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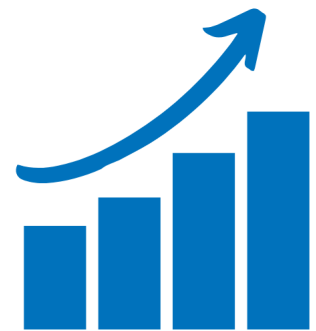
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# Chair Report

In my final year as Chair, I am very proud to be able to reflect on the great strides Nexus continues to make towards achieving our vision of a community where everyone's valued and respected.

This year has seen greater scrutiny over our sector with both a Royal Commission and Review highlighting significant shortcomings with services and systems that are designed to support people with disability. It has been hard to hear the many stories and Nexus acknowledges the bravery of the participants and family members who have raised and relived their traumatic experiences. As a Board we have reflected on the importance of continuing to ensure Nexus keeps delivering safe, best practice support. A large part of this is ensuring staff are trained, capable of delivering quality services, and empowered to speak up if they see any issues.

Our expansion into Children and Youth and Respite has particularly made us consider in greater depth the possible issues of delivering services to vulnerable children. As a result, the Board approved a proposal to seek Child Safe Accreditation and hope to start this

training before the end of 2023 with our partners, the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF).

Nexus has become undeniably more complex in my time on the Board – a fact that presents both the reality of risk but also the excitement of innovation and progress. The range of services we offer, our size, and the complexity of our client base have all grown and the Board has to work across a much wider range of issues. Establishing subcommittees for Program Governance and for Finance and Audit has increased the capacity of the Board to more deeply analyse issues. I thank the independent subcommittee members who have provided their insights and expertise this year.

The Board continues to seek opportunities to further achieve our mission and has supported the development of both respite and SEED. Earlier this year, I was pleased to sign a memorandum of understanding with a service provider in North West Tasmania with the hope that we will be able to expand our services geographically.

Despite the ongoing cost of growth and service delivery I am pleased to report that Nexus returned a surplus of \$1.5 million. This allows us to continue to expand our services. Most of our funds were again spent on paying wages and it is pleasing to record further service growth across the organisation with salaries and employment costs increasing by approximately 11%.

I extend my thanks to my fellow volunteer Board members who have supported me and whose expertise and unwavering passion for supporting the rights of people with disability continues to lead Nexus forward.

Thank you in particular to Deb Bailey who, after three years on the Board, will not be renominating. Deb has brought valuable legal insight to issues as well as providing her experience in child safety to ensure we are building services that are ethically and legally robust.

I am looking forward to seeing where Nexus goes next.



**Marcus Pringle Jones**  
Nexus Chair



# Customised Employment and SEED

## From a SEED of thought

It's a sunny morning at the SEED orchard and apple-pickers work high atop a hill, overlooking the picturesque Huon River.

The idyllic experience transcends the views with the people working there gaining life skills, a broad range of work experience, and a sense of comradeship and community.

The SEED (Social Enterprise Employment and Diversity) Program is one of only a handful of services in the Tasmanian disability sector, offering award-wages for employment through its orchard, gardening and commercial cleaning arms.

Some clients complete work-ready courses through the Customised Employment program and use this as a pathway to employment at the SEED orchard.

Clint spends a lot of time on-site coordinating the orchard operations, as an Acting Team Leader for Customised Employment.

Two years on, he still can't believe his luck at finding his dream job and such a spectacular 'office'.

Previously Clint worked as a manager for a large cleaning company with multiple staff and split shifts that saw him work around the clock.

"Now I wake up and I want to go to work," he said.

In addition to guiding employees in learning about orcharding, Clint has helped them to gain skills in building maintenance, domestic painting, flat pack installation, first aid and safety,







and has supported several in gaining a forklift licence.

“It’s been good to help them out with their confidence too, some of them have come in feeling low and have walked out with skills they never thought it was possible to have,” Clint said.

“Some of the team have told me they feel like we’ve created a real community here and they look forward to coming to work for that.”

Clint started as SEED’s cleaning arm supervisor and, despite not having worked in disability services before his natural desire to see people get a fair go allowed him to excel in this role.

