited Kincumber. Scott interviewed Coast local and employee Allan who told him he had searched from Sydney to Newcastle for more than 18 months for a job before landing a role in our warehouse where he remains happily employed.

A high energy visit to our Newington store from Studio TEN reporter Daniel Doody followed in March. During a live cross to the show's host, Sarah Harris back in TEN's studio, Daniel showed off the store walking past bolts of fabric and shelves of patterns, buttons and ribbons to finish at the cutting table and counter where he met the team. He explained the sustainability credentials of the store and asked questions of the team including employees Jenny, Liza and Doris. Congratulations to The Sewing Basket team for acing live television as part of their workday and for another successful year.



maintaining a strong house

We forged ahead with important work over the 2020-2021 year to continue strengthening Achieve Australia as an organisation.

Managing COVID was a top priority, but it was not our only priority, and we were deliberate in not letting the pandemic distract us from a robust schedule of work.

Over the year we developed and launched our Strategic Plan 2020-2030, completed the frontline management restructure, and developed the operations restructure that will be completed next financial year. You can read a report about our Strategic Plan on page 20.

We also invested in more training for our staff with a particular focus on the frontline. This included a more comprehensive induction course for new frontline recruits over five-days and a calendar of mandatory courses for all direct support staff to run over the year.

Achieve Australia was also thrilled to win public recognition for being a great place to work. Below are more details of work that made a difference this year.

NDIS accreditation

Over July and August, we successfully completed the NDIS accreditation process, which all providers must undergo every three years. Our Quality and Safeguarding team led this work, which was completed in two stages.

During the first stage, independent auditors reviewed our policy and practice documentation. Their feedback highlighted the high quality of our policy and practice documentation that supports staff and managers to do great work.

COVID forced the second stage to be managed from our head office instead of at sites where we directly support clients. The independent auditors checked service quality and also that it is aligned to our policies and procedures. This work focused on six sites chosen at random and involved verifying information with a range of people including clients and their families and carers

Frontline restructure

We started this work in early 2020 with changes made to our Executive and Senior Leadership including introducing General Management roles across Achieve.

The Frontline Management restructure followed and was mostly complete by the end of 2020. Clients and their families and carers were also asked to provide feedback about the job our frontline managers are doing. This feedback was used to inform the frontline management recruitment process. While feedback forms were only a part of this process, it is an important first for Achieve.

Asking clients and their families and carers for their views will continue to be an important performance evaluation tool for Achieve going forward for all our services.

Next, we began a Frontline Operations Restructure, with briefing sessions with staff in March and April 2021. The restructure of the frontline is designed to provide more supervision and training to our staff and ensure service excellence for our clients.

Staff were invited to provide feedback about our plans and were generous with their ideas and recommendations. Each piece of feedback was reviewed, and several recommendations were used in the final restructure plan completed in early October. We anticipate this process will be finalised in the next financial year.



Recognising our staff for their great work

Achieve actively invests in retaining our people through investing in continuous training and development and by recognising our staff for great performance. We do this to ensure we are continually improving and delivering service excellence to the people we support.

Our annual staff Performance and Culture Excellence (PACE) Awards recognise outstanding performance from staff in five categories aligned to our strategic priorities – Lives Inclusion, Elevates Voices, Transforms Services, Builds Capacity and Values Resources.



Support Coordinator, Charles Agbapulonwu, was selected as our Employee of the Year and AchievAble Enterprises, led by Operations Manager, Leanne Larche, was named Team of the Year. See page 14 for more about AchievAble Enterprises.

Welcoming new faces

We also welcomed Dr Kirsty Nowlan (below) to lead work to establish The Achieve Foundation to foster research and innovation in two key areas impacting inclusion, particularly for people with intellectual disability – housing and social attitudes. You can read more on page 23.

A new program where people with disability will help audit our work

In March 2021 we announced our intention to launch our own version of the well-established UK Quality Checkers program and asked our staff to help us come up with a name. They chose “Quality Champions”. This program will employ people with lived experience of disability to talk to our clients to about our accommodation services.

Achieve took part in a pilot project in 2018 run by the Centre for Disability Studies (CDS) at the University of Sydney with our Board member, Professor Patricia O’Brien, that also involved the UK Quality Checkers team. The pilot provided us with great insights on how we will proceed.



Quality Champions officially launched on 11 March with a kick-off workshop at CDS and an initial focus on My Home Services. In May, we started our recruitment efforts to secure our future team, and these are ongoing. It is still early days but there will be much to share in our next annual report.

