



# Annual Report

2021





### Brief Note of History

“Allambi House” (AKA The Lake Macquarie Youth Refuge) opened in 1981, later known as Allambi Youth Services Inc. (2001-2015), and now known as Allambi Care.

### Traditional Acknowledgement

Allambi Care acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia, and recognise their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay respect to their traditions, culture, aspirations and Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the wounds of the past, and the ongoing failure to recognise and support the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. We commit our organisation in walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their process of healing, and creating opportunities for cultural connection.

<b>01</b>	<b>About Us</b>	<b>5</b>
	Our Vision & Strategy	6
<b>02</b>	<b>Our Remarkable Team</b>	<b>8</b>
	Leadership Team	10
	Board of Directors	11
	The Chairman’s Report	12
	CEO Report	14
	COVID-19 Response	16
	People, Support & Culture	18
<b>03</b>	<b>Our Programs &amp; Services</b>	<b>20</b>
	What We Do	22
	Overview	24
<b>04</b>	<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	<b>26</b>
	Learning and Development	28
	Bachelor of Human Services	32
	Improving access to education	34
<b>05</b>	<b>Fostering &amp; Permanency</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>Clinical Care</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>07</b>	<b>Outreach</b>	<b>40</b>
	Social Work Overview	42
	Youth Hope	44
	Homelessness	46
	Family Search and Engagement	48
<b>08</b>	<b>NDIS &amp; ITC</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>09</b>	<b>Residential Services</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Financials</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Community Partnerships and Engagement</b>	<b>58</b>
	Connect with us	60



**Vision**

Belonging, hope and positive futures.

**Mission**

Allambi Care serves individuals, families, communities and government agencies. We are committed to addressing safety and growth needs so that we empower people to reach their full potential. Our services are flexible and characterised by innovation and best practice.

**Values**

- We believe in individual experiences and strengths
- We believe in leadership, support and empowerment
- We believe in innovation and creative practice
- We believe in passion, persistence and a commitment to others
- We believe in honest, genuine and transparent relationships
- We believe in equality and embracing differences
- We believe in “Being With” people through life’s challenges



**Needs-Based Restorative Framework**



Depicted is the Allambi Care *Needs-Based Restorative Framework* which is grounded in research on optimal human development.

The *Needs-Based Restorative Framework* guides the work of Allambi Care’s residential carers, foster carers, family support workers, casework staff, teachers and clinicians. It is based on our commitment to responding to the multiple needs of people in care rather than requiring them to adjust to a particular service model.

There are three core components to the *Framework*. The central focus is on the normal and shared developmental needs of all people and the defining features of healthy growth as outlined in models such as the *Circle of Courage*. These are **Universal Needs**.

Given that the majority of people that Allambi Care work with have experienced severe adversity and trauma, the second major element of the *Framework* is on understanding and responding to **trauma-related needs**.

The third element of the *Framework* is that of **individually assessed needs**. Some clients are referred to Allambi Care because of specific developmental disorders, mental health concerns, or specific behavioural concerns. These issues require an in-depth assessment and tailored intervention plans.



THIS YEAR ALLAMBI CARE  
CONSISTED OF

**867**  
employees



# OUR REMARKABLE TEAM

# LEADERSHIP TEAM



**SIMON WALSH**  
Chief Executive Officer



**BRETT SMITH**  
Executive Officer Operations



**PETER WALSH**  
Staff and Carer Support



**STEPHEN GRAHAM**  
Partnerships, Engagement and Innovation



**KRISTEN BLOMLEY**  
People, Support and Culture



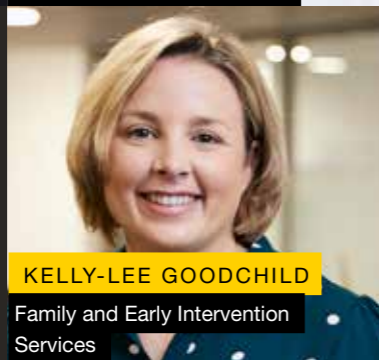
**ADAM WALSH**  
Director (Acting) – People, Support and Culture