He took on the orchard operations a short while later, grew his industry knowledge by completing a Certificate III in Individualised Support (Disability), went above and beyond to secure training opportunities for Customised Employment clients and was later promoted to his current role.

“Picking, pruning, cleaning; whatever needed doing he stepped it up and got it done,” Customised Employment Manager Jackie said.

“This shows me it is all about finding the right person for the job, not the right qualification.

“That person with the right ideas and respect for the clients.”

Despite his humble nature, Clint’s kindness to all who cross his path has not gone unnoticed.

“He has the respect of staff and clients alike,” Jackie said.



# People, Practice and Quality

## Staff Feedback Survey 2023

A full time worker spends on average about 2,080 hours at work every year. With 8,760 hours in a standard year, hours spent at work takes up almost a quarter of our time. This is why it is so important that our workplaces are spaces where we are mentally and physically supported.

This year we ran our third employee feedback survey called The Voice Survey. We last ran this in early 2020 and were pleased to see that, after a challenging few years, our staff still demonstrated highly positive results in the three key areas of assessment: Engagement, Wellbeing and Progress. In particular, Wellbeing has remained stable since 2020 and is on par with the Disability Services Benchmark.

### ENGAGEMENT 85%

96% enjoy the type of work they do

84% get a sense of personal accomplishment from their job

84% would recommend Nexus as a good place to work

### PROGRESS 80%

87% would advocate for Nexus as a support service

87% feel optimistic about the future of the organisation

85% believe Nexus understands the needs of its clients

### WELLBEING 75%

80% feel they can keep their job stress at an acceptable level

76% feel they are in control of things in their job

70% believe their job positively impacts their wellbeing

## HOW NEXUS MEASURES UP

Compared to the Disability Services benchmark, Nexus' results are above average for a wide range of work practices including:

**+15%**

Awareness of work health and safety responsibilities

**+12%**

Facilities

**+11%**

Learning and Development

**+10%**

Workload

# CEO Report

The past year has again been busy and focused on building on the strengths of the last few years.

## Implementing New Systems

This year we have spent a lot of time preparing to implement new accounting and client management systems which has required significant work to understand and map workflows across the organisation. It is timely to do this work to improve our efficiencies considering our growth over the past five years. I thank John, Adrian and Matt who have led this massive undertaking and the Nexus management team who have been instrumental in trialling and implementing these systems ready for roll out by the end of 2023.

## Customised Employment

After the first full year of operating our social enterprise, SEED, there have been some useful learnings as the business continues to support people to gain meaningful skills and be paid a fair day's pay. Despite the ongoing challenge of clients not having employment funding in their NDIS plans, the Nexus

Customised Employment team continue to provide support to SEED employees and were pleased to enrol and support over 20 clients. We were delighted to have supported this group to achieve 46 qualifications between them including three clients completing Certificate II level qualifications – a great outcome.

## Reinforcing Culture

As organisations grow, they need to find new ways to bring the organisation together and keep building a company culture that reinforces organisational values. This is particularly challenging when staff are spread across 30+ locations, so we have increased our internal communications to ensure that we are sharing knowledge and good news stories across the teams.

To better understand how our staff were feeling about our culture, we completed our third staff Voice survey. We received a healthy 67% response rate. Our key indicators were above the sector average with staff demonstrating high satisfaction with Engagement at 85% (+2% above the industry average), Wellbeing at 75% (+3%) and Progress at 80% (+3%). Being a values-driven organisation, it was also pleasing to score well on awareness and belief in Nexus Values (97% and 96% respectively).

We have maintained our strong focus on the health and safety of our workforce and it was pleasing to see that staff felt that they knew their Health and Safety responsibilities (97%, +15%); have enough time to do their job (83%, +14%); have the right equipment to safely do their job (86%, +9%); and know where to get help if they feel emotionally unwell or unsafe (86%).

The next 12 months will be defined by processing and responding to the various findings of the NDIS Review and the Royal Commission being finalised as we close out this year. As an organisation focused on the human rights of our clients, Nexus will endeavour to take on any identified practice improvements required for the ongoing improvement of services to our clients.