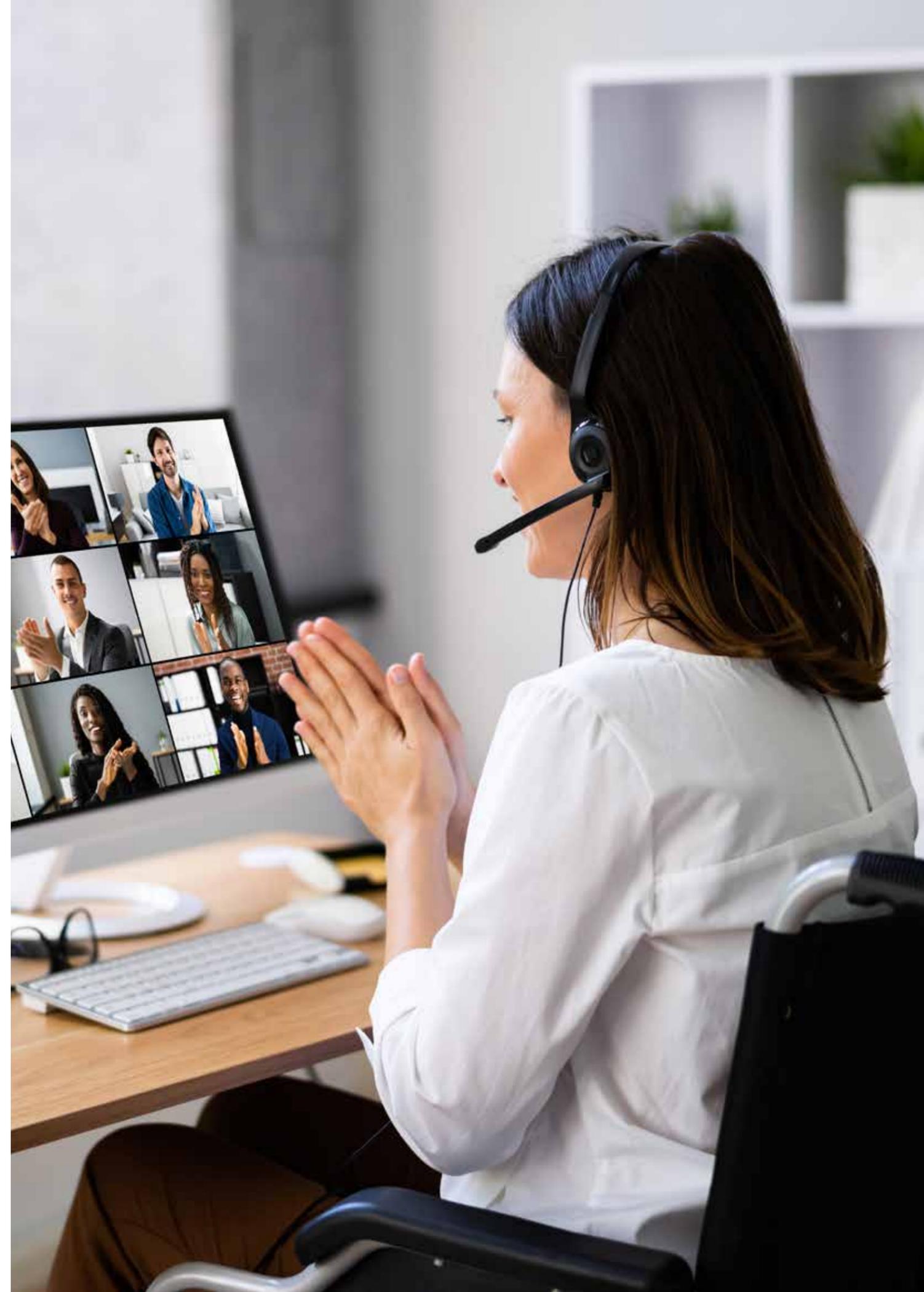
Going virtual

As COVID progressed, we pivoted away from live events entering the virtual world. Our Global Talks event for clients and their families and carers was delivered by Zoom. Even after lockdown passed, we kept this event virtual to make it easier for people to attend.

We also became a virtual exhibitor at several well-known events including the Sydney Disability Expo and we took our monthly “all staff” meeting, Achieve Talks, online as well.

