



CHALLENGE
Community Services

Annual Report



2019

Contents



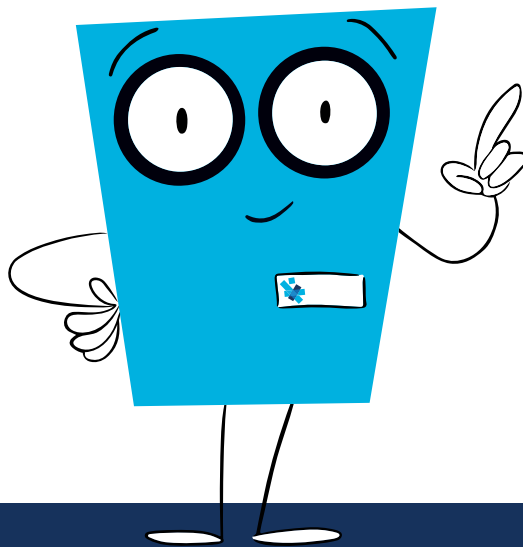
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Accountability

We accept responsibility and take action to improve

Equity

We treat people fairly and equally and champion this in the community



Integrity

We do the right thing

Our Vision and Values

“ WE AIM TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS AND EVERYONE GROWS ”

Innovation

We have the courage to do things differently for the people we support

People Focused

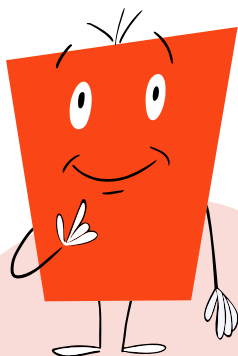
We ensure that people we support come first in all we do

Year in Review



HAD OVER 215 ENTRIES IN OUR 'AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY' ART COMPETITION!

with entries from people with disability, and foster care children across NSW



HELD OVER 27 START UP PROGRAM SESSIONS

for people with disability to build business skills and work towards self-employment

OPENED A STATE OF THE ART SENSORY ROOM IN TAMWORTH

for people with disability, thanks to a generous donation from Warwick Bennet



15K SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

engaging with client and carer stories



HAD OVER 140 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY PARTICIPATING

in our Annual Gunnedah Swimming Carnival



EMPLOYED A FULL-TIME PSYCHOLOGIST

based at Armidale



CELEBRATED 60 YEARS OF CHALLENGE COMMUNITY SERVICES

and held our 60th Anniversary Celebration for staff, supported employees, clients and carers

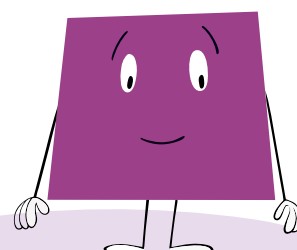


OPENED OUR NEW RESPITE CENTRE

in Trangie

HELD OUR FIRST START UP PROGRAM PITCH

with 7 people presenting their business ideas to the community

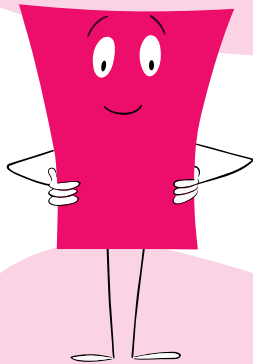


EXPANDED OUR OUTREACH THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

to Coffs Harbour

**HELD A TWO-DAY FOSTER CARE
CONFERENCE AS PART OF OUR
60TH ANNIVERSARY**

over **150** attendees including staff and carers from across NSW came together in Tamworth with representatives from our **12** key regions

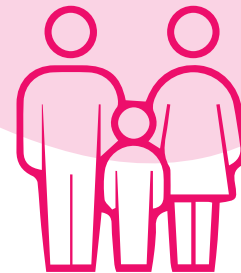


7 CHILDREN

in foster care moved into guardianship or adoption

**COMMENCED OUR FAMILY PRESERVATION
PROGRAM IN NARRABRI**

The Narrabri Family Preservation Program is currently supporting eight families. Children and parents report a feeling of greater empowerment to cope with challenges and make changes in their lives



GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDED

Janet Schorer, from the Office of the Children's Guardian, representatives from CREATE, The Wolinmarra Program (Dubbo Zoo), My Forever Family and FISH



NARRABRI RECYCLING

14 Supported Employees

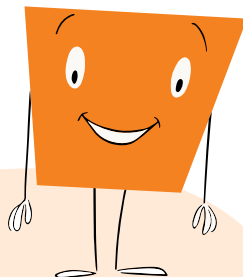


**SECURE SCANNING
SOLUTIONS AND
WORKCREW TAMWORTH**

21 Supported Employees

**KOORA INDUSTRIES
MUSWELLBROOK**

14 Supported Employees



TAMWORTH RECYCLING

33 Supported Employees

4 STUDENTS

from Muswellbrook High School participating in work experience at our Koora Industries

Chairman's Letter

When I first arrived in Tamworth to join a local accounting firm, in 1971, the second task I undertook, in September that year, was overseeing the audit of the Tamworth and District Handicapped Children's Association.

