

2021

ANNUAL REPORT



Our Values

Integrity, respect, openness,
person-centred, accountability,
life-long learning.

Our Vision

To be an organisation of excellence;
a growing, flexible and proactive
person-centred service.

Our Mission

To provide exceptional services for people
with disability, primarily those with an
intellectual disability, and their support
networks. Through person-centred
support, we empower people to reach
their individual goals and aspirations.

**Improving and refining our
organisation to grow with
the emerging developments
of the disability sector.**

A man with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a dark blue short-sleeved button-down shirt with a white polka-dot pattern. He is standing outdoors in front of a brick building with a blue corrugated metal roof. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape that contains the title.

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Chairman Report

Pauline Vamos

It's been a year of firsts, highs, and lows and I am very grateful for the performance of Interaction's staff, Executive, CEO and Board.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the team put together a comprehensive COVID-19 response plan which has been tested on a regular basis and reported against monthly to the Board. I am very pleased and relieved that, to date, we have had no significant incidents due to the strength of this plan. The plan, like our strategy, puts our participants and stakeholders at the centre of what we do. The Board has continued to meet virtually throughout the period with only one or two opportunities to come together in-person. We were lucky to spend several hours reviewing our strategy which is vital in such a changed environment, including the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The revised strategy including an updated vision statement commences this financial year, and the Board believes it will drive better outcomes for participants and staff as well as ensure the sustainability of Interaction. In short, we have no desire to be the biggest, but our ambition is to be amongst the best.

Strategically we will invest more in our IT systems to enable greater productivity, increase our funding in accommodation to provide better quality of life, and invest more in expanding our services and how they are delivered to respond to the unique needs of our participants.

BOARD RENEWAL

One of the roles of Chair is to ensure Board succession. After a robust recruitment process, we were thrilled to welcome Gail Bennell and Rob Binskin to the Board late in 2020 and will be looking for another two Board members over the next six months. I would like to thank Felix Consulting who undertook this search process pro bono for us. We will continue to increase our skill and experience considering the very changing environment.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Last year we reviewed our committees, and I would like to congratulate and thank the chairs and members of the committees for all their hard work. The role of Board Committees is to alleviate some of the work of the Board as well as enable a focussed review of financial and non-financial risks.

The Finance and Risk Committee chaired by Allan Dodd, has done an outstanding job reviewing the risk framework and improving the quality and timeliness of our financial reporting including overseeing the change of our auditor.

Laurie Boxwell who chairs the Projects Committee, has ensured appropriate governance over many of our large projects. In this regard, one of our main projects is a comprehensive review of our IT systems which will entail substantial investment. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge Rob Binskin who is the lead director on this project.

Our Remuneration and Nominations Committee has been very busy with the recruitment of Brett our CEO, our new Board members, a review of salaries at senior levels and the introduction of a modest bonus scheme.

Our Governance Committee chaired by Karen Hinton, has been adjourned as the main purpose of that committee was to oversee the change in our Constitution and review the Board committee structure. I should also note that the job of the Board has been made easier and we have better governance due to the skills and expertise of Lauren Asmussen, our Company Secretary. I would like to personally acknowledge her incredible work.

I would also like to acknowledge and welcome the revamping of the Stakeholder Engagement Committee that has been chaired by Barry Greensmith until his resignation in June 2021 and more recently, Lesley Robertson. The Committee has been instrumental in supporting the development of new branding material and providing insights into how to improve communication with parents and carers,

and participants. A special thanks to Barry for his tenure as the Chair of this Committee over a number of years.

RISK EVENTS

We have had a few risk events of varying degrees of significance throughout the year, but I am very proud of the way in which the Board, Brett our CEO and key members of the executive have responded to them. The most significant event has been the discovery that our interpretation of changes to the Award that covers some of our staff 6 years ago, was found to be incorrect even though it was in line with some others in the industry's interpretation at the time. In light of this discovery, a remediation programme has been undertaken which could result in a significant outlay for Interaction. We have allocated the funds needed to respond to the results of the review programme and please be assured that it will not impact on the sustainability of the organisation. We are able to cope with the financial impact due to the past financial performance of Interaction. Although we may need to postpone some initiatives, the financial position of Interaction is still sound.

FINAL WORD

As a Board we will continue to focus on better governance. We are thrilled with the performance of Brett Thompson, CEO, in his first year and have enjoyed the benefit of significant improvements in organisational reporting. We will continue to set and oversight culture to ensure we continue with the right behaviours and ethical intent. Our participants deserve services and care that reflects the benefits that a professionally run organisation with a culture of service can provide.

Thank you again to my Board colleagues, the Executive, our staff and our stakeholders for their support.

Life Membership Awarded

At the 2020 virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM), George and Judith Gelb were awarded Life Membership by Interaction's Board of Directors in recognition of their long-standing support of Interaction, and in particular, their advocacy for participants with Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS). In 1992, Judith and George commenced their involvement with Interaction as part of the parent group that advocated for funding for the first PWS specific group home. Their daughter Karen was one of the program's first clients and still currently resides in one of Interaction's accommodation programs. George and Judith have been vital in educating the community about PWS and in supporting PWS awareness. Along with Don and Lesley Robertson, Georgina Loughnan and others they set up the first PWS advocacy committee.

George and Judith have consistently contributed to Interaction financially and by volunteering their time, and we are most grateful for their support.

Judith Gelb with
Professor Andrea Prader
and Dr Verne Caradus

Judith, Karen and
George Gelb





CEO Report

Brett Thompson

It has been over one year since I started as the CEO of Interaction Disability Services and it has been a year of rapid and consistent change. None of the introduced changes would have been possible without the support of the Board, the Executive Leadership Team, the Senior Leadership Team, the staff, our participants and their families and carers. My thanks to you all.

As much as I'd like to avoid any mention of COVID-19, I must comment because responding to it has and continues to be such a large part of our operation. The organisation has proactively responded to every Public Health Order and restriction, whilst maintaining support for our participants. Many have become experts in virtual meetings and catch ups, and more recently leisure and lifestyle activities have been provided using a remote approach. This demonstrates the ability of our knowledgeable, experienced and dedicated staff to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Given the vulnerability of our participants and noting that vaccinations have not been mandated for the sector, we have been proactive in supporting all of our participants who sought the vaccinations to have them, with almost 67% being fully vaccinated at the time of writing. Staff have also been encouraged and supported to have their vaccinations and we continue to monitor their vaccination status.

Whilst not everyone has been fully supportive of the approach we have adopted, including at times being

stricter in terms of COVID-19 testing requirements than the requirements of Public Health Orders, we have taken a risk management approach. Managing this and the many other changes throughout the year has required ongoing communication and the provision of information throughout the organisation and with our participants and families and carers. Staff town hall meetings are scheduled and held regularly, the organisation newsletter has been re-launched and is provided to all email addresses registered within our database and Microsoft Teams is available for staff. Executive Leadership Team meeting minutes are shared with all staff in an effort to maintain transparency and a "you said, we did" column is available for staff to see how their feedback and suggestions are acted upon.

Improving communication has empowered staff to bring forward ideas and contribute to the organisation more readily. This helps the organisation to flex and move with emerging trends. An example of this was the re-birth of the Stakeholder Engagement Committee.