Achieve recognised as a great place to work

In April Achieve was selected for inclusion on the 2021 AFR Best Places to Work list. We were ranked in the top 10 of the Government, Education and Non-for-profit category. Published by The Australian Financial Review and Boss Magazine, the prestigious award assesses the workplace policies, practices and programs of contenders from Australia and New Zealand.



living inclusion starts with achieve australia's strategic plan

We took a new more consultative approach in developing our Strategic Plan for 2020 – 2023 to ensure the voices we value most were represented in our plan for the next few years.

Insights gathered from our clients, their families and carers, our front line staff, community partners and industry thought leaders all informed the plan, which will guide our work over the next few years to further enhance quality services for the people we support, while remaining true to our passion and purpose.

Our 2020-2023 Plan helps us build a stronger foundation so we can deliver on our passion of social inclusion for people with disability. This will also allow us to pursue new horizons and firmly establish Achieve Australia as a leader in disability service delivery.

Officially launched in September 2020, our Strategic Plan is underpinned by five priorities:

Living Inclusion

We want to live and breathe inclusion in our organisation and connect with communities.

Elevating Voices

To listen and activate the voices of people with disability and demonstrate true inclusion in all that we do.

Transforming Services

We will align our services to support each one of our clients to live a good life and to deliver on our Passion and Purpose.

Building Capacity

To live by our Principles and support the quality and consistency of practice. This includes building the skills and capabilities of our workforce to ensure we are consistently delivering a quality service.

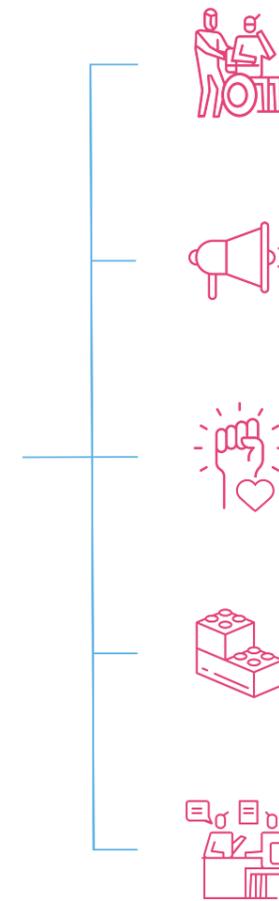
Valuing Resources

Fostering a cooperative environment and encouraging stewardship of organisational resources and collective achievement. This helps us ensure that we continue to run as a responsibly managed organisation.

Aligning projects to the strategic priorities

Over the next three years, 30 separate projects will be delivered under the Strategic Plan, and each will align to our strategic priorities. We will be reviewing and tracking results closely over this period and refining the allocation of resources where needed.

Strategic priorities



Living Inclusion

To cultivate a sense of belonging by nurturing an inclusive organisation and connecting with communities.

Raising

To elevate the voice of people with a disability and demonstrate true inclusion in all that we do.

Transform

To deliver on our Passion and Purpose by aligning our services and workforce to each person's ambition for a good life.

Building

To live by our Principles and support the quality and consistency of practice.