I thank all staff, clients and community members who have contributed to another successful year at Nexus.

**Mark Jessop**  
Nexus CEO



# Nexus Complex and Individualised Support





## Graduating from the NDIS

In an impressive feat of determination and dedication, Gus has worked hard to meet all of his personal goals and is about to graduate from the NDIS.

Gus has been a client of Nexus since 2018, and is a passionate advocate for what individuals can achieve when they receive the right support and care.

"I want young people coming onto the NDIS to know that there is a pathway off, a pathway forward, when you get the support you need and you know you matter," Gus said.

Gus was a client of Nexus Complex and Individualised Support (NCIS), and his story highlights what can be accomplished when the intensive, multi-faceted work of this division is mixed with client "tenacity".

"He is an amazing individual," Key Support Worker Jason said. "He has come such a long way – he is working full time, in a committed relationship and helping his partner with parental duties, living independently, and looking to save for a deposit on a house."

When Gus came to Nexus he was seeking support with emotional regulation, self esteem, patience, community access and achieving goals in his personal life.

One of Gus's early goals was to gain literacy and numeracy skills, as he struggled with everyday things like reading text messages and filling in forms.

Gus was let down by the mainstream schooling system as a child, and again by adult education and literacy programs. None of these provided the assistance or environment to support his needs.

"From a young age I was told I was the naughty child, and because of my autism and dyslexia they didn't know what to do with me, so they just put me in a corner and left me," Gus said. "Even as an adult, that had wrecked my self-confidence, the way I saw myself and it stunted my self-growth."

The turning point was when Gus came to Nexus and his first Support Worker, Pete, taught him to read and write.

"My reading is a lot better and I can write resumes, invoices, forms. Pete is a saint to me," Gus said.

Jason took over Gus's support in 2019, building on the tremendous work that Pete and Gus had achieved together, and shifting focus towards the next big goals around emotional regulation.

"It was all or nothing with Gus at that point, so if he had negative thoughts his life could come to a standstill and he would throw it all in," Jason said.

Jason crafted an approach they called "interrogating negative thoughts with evidence" where Gus would state the reasons why he was having these thoughts – and the pair would work through each of them.

Jason used mindfulness techniques to guide Gus through challenges; worked towards independent living including budgeting and other life skills; and helped Gus find effective ways to diffuse anger and other big emotions.

"Gus's strategies are to take time out, go for a walk, exercise at the gym or run a marathon."

It has been an honour for Jason to see Gus achieve his goals and to have played a part in his journey.

"He really has grown into a man," Jason said.

"I think he has overcome all adversity, is very tenacious, and hasn't let anything stop him in achieving his goals.

"I just want to say to him, well done buddy - this is where you wanted to be and you've got there.

"And to Pete, thank you for your hard work and dedication. Without you, this journey would not have been possible."



# Finance Report

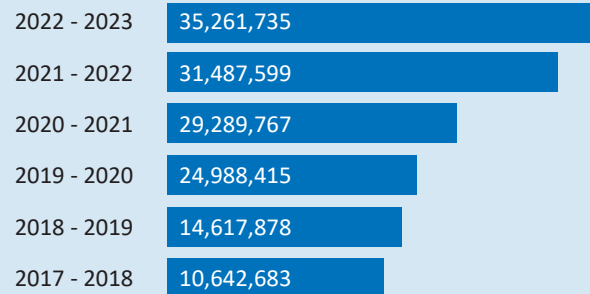
## Moving with the times

It's been a big year for changing processes and systems in the Finance team.

With ongoing changes to NDIS funding and claiming, we have implemented a range of new processes to improve our ability to claim efficiently. This benefits our clients as they know exactly what remains in their plan, and there is transparency around what we are claiming.

Our payroll team are also benefitting from the implementation of new systems with a dedicated rostering team formed to ensure that rosters are up-to-date and the number of corrections to payslips can be minimised.