The Committee comprised predominantly of management in the past, but in line with the importance of engaging with participants and families and carers, membership has changed. It is my pleasure to engage with the participant representatives 1:1 prior to each meeting to work through the agenda. The input of participants and parents/carers is invaluable due to

their lived experience.

One of the areas of focus this past year has been our approach to complaints and incidents. Rather than view these as a negative reflection on the organisation, these are invaluable pieces of information that provide opportunities for improvement. We have introduced feedback forms for all facilities and will also be installing feedback boxes (once restrictions allow) to encourage feedback from participants, families, carers, guardians, visitors and staff. There is also an easy read format for those who require additional assistance in providing their feedback.

Collecting additional data through this feedback system is part of a larger strategy to improve our business intelligence. Capturing measurable data from across the organisation, monitoring for trends and taking steps to address areas of concern is important. We can't manage what we don't measure is true, as is the need to ensure our Board is well informed.

This approach identified some gaps in terms of mandatory training, and not having a requirement for staff to have First Aid certification. We mandated First Aid certification and CPR for all front-line Support Workers this year and are supporting staff to attain these qualifications. We have also updated mandatory training requirements for staff and are monitoring for compliance.

Improved data capture and reporting will also assist us in improving the quality of our services, including the maintenance of our accommodation facilities. Having well maintained houses is a priority for

us and formalising our preventative maintenance program will assist this.

Building and occupying new facilities is important and we have been fortunate this year in being able to open our purpose-built PWS house in Narara. It was wonderful to share with Nathan and Bradley as they moved in to their new home. We also opened two new PWS AccessAccom houses in Werrington and shared the excitement of Michael and Jack who moved in to the first one. We are anxiously awaiting the arrival of Robert, Melissa and Sasha into the second.

Facilities allow us to provide 24/7 support to 74 participants across 24 facilities, with a further 14 participants in 9 facilities being supported to live independently. Land was also purchased in Gorokan earlier this year to further expand our footprint on the Central Coast.

Growing our services and exploring new opportunities will only be possible if we continue to develop our great staff.

The Disability Royal Commission is yet to publish formal findings, but it is clear the importance of staff training and qualifications is an emerging theme. Workforce more broadly is also likely to be an issue as the sector has relied upon students, particularly those from overseas in the past. The COVID-19 situation has impacted on this. New ways to entice people to work within our sector are required and we are currently exploring these and establishing networks with training organisations.

All of this work is achievable only if the organisation remains in a strong financial position. It is pleasing to see the organisation return a profit of \$856,243 in the 20/21 financial year. Whilst this is \$136,243 more than the projected target, the impact of COVID-19, changes in the way the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) funds Supported Independent Living (SIL) activities, Project Green and other factors, this remains a solid outcome.

Before finishing, I note the retirement this year of Maggie Vincent, former General Manager Operations who was the matriarch of Interaction Disability Services. We are not sure whether this was an assumed or bestowed title, but having worked for the organisation for more than 22 years, a fitting one. Maggie leaves a wonderful legacy; her participant focus was second to none and her commitment to her staff was amazing. Enjoy your retirement Maggie, you've certainly earned it.

Despite all of the challenges and opportunities of the past year, it has gone very quickly. The team has successfully adapted to and implemented many changes. As we emerge from the year 2020-21 and move in to the next phase, I am looking forward to meeting the challenges and opportunities, supported by a wonderful team of exceptional people who give their all to support our participants.

Suad Burbar, a valued member of our Finance Team, reached the impressive milestone of 20 years employment with Interaction. Congratulations and thank you, Suad!



Board of Directors Reflections



Gail Bennell

It was an honour to be invited to join the Interaction Board in February 2021. While the past 12 months have given us a variety of problems to solve, it has been a pleasure to work with an Executive Team who demonstrate integrity and leadership when rising to meet challenges. Thank you to Brett and the rest of the team for your unfailing commitment.

Rob Binskin

Twelve months ago was an interesting time to join Interaction as a board member – with a new CEO in the middle of a pandemic – a period of great change.

I am privileged to have joined a group where each person brings a unique perspective to the table and a wealth of experience in management, finance, business, governance, marketing, technology, clinical and health disciplines. Under Pauline and Brett's leadership and combined with the capabilities of our Executive Team and our people, this is a powerful combination. Interaction is well positioned to fulfil its mission of providing exceptional, person-centred and empowering support to our participants and families.

The outcomes of the current review into our technology platforms, infrastructure and governance will enable sustainable and strong operating foundations into the future. I look forward to being part of the next chapter of Interaction's story.



Laurie Boxwell

While "you're on mute" would probably be the most uttered phrase for the last year, I think "challenging" would be the word most used to describe the last 12 months. In this context I am just so impressed with the whole Interaction organisation. From our participants who are central to everything we do, to our frontline staff who provide care, to our support staff at head office and to our executive; everyone has adjusted exceptionally. Now, as we look forward to emerging from this period, I am more confident than ever in the strength of Interaction and our ability to meet our purpose. I would like to also thank my fellow board members for their stewardship of the organisation and their desire to make a difference in the lives of our participants.

Allan Dodd

As has been said many times before, "We live in interesting times". The last 12 months have been "interesting" for everyone, particularly due to the NDIA, the COVID-19 pandemic and the discovery of the under payment of some of our staff. Despite these challenges, our staff and executive have continued to provide an extremely high level of support to our participants we serve, regularly going above and beyond what is expected of them. It has been a pleasure watching this happen and working with the rest of the Board to chart the best way through what is thrown at us.

It was with a heavy heart that we said "farewell" to Maggie Vincent as she retired after decades of helping the Executive lead our company and being a mentor to so many of the younger staff, particularly our women. She will be sadly missed and I wish her well in the future.



Michael Fairley

Throughout the year, I have continued to work with the Behavioural and Allied Health Services (BAHS) team. We are fortunate to have in-house clinicians. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has enabled access to resources and therapy that were previously unavailable. An important example is the role of dieticians in healthy eating. Obesity is a problem, especially in group homes. As the NDIS progresses, cost cutting means that reviews become reductions. BAHS reports are important in maintaining funding.

Despite all the changes, Interaction has continued to grow. As someone who has been on the Interaction Board for years, I try to ensure that the important things that make Interaction what it is are maintained. This is particularly important to people for whom there is pleasure in routine.



Karen Hinton

This year your board has continued to strive for best practice in our governance and oversight of Interaction. Board meetings have evolved considerably in response to the emerging challenges of the times, stretching us towards performance improvement. We have needed to meet virtually at times with board papers now shared (and archived) via a secure paperless platform. Directors do more preparation, and items for consideration come to the board within a clear framework for either noting, discussion or a decision. Governance, risk, finance and operations are standing topics. Critical operational and strategic decisions have greater profile. We welcome various members of the Executive Team to our meetings in a calendar of regular board reviews on other key areas like safety and quality, accommodation, finance, projects, information technology, human resources and WHS, marketing and more. Our collaborative detailed work is now done in board committees with clear accountability. We emerge stronger!



