



# ANNUAL REPORT 2017





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NDS represents service providers across Australia in their work to deliver high-quality supports and life opportunities for people with disability.



**Report from  
the President and  
Chief Executive**

For many NDS members, and for NDS itself, 2016-17 was a high-pressure year. In July 2016 the NDIS escalated from nine trial and early launch sites to the first stage of full scheme. It was a bumpy take-off. The new IT payment portal malfunctioned, the quality of NDIS plans was patchy and providers experienced long delays waiting for answers on the NDIS helpline. Members' requests for information, advice and support from NDS increased significantly.

The NDS State of the Disability Sector report, published in December 2016, showed a sector which supports the NDIS, but lacks the capital and confidence to invest in the growth required. Only 40 per cent of providers expected to make a profit in 2016-17 and 75 per cent found the policy environment uncertain. Two-thirds of providers doubted they would be able to provide services at NDIS prices.

Conscious of these concerns, in early May 2017 NDS published an important policy paper, 'How to get the NDIS on track'. It described problems in implementing the NDIS and proposed practical solutions, making 24 recommendations in total. The paper led ABC national news bulletins on radio and television and gained attention across governments. In a major draft report on the NDIS, the Productivity Commission echoed many of the concerns NDS had raised.

As 2016-17 ended there were signs of progress, with the NDIA commencing an in-depth review of provider and participant experience in the scheme and announcing an independent review of prices.

To help drive progress the NDS Board approved a strategy to see the NDIS deliver on its promise. Its aims are to improve accountability and consultation in the implementation of the NDIS and to resolve issues with the scheme's roll out.

Submissions to government and parliamentary inquiries are an important channel of NDS's

influence on public policy. In 2016-17 we lodged 28 national policy submissions, among them input to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the NDIS, the NDIA's pricing review, the Department of Health's development of its Continuity of Support Programme, the Senate inquiry into the National Disability Strategy and the proposed NDIS Code of Conduct.

**"To help drive progress the NDS Board approved a strategy to see the NDIS deliver on its promise. Its aims are to improve accountability and consultation in the implementation of the NDIS."**

We actively participated in a reference group advising on the major reforms to Disability Employment Services which led to the government announcing its intention to proceed with the reforms in the 2017 Federal Budget. Further detail emerged in an Industry Paper released in June. Helping shape the implementation of these reforms will be a key focus in the year ahead.

NDS continued to represent members before the Fair Work Commission in the review of the Modern SCHADS Award, providing evidence about the likely impact of the NDIS on the structure of work.

The long-running dispute about wage assessment methods in supported employment

continued, with parties agreeing to amend the SES Award to incorporate modifications to the Supported Wage System method. The matter will continue during the coming year with NDS seeking a solution that is fair to workers, sustains jobs and is affordable for Disability Enterprises.

With sponsorship from the Pratt Foundation NDS administered the Supported Employment Excellence Awards, which Assistant Minister Jane Prentice presented at the annual Disability at Work conference in Brisbane.

We launched the BuyAbility campaign to promote supported employment that has seen over 80 Disability Enterprises (employing over 11,000 people with disability) pledge support. BuyAbility has received funding from the Department of Social Services to help boost procurement of goods and services from Disability Enterprises.

At the 2016 CEO Meeting, which attracted around 600 people, we launched NDS's new

**"The long-running dispute about wage assessment methods in supported employment continued, with parties agreeing to amend the SES Award to incorporate modifications to the Supported Wage System method."**

Strategic Plan. It clarifies NDS's purpose and includes five strategic priorities. The strategy commits to the development of an industry barometer, which will build on NDS's existing data collections, including the Business Confidence Survey, Workforce Wizard, Financial Sustainability Study and the BuyAbility Impact Tool. It will help the disability services sector map a path to its preferred future. Sound data adds weight to NDS's advice to governments and helps inform members' planning and investment.

NDS travelled to every capital city to host the one-day event series NDIS Essential Briefing.



*Ken Baker, The Hon. Jane Prentice MP and Joan McKenna Kerr*



“NDS remains financially sound, with a strong balance sheet and an operating surplus of around four per cent of income. Project funding from multiple governments continues to be NDS’s principal source of income.”

This was complemented by many state-based forums that provided information on the NDIS and its implementation.

NDS’s Ticket to Work initiative, aimed at improving the school-to-work transition of young people with disability, continues to attract strong interest from philanthropic funds keen to see it grow.

Reflecting NDS’s focus on workforce, we successfully tendered to administer the \$5M Innovative Workforce Fund. NDS has several other workforce projects, including projectABLE which provides in-school disability awareness training and career workshops led by people with disability. NDS’s involvement in disability awareness training in schools will expand in the year ahead through a grant won under the NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity-building program.

NDS remains financially sound, with a strong balance sheet and an operating surplus of around four per cent of income. Project funding from multiple governments continues to be NDS’s principal source of income. A challenge for NDS in the near future is to boost its income from non-government sources to fund its essential activities.

The number of disability service providers represented by NDS held steady in 2016-17

at around 1,150. The membership of National Disability Practitioners – which operates as a division of NDS – reached 14,000 individuals.

NDS appreciates its constructive relationship with governments around Australia and the funding they provide to assist NDS’s work. Interaction with public officials at all levels to raise and resolve issues on behalf of members is NDS’s daily business. We are grateful to the many members who assist NDS through their involvement on national, state and territory committees.

We would like to thank the Board of Directors and State and Territory Committees for their invaluable contribution to the sound governance of NDS and for the time and contribution they willingly make on behalf of all members.

We extend our thanks to all NDS staff for their hard work and huge commitment during a demanding year.

NDS’s strength and effectiveness relies on many people working in concert.



**Joan McKenna Kerr**  
President



**Ken Baker AM**  
Chief Executive



**The year in  
review**



## Strategic Directions highlights

The disability sector is in the midst of far-reaching change. National reforms, particularly the NDIS, are transforming the operating environment for disability service providers and for NDS. Change of this scale presents great opportunities, but also great risks. This is the environment in which NDS has developed a new Strategic Plan for 2017 and beyond.

The strategy draws on insights from members and other stakeholders and was developed by the NDS Board and senior management team. It is dynamic, with a clear vision of what we want to achieve and will act as a guide for NDS during the critical years ahead.

The strategy recognises that to represent its members well and enable the sector to grow and adapt, NDS itself must be strategically focused, influential, vigorous in

its representation of issues and adequately resourced.

### Membership

We strive to be an organisation that meets the needs of our members and the wider disability sector. To remain sustainable, we need to attract a growing and diverse sector-wide membership. Over the past year we have seen strong renewals across the membership program and continued to grow our offering of member benefits.

### Influence

NDS has held strong relationships with governments, departments and the sector for many years. We strive to not only maintain existing relationships, but develop new ones. A focus for NDS this year was to be more present in the media. NDS has been interviewed for media on an almost weekly basis with a major highlight being the launch of the

'How to get the NDIS on track' report, which received wide media coverage. Work on an industry barometer that generates evidence for advocacy is underway and will be a focus of NDS's influence activities next year.

### Members' capacity

Providing members with timely, relevant and actionable information is at the core of what we do. We want our members to feel informed and well-resourced to provide high-quality supports. Over the past year, we launched a number of initiatives to ensure we meet this goal. Highlights include the launch of BuyAbility to strengthen the supported employment sector and new partnerships with member organisations through NDS Learn & Develop. The initiative saw us join forces with members to plan a number of new e-learning modules for frontline workers to address the wide-ranging needs of the sector.