## Total Revenue



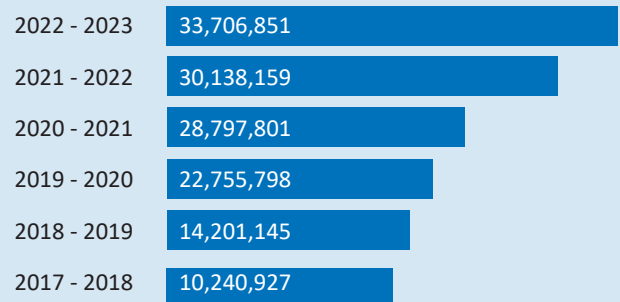
## Retaining a surplus in a challenging market

With ongoing funding changes from the NDIS, I am pleased to report that Nexus still returned a surplus of \$1,554,884 - a profit margin of 4.4%.

In another year of service growth across the organisation, our salaries and employment costs increased again by approximately 11%.

Despite a number of challenges faced by the industry, Nexus continue to be in a strong financial position and we hope to retain this into 2023/2024.

## Total Expenses



# Nexus by Numbers

## Client Breakdown



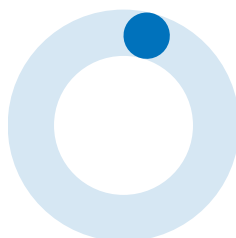
Community Services: 58%



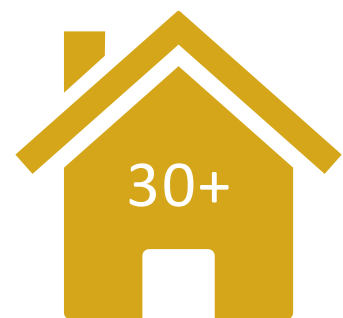
Supported Living: 22%



Complex Support: 14%



Customised Employment: 6%



supported living properties



dedicated staff



# Supported Independent Living



## Reflections on a transformative year

The ever-changing landscape of Supported Independent Living (SIL) has undergone yet another major transformation this year.

New clients have joined us, new properties have been acquired, client needs have shifted and we have farewelled long-cherished clients who have passed away.

With 67 clients now living across our 23 houses, staff have been busy meeting 67 sets of unique needs, 67 sets of likes and dislikes, and 67 sets of goals.

“It has been a really big year,” SIL Manager Louise said.

“There is a lot of work put in to successfully transition someone to their new home. We work out all their medications, any behaviours they need support with, what they enjoy doing and then train our staff before they work with them.”

There have been some great success stories, tales of friendship, and finding the ideal place to call home.

One of these stories involves two young clients who moved in together, one who had struggled to find the right fit in a shared living environment, and the other who was moving out of home for the first time.

“They became fast friends, it was beautiful to see,” Louise said.

Amid the ebbs and flows of the past year, a clear theme has emerged for SIL’s next chapter – one of reflection. “I think we are in a period of reflection about our mission to continually improve the quality of support we provide our clients,” Louise said.

“We are doing a lot of work with the Team Leaders and staff to build on and expand on this quality.

“Also, when incidents do occur that we need to learn from, we are using reflective practice to drill down to the cause. This helps to ensure that we are building a strong and sustainable future for SIL.”



# Finance and Assets

## A place to call home

It took a leap of faith to move from China to Australia, but for our Assets and Facilities Coordinator, Max, it has resulted in finding both a successful career and a place that feels like home.

Max has been on an adventure since he arrived in 2010, undertaking years of study and work and displaying great courage, resilience and adaptability to thrive in his new home.

“Hobart has become a second home and is now more of a home to me than China. I feel that I can make my own choices here, there are more options,” Max said.

Max studied a Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Interpreting/Translating at RMIT University, then a Bachelor of Accounting at the Holmes Institute. It was during this time that Max learned about the careers possible in disability support.

Working for a private client for eight years, Max felt honoured to help this client achieve things that really mattered to them.

“You realise that it is a privilege to be born like this, to be able to do all the things that you want to do, and you should use this privilege to help others live the life that they want to live,” Max said.

“And if you are lucky enough to help people, and make a living while doing it, for me it is like two birds with one stone.”

After this experience, Max moved to Tasmania to study an MBA in Marketing at UTAS in Hobart. Despite this field being his ultimate career goal for many years, his love for helping others never left and he also studied a Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability).