John Lucas

The ravages of COVID-19 continue to wreak havoc across the community but Interaction has been able to adapt and maintain the quality services offered to support our participants. This has been achieved through the inspiring leadership and adaptability of the CEO and the Executive Team as well as the Chairman and the Board of Directors who constantly need to reflect upon and implement the everchanging demands of the disability sector. This could not be achieved without the willingness of our committed, empathetic and professional staff who day by day, week by week deliver the care that keep our participants safe, well and engaged.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding long-term service to Interaction of Maggie Vincent who retired this year. Maggie exemplified the values of Interaction in all she did in so many different roles. She provided a wonderful role model to all staff through her commitment and diligence and most importantly by her deep affection for the participants and their families.



Kevin Pike

This last year has been a very challenging one with the impact of external factors as well as the retirement of our two most senior executive staff. The team has responded magnificently to continue to care for the men and women we have the privilege of assisting to fulfil meaningful and rewarding lives.

This will be my last year on the Board of Interaction. It has been a pleasure to serve on the Board and to see the organisation grow over the last 15 years.



Committee Reports

Executive Committee

The last 12 months provided the Executive Committee with numerous opportunities for promoting organisational growth both in terms of service offerings and staff support. In major project news, the Executive Committee was thrilled to see the completion of the build of our PWS-specific properties at Narara and Werrington. The participants at both properties were kind enough to host opening parties, complete with personal tours around their beautiful new homes. The Executive Committee also oversaw the purchase of land at Gorokan on the Central Coast, and we look forward to sharing development plans for this new location once further research on the most needed supports in the area are finalised.

Internally, the Executive Committee oversaw the development of our Senior Leadership Team, consisting of key management personnel who meet regularly to discuss and plan many facets of the organisation's strategic future. The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams took part in a Values Workshop to generate practical ideas and plans on how to further develop Interaction's team culture. As restrictions allowed, both teams had increased visibility at Interaction's accommodation sites through regular visits to hear wants and needs directly from our participants.

Key deliverables within the organisation included improved communication channels through SharePoint and Microsoft Teams to assist in connecting our remote workforce, and the development and implementation of a Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and the CEO and Executive Continuous Improvement Plan. As COVID-19 restrictions continued, the Executive Committee refreshed all emergency planning and business continuity plans including the provision of monthly COVID-19 updates to staff.

To improve the supports offered to our participants, the Executive Committee developed mandatory First Aid and CPR training for all support staff, and undertook a Client Management System scoping project. We hope to share the results of this project in the coming months.

The next 12 months will see significant changes in the Executive Committee. Sadly, we said goodbye to Maggie Vincent as she embarked on her well-earned retirement. To cater for our ever-growing organisation, her role of General Manager, Operations was restructured into two new positions. We welcome Luana Atger to Interaction as our new General Manager Accommodation, and Helen Amos, who has been with Interaction for many years, has stepped into her new position of General Manager, Community Services and Supports.

Finance & Risk Committee

In my report last year, I had three significant positional changes, any one of which raised the prospect of significant "risk" – namely the Chair of our Board, our Chief Executive Officer and our external auditor who all resigned within 8 months of each other. At the time of writing my report last year, their replacements had only started getting their feet under the table. It is a great pleasure to report that all have continued to work out wonderfully.

Forrest Gump was so right when he said "my mama always said, 'life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.'" This last year has proven that saying is correct. This Committee and our Board had been concerned since late 2019 that we might be paying our staff incorrectly, and so we asked both our external auditor and another external firm (which specialise in these matters) to specifically review our payroll systems.

After both firms had issued their reports, in which they found only very minor issues, we found that Interaction had incorrectly interpreted an aspect of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award affecting some staff payments for the past six years. At the time of writing this report, we are still not exactly sure of the amount involved but it is significant. Honourably, as soon as the Executive and Board found this error, the staff were informed and the job to calculate the back pay was started. As you can imagine, it is a very exacting and frustratingly time-consuming job. Our staff have been very understanding and supportive of the measures we have taken.

Fortunately, the strength of our balance sheet will stand us in good stead and as soon as the final calculation is confirmed, it will be paid. Even after the resolution of this matter, our organisation will still be financially strong and will continue to operate as normal (if there is anything "normal" nowadays).

My report would not be complete if I didn't thank Gurdeep, Maninder and the rest of the Finance Team for their continual hard work and dedication that they put in helping our organisation run so smoothly and make my job much easier.

I wonder what "treat" will emerge from our box of chocolates next year.

Allan Dodd FCPA (retired)
Committee Chair

Projects Committee

The Projects Committee is in place to provide oversight to projects of strategic importance. Our charter is to do the following:

- Review new projects and report to the Board on strategic alignment and viability.
- Provide recommendations to the Board on go/no go of projects.
- Review progress on all projects and report to the Board on their health.
- Provide recommendations to the Board when remedial action may be required for projects.
- At the request of the Board, review individual projects and provide objective advice in the event of a disagreement between the Executive and the Board about aspects of that project.

In this last year we have met to review and close out the project for the Narara PWS group home and the two new houses at Werrington. It was such a delight to be able to attend the official opening of Michael's and Jack's house in March.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee; Maggie Vincent, Michael Fairley, Damien Jones, Rachel Carey, Lauren Asmussen and also welcome Rob Binskin. Of special note I would like to recognise the contribution and work of Maggie Vincent – to the Committee but also to Interaction. We will miss you Maggie, but all the best in your retirement.

Laurie Boxwell
Committee Chair



Safety and Quality Committee

The Safety and Quality Committee's purpose is to review organisational policies, processes and systems and to ensure their compliance to relevant legislation and standards. Key achievements for the Committee included:

- Reviewing forty-five policies over the July 2020 to June 2021 period;
- Facilitating a participant-led review of Interaction's Easy Read policies;
- Developing and implementing a Sole Worker Policy and related processes in response to the sector-wide condition imposed on NDIS registered providers who provide personal supports to vulnerable individuals who live alone;
- Conducting an inter-team mock audit in preparation for the 2021-2022 surveillance audit. This process resulted in cross-departmental benefits including shared learning and resources. The inter-team audit will be continued on an annual basis;
- Review of the Significant Incident form to support greater compliance with the NDIS Incident Management Guidelines; and
- Regular oversight of compliance audit requests and responses ensuring all matters were addressed within their set timeframes.

Lauren Asmussen
Committee Chair

Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Stakeholders are the providers and users of Interaction. A refreshed approach for 2020/2021 saw a stronger representation of participants and families on the Stakeholder Engagement Committee, alongside a small number of Interaction staff including CEO Brett Thompson. Key achievements over the last 12 months include;

- Provision of feedback on the new websites and brochure;
- Reviewing and monitoring the Voice Project Action Plan;
- Improving communication channels with all Interaction contacts;
- Providing insight and feedback on potential new service areas and the goal setting processes for NDIS Plans; and
- Ongoing monitoring of complaints and compliments as well as assisting in the development of new feedback forms for use at all Interaction facilities.

It had been hoped that a family and participant event could be held in late 2021, but it has been a difficult year with COVID-19 and this will need to be put on hold until there is confidence in the community that everyone will be safe.

It is important to Interaction that those who use its services, and those who are providing services, are listened to, to gain their perspective on service provision. Interaction encourages all Stakeholders to bring these to the attention of Interaction. There is an Easy Read Complaints and Compliments Policy available on Interaction's website, available to all stakeholders.

Thank you, Barry Greensmith, for your commitment to, and Chairing of, the Stakeholder Engagement Committee at Interaction. Barry resigned from this position to continue his contribution at other organisations closer to his home. Barry will be missed.