### Resources

In order to continue supporting members in the best way we can, it is imperative that NDS has the resources to meet our strategic and organisational objectives. We ended the 2016-17 financial year with a strong balance sheet, achieving a net surplus of \$1.6M while net assets remained strong at \$13.3M. We secured \$17.5M in new project income, which will go towards supporting our core activities and addressing future revenue challenges.

### Governance

The NDS Board continue to use their knowledge, skills and influence to further the work of our organisation. This year the Board implemented a new Board Work Plan which will complement the regular governance reviews.

NDS represents service providers across Australia in their work to deliver high-quality supports and life opportunities for people with disability.



## We have a clear purpose and role

### We support members by:

- Ensuring they have a strong voice
- Enabling them to position their services in a dynamic industry
- Equipping them to identify the determinants of success
- Enhancing their decision-making

### We strive to build a robust disability sector by:

- Advocating for sound public policies
- Ensuring the sector is funded and supported
- Promoting the value of a diverse, sustainable & mission-driven sector
- Maintaining a national focus on disability issues

**We do all of this in the interest of life opportunities for people with disability**

## Representing the disability services sector

### Supporting the sector through NDIS challenges

There is no doubt the NDIS has created challenges for disability service providers. In response, NDS has created sector-specific resources and taken an active approach to holding workshops for providers. In June, NDS presented at a number of forums run by Community Transport Organisation, a peak body for the community transport sector. Led by our sector development team in NSW, these presentations were tailored to community transport workers to help them understand how the NDIS works, its nuances and operational implications.

In addition, NDS produced an NDIS Business Process Guide to help providers understand what's required of their business processes under the NDIS. The guide was designed to make it easy for providers to offer high-quality support to participants and was launched through a series of workshops in NSW. NDS trained providers on how to run these workshops in-house so they could make the most of the guides.

### The way forward in WA

The uncertainty faced by the disability sector is especially pertinent in Western Australia where the decision on whether the NDIS will be locally governed or transferred to the NDIA is yet to be reached. Since its election in March 2017, the Labor Government has spoken extensively with NDS along with people with disability, their families and carers, service providers and other stakeholders. Throughout the consultation, NDS

has argued the importance of local decision making and the specific challenges associated with rural and remote services and people who require exceptionally high support.

The good news is that while negotiations continue with the Commonwealth Government, the NDIS roll out in Western Australia commenced in July, ensuring that West Australians with disability will be able to access the NDIS and receive supports and services.

### Help is just an online desk away

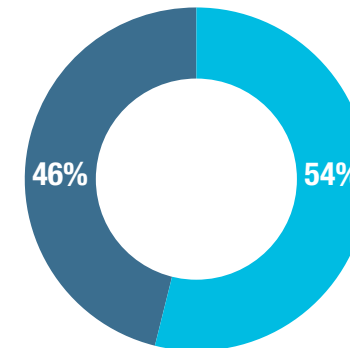
The NDIS Helpdesk was established as part of the Victorian Sector Transition Project in mid-2016 to provide an avenue for disability service providers to ask NDIS-related questions anywhere, anytime.

The Victorian team has built the Helpdesk community, increased its usability and streamlined back-end processes. As a result, membership of the Helpdesk has steadily grown. There are now 300 users and over 180 questions have been answered. NDS has used the Helpdesk to post important news and policy updates and share information about new resources.

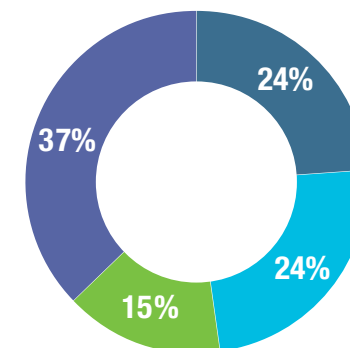
Half of users visit the Helpdesk weekly and nearly all are satisfied or very satisfied with the time NDS took to respond and the quality of responses.

### Ready4 the NDIS

NDS's Ready4 project, run in partnership with consultancy RSM and the ACT Council of Social Services, focused on providing information and running sector-specific events to help providers deliver effective support under the NDIS. Through Ready4, NDS was able to assist providers looking for 1-to-1 support on aspects



54% of organisations that engaged with Ready4 provide services under the NDIS as their primary activity  
46% had other services as their primary activity



### Organisations of various sizes engaged with Ready4:

24% with annual revenue under \$250K  
24% with annual revenue \$250K to \$1M  
15% with annual revenue \$1M to \$5M  
37% with annual revenue over \$5M

of financing such as unit pricing, as well as understanding their options for business processes and IT.

### Communities of practice tackle the big issues

In Victoria NDS has established a wide variety of Professional Communities of Practice. These enable disability professionals to come together according to their roles and navigate the ever-changing NDIS environment.

Every two months, the Professional Communities of Practice meet to explore opportunities, tackle challenging NDIS transition issues and tap into current practice across the sector. These gatherings allow attendees to share mutual goals and concerns and keep up with the latest developments.

Topics for discussion include: marketing and resources in multiple languages; managing cultural change in organisations; the quality of data; getting to know your clients; understanding the breakdown of activity costs; and integration of different operating systems. Attendees have heard from speakers including a consultant on trends in IT systems and an expert in marketing for not-for-profits.

**130**

organisations accessed over **980 hours** of information and support through Ready4



**96%**

of Ready4 participants reported **increased knowledge**

The NDIS in WA is expected to generate:

**\$2.7B**

for the WA economy

**20,144**

FTE jobs



### An Industry Plan for WA

Clear and concrete plans in the midst of NDIS change is critical for a secure, robust sector. Recognising this, NDS commissioned ACIL Allen Consulting to develop a WA Industry Plan to provide a clear framework for the WA disability sector to transition to the NDIS.

The detailed plan provides critical information and includes a profile of the WA disability sector, as well as practical strategies, actions and initiatives to ensure the sector is well prepared for the full implementation of the NDIS. The Plan articulates the need for consideration of pre-emptive investment strategies to build workforce capacity. It is critical these strategies focus on building, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce to minimise skill shortages and maximise the state's ability to respond to NDIS opportunities.

### Critical support for sector transition

The Victorian Sector Transition Project (STP) has a year of NDIS readiness and implementation activities under its belt.

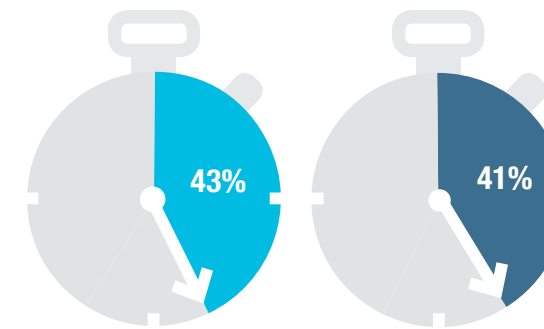
STP has engaged with around 450 different organisations through more than 120 interactive events, attended by key stakeholders including the NDIA, DHHS and Local Area Coordinators. These events have focused on equipping service providers with the information, resources, advice and support needed to build their organisational and operational readiness for the NDIS.

STP's Sector Support Consultants have expanded their presence statewide to provide strategic, capacity-building support for providers in the early NDIS-readiness phase. We delivered 33 Learn and Develop activities and launched the flagship Leading for the NDIS Transformation residential executive leadership program. In response to the need for relevant, timely information we launched our NDIS News Victoria bulletin and published Practical Guides to the NDIS – an evolving series of topical information packages about successful operation under the NDIS.