When Max joined Nexus as a casual Support Worker for Supported Independent Living (SIL) in early 2021, the organisation warmly welcomed him. Nexus is committed to employing, upskilling and celebrating the unique experiences of staff from different countries, cultures and social backgrounds. This was very much the case for Max, whose career went from strength to strength.

Max was employed in a permanent part-time role for SIL when, in late 2022, an opportunity came up to use his operational knowledge to provide support in a different way. Drawing on almost a decade of experience working in disability services and his background of studies in accounting, Max was promoted to his current role of Assets and Facilities Coordinator.

“When a worker says can we please purchase this product or can we fix this, I always get to it asap as I have been there myself when I was a Support Worker,” he said.

“And if I can’t get it sorted at that moment, I might suggest could they try this for now, or ask is there anything else I can do right now to help you out.

“Accounting has been helpful too, as it’s all about documents and an eye for detail. It’s a particular mentality.”







# Children and Youth

## Find your village

It takes a village to raise a child and we take our role in supporting children and their families very seriously. Through our specialist Children and Youth team, we support clients aged seven and up to achieve their own unique goals and ambitions.

Whether they are staying for a night or two, or even a few weeks, our Children and Youth Planned Respite service offers home-away-from-home accommodation and capacity building activities, all tailored to the individual.

The Nexus specialist respite team are trained to support clients to build capacity and develop life skills in a safe and engaging way.

For one client, respite was made to feel like a girly sleep-over with lots of cosy time on the couch and movies.

The team worked with her to make her feel comfortable, and provided a 2:1 support ratio, to best meet her support needs.

“We cooked with her and helped her through a challenging time, making it feel like she was spending time with the girls, like a sleep-over weekend,” Children and Youth Assistant Manager Rebecca said.

Another client, 15 year old Jordan, thrived in a supported independent setting and took every opportunity to get out and about in the local community. As well as visiting the botanical gardens, library and CBD, Jordan attended a workshop at the Youth Arts Centre.

Jordan worked with staff to plan his own meals, shop for ingredients, cook and wash up, do his own laundry and tidy up.

Jordan’s father Darran is thrilled with the new skills that have been acquired and said the family were looking forward to what the future would bring.

“It’s great to see him participating in regular everyday activities, helping with the day-to-day chores and building on his life skills,” Darran said.

“We’re working with his school to make that transition to the working world in the near future, such as a part time job at Maccas.

“There has been talk about a mechanical course that will start later in the year too, so it is all positive news for Jordan going forward.”

Our Children and Youth team also provide regular support for clients throughout the week outside of respite.

This includes supporting clients to access their community, such as attending school and activities, and build their independence by developing life skills.







# COO Report

Doing more with less, and doing it well. This has been the mantra for our operations team this year. In light of issues in the wider disability services sector, it is more relevant than ever.

The last few years have been particularly challenging for disability service providers. With increasing compliance requirements, limited staffing pool, and ongoing NDIS funding changes, it is estimated that 45% of services providing core supports are running at a loss.

As Nexus COO I am grateful for our organisation-wide motivation to continue implementing improvements to create a sustainable organisation for both staff and clients.

**“Doing more with less,  
and doing it well.”**

One of our largest projects this year is implementing our MYP IT system. This will streamline our systems, create more effective processes, and provide a better user experience for both staff and clients. It will play a key role in retaining quality staff and, in turn, support the ongoing provision of quality support to clients.

This new IT system is complemented by our significant efforts in recruiting staff who share Nexus values. We are providing more service hours across more clients than ever before, and we pride ourselves on our ongoing efforts to match the right staff with the right clients. This can pose some challenges in being able to meet the staffing numbers required across the organisation, but we continue to explore new pathways for recruitment so that we can meet these growing needs.

A recruitment process like this means we have consistency in the values our staff share, and the dedication the team brings to delivering high quality support to clients across Nexus. The MYP system also works alongside this, by clearly outlining and tracking a clients' goals and support needs so that we are confident we are providing best practice support.

We know it is likely that our sector will continue to face challenges around funding, quality assurance and recruitment, but it is reassuring to know that the Nexus team are committed to working through these challenges for the benefit of our staff and clients into the future.