Valuing

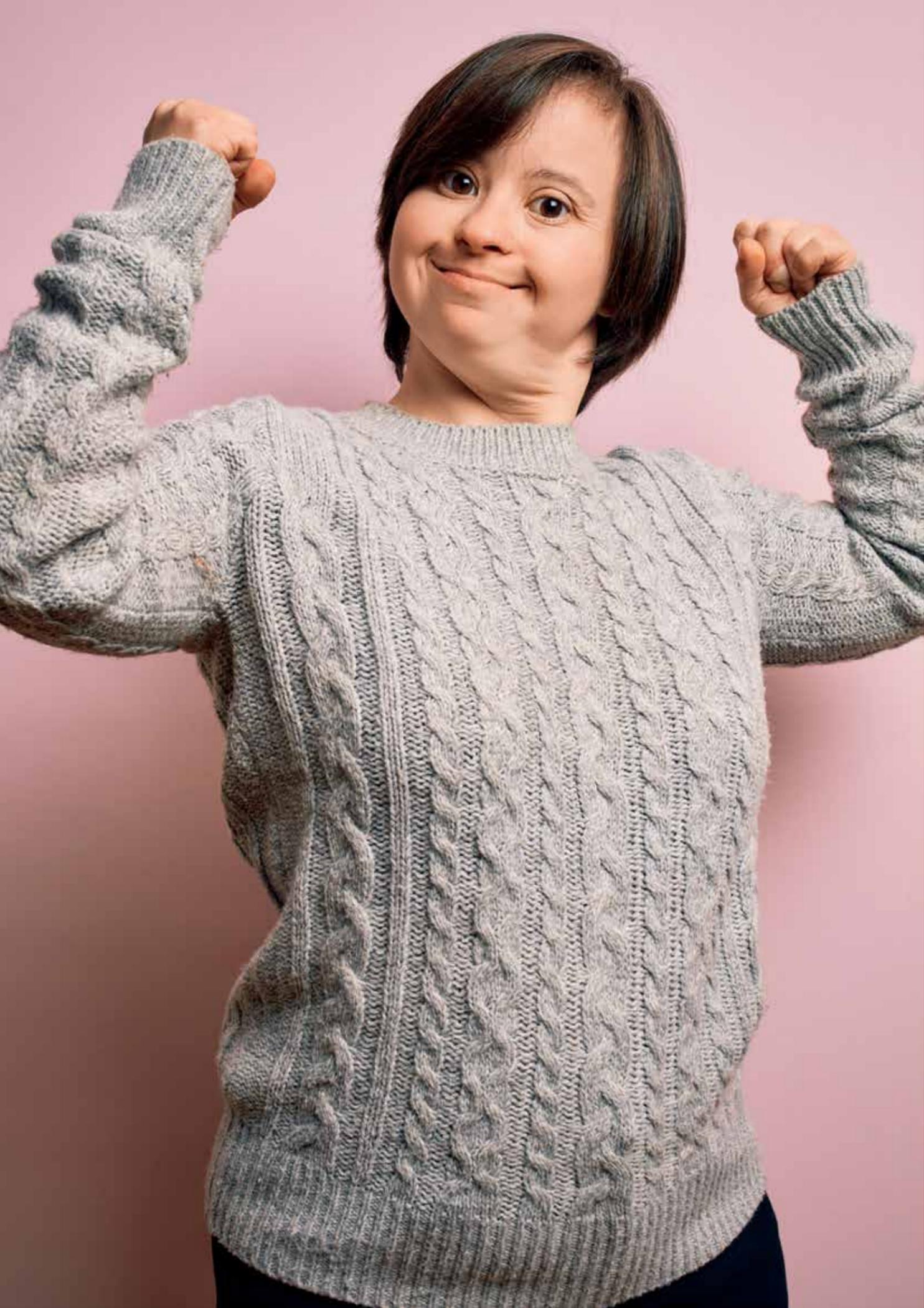
To foster a cooperative environment, encouraging stewardship of organisational resources and collective achievement.

Projects include:

- Development of a Practice Framework for our frontline to act as a tool and comprehensive guide to service delivery at Achieve Australia. The framework will also enable clients and their supporters to understand the Achieve approach to the delivery of good practice.
- Achieve's own Quality Checkers program to employ people with lived experience of disability as part of a team talking to our clients to review our services and find ways we can improve. Quality Checkers is a highly successful UK program. Achieve took part

- in a pilot to test its application in Australia and we are pleased to pioneer its application locally.
- Establishing The Achieve Foundation to support academic research and innovation into service delivery and outcomes to benefit people with disability. The Foundation will have its own Board and Executive but will work with team members at Achieve Australia to test new models of service delivery.

These are just a few of the projects Achieve Australia will be rolling out in the next few years. We look forward to sharing news about many more as they take shape.



our advocacy agenda

Speaking in support of people with disability

We don't speak for people with disability, but we certainly speak up strongly on issues that impact inclusion and the rights, health and wellbeing of the people we support.

Over the year, we stood with people with disability to oppose the introduction of Independent Assessments as a way of determining who can access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). We also made submissions to important work shaping the future for people with disability. We share some of our advocacy work on this page.

Independent Assessments

The NDIS Independent Assessment program promised a far cheaper way for people coming into the Scheme to have their support needs assessed. However, the intent was expanded to reassess those already on the Scheme - people who had undergone thorough assessment at their own cost by engaging a range of experts specific to their needs and aspirations for a good life. The new proposal that they be assessed in a session of up to three hours by a single practitioner was alarming.

We believe people with disability are best placed to know what supports they need to live their best lives and told this to the NDIS Minister Stuart Roberts and his successor Minister Linda Reynolds. Minister Reynolds took over the portfolio in March 2021, paused the proposal in April but in May signalled her intention to forge ahead with "some form" of Independent Assessments. We and many others continued lobbying and the proposal was eventually abandoned.