Lesley Robertson
Committee Chair

Work Health & Safety / Wellbeing Committee

The last 12 months saw the merging of the Work Health & Safety (WHS) Committee with the Wellbeing Committee. Consisting of both office-based and support staff, the combined Committee focused on reviewing and improving WHS procedures across the organisation, overseeing WHS hazard and incident reporting and improving procedures for workplace inspections.

The Committee developed an annual Wellbeing Calendar where every second month saw a new topic rolled out to staff, focusing on issues such as healthy living, fatigue in the workplace, work/life balance and frontline safety.

As the year drew to a close, meetings were paused as a new policy and charter is in development to provide avenue for more support staff to be involved in the day to day running of the Committee and its projects.

Desire Roumanos & Emily Griffith
Committee Co-Chairs



Accommodation

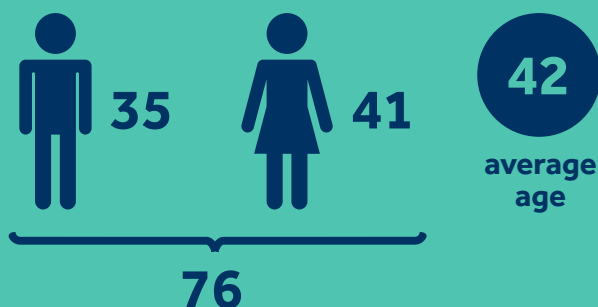
Two words sum up the Interaction's accommodation services - commitment and dedication. The past year has proved challenging on many levels as we survive not only a pandemic but changes in funding, systems, processes and people. The commitment from staff to participants, their families and carers, and to our organisation has been outstanding and the dedication of staff to the work that they do shines through. Despite the pandemic there were great achievements along the way. Participants have continued to meet their goals supported by a team of staff dedicated to their success; three purpose-built homes were completed and participants able to move in; Accommodation and Individual Options services were separated and became standalone arms of the organisation and

we've continued to build on our COVID-19 plans for the organisation, each site and for individual participants as required. In addition, we worked on systems and processes to ensure we build consistency across the organisation in how we work with people and for people. Change and our response to change have been vital to the ongoing success and viability of the organisation. We've built on the commitment and dedication to the work we do by improving how we roster, how we train our staff, what our staff are trained in, recruitment processes and how participants are funded. Staff have shown resilience in the face of all of this change and have managed remarkably well as the pandemic took hold. They have managed further demands upon their time and commitment abilities as they attended to temperature checks,

mask wearing, testing and vaccinations, all while supporting participants and their families through the very same things. There has been so much change that no one could have anticipated and yet we're still standing and doing so in such a way that upholds our values as an organisation. As well as commitment, dedication and resilience we stand true in our person-centredness and our accountability. And in closing, a thank you and go well to Maggie Vincent who resigned this year after 22 years with Interaction. Thank you Maggie, for your commitment and dedication to Interaction participants and staff. We wish all the very best and thank you for the legacy you leave behind.

Luana Atger
General Manager
Accommodation

Number of participants



Properties

5 Drop-In
Support
Homes

19 High
Support
Homes



Brand New PWS-Specific Homes

Since establishing Australia's first accommodation model specifically for three adults with PWS, Interaction has continued to focus on providing purpose-built homes for our participants. Being able to open three brand new homes has made for a very exciting year for our participants with PWS.



Nathan and Bradley's Story

After patiently watching their new house being built, Nathan and Bradley were thrilled to move into their house in early 2021 and in their words, 'have been absolutely loving it!'



Both Bradley and Nathan love their new bedrooms as they are much bigger than the last house, so they have more room to relax and set up their belongings. Each bedroom has its own private large ensuite and big built in closets to hang up all their clothes. Bradley loves having his own bathroom.

With all the new restrictions going on it has been great to have a big garage to exercise in. Bradley and Nathan have both been working out a lot while gyms are closed. Having 2 separate living areas has given Nathan space to watch movies in one room while Bradley works away quietly on his puzzles in the other room. Nathan and Bradley recently installed Vege Pods to grow fruit and vegetables, and they have been regularly watering and maintaining their new garden.

"We are so grateful to Interaction for providing us with a safe and new home in a great neighborhood on the Central Coast!"

Michael and Jack's Story



In partnership with AccessAccom, Interaction was able to provide two brand new beautiful homes. While we await the new tenants in one of the houses, Jack and Michael moved into their home in early 2021. They have lived together in another of Interaction's properties

for quite some time, so while their new house was being built, they excitedly planned and prepared for moving day.

In Michael's words, "the house is great, I like the colour, the chill out room and the air conditioning is lovely. I like living in this house."

"I like that I have my own bathroom and don't have to share, I like the chill out room, I like being walking distance to the local lake where I am able to complete my exercise. I like that we are so close to everything," Jack told Interaction. Congratulations on your new home, Michael and Jack! We can't wait to see what amazing things you will achieve there.



Support Coordination

Our participants who receive Support Coordination have met some significant goals throughout the year. To name a few, they have moved into new homes, secured employment, learnt new ways of communicating with assistive technology, enjoyed social outings or holidays, learnt new skills in navigating their supports, or returned home from hospital with supports and equipment around them. With NDIS review meetings turning remote during COVID-19 restrictions, our dedicated Support Coordinators have helped participants to attend and contribute to their reviews in new ways.

In the last year, our Support Coordination team provided support to 209 participants and are currently supporting 188 participants. Our Support Coordination team are looking forward to expanding in the new year, in order to help more participants with capacity building.

Helen Amos

General Manager, Community Services and Supports

Marija & Dane's Blue Mountains Getaway

Marija – "Our Blue Mountains trip was the best weekend ever, we had so much fun! When we got to our accommodation it was like a house. On the first night we went to Auntie Ed's restaurant in Katoomba for dinner and dessert. On Saturday after breakfast we went to Scenic World to go on the railway and cable car. That was fun. When the railway went really steep down the cliff I said 'holy cow!' We walked to see the Three Sisters but it was too steep to get down to the bottom. We went to the chocolate factory.

My favourite thing about the weekend was everything. It was a really fun getaway and me and Dane really enjoyed ourselves. For my 40th birthday I don't want a party, I want another weekend away."

Dane – "I had a really good time at the Blue Mountains. The railway ride was my favourite but it was a little scary."

Celebrating Participant Outcomes



GOING PLACES

- Trips to Canberra, Coffs Harbour, Kiama, Blue Mountains, Newcastle
- Went whale watching
- Attending church
- Connected with women's groups
- Went swimming
- Played basketball
- Rode horses
- Attended a musical
- Visits to see a beloved pet dog
- Joined hip hop dance group
- Joined hydrotherapy



SMASHING GOALS

- Getting out of the house
- Exercise during COVID-19
- Landscaping around the home while adding to the plant collection
- Assisted to remain living in their own home
- Attended regular physio
- Achieved driver's L's and now working on getting P's
- Numeracy & literacy skills and completing handbooks independently
- Improved and maintaining balance, coordination and core strength



SOCIAL SKILLS

- Returned to work
- Attended a job interview
- Maintained employment and made new friends
- Meeting new people with same interests and age group
- Learning to control emotions
- Building better relationships
- Accessing rehab gym and making good progress
- Meeting people with similar health conditions
- Remained in regular contact with family over phone and visiting



Direct Support

Direct Support may have looked a little different over the last 12 months. When social and community activities became difficult for some, our Direct Support program has offered a range of supports in line with COVID-19 restrictions to offer a more personalised approach to our new way of living. Supports have included community participation, in-home support, capacity building and life skills training, or simply some extra support to pick up groceries from the local store. Participants at home have also enjoyed one to one phone or zoom catch-ups with a support worker of their choice.