**Adrian Scott**  
Nexus COO



# MYP Implementation



## A new digital age

It's hard to imagine the early analog days of disability services with stacks of hand-written logbooks. Now in its 25th year, Nexus has progressed well beyond these methods and has distinguished itself as an industry leader for its digital technologies.

A couple of years ago, Nexus had reached a critical point in its operations. The divisions of Community Services and Complex and Individualised Support were expanding, extra reporting requirements were introduced by the new Quality and Safeguarding Commission, and changes to NDIS billing and reporting came into effect.

"These factors, along with rapid expansion in client numbers and services, made it crucial to get new technology better suited to the needs of a growing organisation," Nexus COO Adrian Scott said.

This year a new digital system called MYP has been rolled out by our specialised team. MYP will better support the needs of our staff and clients with interactive, automated and real-time capabilities.

When a client decides to join Nexus, the system provides an easy user experience. Their enquiry comes via our website which creates an entry in the system and notifies the Nexus intake team. NDIS billing data can also be found in real time, so staff can see the funding allocated to a client's service and maximise the benefit for each client from the funds that they have available. "We often fly blind with that, so this system gives us the visibility we need," Adrian said.

The same automated and streamlined digital processes are used by the People and Culture team, for recruitment, compliance documentation and staff management.

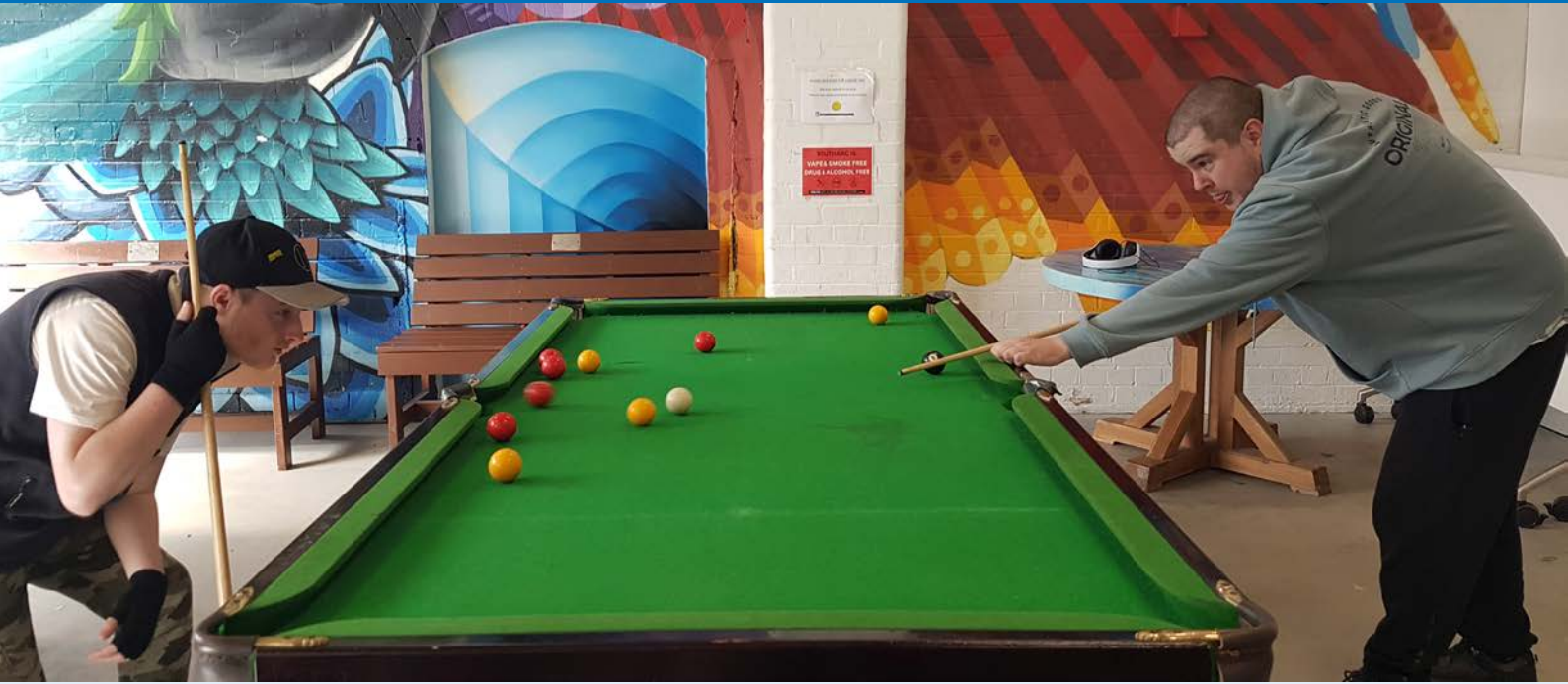
"Team Leaders and Managers can also review staff performance against their position descriptions, setting KPIs and personal development plans from this," Adrian said.