Accessing COVID vaccination

Protecting the people we support through COVID vaccination was a significant over the year. The government promised people with disability, their families and carers and disability support workers would be amongst the first people to receive the jab. In addition to talking to political decision makers, our CEO Jo-Anne Hewitt also spoke to the media about the issue. Read more on page 16.

Submission to the National Disability Strategy

The 2010-2020 National Disability Strategy was the first time in Australia's history that governments around the country were unified in taking a national approach to ensuring people with disability can fulfill their potential as equal citizens.

We responded to an invitation from the Department of Social Services

(DSS) to provide a review submission of the draft for the next decade. We agreed with a great deal of the draft Strategy, including that it align with Australia's commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Convention). Also, for the Strategy to build positive community understanding and attitudes towards inclusion.

We also shared our view that data, evidence and experience should be used to identify and pursue the key drivers of wellbeing for people with disability likely to be housing, employment and health. And the Strategy's attempt to strengthen accountability for different levels of government and believe Local Government should be included. Responsibility for navigating a complex and multi-layered system

has largely fallen to people with disability and their families and this must change.

Justice Matters

In April 2021, Jo-Anne Hewitt, became one of 70 eminent Australian signatories in her capacity of Achieve Australia CEO to a campaign calling for more support for people with cognitive disability navigating the NSW justice system.

The campaign, spearheaded by Justice Advocacy Service (JAS) and the Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) urges the NSW Government to dedicate funds to support people with cognitive disability deal with police and the courts whether they are witnesses, accused of crimes or convicted of crimes.

Disability Royal Commission consultation on promoting inclusion

In our June 2021 submission to the Disability Royal Commission consultation on promoting inclusion we focused on how inclusion can be realised in disability accommodation settings.

We presented several case studies of how Achieve has worked with people we support to make positive changes resulting in far greater inclusion and the associated learnings for staff training. We also discussed how social inclusion for all requires deliberate planning and execution. And that the diverse capacities and ambitions of people with disability require investment in listening to them and designing responses with them.

and mindsets in Australia toward people with disability, particularly people with intellectual disability.

These areas were chosen because home is where our sense of self is formed and reinforced and ways of thinking profoundly influence who gets included in our society and who gets left out.

The Board of Achieve Australia approved initial funding so The Achieve Foundation can establish itself as an independent organisation providing leadership in research, innovation, and advocacy to build a more inclusive Australia for people with disability.

Achieve Australia will be amongst the organisations the Foundation will work with to test ideas and prototype solutions.

The Achieve Foundation

Work got underway to establish The Achieve Foundation as a future leader in disability philanthropy including welcoming Dr Kirsty Nowlan to lead this work.

Dr Nowlan joined Achieve in September 2020 bringing more than 20 years' experience in leading systems change, research and policy initiatives gained working with well-known organisations including Benevolent Society and World Vision International.

The Foundation's mission is to build a philanthropic community committed to dismantling the barriers to inclusion in two key areas – housing



The Honourable Ronald Sackville speaking at the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.





one world, many destinations

Celebrating International Day of People with Disabilities with a colourful trip around the world.

We created a fully accessible outdoor display at Sydney Olympic Park featuring the travel stories of people with disability as part of celebrations for International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPwD) in December.

The free outdoor installation featured colourful artwork depicting easily

recognisable travel locations and personal travel stories from the magazine, Travel Without Limits, and blog, Have Wheelchair Will Travel.

Adding to the international flavour were highlights from the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games including videos of Paralympic athletes.





the Lachlan Tigers win 21 medals and many hearts at the National Disability Championship

The tenpin bowling 2021 National Disability Championship held in Brisbane in June was one of Australia's largest sporting events of the year attracting more than 3,000 competitors.

Amongst those competitors were Achieve Australia's The Lachlan Tigers – a 14-member team who had worked very hard to make it to the finals. The team had bowled for three hours each Monday to practice for their winning performances at local competitions then at regional and state competitions to earn selection in the nationals.

The Lachlan Tigers arrived in Brisbane with their Achieve support crew for the 10-day competition excited to compete but also to meet up with

old friends and make new ones. The atmosphere was buzzing at Zone Bowling Mt Gravatt, especially as the 2020 National Disability Championships had been cancelled due to COVID.

Wearing shirts sporting their names on the back, the faces of our team members said it all. The looks of total concentration as they lofted balls down the alleys gave way to broad smiles when the pins were knocked over or frowns when too many pins remained standing, which was not very often!