The Chairman of the Association at that time was John Simpson, who I got to know better, along with his wife Gwen, when I joined the Rotary Club of Tamworth in May 1973.

That Association has now, through various stages, become 'Challenge Community Services'. A unique situation where during 60 years, there have only been three persons leading the Board. Kevin Kelly followed John Simpson and then handed over the reins to Ted Wilkinson in 2011. To have been given the opportunity to follow them as the Chair of the Board of this extraordinary organisation is an honour for me and I pay special tribute at this time to Ted Wilkinson for his eight-year tenure as the Chair of Challenge.

To have come from the entity I was first introduced to forty-eight years ago to what Challenge is today, and the range of top class services now provided, far and wide, gives some insight to the extraordinary growth that in the FY 2018-19 saw total revenue of over \$80 million with projections for the current financial year standing at more than \$92 million. Total staff numbers at June 2019 were 875.

Reflecting on the Board leadership shown by those three men I can only hope that I can adequately do my part in contributing to the wellbeing of all who form the family of Challenge, by helping maintain our vision to ensure people with disability, children and vulnerable members of the community, have the same rights and opportunities as all other members of the community, thus allowing them all to reach their potential.

Looking forward, we need to be aware of the fact that we have moved into a new environment where, because of the NDIS, in the majority of our areas of operation we now need to market our programs and services, most importantly to our current clients, as well as potential clients, to remain relevant. Foster Care remains as the only area of the Challenge operation funded outside the NDIS.

In our Business Services Division, which provides quality services to the community and meaningful employment for our clients, our Recycling units at both Tamworth and Narrabri face some interesting times with markets for glass and plastics, in particular, drying up. We will be calling on our local politicians, both state and federal, to provide some meaningful assistance. I know, by all working together, we have the team to move forward to greater things and on behalf of the Board, I thank you all, whatever your role, for the dedication you show every day which goes to inspire, empower and develop people to enrich their lives, and the communities they live in, within an environment of continuous improvement. We measure our success in this by continually reviewing what we do and seeking feedback from all stakeholders.

Winston Churchill is attributed with saying, "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results". How true.

Finally, I thank my fellow Board members, members of the various committees, our CEO, Barry Murphy, all managers and all our devoted team members for their genuine drive to help Challenge achieve its mission, and I look forward to working with you all as we move into the future, although, maybe, not for as long as my predecessors.

BILL WARBURTON, CHAIRMAN



A Word from our CEO

This year at Challenge has been both exciting and demanding. Over the last seven years, Challenge has continued to grow by 15% each year. The FY 2018-19 year was no exception. Our revenue for the year just completed was \$80 million. The difficulty that this “wonderful” problem presents is one of continually “playing catch up” in regards to staffing, resources, IT requirements and ongoing changes to systems and the way we do business.

The very fact that we have reached this point, reasonably unscathed, is down to one thing only. Our people. Our Board, management team, operation managers and supervisors and our frontline staff, along with our families and carers continuing support have brought us to this point of being the major regional community service provider in New South Wales.

This accomplishment has been a real team effort; however, I would like to elaborate on the efforts of our frontline staff. In Foster Care, our case workers and in Disability Services, our support workers. We can have wonderful buildings, state-of-the-art systems and a great marketing scheme; however, it would all fall flat without dedicated, hard-working “coalface” staff.

With this in mind, we are currently reviewing how we do everything at Challenge, our strategic plan, our goals and vision must all start at the one point, our frontline staff.

I remember five years ago, at a meeting of our staff involved in the first trial of the NDIS. It had only been going for a short time and we had called the staff together to get their impressions. They had already seen that the success of a service provider revolved around being able to demonstrate their quality and capacities. One staff member asked me this question, “It’s important that families and people with disability know who we are, are you going to increase the size of our marketing department?” (At the time our marketing department comprised of three people). I immediately answered yes. Our new marketing department will have 515 members. (The total number of people working with Challenge at that time) everyone involved in the organisation will be involved in marketing how well we do our job.

On reflection, this has proven to be true, but no more so than with our frontline staff. Word-of-mouth continues to be the most successful method of attracting new clients and carers to Challenge.