Direct Support currently provides support to 113 participants including adults and children. Over the past year, support has been provided to 143 participants.

In line with reporting requirements under the Quality and Safeguards Commission, our Direct Support Coordinators have ensured the safety and wellbeing of participants who live alone.

Direct Support have also delivered parenting training and support to parents with intellectual disability. The Healthy Start Program is a series of training modules to help build on parenting skills in the family home.

The Healthy Start Program

Hi, my name is Sharrea I'm 29 years old. I gave birth to a beautiful, healthy baby girl Holl'e about 2 months ago. It is challenging being a parent but I love baby Holl'e and I wouldn't change being a parent for the world. I have had support from the doula service since Holl'e came home from the hospital. And I have also recently been getting support from Interaction. I have been part of their Healthy Start Program and we have been working through modules on parenting. I have been learning new things with my time with Dejana. I find that the one on one training benefits me because I feel like it gives me a chance to learn more, ask more questions and concentrate better, as opposed to group learning sessions. I get all the attention from the support worker from Interaction and I have a chance to learn everything thoroughly. I ask questions when I'm not sure of anything and there is time for us to go over certain things again. I like the module books too. They are easy to read. I like the big writing and also the pictures. Pictures show what the writing is about and it helps with remembering certain things.

I would recommend the Healthy Start Program to new mothers with a disability as the program is easy to follow and it has a lot of useful and important information for new parents.



Leisure and Lifestyle

Interaction was very lucky this year to welcome Diem, a qualified Diversional Therapist, as our Leisure and Lifestyle Planner. When COVID-19 didn't keep us at home, Diem was able to offer more tailored Leisure and Lifestyle activities to suit participants' choice and abilities. During lockdown, activities turned to online games, competitions and catch-ups. Some of these included:

- NAIDOC Week activities
- Online Bingo
- Music Trivia
- Olympic themed activities
- Guessing Competitions
- Mad Hatter's Tea Party
- Photo Scavenger Hunts

As Diem further develops and expands the scope of the Leisure and Lifestyle program, we will be offering activities that enable participants to explore their interests, express ideas and improve their functional skills. These will include arts, crafts, educational sessions, speaking groups, music and cooking.

We will also have our social groups, community-based group activities for those who would like to stay active while catching up with friends. These will include walking groups, bowling, mini-golf and games at the park.

Helen Amos

General Manager, Community Services and Supports

Sensory Room

As restrictions eased, we were able to open the Sensory Room. Participants relaxed to its lighting and sound effects and interactive tactile experiences. The gantry hoist has been a welcome addition, allowing participants with physical disability to better access the room.



Behaviour and Allied Health Services

The BAHS team provides mobile services as well as clinic-based supports to participants and their support networks. All services are delivered by a professional team who work within the ethical guidelines of their respective national registration frameworks.

The team currently provide services across two key areas under the NDIS: Improved Relationships and Improved Daily Living.

The Improved Relationships category involves providing specialist behavioural interventions and support for participants with varying degrees of complexity, as well as implementation and training for the individual and their support networks. The Improved Daily Living category involves individual counselling, therapy, assessment and training which is provided by our trained and qualified provisional and registered psychologists.

This past year we have also established the delivery of Mental Health First Aid training, which enables us to provide training and accreditation internally as well as to the broader community. We have also provided psychological therapy outside of NDIS funding while continuing to maintain financial stability within the department.

The BAHS team has continued to provide person-centred services by providing safe and flexible support and work practices.

BAHS will continue to focus on providing quality goal-driven services with a focus on sustaining positive outcomes to all of our participants and their support networks.

Kim Konowec
Practice Manager



Jennifer's Story

One of Jennifer's goals was to travel into the City to visit the Opera House and see the Harbour Bridge. After careful planning, Jennifer, along with her support worker, caught the train into Circular Quay. Her first port of call was a café to sit and enjoy a coffee and the view of the harbour. Jennifer then walked through Circular Quay, marvelling at all the ferries and the size of the Harbour Bridge, until she arrived at the Opera House with much excitement. To make the most of the beautiful day, Jennifer and her support worker enjoyed their lunch at a restaurant overlooking the Harbour Bridge where she was supported to order and pay for her lunch. Once finished, Jennifer and her support worker walked around the Opera House and back to Circular Quay to catch the train home after their lovely day in the City!



Wayne's Story

Wayne transitioned into the SDA Sheffield Program from an aged care facility. Wayne has a diagnosis of stroke, which has impacted his speech and mobility. When Wayne initially transitioned into to Sheffield, he answered every question with "absolutely". This was a challenge as Wayne would often get frustrated during supports.

After a few months living at Sheffield, Wayne is completing sentences through song and staff prompts with sentence completion activities.

Wayne loves to sing Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston hits. He can now communicate what foods he wants to eat when given choices, as well as selecting his own clothing. Thanks to Wayne's hard work on his goals, intervention from allied health specialists, as well as consistency of support staff and Wayne's family, he is living his best life. Go Wayne!