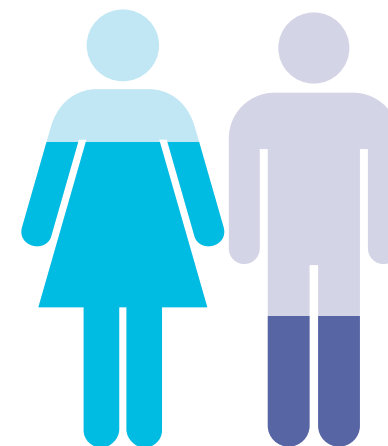
Looking ahead the STP team will continue this important work with the support of the Victorian Government. In doing so, we know we are working towards delivering the compelling vision offered by the NDIS.

### Improvements won for open employment providers

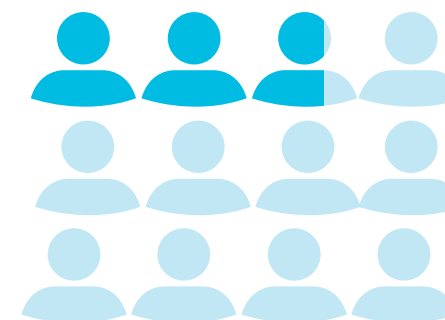
NDS has been active in securing the new Disability Employment Services (DES) contract which will take effect from mid-2018. Through participation in the DES Industry Reference



43% of disability support workers are permanent part-time  
41% are casuals



Women make up 70% of the disability workforce



24% of the disability workforce is aged between 45 and 54

Group, NDS successfully advocated for several enhancements to the grant application process and the design of the new DES program.

Two very positive developments include the Invitation to Treat process being opened to all providers rated three stars and above, as well as indexation of DES program funding with effect from mid-2019.

### Bringing wizardry to workforce challenges

As the NDIS rolls out, the disability workforce will grow and change shape. The sector lacks national data on workforce and labour market trends, making it difficult to monitor trends and plan for the future. Enter Workforce Wizard – an online tool designed to help service providers keep track of workforce changes in the sector and more importantly, make informed decisions about their staffing needs. The growing pool of data collected by the Workforce Wizard has led to many interesting insights and enabled the sector to be understood in a quantifiable and actionable way.

### Working for NDS members

#### Using data to demonstrate value

Supported employment has significant social and economic benefits, but until recently there was no way to quantify this. In response, NDS created the BuyAbility Impact Tool.

A first for the sector, the tool uses data provided by BuyAbility network members and considers factors such as how much the government saves from people with disability being employed, the increased employment participation of carers, business income and capital purchases. It also quantifies social



benefit by looking at quality of life indicators for employees.

NDS is committed to further developing the tool so that it enables members to view aggregated data by region or industry for a more comprehensive view of the supported employment sector.

### Advocating for members

Information and advocacy are key benefits of NDS membership. This year, NDS has coordinated two committees to analyse and resolve NDIS operational and implementation issues experienced by the sector.

The NDIS Operations Cluster is a monthly, national meeting involving NDS staff who focus on NDIS implementation matters from each state and territory. The Cluster discusses information on jurisdictional roll out issues and developments, which helps determine which issues can be dealt with locally and which require a national response. Key issues prioritised in the last year include: pricing; planning; registration; NDIA communication; and the myplace portal.

The NDIS Operations National Committee plays an important role in feeding information to and from member organisations. It has met four times since its inception in March 2016.

When over 1,000 providers experienced delays with their registration application to provide supports under the NDIS, NDS was heavily engaged in communicating changes to providers. Regular communications kept members abreast of these changes as they happened and NDS regularly discussed its concerns with the NDIA. NDS looks forward to continuing this work to keep the NDIS on track.

### NDIS readiness and transition for supported employment providers

Disability Enterprises are not exempt from NDIS challenges and the transition to the new model has not always run smoothly. This has led to NDS supported employment members raising a number of questions regarding participant plans and provider payments.

NDS has served as a go-between with the NDIA and DSS to clarify the planning process and ensure that member concerns are resolved. We have begun work with the NDIA and DSS to develop an ongoing pricing and funding model for supported employment to replace the current interim arrangements.

### Planning for a brighter future

What does the future hold for service providers? How will the NDIS impact the sector? What strategies can providers use to cope with the rate of change? These were just some of the questions addressed by world-leading futurist and professor Sohail Inayatullah at a futures thinking course run by NDS in October 2016. During the three-day event, members were challenged to reimagine alternative and preferred futures in the new NDIS world. This included predicting future trends, challenges and opportunities and sharing strategies for succeeding in these different types of imagined futures.

After attending the course 100 per cent of participants reported seeing the future differently and said they would recommend the course to others.

### Fighting for Disability Enterprises

NDS continues to fight for Disability Enterprises in the long-running wage assessment case

before the Fair Work Commission. Our negotiations have led to a number of positive outcomes, including modifications to the Supported Wage System (SWS) to make it more logical and equitable. Importantly, the use of the SWS by supported employers remains voluntary. This is key for supported employment as a productivity-based tool is not appropriate for all settings.

NDS has been preparing for the SES Award review in 2018, which will examine the current wage assessment tools and whether they should remain in the Award. Ahead of the review, we have been working with employer and parent advocate groups. Together, we will seek amendments to the Award that will ensure ongoing coverage of Disability Enterprises as well as a definition of eligible employees that reflects the funding changes introduced by the NDIS.

### New ways to interact with members

An open dialogue with our members is essential to ensuring the sector is equipped with the latest and most relevant information. This year we held a number of member-only webinars, which were designed to be interactive and an opportunity for members to ask questions openly. The topics covered were diverse, spanning everything from the practicalities of operating in the NDIS business environment to the latest DES reforms. In May we held an exclusive session with NDS Chief Executive Ken Baker on what the 2017-18 Federal Budget meant for the NDIS and disability employment. Plans for more webinars are already underway in response to strong member demand.



More than **200** delegates have tuned into **NDS webinars**

After attending the futures thinking course, **100%** of participants reported **seeing the future differently** and said they would **recommend the course** to others

## Creating opportunities for people with disability

### Over 1,000 jobs for young people with disability

Ticket to Work is committed to providing a pathway to employment for young people with disability. Using collaborative partnerships, schools, employment services, NDIS providers, apprenticeship services and employers work together to ensure students with disability have the opportunity to achieve their aspirations.

This year, Ticket to Work achieved the milestone of over 1,000 jobs in just three years. The ripple effect of this has been huge – opportunities for over 2,000 young people to participate in work experience and work preparation activities, with involvement from over 1,500 employers.

Following a funding win, the program has expanded to provide after school hours employment. After school work is an important rite of passage for young people and a great way to learn about the workforce and gain social skills.

The team's focus is on securing a sustainable funding model while continuing to influence policy and practice to create an employment-first approach in Australia.

### Celebrating International Day of People with Disability

Almost 500 people gathered to celebrate International Day of People with Disability in Perth. The event saw people with disability, disability service providers, government representatives and the business community

join together.

The theme was 'Transforming Our World' and promoted the removal of all types of barriers – physical environment, information and communications technology and attitudinal.