I am grateful to be part of that team. My thanks to our Board, who continue to lead, our families and our carers for your ongoing support and service and to everyone else involved in this wonderful organisation, my sincere thanks and congratulations on yet another successful year.

BARRY MURPHY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

“We can have wonderful buildings, state-of-the-art systems and a great marketing scheme, however, it would all fall flat without dedicated, hard-working ‘coalface’ staff.”



Finance at a Glance

Challenge Community Services experienced remarkable growth in FY 2018-19, total revenue for the year grew from \$69.6 million to \$80 million, representing an increase of 15%. This revenue increase reflects a strong demand for our high quality services, in particular, Supported Independent Living.

Staff and employment costs accounted for 61% of expenditure and direct out-of-home care expenses for 20%. This reflects Challenge's continued commitment to responsible stewardship of community assets.

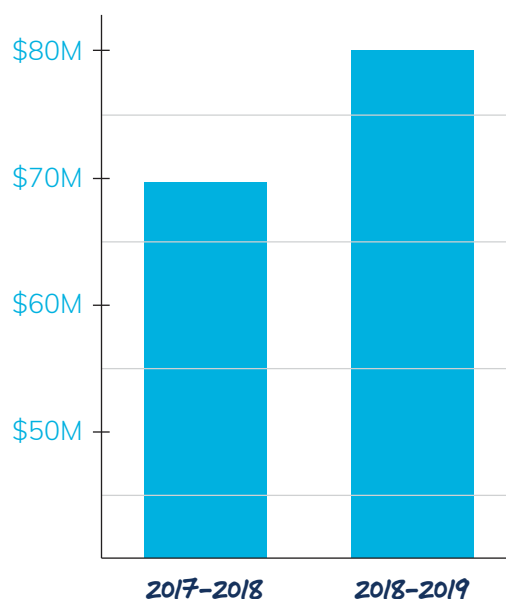
Over the past year, we significantly improved the way we process National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding. We also developed systems to accommodate changes in Foster Care services.

In 2018 we became a participant of the New South Wales (NSW) container deposit scheme – Return and Earn, the largest litter reduction scheme introduced in NSW. We were thrilled by the support offered by Tamworth Regional Council to help us assist the community to recycle, as well as provide other much-needed support.

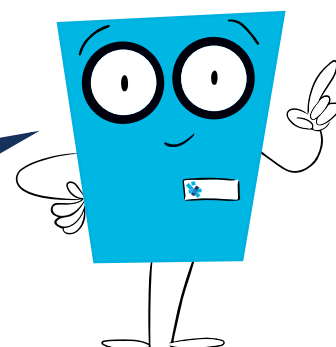
We would also like to thank the federal and state governments for their funding streams, as well as local councils for their continued support.

TANIA MILLS
GENERAL MANAGER,
FINANCE

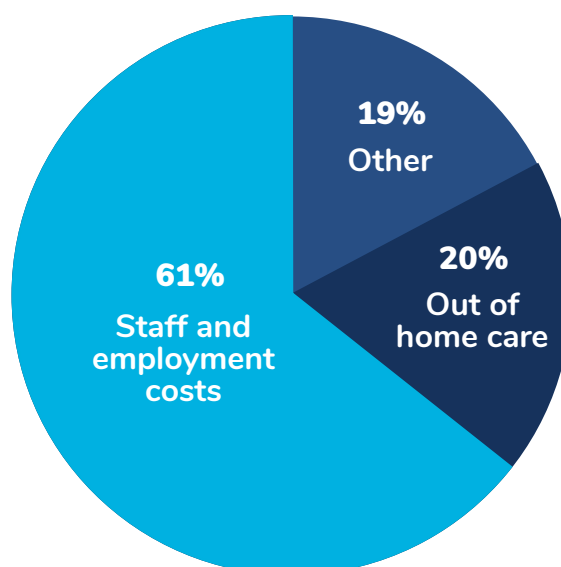
Total revenue



That's a 15% increase since 2018!



Expenses



A Word on our People

Establishment of an infrastructure capable of ensuring Challenge Community Services is an employer of choice over the coming years was the focus of Human Resources during the past 12 months.

The Human Resources team continued to provide the highest level of service to the managers, staff and employees across the organisation as well as to our clients.