**MARK BRANSON**  
Therapeutic Care and NDIS



**DR. HOWARD BATH**  
Consultant – Research, Training and Program Development



**KELLY-LEE GOODCHILD**  
Family and Early Intervention Services



**TIM REED**  
Fostering and Permanency



**LYN WALSH**  
Staff and Carer Support



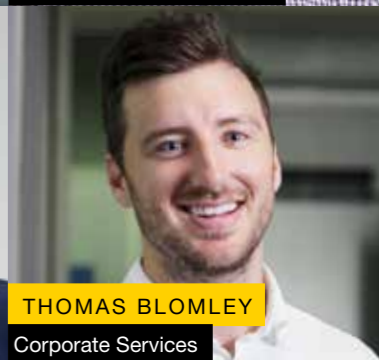
**MARK SAID**  
Organisational Development



**LYNDAL DAY**  
Finance



**DR. PAUL BAKER**  
Clinical Services



**THOMAS BLOMLEY**  
Corporate Services

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**KEN YOUMAN**  
Chairman – Non-Executive Director



**PETER PARSONS**  
Vice Chairman – Non-Executive Director



**GRAEME THOMAS**  
Treasurer – Non-Executive Director



**SIMON WALSH**  
Secretary – Executive Director



**ANNE-MAREE KELLY**  
Non-Executive Director



**BRONYA THOMAS**  
Non-Executive Director



**PAUL SNEDDON**  
Non-Executive Director



**DR. TONY RYAN**  
Non-Executive Director



**LYNDAL DAY**  
Executive Director



**BRETT SMITH**  
Executive Director



# THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

**At the beginning of this year I did not expect to arrive at this time still operating under Government Health Orders relating to the COVID-19 epidemic. Again, it has been a year of unprecedented change and constraints on our operating environment.**

Allambi has done very well in coping with the uncertainty resulting from the epidemic. I must acknowledge, with gratitude, the inspirational behaviour of our people in ensuring that the care of those entrusted to us is not diminished by external factors out of our control. Many people have made significant personal sacrifices in order that Allambi Care is able to continue providing our best practices to those in our care. I am deeply grateful for your actions and your commitment – you are inspirational and outstanding!

### Operating Environment

The year has been characterised by increasing demands by our funding bodies for more information and compliance with their ever changing and complicated processes. This is onerous on our people; being time consumptive, creating delays, a distraction from caring, and all without any financial compensation. With representation from the NSW Industry peak body, ACWA, and by personal representation to Ministerial level by our senior staff, we have successfully advocated for change in several areas. Our senior people continued to negotiate better outcomes for those in our care and I am proud of the stance they have often taken to refuse to accept a lesser standard of care than that we believe is right.

During the year, Allambi Care signed up to the National Redress Scheme which supports people who have experienced institutional sexual abuse. We have had three historical cases brought to our attention and these are being dealt with by proper protocols. The

impact of this scheme on organisations in our sector is that insurers have started to deny coverage to some organisations or increase premiums to unsustainable levels, as is the case for Allambi Care. This has caused Allambi Care considerable financial stress. Overtures have been made to all levels of Government about this crisis, seeking for them to address the issue of insurance.

The year has been seriously impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. Again, I am proud of the way that Allambi Care galvanised to cover possible issues and produced procedures to cover all contingencies. The managements response has been exemplary but the face-to-face people have been extraordinary – exhibiting personal sacrifice, flexibility, and a common desire to support those in our care and to look after each other. COVID vaccinations were arranged at Allambi Care premises and the take up was encouraging. Thank you to everyone!

Our EOO, Brett Smith has been working to secure research opportunities with the University of Melbourne and the work of Dr Howard Bath and Dr Paul Baker has given us “a seat at the table” to contribute and share in our quest to examine new ways of helping the people in our care. These actions are valuable in sustaining our position as the benchmark in care for our sector. Our future in caring is secure because of these activities.

### Victorian Operations

Our Victorian operations are stable and producing great results. We have been invited to tender for additional services

and it appears we will be successful in extending our operations. I have been very impressed by the quality of the Victorian staff and, in particular, their enthusiasm and the way they have endorsed and implemented the AC model of therapeutic care. The AC people involved in our Victorian operations, both local and from Newcastle, have made significant personal sacrifices and I acknowledge and am grateful for your contributions. The future is exciting!

### Strategic Plan

Our plan is due for review and updating early next year. The present plan has run for three years and has 185 goals of which 84% have been completed at the end of August. This is a commendable result for the organisation and reflects well on our future directions. Well done to all those involved!