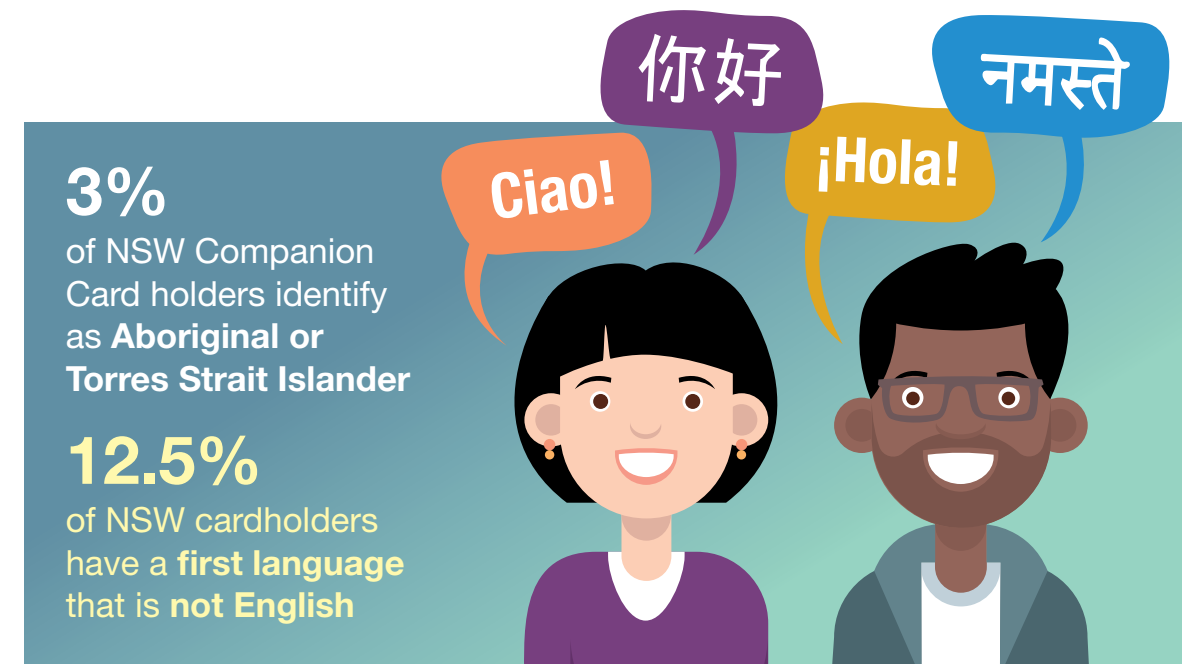
The event's major focus was to showcase and celebrate a diverse group of West Australians with disability who shared their journey and achievements. Highlights included interviews with disability advocates Catia Malaquias and Robyn Lambird and self-taught artist, Jacob 'Shakey' Butler, who created a live artwork during the lunch. Paralympians Sharon Jarvis, Brad Scott, Priya Cooper, Colin Harrison and Russell Boaden also shared their stories of competing at the highest level of their sports.

### Safeguarding the rights of people with disability

Zero Tolerance helps disability service providers understand, implement and improve practices which safeguard the rights of people they support. Over the past 12 months, the initiative partnered with Inclusion Australia, the national peak body for people with intellectual disability, to deliver a series of forums titled 'Understanding Abuse and Staying Safe'.

Over 20 forums were held for people with disability, support workers and supervisors in Tasmania, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia – to share the message that abuse and neglect of people with disability is never okay.

The forums were run by the Zero Tolerance team in partnership with local advocacy groups and statutory bodies. Participants learned how to use the free Zero Tolerance resources on the NDS website and left empowered to make a



'zero tolerance' commitment to supporting the human rights of people with disability.

Looking ahead we will be rolling out the forums across regional Northern Territory as well as adding to our range of resources on recognising restrictive practices. This includes a series of new videos for frontline workers and a new research partnership with RMIT University.

Further supporting our work in this area is the Quality and Safeguarding Project. Funded by the West Australian Government, this project provided consultancy services for organisations to enhance their capacity to deliver high-quality services and support. Following NDS consultancy support, all participating organisations successfully developed and implemented an action plan to address their key priorities for quality improvement, particularly in embedding policy into daily practice.

### 30,000 Companion Cards issued in New South Wales

Companion Card in NSW reached the milestone of 30,000 cardholders this year. The team made a concerted effort to identify Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and those from a non-english speaking background who would benefit from receiving a Companion Card, but might not have heard about the program.

The team works closely with service providers and schools to assist people to receive a Companion Card through an onsite assessment process. This model removes the barriers of literacy and language when applying.

### Making work work for NDIS plans

An Australian first School to Work Transition pilot has been achieving great outcomes in the NDIS Perth Hills trial site. The aim? To assist nearly 500 students with disability in school years 10-13 to include employment related goals in their NDIS plans and attain them through the Customised Employment approach.

As a result, more people in WA have employment in their NDIS plans than any other jurisdiction.

The approach has been delivered to disability service providers throughout the Perth metropolitan and Lower South West region and



recently began in Melbourne and Sydney as word of the concept spread.

### Building a more inclusive society for people with disability

Part of NDS's purpose is to promote life opportunities for people with disability. Access and inclusion services led by NDS in WA include Community Living and Participation Grants, the Changing Places Network and ACROD Parking.

The Changing Places Network has seen the establishment of secure and private change rooms for people with disability who need additional facilities such as adult-sized change tables and extra room for carers across WA. This year, NDS was commissioned by the state government to distribute access cards to an electric locking system for the facilities and further promote Changing Places in the community. We trialled the system with people with disability and provided feedback which will inform the government's decision on how to restrict access to eligible users only.

## Strengthening relationships with governments

### Creating change through policy reform

NDS's Sector Development team in NSW wrote a submission in response to the review of the NSW Guardianship Act 1987, addressing restrictive practice regulation. The team held a consultation session with over 20 member organisations to inform their position.

The paper highlighted inconsistencies in policy and practice in the disability sector and raised a number of questions regarding gaps in operational policy and regulation. The team collaborated with NDS in the ACT to make recommendations regarding the potential of a NSW Office of the Senior Practitioner as an external and independent monitoring mechanism. The paper advocated for an overarching clinically-based definition and categorisation of restrictive practices at a national level.



Through our submission, NDS identified the likelihood of the unregulated use of restrictive practices in disability services and other services accessed by people with disability. We drew this issue to the attention of the NSW Law Reform Commission and NSW Ombudsman, who both requested to meet with us and subsequently reflected our recommendations in their advocacy.

NDS continues to support the reduction and elimination of restrictive practices.

### The right people, in the right place, at the right time

NDS Initiative WorkAbility Queensland is working with the sector, government and the NDIA to deliver both local and statewide workforce solutions to build the sector's workforce supply and capability to meet demand under the NDIS.

Developed by a consortium of peak bodies in collaboration with key government agencies, the strategy has been designed to enable local workforce solutions for local needs. This will ensure Queensland has the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time to achieve full implementation of the NDIS by July 2019.

WorkAbility Queensland has focused its activities to date in Townsville, Mackay, Toowoomba and Ipswich. A highlight was the Townsville Careers in Disability Expo in October 2016. The expo attracted over 30 exhibitors and saw around 700 people interested in a career in the disability sector come through the doors.

### Opportunities grow in Western Australia

In April this year it was announced that a new Department of Communities would be

created in Western Australia. This significant transformation will allow for a more holistic and co-ordinated delivery of services.

As part of this change, a review is underway regarding how best to deliver services in regional and metropolitan Western Australia into the future. In its submission NDS in WA highlighted the need for a high-quality disability workforce which provides greater choice for people with disability so a vibrant disability services sector remains across Western Australia.

This review and new department provides a great opportunity for the West Australian disability sector to further strengthen its partnership with the state government, to build strong communities and to help grow and diversify the state's economy.

## Working with the allied health sector

### Working together for healthy outcomes

Developing strategic partnerships beyond the disability sector is critical to ensuring the success of the NDIS. NDS recognises that we are strongest when we work together. Over the past year, NDS in Queensland partnered with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) to produce the resource, 'NDIS Guides for Physicians and Paediatricians'. Launched at the RACP National Congress in May, the guides were created to assist health professionals, including physicians and paediatricians, achieve two goals – to develop policy around the NDIS and to build the capacity and capability of physicians to work more effectively with people with disability.

