

nexus INK



Summer 2023

 nexus inc.



Welcome from CEO

It has been a busy summer for Nexus and the disability sector in general.

We were very happy to release our latest Annual Report over Summer. It is great to see how the new format has come together to highlight our services through client and staff stories.

Our respite houses are almost complete and our play and sensory garden will be finished in the next few months. At the moment we are taking a few regular clients while we roll out this new service and we are already getting great feedback for Bec and her specialist team.

With the Disability Royal Commission continuing to have public hearings, the sector has faced further scrutiny. The questions asked at the most recent hearings give a good idea of some of the Commissioners' key concerns. These include:

- The importance of services having a rights based approach
- Making sure workers are registered and monitored
- Supporting clients to make their own decisions rather than doing it for them
- Getting meaningful feedback from clients and their supports
- Making sure people with disabilities are represented in the decision making process of service providers

I am pleased that Nexus has always been a rights based service and we support our clients to make as many of their own decisions as possible.

One of our main strategic projects for 2023 is adding new ways we can collect the views of clients and make sure their voices are better heard.

I think the next 12 months will be even busier, but I'm looking forward to some great outcomes for people living with disability in Tasmania.

Mark Jessop
CEO, Nexus Inc.

A portrait of Jacquie Petrusma, a woman with dark brown hair, wearing glasses, a black blazer, and a red and white patterned top. She is smiling and standing in front of green foliage.

Jacquie Petrusma joins Nexus Board

It is with great excitement that we welcome Jacquie Petrusma to our Nexus Board.

Jacquie brings with her over 12 years of State Government and Parliamentary experience, and she is well-versed in issues within the disability support sector having previously held portfolios in Disability Services, Human Services and Community Development.

The Nexus volunteer Board oversees governance and strategy and is made up of eight community members from different backgrounds.

With a passion for helping everyday Tasmanians live happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives, Jacquie is looking forward to contributing to Nexus.

Many people do not know that Jacquie has lived experience of disability too, as she has severe hearing loss and a cochlear implant.

These experiences make Jacquie even more determined to give back to the sector.

Jacquie originally trained as a nurse at Launceston General Hospital before she later went into politics.

Among her many achievements she served Tasmanians living with disability for nine years as Shadow Minister for Disability Services and then Minister for Disability Services.

During this time Jacquie was involved in the roll out of the NDIS in Tasmania, which gives her a unique perspective on the aspirations of people living with disability in the state.

After retiring from politics, Jacquie noted that one of the biggest joys she missed was the opportunity to help people, which is why she wanted to find a board position that allowed her to do this again.

Jacquie's experience and compassion is ideally suited to the goals and mission of our Board, and we are looking forward to working with her over the coming years.

Nexus Team



Children and Youth respite opens

Nexus' specialist Children and Youth team celebrated a huge milestone over summer with the soft opening of their brand-new, purpose-built respite service.

A small number of clients have used our respite services since late 2022 and we are now welcoming new enquiries.

We are very proud of the modern respite facility, where children and youth aged 7 years and older are supported to achieve their goals in a safe, rewarding and fun respite environment.

Our Children and Youth team works hard to find new ways for clients to achieve their goals and develop skills in areas such as:

- Reading, writing, maths and creative projects
- Cooking, cleaning, catching transport and self care
- Other independent living skills

It's great to welcome back Bec Fahey who is returning as Assistant Manager of our Children and Youth service. She is currently busy developing our specialist Children and Youth team.

Please contact Donna on donna.coetzee@nexusinc.org.au for enquiries about respite places.



Nutrition and Swallowing education

Our Learning and Development Manager, Greg, has worked hard over the last few months to develop and implement our new Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist.

This will be used across all divisions of Nexus to help us more easily identify clients who need support at mealtimes. It has already been used to gather data for more than 150 clients.

Alongside this, six Key Workers from our Community Services team recently went to a Nutrition Education workshop where dietitians advised on healthy eating and special diets for people living with disability.

These staff are now able to better support their clients who need mealtime assistance and share what they have learned with their teams.

“Information from the new Nutrition and Swallowing checklist will help us with early identification of clients who require mealtime assistance.”

- Learning and Development Manager, Greg

Nexus in the Community



Nexus gets to the Grassroots

Disability support workers come from many backgrounds. Some of the best ones start out with very little experience, instead bringing the right attitude and lots of life experience to the job.

Grassroots is a proposed initiative connecting Nexus with grassroots organisations to find staff with unique life experiences, community knowledge and local connections. These traits can make people great mentors, especially for younger clients who have become disconnected from their communities.

Our Recruitment team and Complex Individualised Support team will be working with organisations to offer training and support to connect their communities with work opportunities.

If your organisation is interested in this project please contact jobs@nexusinc.org.au



TAFE talk sows the SEED for future Support Workers

Our SEED and Customised Employment General Manager, Jackie, has spoken with TAFE students to share her own story about turning a TAFE qualification into a solid career path.

Jackie completed a TAFE Certificate III in Individualised Support (formerly Disability Support) in 2010. After starting her career at another disability organisation she soon brought her skillset to Nexus.

Jackie has achieved a lot at Nexus including starting the Community Services division in 2014, growing it to provide day service and capacity building opportunities, and then moving successfully into her current role as General Manager.

Jackie believes that with the right frame of mind anyone can achieve big things.

Nexus on tour



As part of our 25th Anniversary celebrations, Client Intake manager, Donna, is going “on tour” to visit organisations across Southern Tasmania that work closely with Nexus.

Donna will meet face-to-face with the Support Coordinators, service providers and community groups she has built connections with over the past year.

Discussions will be around the ways we can provide support, our latest service updates and celebrating the great work we continue to do together.

Client Stories

Ron

Ron was out and about in the Summer sunshine on a visit to the New Town Rivulet.

He enjoyed seeing the waterfall and having lunch outside in the fresh air.

Spurred on by the warm weather, Ron also did a spot of Christmas shopping with his support team.



Rawa

Making the most of a bright summer's day, Rawa visited ZooDoo.

Some of the highlights included exploring the animal park, petting and feeding some wallabies.

Rawa also enjoyed looking at an old vintage tractor and large animal sculptures throughout the park.



Lindley

A fascinating trip to the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Glenorchy allowed Lindley to learn all about local history.

Lindley loved to see the vintage buses, cars and trains on display.

He had a particular soft spot for the quaint historic fire engines.



Client Stories

Michael

A trip to Cornelian Bay was a wonderful way to enjoy a warm afternoon for Michael.

He came prepared with some feed for the hungry ducks.

An icecream from the Boathouse topped off a great day out.



Mark

Mark whipped up a delicious array of festive treats to give out as Christmas gifts.

He then came into the Nexus office to deliver his handmade presents in person.

From rum balls to biscuits, the staff at the Nexus office were thrilled to receive them.



Sally

A creative afternoon decorating rocks allowed Sally to add some extra magic to her home fairy garden.

Smiles and laughter were shared as she and Maree made their works of art using different paints and sparkly crafting supplies.

The two ladies finished the day by making a healthy lunch to enjoy together in the garden.





2021/2022 Annual Report



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