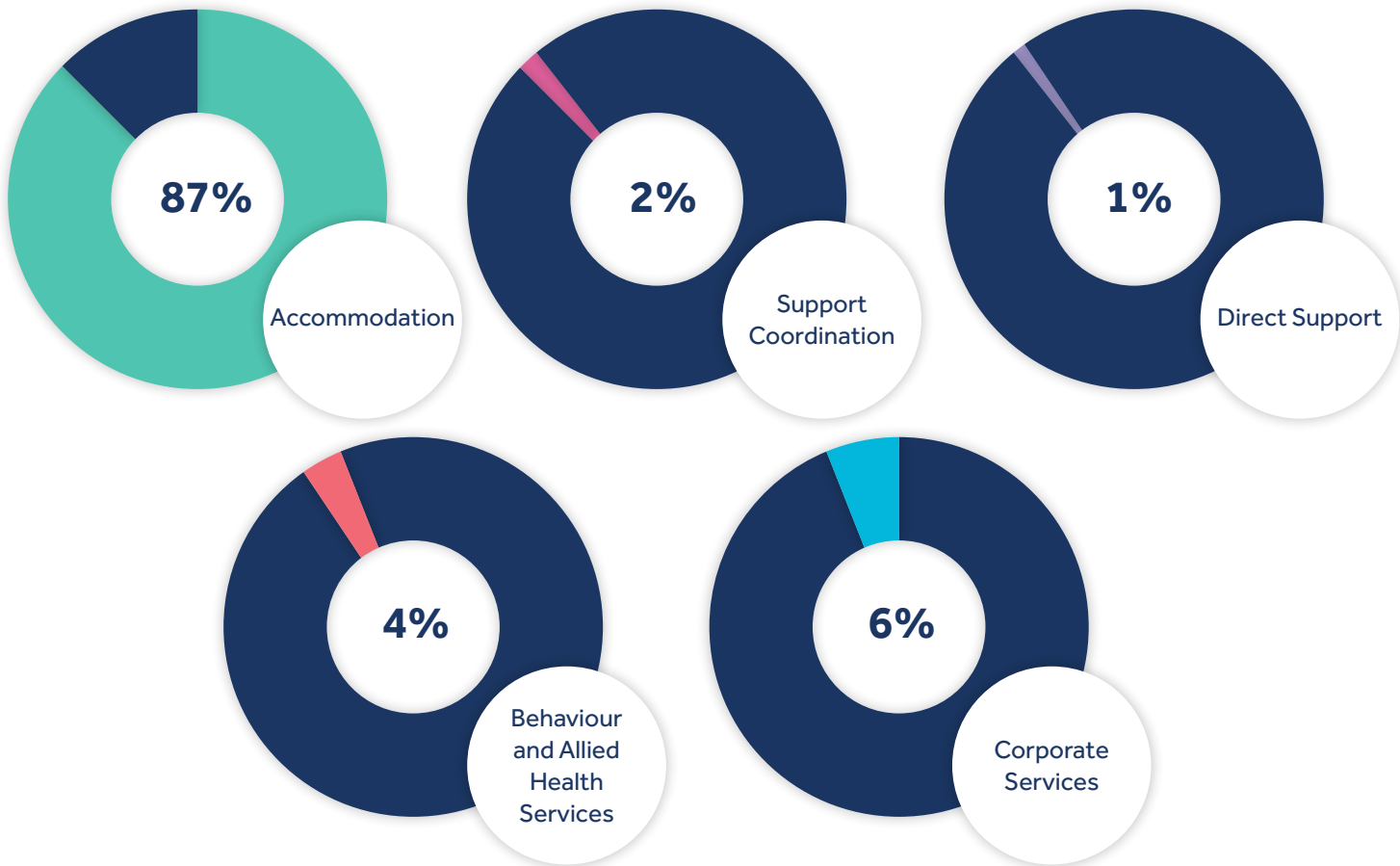


People and Culture HR Report

Interaction had a small decline of 1.03% in staff in the last financial year, bringing our total number of employees to 291.

Once again, we have seen consistency in the number of staff ranging between the ages of 25-44. Interaction continues to maintain a notable percentage of employees over the age of 55, most of whom have maintained a loyal and lengthy employment with our organisation. Most notably, this year we acknowledged Suad Burbar for 20 years of service with Interaction.

STAFF BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY



As always, our largest growth was within accommodation services as we continue to provide the highest quality of care to our participants. Interaction has focused on the upskilling of our employees and provided numerous resources dedicated to both refresher and further training to all our staff members. This has included the introduction of mandatory First Aid and CPR training for all frontline workers to ensure the safety of all participants and peers.

291 Total Staff

EMPLOYMENT STATUS BREAKDOWN			
<div>23%</div> <div>Full Time</div>	<div>22%</div> <div>Part Time</div>	<div>55%</div> <div>Casual</div>	
STAFF BREAKDOWN BY AGE			
<div>14%</div> <div>18-24</div>	<div>50%</div> <div>25-44</div>	<div>19%</div> <div>45-55</div>	<div>17%</div> <div>55+</div>
GENDER BREAKDOWN			
<div>73%</div> <div>Female</div>	<div>27%</div> <div>Male</div>	<div>In accordance with the requirements of the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 ('Act'), Interaction lodged its annual compliance report for 2020/2021 with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency ('WGEA'). The Act provides for feedback from the community to comment on the report either to Interaction via email or to the WGEA.</div>	

Participant Satisfaction Survey

Focusing on the needs and wants of participants and families allows Interaction to provide the best possible supports. The biennial Participant Satisfaction Survey carried out by The Voice Project helps us to better understand the quality of our current practices as well as areas for improvement. Every Interaction participant and family is given the opportunity to respond anonymously through scaled and open-ended questions.

Independence

93%

I feel in control of my life at Interaction.

97%

Interaction supports me if I want to try new things.

97%

I like the places I go and things I do.

93%

Interaction staff ask for my opinion.

Staff

100%

Interaction staff are friendly.

97%

Interaction staff are doing a good job.

97%

Interaction staff listen when I'm not happy with something.

97%

Interaction staff are honest.

My Opinion

97%

I feel my staff understand me.

97%

I am treated with respect.

97%

I feel safe at Interaction.

94%

I am happy with the way Interaction is helping me.

Since the last survey in 2018:

- The Overall Satisfaction score has improved by 9%
- The Change and Innovation score has improved by 2%

Interaction's greatest strengths are:

- Knowledgeable and understanding staff
- Reliable staff
- Privacy and confidentiality

"I am 100% happy. I very much appreciate the support that I've had for my son. I have nothing but praise for Interaction and my Support Coordinator. He is our lifesaver!"

"I'm very happy – my carers are all good and I love all of them. They help me."

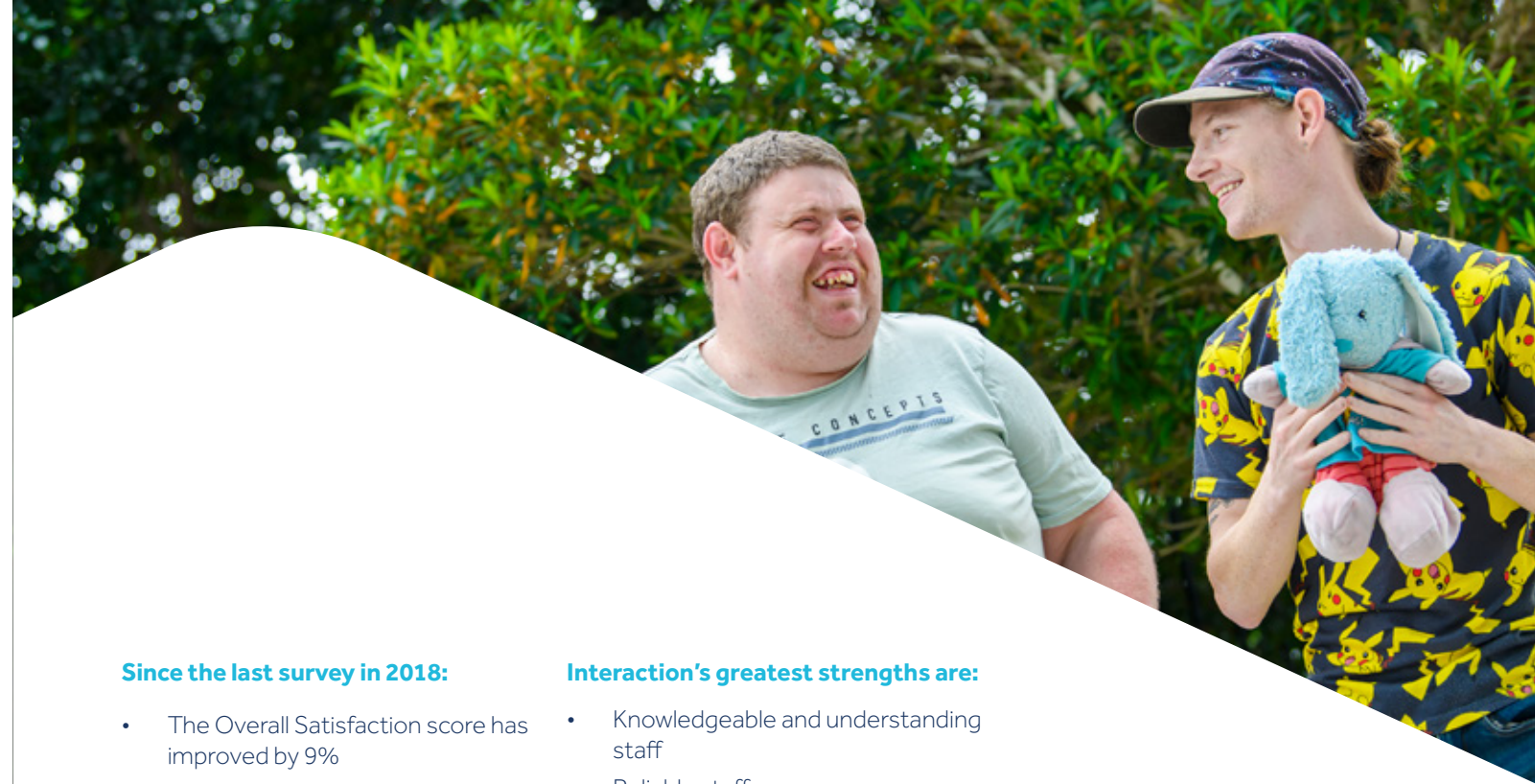
"I get to try lots of new things and I'm learning to cook."