Through these comprehensive guides, which cover everything from background information on the NDIS to specific processes around participant planning, health professionals are now better equipped to help their clients navigate the requirements of the NDIS.

Looking ahead NDS is keen to further strengthen its strategic partnership with the RACP, especially in creating joint policy positions around the interface between health and specialist disability services.

### Aligning with allied health

National Disability Practitioners – a division of NDS – in conjunction with NDS in the ACT and the ACT Government, delivered the ACT Allied Health Market Capacity Building Project earlier this year. As well as providing opportunities for knowledge development, networking and collaborative learning, the project aimed to deliver tailored events and resources to help allied health providers succeed in the new NDIS world.

Of particular success was a series of networking events. The events were held in 'speed dating' style, enabling allied health

practitioners to connect with as many people both within and beyond the sector as possible. Following the success of these events, several project participants agreed to host their own networking events post-project.

### Connecting with the business community

#### Rising to the challenge of employment for people with disability

It's widely accepted that Australia needs to significantly lift its rates of employment for people with disability. In response, NDS in Tasmania launched JobsABILITY to support employers addressing a labour supply challenge and connect them to jobseekers with disability.

The initiative provides a pathway to securing work-ready staff through a three-step process. First, we raise employer awareness of the benefits of employing people with disability. Second, we establish a level of confidence among employers before the final step of

**Tasmania has the highest rate of disability in the country at 25%**, with only 46% of working age participating in the labour market – highlighting a pool of work-ready people available with a variety of skills and qualifications

**87% of the public** prefer to give their business to companies who employ people with disability



**\$23.9M**

in contract revenue for  
54 Disability Enterprises  
engaging 974 supported  
employees



connecting disability employment providers with potential employers.

With the backing of key industry peak bodies including the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tasmanian Hospitality Association, TasICT and the Tasmanian Small Business Council, the initiative has already seen 12 iconic Tasmanian businesses engage with JobsABILITY to place individuals into work opportunities. As a result, 19 individuals have been exposed to work readiness and work experience opportunities which have led to traineeships, full-time and part-time employment.

### Purchasing that is commercially sound and socially responsible

This year NDS launched BuyAbility Procurement, a project management service focused on promoting, connecting and managing socially responsible procurement opportunities between Disability Enterprises and public and private sector buyers.

After securing \$700,000 in funding from the

Department of Social Services, we launched an online marketplace for Disability Enterprises – [www.buyability.org.au](http://www.buyability.org.au) – as well as expanded brokerage services around the country with staff now in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Additionally, we have moved into a number of new services for Disability Enterprises including administrative assistance, reception services, e-cycling and cleaning of shared meeting spaces.

The first Tasmanian contract through BuyAbility Procurement was awarded to Disability Enterprise, Start Fresh Services. The Start Fresh team were contracted to renovate a group of aviaries that housed the breeding program for the endangered Orange Bellied Parrot.

With only 30 Orange Bellied Parrots left in the wild, this was a delicate job. The birds are very small, shy and a little nervous, so this work needed to be spread out over several weeks so staff could safely move birds and minimise disruption. The work went without a hitch and all the birds remained safe! It was great to see people with disability playing a key role in the survival of this species.



## Informing the broader Australian community

### A new phase for projectABLE

With the assistance of funding from the NSW and Commonwealth governments, NDS has created two successful programs to help meet the growing demand for workers. carecareers is a job website for the disability and community care sectors, aimed at attracting talented staff from all backgrounds. projectABLE is a free and interactive workshop delivered to secondary school students to encourage them to consider a career in the disability sector.

This year marked an exciting change for projectABLE with a new format which has seen

its workshops delivered entirely by people with disability. This team of presenters, now 57 strong, has taken the program to new heights and won positive feedback from both students and teachers in schools around the country. A flow-on effect of their success with projectABLE is that many presenters have moved into other NDS projects such as presenting for the Zero Tolerance initiative in partnership with our sector development teams.

### Supported employment: Raising awareness and busting myths

Supported employment has evolved in recent years to a sector that operates viable businesses through offering employment, support and training for people with disability



– but many community perceptions about the employment model have yet to make that shift.

A key goal of the BuyAbility campaign is to present Disability Enterprises as vibrant places of work that offer people with disability a good and valid employment choice. What better way to impact the broader community than through the stories of supported employees who love their jobs. The stories collected this year have been real, raw, impactful and three videos recently released have been viewed almost 100,000 times already.

Looking ahead BuyAbility will be launching more stories and running a week of action to continue the promotion of supported employment.

### projectABLE highlights:

**2,429** students reached  
**90%** would recommend the workshop to peers  
**80%** were inspired to consider a career in the disability sector

### carecareers highlights:

**33,261** job ads posted  
**51,532** candidates registered  
**135,220** job applications received  
 Estimated **19,300** jobs secured



### Vale Tim Walton

NDS was saddened to lose a Life Member this year, Tim Walton.

Tim was a stalwart of the disability sector. In his many roles over several decades Tim was tireless in his efforts to improve the opportunities and services available to people with disability.

An early champion of supported employment, 15 years as CEO of the Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford), President of NDS from 2009 to 2012 and Chair of the National Steering Committee of the Every Australian Counts campaign – were just a few of his roles.

He was a passionate supporter and key driver of the campaign for the NDIS. He raised funds for the Every Australian Counts campaign and called on his network of contacts to influence media and political opinion in support of the scheme.

Tim's own experience of illness and disability during recent years added depth to his determination to see people with disability participate in all spheres of life.



## Membership Awards

### Membership Recognition Awards

NDS's Membership Recognition Awards acknowledge the loyalty, support and contributions of Organisational Members that have reached the milestones of 20, 30, 40 and 50 years of continued NDS membership.

In December 2016, 17 members were recognised for their long-standing partnership with NDS.

### 50 years of Membership

The Westhaven Association

### 30 years of Membership

ACL Disability Services

Essential Personnel

Jobsupport

Motor Neurone Disease Association of Victoria Inc

### 20 years of Membership

Carinya Society

Endeavour Industries Goulburn Inc

Finding Yellow

The Housing Connection Limited

Interaction Disability Services Limited

L'Arche Sydney Inc

Montagu Community Living Inc

The Parkside Foundation

Peace Lutheran Church Gatton t/as Anuha

Valmar Support Services Ltd

Wallara Australia Ltd

WCIG

### President's Service Award: Vicki O'Halloran AM

This year NDS recognised the tireless work for people with disability and the broader disability sector of Vicki O'Halloran AM.

Vicki is a long-standing supporter of NDS and an influential advocate for the disability sector both in the Northern Territory and on the national stage. She is highly-regarded in government and business circles as a strong voice for the interests of service providers and people with disability in the Northern Territory where conditions can be very challenging.

Her skills are widely sought after as demonstrated by her time as President of NDS from 2012 to 2015 and as an NDS Board Member for almost 10 years.

Vicki's outstanding record of service to NDS and the community sector underlines the confidence that people have in her. In the Northern Territory she is listened to by both sides of politics and is highly regarded among



consumer advocates. Everyone that knows Vicki can attest to her passion to make a positive contribution to the lives of people who use disability and other community services.

Recently Vicki was named the new Northern Territory Administrator, a position equivalent to state governor. The loss for the disability sector is in every way a gain for the Northern Territory.