Our Human Resources initiatives included:

- Completing a holistic review of Challenge's recruitment and onboarding approaches to ensure minimal operational disruption, whilst attracting the highest quality candidates
- Transitioning to the associated industry awards to establish Challenge as a leader in operational excellence within the community services sector
- Progressively undertaking a review of the Human Resources policies and procedures to aid in both the attraction and retention of staff
- Commencing a staff/employee engagement program to ensure working environments are being continually enhanced, and our people are actively involved in achieving Challenge's vision
- Revisiting the Human Resources strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose in allowing Challenge to deliver against its strategic plan, as it continues on its growth journey.

Challenge is committed to providing the best possible working environment for our staff and employees, in turn empowering them to deliver the highest level of support to our clients. The Human Resources initiatives we are working towards today will continue to build momentum for the remainder of FY 2019-20 and beyond.



“THE HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM CONTINUED TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SERVICE TO THE MANAGERS, STAFF AND EMPLOYEES ACROSS THE ORGANISATION AS WELL AS TO OUR CLIENTS.”

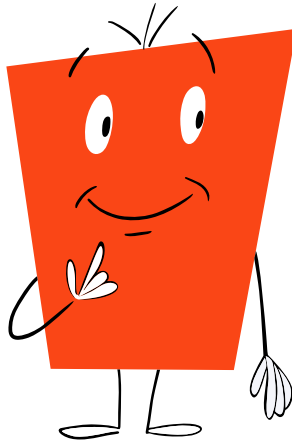
Challenge 60 Year Celebrations





Disability Services

**546 STAFF
MEMBERS**



**834 CLIENTS
SUPPORTED**

**46 SUPPORTED
INDEPENDENT
LIVING HOMES**

**10 PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED
IN THE START
UP PROGRAM**



Rheanne reaches her dreams and goals

Living with cerebral palsy, Rheanne has often been told by those around her that she would never achieve her goals of driving a car and living independently. But with the support of Challenge Disability Services, she has achieved this and more. Having aced her learner driver test, she has bought a car and is now focused on doing her 120-hours driving practice and getting her Ps.

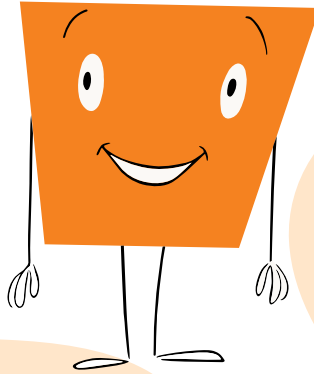
Rheanne relocated from Port Macquarie to Tamworth to gain better access to the supports she needed, including Supported

Independent Living. Since living in her new home, Rheanne has become more independent and confident with the help of the support workers who go above and beyond to support people with disability to achieve more.

"I ENJOY THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY AND GOING ON OUTINGS LIKE SHOPPING, TO THE MOVIES OR SEEING A SHOW AT THE LOCAL THEATRE."

Business Services

OVER **685,000**
DOCUMENTS SCANNED
THROUGH SECURE
SCANNING



4 BUSINESS UNITS
EMPLOYING **82** PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITY

OVER **12,000**
TONNES OF
RUBBISH RECYCLED

70 TRANSPORT
BOXES CONSTRUCTED
FOR THE DEFENCE
FORCE AUSTRALIA BY
KOORA INDUSTRIES



Andrew works towards greater independence

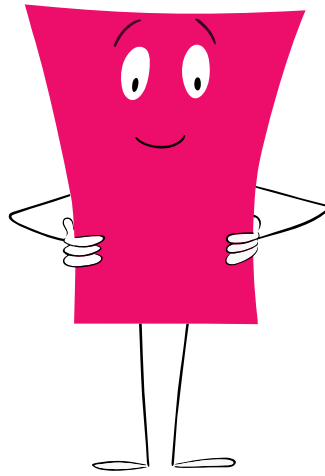
A very dedicated employee, Andrew has worked for Secure Scanning Solutions in Tamworth for the past 17 years. The open market enterprise is managed by Challenge Business Services and provides supported employment for 21 people with disability. Andrew processes and collates important documents for scanning. He has also carried out many other roles including secure pickup of documents, scanning documents and indexing scanned documents with new file names.

Having a job has been an important part of Andrew's independence as well as being active in the community, getting outdoors and playing his favourite sport, lawn bowls. Looking to increase his autonomy for the future, Andrew also plans to transition into Challenge Supported Independent Living.

"I LOVE HAVING A JOB AND HAVE MADE LOTS OF FRIENDS THERE. I ESPECIALLY LIKE IT WHEN WE GO OUT FOR A MEAL AFTER WORK."