### Staff and Community engagement

We have continued several initiatives that are raising awareness of Allambi's operations. Our TV advertising campaign is continuing, and our brand building is helped by our participation in several charity fund raising events. Thanks to those staff members who have spent time in ensuring these things have been successful.

Allambi Care has increased our engagement with staff and the community and “telling our stories”, monthly newsletters, COVID communications and our social media opportunities have all been effective. We are using new initiatives such as staff profiles and communication on important issues. This is raising our profile in the community and will assist our future dialogue with stakeholders.

Our staff have been given the opportunity to participate by remote access in International Conferences relating to our areas of interest, further enhancing their professional development and networking opportunities.

We continue to promote the diploma and degree courses for staff and are engaging with Universities and trainers to ensure the long term viability and availability of the courses to Allambi Care. This internal pathway of professional development is unique in our sector and brings much pride to the organisation.

### Diversification

Allambi Care have submitted a Development Application to Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) for our Macquarie Road properties. Questions from the LMCC have been answered and we expect approval soon. The Board will then receive a detailed proposal for the project from our development group for consideration, which we expect to happen early in 2022.

### Board Matters

I am grateful for the generosity of the volunteer Board members in sharing their experience and time to enhance the performance of our organisation and to ensure good governance. Together with the employee Board members we have a cohesive and harmonious relationship that allows difficult matters to be discussed and agreed to in the best interests of Allambi Care. Although COVID restrictions have limited our interaction the Board continues to seek opportunities to engage with operational areas to ensure the Board has a good understanding of “how things are done at Allambi Care” and are aware of issues that arise.

It is with sadness that I advise that Ann-Maree Kelly is retiring from the Board at this year's AGM. Ann-Maree's contribution has been significant and she brought to the Board great experience in the care of children and the operation of funding organisations. I have a thankful heart for Anne-Maree's contribution and we will miss her wise counsel. We wish Ann-Maree and her family the very best for this next phase of their lives.

The Office of the Children's Guardian have started their re-accreditation audit. The results so far are encouraging with only minor improvements identified and we expect the audit to be complete in January 2022.

### Safety

AC is determined to reduce our injury rates. Significant improvement has occurred during the year which is gratifying! This a result of hard work and an increasing awareness of safety by all people involved in Allambi Care. The Board acknowledges that we operate in a difficult and unpredictable environment and are encouraged by your efforts to improve.

### Thankfulness

Again, as I comment every year, our operations have only been possible by the integrity and professionalism of our staff and colleagues who provide care to people who are going through very tough times. This care is often delivered in challenging environments without compromise to high professional standards, integrity and duty of care. I thank you sincerely for your sensitive, diligent and professional approach and for the sacrifices you have made. Your contribution is making a difference in so many lives and giving hope.

I am proud to be associated with Allambi Care and the impact that is being made on the lives of many people. I feel privileged to be able to contribute to our outcomes.

**KEN YOUMAN**  
**CHAIRMAN – BOARD OF**  
**ALLAMBI CARE LIMITED**

# CEO REPORT

**Once again, we are nearing the end of another year here at Allambi Care. Again, this year was not shy of its challenges, and we were met with many contests. However, our resilience and adaptability remain strong, and we have many successes to be proud of.**



COVID-19 continued as a priority, as we navigated risk and developed innovative ways to continue service delivery. Our experience last year put us in great stead for managing the most recent outbreak, with systems and practices already set up for us to maintain quality client-focused work. I am proud of our staff and their ability to adjust in these stressful times, putting their needs aside to continue to care for our most vulnerable. Their effort is a direct contributor to our success.

Flexible work conditions have continued and allowed our staff to pursue a balance between work and their family commitments. We were also successful in securing a COVID-19 vaccination clinic for staff, allowing many to get their

vaccinations earlier than that available in the public system. This, alongside expanding our free flu shots to all staff, are just some of our successful workplace health and wellbeing initiatives that we have been able to offer.

Our frontline staff pool has strengthened considerably through staff training opportunities and rostering improvements. Our People, Support and Culture and operational teams have worked tirelessly to support, develop, and retain our quality staff. Much work has gone into building staff cohorts to improve care environments, build relationships with young people, and facilitate meaningful and deliberate connections. We have realised some outstanding results of this work, with the most important being the improved felt safety of those we care for.