### Life Member: Jason McKey

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to both NDS and the disability sector over many years, we were delighted to induct Jason McKey as a Life Member this year.

Jason has been contributing to the work of NDS since 1990, serving as a Board Member for 14 years, representing NDS on working groups and chairing a number of NDS committees – particularly the National Committee on Open Employment. His deep knowledge of open employment has greatly

informed our policy work and influence on government.

Beyond NDS Jason has been a strong advocate for international development in the sector. He has sponsored an inclusive school in a rural area of Bangladesh since 2000, initiating an innovative micro-credit program to self-fund employment ventures for people with disability. As a result, young people with disability and their mothers now own cattle and sell milk at the local markets. There are 55 families involved in the project and this is expected to grow as families repay their interest-free loans.

NDS Life Membership is reserved for those individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to NDS. Jason McKey joined the following Life Members:

Jean Garside OBE

Ted Petersen AM

Felicity Purdy

Michael Sumner

Joan Tuxen MBE

Bryan Woodford OAM





*Susan Burns, Noelene Swanson and Kali Iannou*

## Meet NDS

The team in the Territory

The NDS team in the Top End gained some fresh faces this year. Those in the Northern Territory are State Manager Noelene Swanson, Project Officer in Industry Development Susan Burns and Administration and Events Coordinator Kali Iannou.

The team says the few months since they each started at NDS have been ones of change – challenging yet exciting.

“Since we’re a new team, we can really move forward with our visions and our goals,” says Kali. “It’s a whole new dynamic.”

Susan has been in the sector for 12 years. She says the sector in the Top End is very collaborative and welcoming. “One of the most exciting things is opportunities, both internally and externally, because the sector is changing,” she says. “I’m really impressed by the investment of NDS in the disability sector.”

Among the many great achievements of the new team in the Northern Territory have been the successful Zero Tolerance forums – advocating

for human rights of people with disability, the Disability Services Act and improving NT legislation – the development of Communities of Practice on human rights and workforce, industry surveys about gaps in the sector and the development of an Industry Plan.

New NT State Manager Noelene Swanson has begun the development of a workforce plan, been instrumental in advising NT organisations about housing and appeared as a witness in front of a Joint Standing Committee. All since starting the role in May.

*“It’s about recognising people who are passionate about achieving results and rewarding that.”*

Noelene says the team has been cultivating positive relationships with government. “We’ve been making good contact with NT Ministers, who have been very available to have conversations and are seeking active information,” she says. “We have good relationships with government on a federal and state level.”

*“This is such a dramatic change. What it’s done is make people turn to each other and say, ‘How can we learn from one another?’ And there’s been a generosity in that sharing of information and of experiences.”*

Looking forward has been important for the new team, who are making big plans for the next year and beyond.

“Next year, our project funding from the NT Government will be in regards to the delivery of [NDS school careers program] projectABLE in really remote communities,” says Susan. The team is currently planning the logistics of this delivery and speaking to Aboriginal elders on the land.

Another exciting project in the works is the NT Disability Services Awards. “We want to create a conference that’s a little more exciting and fun this year, and that’s what I’m looking forward to delivering,” says Kali. “It’s about recognising people who are passionate about achieving results and rewarding that.”

Noelene says she thinks the next 12 months will be very interesting for the Northern Territory. “It will be about exploring new modelling with remote and very remote areas

under the NDIS and lobbying in that way,” she says.

“In the next year, I’m looking forward to getting a better deal for the Territory – that’s number one. Number two is working with service providers and making them able to survive and sustain themselves in the new world,” Noelene says.

“The third thing is celebrating successes as we go, because I think the disability sector doesn’t always have good opportunities to do that. That’s why we have a different approach to our conference this year – it’ll be a celebration of success.”

Noelene is hopeful about the major change of the NDIS in the Northern Territory. “You know how they say if there’s a common adversity or a common enemy, people pull together? This is such a dramatic change. What it’s done is make people turn to each other and say, ‘How can we learn from one another?’ And there’s been a generosity in that sharing of information and of experiences.”

“I believe that’s made our sector a stronger sector,” she continues, “and it’s got a much stronger voice now than it’s ever had before. That voice is recognised by both tiers of government, which is important, but other organisations are also looking on and saying, ‘We need to spread our wings and join the market as well.’”

NDS membership in the NT is growing, and Noelene says she is excited that a number of Indigenous organisations want to become members. “I think that’s really special,” she says. “I think it’s actually been a good year, with some changes that are really positive for the sector.”



## Early days provide good rewards

Kylie Hutchinson

Senior Project Officer Kylie Hutchinson has been working for NDS in the Adelaide office for almost a year.

"I thought that I was aware of the issues that faced providers and their staff, but now that I have had the opportunity to interact with a wide range of providers, I have learned so much about the sector," she says of her time at NDS so far. "I've also valued the ability to learn from the other NDS offices around Australia. Being able to learn about what is happening around Australia has been really beneficial to me and the providers in SA."

Kylie says the greatest achievements of the SA office in the past year have included the execution of the Organisation Readiness Survey and the Regional Profiles that NDS created for the information of the sector.

They conducted a survey in the form of individual phone interviews with providers about what they thought were the main issues around workforce, transitioning to the NDIS and how NDS could support them in the future.

"From the engagement we did, we got a really good picture of the sector and the issues that our members are finding with the NDIS. We



used the information in the survey to draw a picture of what the regions look like – who was active, what kinds of services they were providing, where they were and so on – a Regional Profile, which we sent out to all those people to give them an idea about what was happening."

Kylie said providers loved having this resource. "They said it was one of the best things they had," she said. "Before that, it was almost impossible to find out what was in the region, but if a job seeker came to them now, they could give them quite a bit of information."

"I would like to see NDS become the premier go-to organisation for advice, research and assistance on the disability sector," says Kylie. "NDS does so much good research and support. I am really looking forward in particular to new developments from NDP and CADR [Centre for Applied Disability Research]."



## Board and Committees



# The NDS Board



**Joan McKenna Kerr**  
**President**  
Elected Member (to Mar 2017)  
WA Chair (from Mar 2017)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Autism Association of WA



**Paul Byrne**  
**Vice-President**  
TAS Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Li-Ve Tasmania



**Rohan Braddy**  
Elected Member  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mambourin Enterprises Ltd



**Anne Bryce**  
NSW Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Achieve Australia



**Warwick Cavanagh**  
Elected Member  
Chair  
Active Community Housing



**Jennifer Fitzgerald**  
VIC Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
SCOPE (Aust) Ltd



**Joanne Jessop**  
QLD Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Multicap



**Debbie Karasinski**  
WA Chair (to Mar 2017)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Senses Australia



**Cathy Miller**  
SA Chair (from Dec 2016)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Minda Incorporated



**Vicki O'Halloran AM**  
NT Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Somerville Community  
Services



**Cheryl Pollard**  
ACT Chair  
Chief Executive  
Duo Services Australia Ltd



**Glenn Rappensberg**  
SA Chair (to Dec 2016)  
Elected Member (to May 2017)  
Executive Director  
Royal Society of the Blind



