

# nexus INK



Spring 2022





## Welcome from CEO

Welcome to our Spring edition of Nexus Ink - and what a rollercoaster ride the disability sector has been on since I last put pen to paper. Following the election of a new Federal Government in May 2022, a real impact has been felt in the disability sector.

We have seen significant moves made by the Federal Government including adjusting the pricing model to acknowledge increased costs for providers, the creation of a jobs summit to look at addressing sector-wide staff shortages, and action on getting people with a disability out of hospital faster once they are medically ready to leave.

We have also seen a revamp of the NDIS Board with the appointment of Kurt Fearnley as Chair and the addition of new members Graeme Innes and Maryanne Diamond. The NDIS review has also been brought forward from 2023 to 2022.

Locally, the State government continues to play an important role in making Tasmania accessible, and I spoke recently with new Minister for Disability Services, Jo Palmer, about the direction of the sector. We anticipate a number of changes in Tasmania with the creation of a Disability Commissioner role and the Disability Services Act Review which will set new rules on issues such as restrictive practice. Minister for Community Services and Development, Nic Street, is also supporting a 'care workforce' plan and I am pleased to be on the steering committee for this project.

Meanwhile, Nexus has opened a new shared supported living house in Kingston. The purpose-built house allows for more independence than a traditional group home, and the flexible living arrangements include three, two-bedroom units and separate staff quarters for sleepover shifts.

We have split our Supported Independent Living Team in two, with Troy Briggs moving roles to support Manager Louise Sullivan. Troy's role will oversee a group of high support clients who often have both Autism and an intellectual disability. These clients require a significant amount of positive behaviour support to help keep staff and clients safe. These homes are intense workplaces that deserve an additional level of support and care.

We have also been busy talking to potential new staff and will continue to look for ways to attract and train new people as professional support workers.

Coming out of our winter hibernation it is great to see staff getting out into the community, supporting clients to experience the things they like to do. I'm looking forward to a busy and exciting end to the year.

**Mark Jessop**  
CEO, Nexus Inc.





## New Supported Independent Living Home

Our brand-new Supported Independent Living (SIL) property in Kingston was officially opened in September and, as our cover photo shows, clients like Pania are very happy to be more independent in the new house but still have access to support as needed.

It was an exciting day for our Nexus Community with many high profile guests attending, including Federal Housing Minister Julie Collins MP who talked about her strong support the house.

A packed crowd of clients, families, key community members, local politicians and Nexus employees were there to celebrate this milestone occasion. Lucky guests enjoyed hot spiced apple juice and apple and apricot jam made from apples picked by some of our Customised Employment clients.

The new property provides a home for up to six people living with disability across its three two-bedroom units. It was built with client support in mind and clients are already benefiting from the special design that suits their needs.

We were very happy to work with Supported Affordable Accommodation Trust (SAA Trust) to build this house. It will help to ease some of the challenges faced by people living with disability looking for a home to suit their needs.

The SAA Trust attracts funds and builds the houses, then leases them out for 20 years to NDIS service providers such as Nexus.

The three units each have two bedrooms with their own ensuites, an open-plan kitchen, and a living and dining area. There is also a separate staff area in the house. The home has a Nexus vehicle on-site at all times, so that clients can be supported to go to appointments and activities in the community.

Our CEO Mark Jessop is keen to work with the SAA Trust again, and would like to see another SIL property in the far South of the state.

The SAA Trust got a \$6 million Federal Government grant under the Improving Social Housing Outcomes Program, which funded the Kingston house and eight other sites.

# Nexus Team



## Strategic Planning Day

It is important for us to make sure that we keep improving how we work. This is one of our values and a key responsibility we have to clients and supporters. One way we keep improving is to regularly ask ourselves if there are things we could do differently.

A key job of the Nexus Board is to keep an eye on this important strategic work. Every three years we update our Strategic Plan to make sure we are doing the best job we can to support clients, staff and the community.

This year the Nexus Board members and executive team came together to do a mid-term review of our current 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. It was a great day with everyone sharing successes and new ideas with the group. We are looking forward to continuing to provide the best support to our Nexus community.



## New Client Intake Role

It is with absolute pleasure that we celebrate the one-year milestone of Donna taking on the role of Intake Manager.