Every year we are seeing more staff meet major milestones in length of employment and I am proud to have these people represent Allambi and who we aspire to be. Additionally, we continue to progress our staff collective in Victoria with another year of growth, avoiding agency staff usage.

Our Victoria programs are not only attracting quality staff but are expanding service delivery and therapeutic supports. Through strong leadership, this small program is building every day and the children and young people we support are benefiting from our experience and innovation. We have

been proud to return a sibling group to family during this period, whilst continuing to stabilise several young people in preparation for independence outside of residential care. There is much success to come out of Victoria and we look forward to expanding our impact south of the border.

As mentioned above staff continue to learn and grow through our distinct education programs. Our Diploma of Community Services course, and our Bachelor of Human Services degree continued throughout this year, providing an internal pathway for career development and formal training. Our Diploma program has now seen 82 staff receive their Diploma, with another 55 staff currently enrolled. Our Bachelor program has produced 40 graduates, with another 26 already moving through this program. We continue to seek innovative ways to support staff with their education and I anticipate further development in this area.

Staff were not the only ones being educated, with our Learning Without Walls program also maintaining momentum. An exciting opportunity is currently being pursued in relation to this program, as we seek accreditation to be recognised as a School for Special Purpose. This accreditation will allow funding to be obtained for this essential service, ensuring that our teachers can continue their quality work with our students.

Several internal Committees were established last year, and these have observed continued success. The Cultural Committee have successfully wound up our first Reconciliation Action Plan and are now looking to submit our second Plan to Reconciliation Australia. The Sexual Safety and Wellbeing Committee has worked hard to establish services for staff to seek guidance and

support in areas of risk, ensuring many young people are receiving appropriate supports. The Sexuality and Gender Inclusivity and Diversity Committee are enhancing visibility and providing an avenue of support for the LGBTQ children and young people in our programs.

In addition to these Committees, we have also formed a Research Committee to ensure we are tracking, evidencing, and providing ongoing opportunity for evaluation across our programs and services. We have been able to secure several tertiary research projects through this Committee and the future is exciting in this space.

A long-term project, namely the ITC Review, has met fruition after many months of research, planning and preparation. In the initial stages of implementation, we are seeing positive changes in this crucial area of the organisation. A key team of experienced staff have led this project into a successful venture of change that will allow for several improvements in practice and support for the children and young people supported by this program.

Advocacy throughout the sector has persisted and several crucial areas of operations are under the spotlight. Through a united voice many gains have been made over the last year that will support the continued application of quality service for many organisations. I thank my sector colleagues for their expertise and support through these processes and thank the Department of Communities and Justice for their willingness to consider feedback and seek improved service delivery.

We successfully gained reaccreditation from the Office of the Children's Guardian in early 2021, after many months of hard work across the organisation. The foundations of our work are strong and enhanced by our experienced and committed staff who always put the children, young people, and families at the centre of our practice. I cannot thank our staff enough for providing a solid platform for reaccreditation where minimal improvements were noted.

Of course, the greatest achievement we have fostered throughout the year belongs to the many children, young people, participants, and families we care for. Their ability to overcome adversity and seek stabilisation and a brighter way forward is admirable. So many success stories have been realised this year, providing further motivation for our work.

Throughout this last year, I have taken time to reflect on our growth and success, and the innovative ways that we have been able to adapt and adjust. Through this work, we have sustained quality service delivery and person-specific care. I am blessed to have such a dedicated and unshakable team who steer this organisation in the right direction, no matter the challenge ahead. I am proud to be with you each day on this journey.

I also wanted to thank the families and support networks of our staff; we wouldn't be able to do this without you. You play such an important role in our continued success.

As always, we have received unfailing support from our Board of Directors, who time after time provide their validation and encouragement. With such a strong team we will continue to succeed and bring belonging, hope and positive futures to those who we support.

**SIMON WALSH**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



# COVID-19 SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Again, in 2020/21 Allambi Care dealt with the ongoing impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As an organisation we continued to revise and improve our internal response systems to ensure we kept our staff, children and young people, and the families we care for as safe as possible during this challenging time. With robust systems and process already developed and in place, the transition into the next wave was smooth and successful.