**Gordon Trewern**  
Elected Member  
Chief Executive Officer  
Nulsen Disability Services



**Rob White**  
Elected Member  
(from May 2017)  
Chief Executive Officer  
Cerebral Palsy Alliance



**Ken Baker AM**  
Company Secretary  
Chief Executive  
National Disability Services

**Auditor:**  
Ernst & Young





## National Committees

### National Committee on Accommodation, Housing & Support

**Chair:** Anne Bryce, Chief Executive Officer, Achieve Australia

**NDS Co-ordinator:** Philippa Angley, Executive Officer to the Chief Executive

### National Committee on Open Employment

**Chair:** Cathy Miller, Chief Executive Officer, Minda Incorporated

**NDS Co-ordinator:** Kerrie Langford, National Employment Manager

### National Committee on Supported Employment

**Chair:** (to Dec 2016) Andrew Richardson, Managing Director, House with No Steps

**Chair:** (from Mar 2017) Sally Powell, Chief Executive Officer, Bedford Group

**NDS Co-ordinator:** Kerrie Langford, National Employment Manager

### National Committee on NDIS Operations

**Chair:** Chris Mathieson, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Deaf Society

**NDS Co-ordinator:** (to Oct 2016) Deb Sazdanoff, NDIS Adviser

**NDS Co-ordinator:** (from Oct 2016) Stephanie Worsteling, NDIS Adviser

### National Committee on Children, Young People & their Families

**Chair:** (to May 2017) Glenn Rappensberg, Executive Director, Royal Society for the Blind

**NDS Co-ordinator:** Philippa Angley, Executive Officer to the Chief Executive

### National Committee on Workforce

**Chair:** Paul Byrne, Chief Executive Officer, Li-Ve Tasmania

**NDS Co-ordinator:** Caroline Alcorso, National Manager Workforce Development



## State & Territory Committees

### ACT

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Cheryl Pollard

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Eric Thauvette

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Lisa McPherson-Stuart  
Hugh Packard  
Kylie Stokes  
Amanda Tobler  
Torrian Lau  
Marco Xuereb  
Chris Redmond  
Ian Ross

**STATE MANAGER:**  
Stephen Fox

### NSW

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Anne Bryce

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Chris Campbell

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
David Carey  
Max Bosotti  
Andrew Richardson  
Claire Robbs  
Glenda Pearce  
Pennie Kearney  
Kerry Stubbs  
Rob White  
Adrian Ford

**SENIOR MANAGER  
STATE OPERATIONS:**  
Tony Pooley

### NT

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Vicki O'Halloran AM

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Tony Burns

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Helen Egan  
Terry Cleary  
Kim McRae  
Eileen Farrell  
Steve Vitone  
Sue Shearer  
Pat Brahim  
Nadia Lindop (from Feb 2017)  
Sue Coombs (to Aug 2016)

**STATE MANAGER:**  
Noelene Swanson



**VIC**

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Jennifer Fitzgerald

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Terri Carroll

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Christine Mathieson  
Estelle Fyffe  
Glenn Foard  
Julie Graham  
Kerry Nelson  
Peter Spyker  
Rohan Braddy  
Warwick Cavanagh  
Daniel Leighton *(to May 2017)*

**STATE MANAGER:**  
David Moody

**TAS**

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Paul Byrne

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Donna Bain

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Mark Jessop  
Jenny Branch-Allen  
Steve Daley  
Deborah Byrne  
Drew Beswick  
Murray Coates  
Kathryn Ellston  
Janette Martin *(to Jan 2017)*  
Dale Luttrell *(to Apr 2017)*

**STATE MANAGER:**  
David Clements

**QLD**

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Joanne Jessop

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Liz Sutton

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Scott Sheppard  
Tracey Shaw *(to Feb 2017)*  
Angela Tillmanns *(to Oct 2016)*  
Robert Evelyn  
Judy Dickson  
Ann Greer  
Russell Mason  
Peter Tully

**STATE MANAGER:**  
Richard Nelson

**WA**

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Joan McKenna Kerr  
*(from Mar 2017)*  
Debbie Karasinski  
*(to Mar 2017)*

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIRS:**  
Gordon Trewern  
Marina Re

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Matt Burrows  
Justine Colyer  
Rob Holmes  
Rosie Lawn  
Marcus Stafford  
Michael Tait  
Sue Ash *(to Apr 2017)*  
Fiona Beernier *(to May 2017)*

**STATE MANAGER:**  
Julie Waylen

**SA**

**COMMITTEE CHAIR:**  
Glenn Rappensberg  
*(to Dec 2016)*  
Cathy Miller *(from Dec 2016)*

**COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR:**  
Cathy Miller *(to Dec 2016)*  
Sally Powell *(from Dec 2016)*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
Glenn Rappensberg  
*(to May 2017)*  
Mark Kulinski  
Janine Lenigas  
Michael Forwood  
Geoff Blackwood  
Majorie Ellis  
Matt Collins  
Peter Stewart

**STATE MANAGER:**  
Peter Hoppo



**2016-17 financial  
performance  
highlights**





## Summary

For the financial year ending 30 June 2017, NDS achieved a net surplus of \$1,611,744.

Net assets remain strong, having increased to \$13,339,902 (2016: \$11,728,158). The current ratio (current assets: current liabilities) was 1.26 (2016: 1.21).

### NDS income 2016-17

Total income received in 2016-17 was \$33.5M, a 2.7 per cent decrease on 2016-17 (\$34.4M). Forty nine per cent of revenue for the organisation is related to projects being undertaken by NDS to support the sector (2016: 57 per cent). NDS acknowledges the support of the federal, state and territory governments who provide funding for these initiatives.

The other major sources of income were:

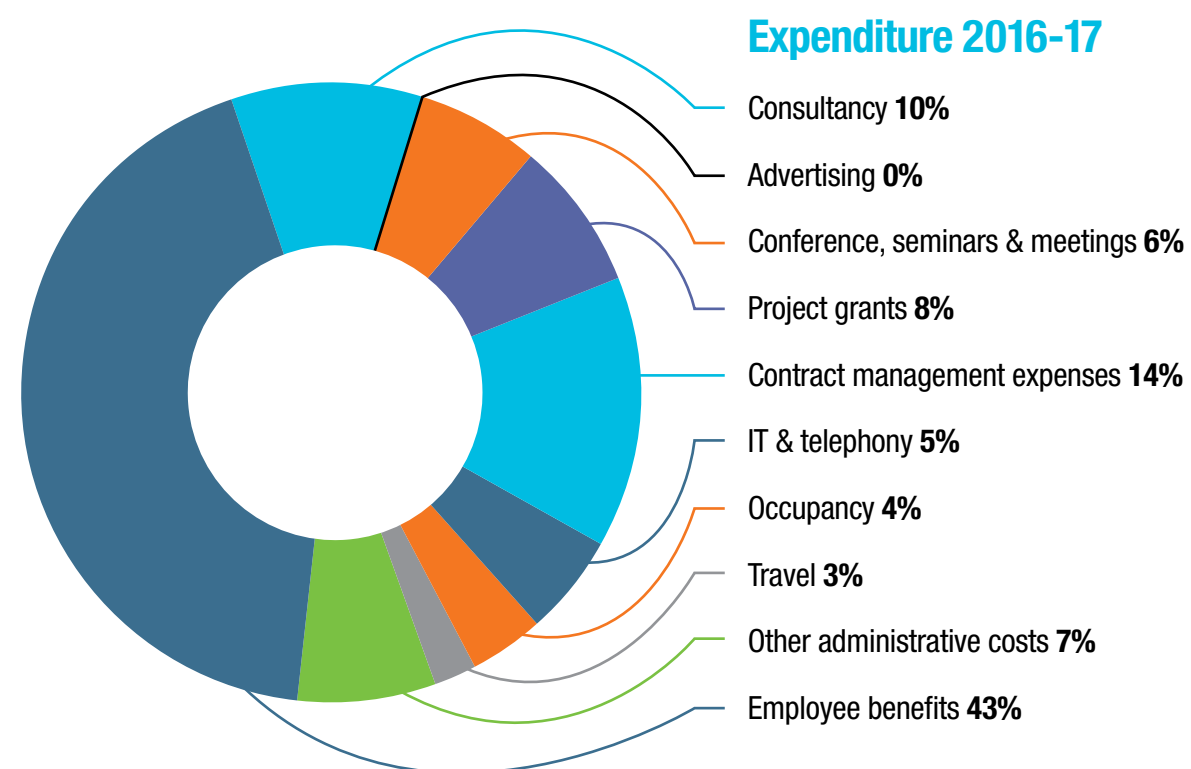
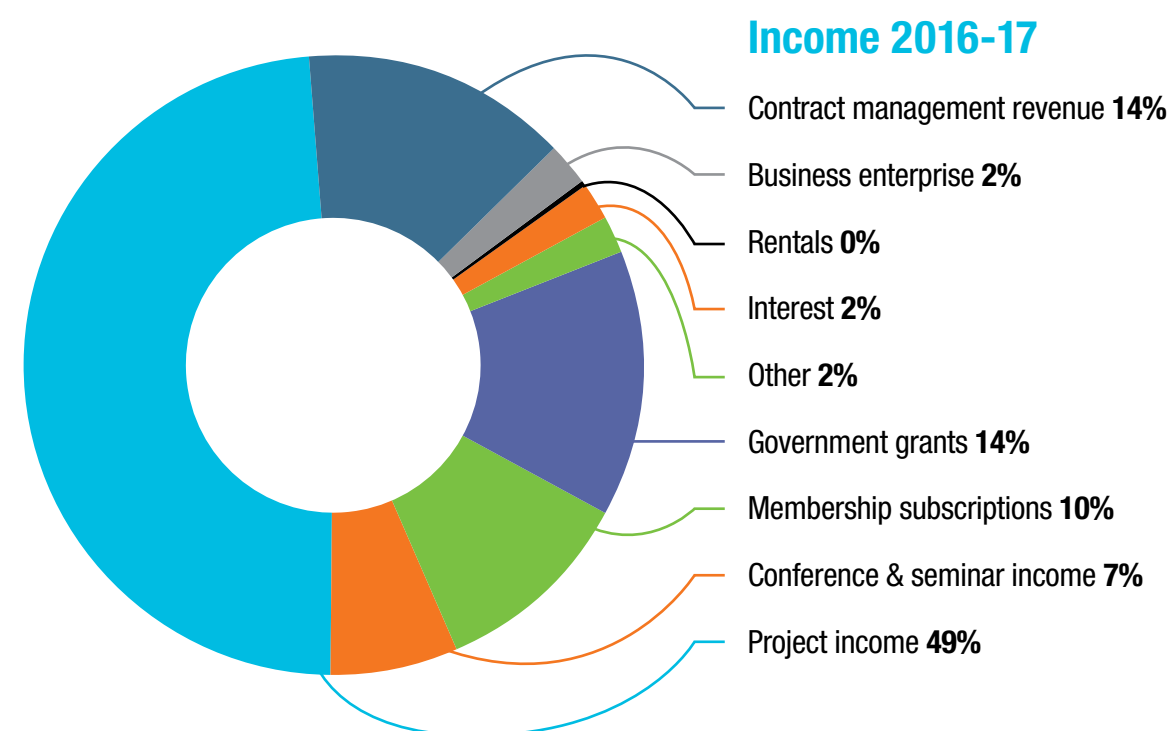
government grants (14 per cent); BuyAbility Procurement (14 per cent); NDS and NDP membership subscriptions (10 per cent); and conferences and seminars (7 per cent).

### NDS expenditure 2016-17

Total expenditure for the year fell 3 per cent to \$31.9M (2016: \$32.9M). Employment costs are the largest area of expense incurred by the organisation at 43 per cent (2016: 44 per cent). Contract management expenses (14 per cent), consultancy (10 per cent) and grants for projects and other activities issued to service providers (8 per cent) are the other principal expenses.

A full set of audited financial statements is available from the registered office (33 Thesiger Court, Deakin, ACT) on request. Email: [nds@nds.org.au](mailto:nds@nds.org.au) or phone 02 6283 3204.

Income	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Government grants	4,692	4,298
Other grants	-	-
Membership subscriptions	3,532	3,427
Conference & seminar income	2,207	2,450
Project income	16,270	19,708
Contract management revenue	4,740	3,303
Business enterprise	668	353
Rentals	156	86
Interest	625	614
Other	619	203
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>33,510</b>	<b>34,442</b>
Expenses	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Employee benefits	13,775	14,360
Consultancy	3,172	3,610
Advertising	38	247
Conference, seminars & meetings	2,011	2,162
Project grants	2,454	3,028
Contract management expenses	4,511	3,146
IT & telephony	1,685	1,776
Occupancy	1,246	1,243
Travel	778	843
Other administrative costs	2,226	2,488
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>31,898</b>	<b>32,901</b>
<b>Total surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>1,541</b>



Assets	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	35,015	33,316
Other current assets	4,555	1,576
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>39,570</b>	<b>34,892</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant & equipment	5,690	5,895
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>5,690</b>	<b>5,895</b>
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>33,510</b>	<b>34,442</b>
<hr/>		
Liabilities	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade & other payables	2,556	2,303
Provisions	283	336
Employee benefit liabilities	1,121	1,001
Interest bearing loans & borrowings	3	3,445
Unearned revenue	27,536	21,567
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>31,499</b>	<b>28,653</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Provisions	32	32
Employee benefit liabilities	350	313
Interest bearing loans & borrowings	40	62
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>407</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>31,920</b>	<b>11,728</b>
<hr/>		
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>13,340</b>	<b>11,728</b>
<hr/>		
<b>Funds</b>		
Retained earnings	12,879	11,267
Reserves	461	461
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>13,340</b>	<b>11,728</b>



# Celebrating 10 YEARS with NDS

**Sue O'Neill**



Beginning as a receptionist, Sue is coming up to 10 years with NDS in Victoria. She offers specialised support to the Sector Transition Team and senior leaders in the Melbourne office.

Paired with her lived experience of having a disability and her extensive network, Sue is confident in her ability to share valuable perspectives in our workplace.

The thing Sue says she values most about working at NDS is the camaraderie. “We’ve always had great teams,” she says. “The cohesive, positive culture has continued despite staff movement and organisational growth. There’s a lot of passion from the employees in this place,” she says.

Sue says the NDIS has created a new environment, but the NDS team in Victoria has blossomed in the experience.

“With the roll out of the NDIS, obviously we’ve needed more people in the office,” she says. “Working on the Sector Transition Project has been a big change for me, as well. Being at work’s really exciting, especially as the roll out of the NDIS gets further along.”

Sue says a part of her job she really values is connecting with members at conferences and other events. “Recently, I went to the Zero Tolerance events with the Disability Services Commissioner,” she says.

“The cohesive, positive culture has continued despite staff movement and organisational growth. There’s a lot of passion from the employees in this place.”

“I really enjoy meeting the members, and catching up with people year to year. We’ve all got the one goal.”

Into the future Sue says she’d like to see NDS continue what it is doing with the roll out of the NDIS – “helping people with disabilities to live as full lives as possible... helping organisations to give those services.”

## National Disability Services

Annual Report 2016-17

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Produced by National Disability Services

Data used in this report is drawn from the most accurate information available at the time of writing.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many people who have agreed to allow photographs of themselves to be used in various NDS publications. We also thank our members who were instrumental in arranging for the photographs to be taken.

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This report was printed by a Disability Enterprise.

[www.nds.org.au](http://www.nds.org.au)