The benefits extend to all staff who can now quickly update their own information, access their contract and PD, and file digital timesheets and leave forms. In the past, up to 45 per cent of Team Leaders' time was spent processing written information, but now it is all done digitally.

"I used to dream about all this," Adrian said.



# Community Services



## Collaboration for Community Engagement

The first thing you notice when you arrive at the Nexus Come and Try Day at Hobart's Youth Arc is the buzz of energy as everyone finds activities to get involved in.

Whether it's playing table tennis with their support team, having some quiet time gaming, or making new friends on the basketball court, everyone is encouraged to participate in a way that feels fun and comfortable for them.

Community Services client, Isaac, is particularly thrilled with the opportunities provided at the Open Day.

"I love that there is so much to do and I am getting good at beating [Nexus Assistant Team Leader] Dan at table tennis!" he said.

"I'm getting pretty good at doing the back spin on the ball – I've been practicing!"

This was Isaac's second time at the Nexus Open Day and he was not shy about trying everything on offer.

A group of Nexus Support Workers and clients formed a game of basketball that Isaac got involved in before he joined another Nexus client, Jeremy, for a game of pool.

"It's good because I get to meet people I don't know", Isaac said.

Isaac and Jeremy enjoyed playing and traded tips throughout the game on the best ways to take particularly tricky shots.

"It's great to be able to host these events with Youth Arc," said Community Services Assistant Team Leader, Dan Chevalier. "This is the second one we have run and we are getting more and more interest."

Dan is the instigator of the partnership with Youth Arc and has more Come and Try Days planned.

"Ultimately we want clients to feel comfortable enough to come along during Youth Arc's public access hours as well, but we'll keep running these to build client confidence and support them to access the space."

As well as collaborations with local community organisations like this one, our Community Services team also support people to build their independent living skills through support in the community and in their home.



# Rostering and Payroll

## Through the lens of admin

From the frontline of a Zimbabwean food aid mission to roles in aged care, child care and now disability services, Melissa has always worked in sectors that care for the community's most vulnerable.

Melissa is a CRM Administration Officer for the Nexus team currently rolling out the new information management system, MYP.

With a passion for attention to detail, Melissa has thrived in administration roles that provide behind-the-scenes support to a variety of care-based sectors.

"When I was living in Zimbabwe, I worked at World Vision (relief aid) as a Monitoring and Evaluation Field Officer in the rural areas, which involved data collection and report writing," she said.

"In Australia I worked as a disability Support Worker for 12 months before coming to Nexus and I have loved getting to know the broader view of the NDIS."

It has been close to ten years since Melissa and her husband moved from Zimbabwe to Australia - a move that has seen them start a family and embark on exciting career trajectories in their respective fields.

"We love it here - Tasmania is quite chilled and relaxed," she said.

"People in Australia value work-life balance and I love that weekends are for family time."

Since starting with Nexus in August 2022, Melissa has been meticulous in the careful transfer of client and staff data onto the new MYP system.

She has also worked extensively with Nexus Team Leaders in the "parallel testing" stage, to ensure that the digital roosting system is ready for its official launch later this year. Accurate roosting will mean Nexus clients are able to receive the support they require from staff that are a good match.

After all this time spent testing and trialing, Melissa is ready for the big day when MYP launches in late 2023.

"Bring it on," she said.







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