## Health Care Australia (HCA) Vaccination Hub

During August and September, in conjunction with HCA, we were able to successfully run a vaccination hub at the Allambi Care Auditorium that successfully administered approximately 300 doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

## COVID-19 Lead Response Team

As our internal crisis response processes improved throughout the pandemic, it was decided to consolidate the original COVID-19 Emergency Response Committee (ERC) into a smaller Lead Response Team. This group is comprised of key departmental personnel across the organisation who ensured that our

communication and key messaging to staff is uniform, clear, and purposeful. The Lead Response Team meet regularly and will consult on anything from local case numbers, strategies to manage placements with potential positive cases, as well as working with staff who have been deemed close or casual contacts.

## COVID-19 Safe Workplace - COVID-19 Safety Plan

Allambi Care's COVID-19 Safety Plan continues to be revised in line with best practice standards and government requirements. This plan continues to outline our ongoing commitment to keeping everyone safe by addressing the following:

- Hygiene and safety requirements
- Physical distancing
- Service NSW QR Code record keeping for staff, visitors, and contractors
- Staff wellbeing and mental health

## Frontline Staff

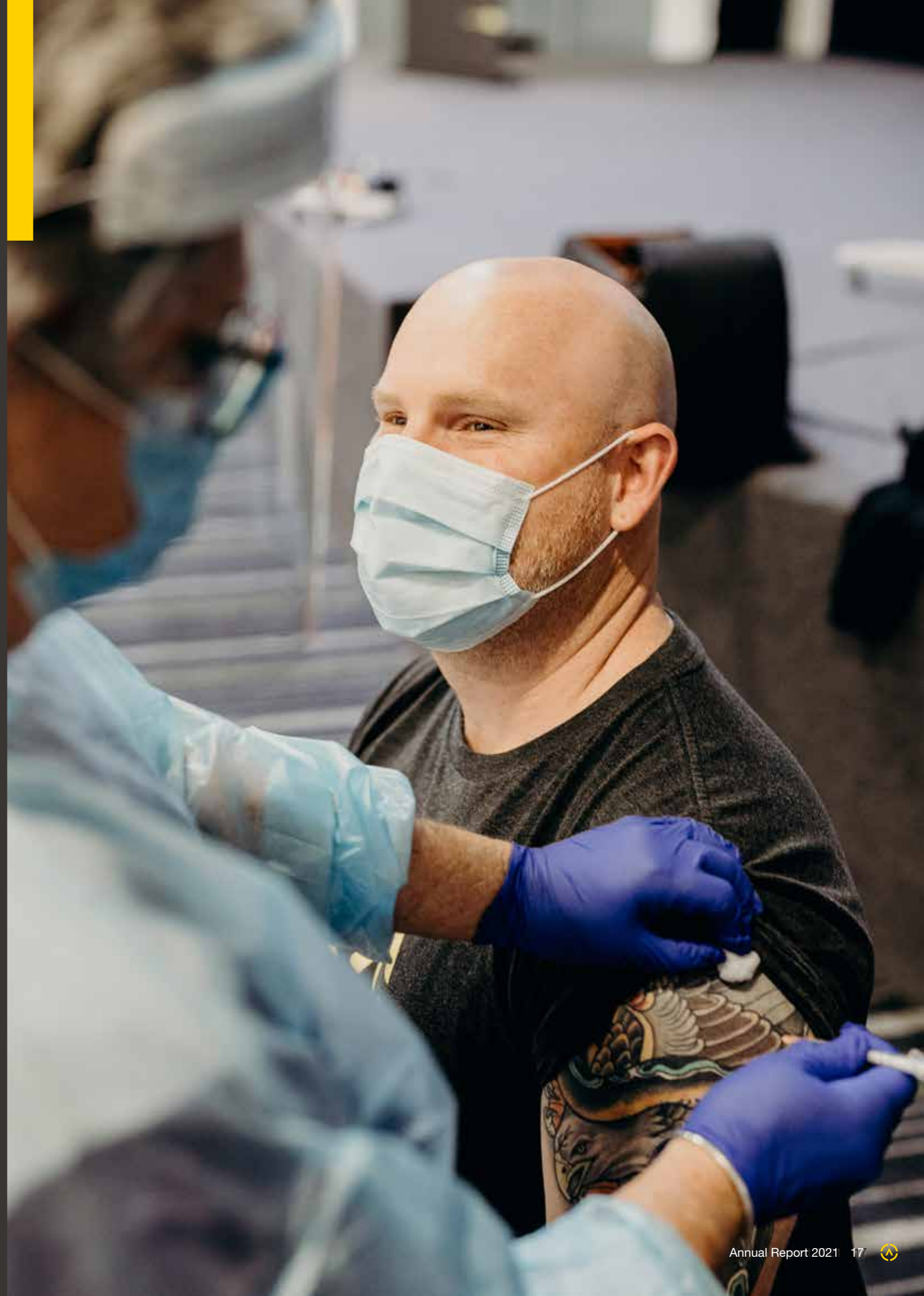
Frontline staff have been able to maintain Covid Safe environments through focused responses in the following areas:

- Increased cleaning frequencies added to daily planner
- Visual COVID-19 hygiene prompts and posters
- Mandatory Infection Control training
- Ongoing vigilance and awareness of their work environment

Emergency Response Kits have been prepared containing necessary items for immediate safety and protection. They are ready for deployment to manage the health and safety of staff, and the people we care for.

## COVID-19 Testing Email

Managed by our People, Support & Culture and Safety Team, this group manages all COVID-19 testing requirements for staff, clients, and family members. With this information we have been able to develop individualised plans and arrange adequate rostering strategies to support staff, clients and families whilst awaiting results.



# PEOPLE, SUPPORT & CULTURE



The last twelve months has been some of the most challenging times People, Support & Culture have faced in our history. In saying that our team has constantly displayed a level determination, resilience and commitment to each other and to the greater Allambi Care family that has made me proud on so many levels.

If for a second, we pretended Covid19 did not exist, our achievements include;

Since July, 2020 our rostering team has expanded from four to nine staff, we have introduced a rosters reception function to our team and automated the jobs our rosters department responds to, which allows us to better understand workload and distribute resources accordingly. At the same time, we have worked closely with operations to implement a cohort model across the

ITC and NDIS spaces and introduced a systematic roster line model across our placements. This brings together, operational teams, the cohort roster coordinator, the cohort's People, Support and Culture Officer and our Support and Crisis Manager together weekly to plan and address the issues relevant to the cohort placements in a proactive way. At the same time, we have had a very focused effort on providing part time employment opportunities for all of our front-line staff and have

issued over 160 part time contracts, most of these converted from casual employment. These factors combined have enabled our staffing resources to be used more effectively for our clients and more efficiently for Allambi Care as an organisation, while providing greater stability and entitlements to our staff.

Our Recruitment team has worked closely with Training and Development to design and implement our most supportive and cohesive recruitment and training program in our history. Staff are now employed before attending induction, provided with a fully paid induction and training process, provided direct mentoring and support from our new starter support team, new starters are also engaged in weekly mandatory online training sessions for their entire 6 month probation period that they are paid for and provided direct support while doing this. This includes reflective practise and Lounge Chair online support sessions. New starters are also provided with three - and six-monthly probation reviews to ensure they are receiving adequate support and to assess if they are suitable for the work we do.

We have also assisted the ITC department with the ITC review role-out which has seen the Residential Officer role being taken out of our care model, the reshaping of front-line support at a casework level, now known as House Managers and the creation of a Casework Support role. Our department worked with Operations to place almost all 25 impacted Residential Officers through this process into suitable alternate employment. In addition to this we have allocated a Senior People, Support & Culture Manager with the role of internal recruitment and support to ensure staff development at a manager level is kept at the forefront of our thinking. In 2021 we have issued 107 contracts internally outside of our front-line youth and disability support workers roles to support the staffing needs across the service.

We have continued the support of our Victorian Operations, employing our first People, Support and Culture staff member in Victoria to supplement the supports we provide from NSW and reduce the need for interstate travel as regularly. This will be the first step in many we make in that area. We are now working with a focus on expanded recruitment into new areas of Victoria following our successful tender process into the Gippsland and Southern Melbourne areas.

Our Client Welfare and Safeguarding Team are continuing the excellent work they do in the area of reportable conduct and child protection and are currently working on developing systems to improve our legal compliance in relation to the sharing of information with authorities or other agencies to ensure consistency across our organisation. They have also developed a pathway to assist clients to be able to lodge complaints more independently to give clients and their families a further sense of safety and to ensure more accountability to us as a service provider.