"I get to choose and I get lots of help with my budget. My behaviour support plan helps me manage my temper."

"Very open to receiving feedback, they respond to me promptly of any changes, very good with communication over phone and email."

"Always involve me in my care planning, they never take over goal planning. They always put my brother as a priority."

"Staff are very good, they are open to receiving feedback."



Employee of the Year

We congratulate all staff nominated for Employee of the Month Awards. Listed are the recipients, along with the Employee of the Year.

Employee of the Month

Michelle Liu

For recognition from participants and families for her respectful and calm manner.

Greg Atkins

Going above and beyond in supporting complex participants in accessing the community.

Amber Price

Going above and beyond to support participants in achieving health goals.

Michelle Pittendrigh

For her ongoing support to colleagues and commitment to advocating for participants.

Daniel Yammine

Going above and beyond when providing support, with special recognition participants and families.

April Hamilton

Impressive leadership and management skills, and always encouraging her team.

Maggie Lam

Displaying compassion, confidence and empathy in her new role when supporting participants.

Sherilyn Tablada

Providing assistance and support to her team on top of her usual duties.

Darwin Cevallos

Thinking outside the box for new and inventive ways to support participants.

Gloria Hollier

Continuously providing participants with kindness and support to improve their quality of life.



Employee of the Year Kristina Milankovic

Kristina received her Employee of the Month nomination for being a valued manager and mentor who always goes above and beyond for her staff and participants. As the House Manager of Interaction's Sheffield accommodation program, Kristina has been recognised for taking the time to listen to ideas from her team, and for being competent, confident, supportive and caring. Kristina goes above and beyond to help, support and encourage not just the participants but her whole team.

Goal Kicker of the Year

Goal Kicker of the Month is a way for us to recognise the hard work our participants put in to achieving their goals. The 2020 Goal Kicker of the Year was announced at the 2020 Virtual Christmas Party and all monthly winners are listed below.

Goal Kicker of the Month

Blake Lucas

Studying hard to obtain a Cert II in Hospitality and searching for employment.

Sarah Morey

Focusing on her health to quit smoking and lose weight.

Annette Nobbs

Committing to achieving her goal of improving her gardening skills.

Jessica Collins

Working hard to get her learner driver's license.

Jarrad Halasz

Showing incredible personal growth and resilience in difficult circumstances.

Suzanne Kerr

Making an incredible recovery after an accident and achieving her goal to adopt a cat.

Daniel Brotheridge

Making face masks to use at work and on public transport.

Marija Banovic

Received the Good Work Award for her commitment to her job.

Goal Kicker of the Year Alyssa McCartney

Alyssa was nominated for Goal Kicker of the Month for completing a 5km marathon to raise awareness for Lissencephaly, the condition Alyssa is diagnosed with. Over the past year, Alyssa has worked hard with her exercise physiologist and speech support with fantastic results. She likes to choose her daily activities with her favourite support worker, who helps her compile a weekly routine for Alyssa to look forward to.

Interaction and COVID-19

Since the first cases of COVID-19, we have all learnt to adjust to a different way of life. Luckily, we were able to enjoy some months of relative freedom with participants and staff alike enjoying the opportunity to get back to their usual activities and even some small group outings and meetings. Interaction's office-based staff returned to the Head Office as restrictions allowed, with frontline support staff continuing to do what they do best – the safe support of participants and families. Interaction continued to engage The Voice Project to undertake regular surveys to gauge the effectiveness of the organisation's handling of COVID-19 and to ensure staff wellbeing.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Staff wellbeing, their level of stress and sense of safety.	72%	82%	82%
I am satisfied with the organisation's response to the situation.	86%	91%	90%
I am aware of the changes made in how we work and operate.	89%	89%	91%
This organisation's communication about COVID-19 has been clear and timely.	84%	92%	93%
We are given all necessary safety information and safety equipment to manage the risk of COVID-19.	76%	81%	89%
I know where to get help if I am feeling emotionally unwell or unsafe.	79%	88%	87%



VIRTUAL AGM

Interaction hosted its first virtual AGM and Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in 2020, open to members only. Thanks to a detailed consultation process carried out in 2020, Interaction's updated Constitution was passed unopposed at the EGM. Prior to the event, numerous Interaction participants took part in the filming of a video, sharing their experiences with COVID-19, how they managed the year and what they are most looking forward to once restrictions are lifted.



Anthony's Story

Anthony has had a longstanding goal to be on camera, a dream that came true when he took part in filming the participant message to members for the AGM as well as the Interaction Christmas Video. Anthony did a fantastic job and was a joy to work with!

Thank You to Baulkham Hills Sports!

Thank you to Baulkham Hills Sports, the Bankstown Sports Group and its Board of Directors for the generous financial grant which allowed Interaction to host a series of Cyber Safety Training sessions for participants and their families.

Particularly as the current climate requires so much of our daily lives to be carried out online, it is vital that vulnerable members of our community are protected from the dangers of the internet. Delivered by ySafe, the Cyber Safety Training addressed key issues such as online stranger danger, protecting personal information, cyberbullying, online wellbeing and screen time. Parents and carers were given the opportunity to learn skills and practical tips on how to best support participants in implementing safe online practices.



Before the training, only 66% of participants with disability knew how to get help if they were having problems on the internet - after the training, this figure was 100%.

Before the training, 50% of participants with disability said yes or unsure when asked if they thought it was always safe to trust people they met on the internet, after the training 100% said they now understood when it was safe to trust people.

100% said they would be able to spot a scammer thanks to the training.

Before the training, only 66% of parents said they could tell if their family member was having problems online, after training this was 100%.

Before training, 100% of parents said they couldn't tell if their family member was in danger after meeting someone online, after the training 100% of parents said they could confidently recognise potential dangers in this situation.