The Tigers scored 21 medals in all. In the trios, the Tigers placed first, second and third. We had six people make it to the Masters' Competition, which meant they were amongst the top 16 best players of the championship in their division. Star bowler, Scott Mitchell, was outstanding! He finished second in the Masters' Competition against a national field of the best of the best.

There were lots of other special moments including visits from family and friends to cheer on our competitors. The brother and sister of competitor Susan spent five days watching her with great admiration. A group of people Achieve supports in the Northern Rivers came for a day and were star struck by the Tigers seeing the team as sporting icons and role models. It was fantastic to see the pride the Tigers took in being seen that way. Tigers rule!

Tigers find time for play

After their outstanding performance inside the bowling alley, it was time for some fun in the sun outside for The Lachlan Tigers.

There was a visit to a theme park and lots of happy, group meals. Travelling, competing, meeting lots of new people and catching up with fellow competitors they had first met at previous tournaments was a whirlwind of activity and a great experience.

A highlight for the team and support crew was a visit to a Queensland ranch run by a friend of the Achieve community. Team members got to ride horses and see farm life close up.

The trip was certainly about living life to the full.

consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

<i>For the year ended 30 June 2021</i>	2021 (\$)	2020 (\$)
REVENUE AND INCOME		
Service revenue	103,403,282	96,185,094
Commercial sales revenue	1,402,823	912,939
Donations and fundraising	6,285	96,145
Government grant – Cash flow boost	172,275	409,553
Other income	3,555,983	417,976
Total revenue and income	108,540,648	98,021,707
EXPENDITURE		
Employee benefits expense	87,506,719	79,405,825
Client support services	548,879	529,653
Depreciation & amortisation	2,214,862	2,488,146
Rent expense	519,374	459,845
Motor vehicles expense	362,018	381,990
Consulting and professional fees	2,145,634	2,264,402
General operating expenses	7,819,641	7,364,444
Agency expense	6,003,605	5,103,032
Interest expense on lease liability	106,467	148,497
Total expenditure	107,227,199	98,145,834
Surplus/(Deficit)	1,313,449	(124,127)
Share of profit from equity accounted investments	581,621	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	1,895,070	(124,127)
Other comprehensive income		
Gain/(Loss) on re-measurement of defined benefit liability	951,843	(296,947)
Fair value gain on asset revaluation	655,573	1,733,069
Total comprehensive Surplus for the year	3,502,486	1,608,941

consolidated statement of financial position

<i>As of June 2021</i>	2021 (\$)	2020 (\$)
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	7,133,656	20,057,045
Trade and other receivables	1,829,085	1,294,829
Contract assets	3,846,240	2,592,335
Assets held for sale	-	14,786,544
Other assets	624,457	490,312
Total Current assets	13,433,438	39,221,065
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	8,479,903	7,751,416
Intangible assets	-	308,411
Other non-current assets	9,212	49,212
Financial assets	26,474,280	4,812,611
Right of use assets	2,291,195	3,028,690
Investments accounted for using the equity method	3,247,035	-
Total Non-current assets	40,541,625	15,950,340
Total Assets	53,975,063	55,171,405
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	9,201,967	6,457,283
Provisions	15,264,074	13,748,219
Lease liabilities	1,029,040	1,375,161
Contract liabilities	277,760	7,895,898
Total current liabilities	25,772,841	29,476,561
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	2,179,315	2,846,240
Lease liabilities	1,406,340	1,734,523
Total non-current liabilities	3,585,655	4,580,763
Total Liabilities	29,358,496	34,057,324
Net assets	24,616,567	21,114,081
Funds		
Accumulated funds	21,930,979	19,084,066
Asset revaluation reserve	2,685,588	2,030,015
Total funds	24,616,567	21,114,081

our board of directors



Richard Dinham
Chairman



Dr Georgina Reynhout
Director



Robert McKimm
Director



Professor Patricia O'Brien
Director



Jennifer Gardiner
Director



Colin Westman
Director



Doug Reid
Director

our executive team



Jo-Anne Hewitt
Chief Executive Officer



Wally Phillips
Corporate Services Executive
(CFO)



Daniel Kyriacou
Chief Operations Executive
(COO)



Lorraine Salloum
People, Performance & Culture
Executive (CHRO)



Laura Ramos
Customer and Market
Engagement Executive (CMO)

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