On the injury management front, we have implemented a new injury management system, SOLV to assist the efficiency of what we do and to provide accountability to the injury management process. It also greatly improves our business intelligence capabilities, which will help with forward and data analysis. The work being done by the team has resulted in a sustained reduction in premium both in terms of a gross figure and as a percentage of wages; to the tune of about a 2 million premium saving. We believe we have achieved this through better injury management processes and improved stakeholder relationships which includes workers, insurers, doctors and our management teams.

Then we have had to manage Covid; Our Covid Management Team which includes People, Support and Culture staff and our Work, Health and Safety and

Compliance Team have been responsible for managing all Covid related workplace issues whether that be managing positive Covid cases impacting staff or clients and liaising with police and health to ensure the proper response, managing all related staffing issues inline with employment law and ensuring we take care of our staff well above and beyond what is provided for. We maintain data bases of all staff and client testing and manage results while working closely with rosters to ensure organisation wide safety and compliance. We have developed and implemented safe work practises across the organisation that are covid compliant, coordinated a COVID19 vaccination clinic at Allambi Care where we were able to provide 330 full vaccinations to staff. We have been engaged at a government level and with ACWA to develop policy and share practises and information with other organisations in the sector.

Covid has had, and continues to have a significant impact on our operational ability as an organisation. We have had seven clients and five staff members return positive Covid tests across NSW and our Victorian operations. The flow on from these and other Close Contact Cases given the nature of the work we do, has meant working daily to manage staff quarantine requirements across the organisation and to ensure our staff and clients receive the support they deserve.

We are in the process of development our policy regarding vaccinations while working with the public health ordered mandatory vaccinations in Victoria and now NSW.





03

# OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

# WHAT WE DO

Due to our commitment to the people we serve, Allambi Care have organically established integrated services to ensure that we meet the varying needs of our community.

## DIRECT SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES



## INDIRECT SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES



FUNCTIONS OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES, HOWEVER ARE IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR SUCCESS. THESE SERVICES ALSO HAVE A DIRECT LINK TO THE COMMUNITY AND SECTOR

# OVERVIEW



## LOCATION OF SERVICE

Individuals and families supported by Allambi Care are located in Victoria, as well as New South Wales in various LGAs including Upper Hunter, Hunter, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens and the Central Coast.

## NSW



## VIC





# EDUCATION & TRAINING

# 04

# LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



**Allambi Care’s ‘Our Mission’ proudly announces that we “Empower people to reach their full potential through services that are flexible and characterised by innovation and best practice”.**

**The Allambi Care Learning and Development Department (L&D) have demonstrated these core values throughout 2021 ensuring innovative and flexible practice principles can be applied to training and processes despite our current climate and everchanging restrictions.**

**To steal a line from theatre - “The show must go on” and the L&D team have upskilled and provided best practice supports to staff in roles providing care to our valued individuals and families.**

**2021 has also seen Allambi Care identified as State Finalists in two categories of the 2021 NSW Industry Training Awards, the Large Employer of the Year Award, and the Industry Collaboration Award for our work with the Bradford Institute of Advanced Education.**

## Internal Trainings

Allambi Care continues to provide high quality comprehensive trainings to ensure competence and confidence to those staff providing support. 2021 has seen a number of progressions to our on-boarding of staff and processes have been enhanced to provide a 6-month probationary learning journey to complement our 5-day induction.

## Probationary Learning

In addition to Policy & Procedure Training, Needs-Based Restorative Framework Training (NBRF) and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training (TCI), all new staff to Allambi Care will embark on a 6-month probationary learning journey that will compliment, scaffold and focus on applying these core training concepts during the early stages of their employment.

An e-Learning platform login is provided to new staff which is accessible from laptops, tablets and smart phones. This login will provide access to individualised and tailored Allambi

Care training content, videos and questionnaires contained within ‘weekly’ modules. Not only will staff develop knowledge, skills and confidence, they will also document and apply this learning throughout a ‘reflective journal’. This journal is included within probationary meetings and upon successful completion contributes towards a Nationally recognised Diploma of Community Services qualification.

This learning provides meaningful resources for staff at their fingertips to use and apply with the individuals and families we provide care for. This training is mandatory for staff and will enhance our operational practices by providing ongoing access to training, supports and consistency of training for all our direct care staff contributing to quality of care.