The role was created to make it easier and quicker for people to get support from Nexus and to talk to someone directly – a part of the role that Donna loves.

Since Donna came on board she has worked with more than 80 clients. Some of these clients were new and some were existing clients of Nexus who are looking for additional support. Donna has enjoyed empowering clients to be independent and in control of their lives.

Now that the role is established, Donna's aim for next year is to ensure that intake becomes a key part of the culture of the organisation.

**“I like to empower people to be as independent as they choose to be,”**

**– Donna, Intake Manager**



# Nexus in the Community



## Disability Expo

Piles of fliers had to be quickly topped up at the Speak Out Disability Expo as our staff spoke with hundreds of people from the community at our two stalls.

The SEED social enterprise team, who work closely with the Nexus Customised Employment program, spoke about their services and the ways they create meaningful employment opportunities for people with disability. Our Nexus stall showed off the support services we offer including our new Children and Youth services for people aged seven years and older and our upcoming respite services.

We were also happy to meet recent TAFE graduates want to be support workers. Nexus is well known for its support and training of employees.



## Foresite Training Visit

At Nexus we are very proud that our support workers are as diverse as our clients. Our team regularly get out in the community to meet potential employees from all over Southern Tasmania.

In October we spoke with an enthusiastic group of adult learners doing Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) at Foresite Training.

Beck from Nexus Complex and Individualised Support and Christie from Recruitment provided an interactive session to the group, who were very interested in the support we offer and the training we provide our employees. We look forward to presenting to Foresite students again soon.

# Come and Try Youth ARC



Our first Come and Try Day at the Youth Arts and Recreation Centre (Youth ARC) was a great success, with basketball and video games proving popular.

The aim of these sessions is to encourage clients to attend Youth ARC's Open Access sessions, held daily for all community members. Our Community Services team is keen to support clients to attend these sessions, make friends, and improve their fitness – all things that clients have said are important to them.



# Client Stories

## Malcolm

The opportunity to take photos somewhere beautiful is always welcomed by Malcolm.

This month Malcolm visited the Claremont Memorial Park, taking in the lovely sunshine, peaceful nature and ducks on the pond.

The history billboards were also of interest, and Malcolm took photos of these to read through later.



## Maree

Paint and glitter were used to decorate pine-cones and rocks, at a fun crafternoon at one of our Supported Living houses.

Maree enjoyed sitting in the sun to make her works of art that could be displayed in the garden, brightening it up for the Spring season.



## Ed

Supported Living client Ed went on a fun adventure to Henden Ryse farm over Spring.

Getting up close with the animals on a farm tour, Ed gave milk to a lamb, brushed a horse's hair, and fed the alpacas.

Ed was also thrilled to make a furry friend who seemed to share his love for coffee.





# Client Stories

## Kiara and Lacey

A scenic walk to Myrtle Forest Falls was made extra special when a feline friend came along too.

Kiara was thrilled when the NCIS team supported her to bring along her furry friend, Lacey, on an adventure in the wilderness.



## Art by Mark and Ed

Rowbottom Day Support clients have also been beautifying the world around them, trying out activities including craft and painting.

A big thank you to Ed and Mark, who popped into the Nexus office to brighten our days with their artworks which are now hanging up in our offices.



## Jenny

Getting out and about in the community regularly, Jenny has achieved some wonderful things since starting at the gym.

Taking things at her own pace, she has used the treadmill and dumb-bell weights with great success.

Jenny has also used step-work and ball-work to improve her strength and fitness.







## Staff Milestones

Congratulations to our staff celebrating milestone years at Nexus this year.  
We are very proud to be an organisation that people  
want to work for over many years.

### Five Years

Denise Cooper  
Mauricio Duarte  
Kylie Ellis  
Craig Glover  
Tess Handl  
Clive Hanks  
Tania McCarthy  
Hiroyuki Mori  
Malumbo Nyirenda  
Michael Rabe  
Jaime-Lea Ryan  
Tanya van Wageningen  
Kia Woulleman

### Ten Years

Samantha Bleathman  
David Smithurst  
Scott Wheatley

### 15 Years

Matt Pearce

### 20 Years

Anthony Briggs