Thank you to Baulkham Hills Sports for providing participants and their families with the opportunity to learn these important skills.

BankstownSports

BaulkhamHillsSports



2020-2021 Contributions

Interaction sends a special message of thanks to every person who made a donation this past year. Your support is valued and has enabled us to continue to provide excellent services and resources to the people we support.

Finance Report

The financial results for Interaction this year are proof that strong robust financial management is vital in enabling the organisation to make a positive difference in the lives of participants.

During COVID-19, Interaction remained focussed on providing quality services for our participants while managing challenges with cash flow, consistent changes by the NDIA in SIL funding and the impact of Project Green.

Interaction remained focused on the internal controls required to mitigate the risk of fraud and error, such as reviewing the Financial Management Policy and Cash Reserve Policy and the establishment of a detailed Delegations Instrument for expenditures across the organisation.

We have been able to grow our presence and impact in significant areas over the last twelve months due to the

commencement of new projects such as the construction of the PWS property at Narara and acquiring land in Gorokan for another project to expand our footprint on the Central Coast.

The Finance Team is committed to maintaining transparency and accountability in all financial matters. The focus remains on Interaction's financial viability and maintaining stable cash flow.

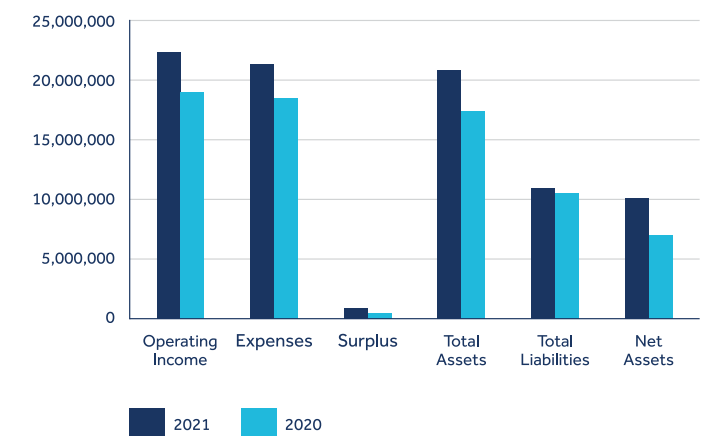
Interaction's accounts are prepared in accordance with accepted accounting standards including the Australian Accounting Interpretations and Regulations set out in the Australian Accounting Standard Board and Corporations Act 2001. The review of the financial statements indicates that they comply with accounting standards.

Gurdeep Masson
Chief Financial Officer

Financial Snapshot

- Interaction receives 97% of its income from the NDIS. The Financial Year 2021 saw a growth of 16.98% in revenue.
- Employee costs make up the majority of our expenses, which overall increased by 15% across the financial year.
- Our overall surplus for the financial year is \$856,243.
- The organisation is in a strong financial position with Net Assets of \$10,009,953 that has \$4.5m of asset revaluation reserves.

2021 vs 2020



Statement of Financial Position

AS AT 30TH JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,759,361	3,798,922
Trade and other receivables	837,840	580,615
Total current assets	5,597,201	4,379,537
Non-current assets		
Capital work in progress	-	343,429
Property, plant and equipment	15,078,713	12,469,759
Right-of-use assets	201,873	300,932
Total non-current assets	15,280,586	13,114,120
TOTAL ASSETS	20,877,787	17,493,657
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	535,732	2,389,721
Borrowings	486,819	646,967
Lease liabilities	59,020	51,779
Employee benefits	3,355,225	2,934,510
Total current liabilities	4,436,796	6,022,977
Non-current liabilities		
Borrowings	5,804,056	3,761,086
Lease liabilities	147,628	256,042
Employee benefits	479,354	410,487
Total non-current liabilities	6,431,038	4,427,615
TOTAL LIABILITIES	10,867,834	10,450,592
NET ASSETS	10,009,953	7,043,065
FUNDS		
Accumulated funds	5,425,885	4,569,642
Reserves	4,584,068	2,473,423
TOTAL FUNDS	10,009,953	7,043,065

Statement of Profit or Loss and
Other Comprehensive Income

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Income	22,028,624	18,830,854
Employee benefits expense	(15,787,926)	(13,016,219)
Gross Margin	6,240,698	5,814,635
Interest received	3,099	1,241
Other income	16,241	75,114
Gross Income	6,260,038	5,890,990
Other Expenses		
Indirect wages & on-cost	(2,393,808)	(2,539,246)
Depreciation expense	(437,875)	(424,421)
Finance Expenses	(140,569)	(196,737)
Loss on disposal of assets	(56,925)	(12,492)
Motor vehicle expense	(446,709)	(422,091)
Occupation costs	(224,061)	(229,222)
Other client expenses	(520,081)	(532,498)
Service charges	(803,981)	(532,960)
Other expenses	(293,678)	(437,283)
Professional fees	(86,108)	(108,448)
	(5,403,795)	(5,435,398)
Surplus before income tax	856,243	455,592
Income tax expense	-	-
Surplus for the year	856,243	455,592
Other comprehensive income <i>(items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss)</i>		
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	2,110,645	-
Other comprehensive income for the period	2,110,645	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	2,966,888	455,592

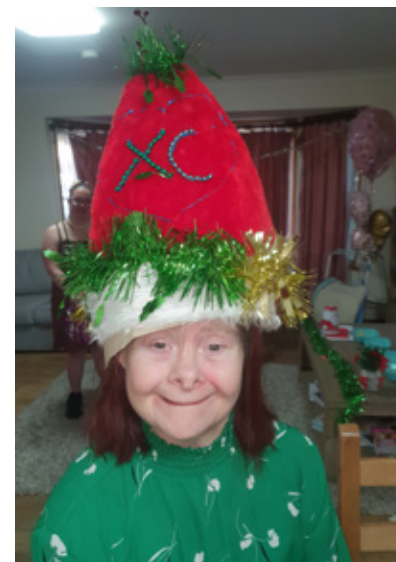
Statement of Changes in Equity

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

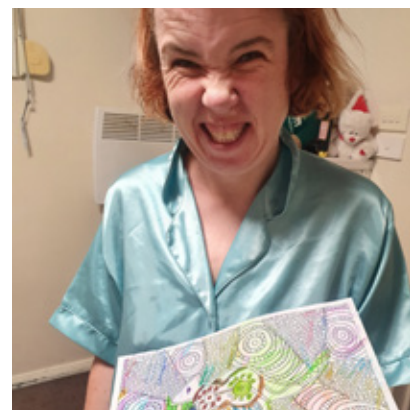
	2021	2020
Opening retained equity	7,043,065	8,187,473
Prior Year Adjustments re Project Green		-1,600,000
Surplus/(loss) for year	856,243	455,592
Net gain on revaluation of land and buildings	2,110,645	-
Closing Retained Equity	10,009,953	7,043,065

Christmas 2020

Interaction's 2020 Christmas Party definitely was a change to our tradition, but it certainly didn't stop everyone from having an awesome time. We still enjoyed some great food, exuberant dancing with the help of DJ Darren, Christmas hat competitions and prizes. It was wonderful to see so many faces on screen. A highlight was definitely seeing our new CEO, Brett Thompson, dressed as Santa Claus, dancing to Love is in the Air.



Out and About





1300 668 123

www.interactionservices.org