Foster Care

**732 FOSTER
CARERS**



**12 OFFICES
ACROSS NSW**

**483 CHILDREN IN
FOSTER CARE**

**14 CHILDREN
RESTORED TO THEIR
BIOLOGICAL FAMILY**



Grandparents provide a stable home

Having already brought up three children, Doug* and Nancy* weren't expecting to care for a second family. But when the behaviour of their daughter-in-law, who was struggling with alcohol issues, became more unpredictable, their grandchildren Katie* and Damian* needed a permanent, stable home where they could belong and feel safe.

Katie and Damian were becoming more and more anxious about living with their mother. The children made it clear to their grandparents that they wanted to live with

them permanently and have a normal home life. Once the children were feeling safe in their home and settled into new schools, it was a natural progression for Doug and Nancy to apply for guardianship.

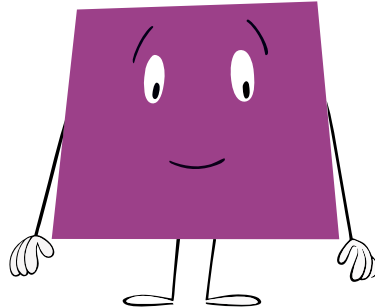
The children are still in contact with their mother, and their father visits regularly.

"OUR CHALLENGE FOSTER CARE CASE MANAGER WAS VERY FOCUSED ON WHAT THE CHILDREN NEEDED AND WANTED."

*Identifying details have been changed.

Therapeutic Services

**10 STAFF
MEMBERS**



**8 OFFICES
ACROSS NSW**

**470 CLIENTS
SUPPORTED**

**13 PARTNERS
IN RECOVERY
CLIENTS**



Chris takes control with the NDIS

When Chris* decided he needed to improve his mental health and behavioural issues, he sought the support of Challenge Therapeutic Services. Initially Chris was referred to Challenge by his GP under a mental health plan, and was struggling to meet the fee gap for professional services. Through his NDIS plan, Chris was able to continue his sessions at Challenge, which was his provider of choice, and receive the funding he needed to pay for the sessions.

Under his NDIS plan, Chris' psychologist worked with him to successfully navigate his financial hurdles and devise a plan to manage his behaviour related to his disability. Over the past 18 months, Chris has gained control of his aggression and improved his capacity to maintain meaningful friendships.

"THE PSYCHOLOGIST WAS JUST A GREAT PERSON TO TALK TO, AND SHE GAVE ME WAYS TO OVERCOME MY DIFFICULTIES. IT HAS REALLY HELPED ME OUT."

*Identifying details have been changed.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

Ability Links NSW
Back Track
Bullimbal School Tamworth
Bunnings Taree
Bunnings Warehouse Tamworth
Castle Personnel
Cessnock Hornets
Cheryl Royle, Hunter Futurepreneurs
CREATE Foundation
Danielle Northey
Eddies Fresh Chickens
Enabled Employment
Fiona Henriques & George Ballas,
ComServ Professionals
Flourish Australia
Good2Give
Greater Bank Armidale
Gunnedah Shire Council
Hudson St Hum
Hunter Accounting Services
Ian Edwards, The Blind Chef
John Treddinick
Macquarie University
National Disability Services
Newcastle City Council
Octapod
Olivia Star
QBE Lismore
Ralph Naden
Regional Australia Bank
Regional Australia Bank
Riding for Disabled Association
Tamworth
Singleton Rugby Club
Sophie MacPherson, Porky's Nest
South Tamworth Bowling Club
Tamworth Aboriginal Children's Services
Tamworth Family Referral Centre
Tamworth Family Support Service
Tamworth Regional Council
Tamworth Regional Gallery
University of Newcastle
University of Newcastle, Tamworth
Campus

University of Technology Sydney
Valued Customers of the
Connexions Café
Warwick Bennet
Wendy Blackmore
Whitehaven Coal
Will Creedon
Yalmambirra Boogijoon Doolin
Cultural Camp

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Department of Education
Department of Health
Department of Social Services
National Disability Insurance Agency

NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

NSW Department of Family and Community Services
Housing NSW

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Amelia, Elise and Emily, CREATE Foundation
Colleen Mullins and Tammy Prince-Doyle, FISH
Gauri Ahuja, My Forever Family
Janet Schorer, Office of the Children's Guardian
Lowana West and Tasma Harrison, Walamarra
Program, Dubbo Zoo
Matt Purcell
Monica Lamelas, ACWA
Vicki Day and Lisa Proctor, FACS

CRG MEMBERS

Connie Ellis, Jo Kelly, Kym Plowman, Margaret Forrest,
Matthew Pearce, Natalie Sanderson, Samantha
Malpass, Veronica Heald

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