## Operations Role-Specific Training

Allambi Care recognises complexities and everchanging dynamics of those in leadership roles. To assist with supporting, upskilling, and empowering those in current and future leadership

roles Allambi Care have introduced unique coaching and mentor roles. Identified staff with a wealth of experience have been transitioned into these roles and will walk alongside those in current and future leadership roles to deliver role-specific training uniquely tailored to the support needs of the individuals in those identified leadership roles.

A CORE training package will introduce the uniformed requirements of these roles including focuses on supporting staff, reflecting on practice, facilitating meaningful conversations and meeting legislative requirements. In addition to this, elective modules will assist in meeting identified needs and objectives across a range of different leadership positions with a focus on empowering individuals in House Manager, Casework Support and Therapeutic Specialist roles.





## Virtual Supports in an ever changing climate

L&D Manager Ben Jones states that COVID restrictions placed upon face-to-face training throughout 2021 has made the team realise that the power of physical connection, interaction and relationships in the Human Services sector are as essential as oxygen, food and water. It is these elements that draw us to this type of work and having restrictions placed on attending the office and having staff/learners not being able to come together has had a huge impact on us all.

The L&D team has learned to adapt in the present climate. Online virtual learning has been embraced by the team and the majority of Support Workers, as it was rolled out across August and September throughout mandatory lockdown periods, enabling us to meet prioritised health recommendations. Whilst growing skillsets have seen us enhance the engagement, interaction, and quality of training the recent roadmap and Allambi's support in returning to face-to-face training has excited us all and ensured the L&D team are motivated and have hit the ground running with the return to in-person modified training. Yet, if lockdowns occur along the way, confidence is held that the team have the online teaching covered.

## Diploma of Community Services

The Allambi Care Diploma of Community Services is work integrated and highly contextualised to the Allambi Care frameworks and learner needs. This year we have been able to enhance this workplace integration even further by reviewing and mapping trained content within the Induction, probationary learning and reflective journals and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI). The result is that a learner's workplace training will now have up to 8 units of competency recognised for the Diploma of Community Services. This significantly reduces the study requirements of learners wishing to obtain these qualifications through recognising their skills, knowledge, and experience they are utilising daily within the organisation.

The Allambi Care Diploma pathway has been facilitated since 2015. Subsequently, several hundred students have participated and graduated with their Diploma which consists of online learning, flexible face to face workshops, training days and support from an allocated trainer. We are excited to see this pathway grow. Two new Diploma specific trainers have joined the team with the sole purpose of increasing resources and opening this pathway up to ALL Allambi Care employees

regardless of circumstance. In 2021 over 300 Allambi Care current staff have been offered opportunities to complete the Diploma. By the end of this year every staff member of the organisation will have been offered the opportunity to have completed the Diploma. As of 2022 the Diploma will be offered to ALL employees at the completion of their 6-month probationary period with the intention to not only ESTABLISH A MEANINGFUL CAREER but more so facilitate improved outcomes and safety for the children, young people, and families we support.

Another amazing outcome our team have been able to achieve is uniquely supporting 5 Therapeutic Home-Based Foster Carers to obtain a Diploma of Community Services qualification. They undertake essential and meaningful work, day in and day out for those children living in their full-time care. Our Trainers have worked diligently in tailoring course work to recognise and capture the unique skillsets Carers apply in their day to day caring of children.

## TACT - Training and Consultancy

Whilst many facets of scheduling any large-scale event can be difficult, navigating a national course throughout multiple Australian States and City's amidst a pandemic could be considered as madness. To utilise an analogy, many of our trainings this year were similar to a game of frogger with last minute state enforced cancellations sending us right back to the starting line! At one point TACT instructor Ben Jones was required to leave Perth mid-course and return to Newcastle via QLD to avoid imminent State border closures being enforced at midnight.

In true Allambi Care style, adaptations, flexibility, and resilience has seen us continue to deliver quality training at every opportunity possible. This year TACT was able to facilitate 9 face to face Train the Trainer courses throughout Australia with 126 newly certified TCI Trainers. In addition- TACT facilitated 15 TCI Trainer updates virtually to participants in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore to a total of 217 currently certified trainers. This was all facilitated by our 4 committed Australian instructors amidst the absence of US staff being permitted to attend due to boarder closures.

TACT is excited to announce that they are in the process of growth and are in the final stages of appointing a full-time TCI Field Instructor solely dedicated to external training and meeting the growing requests for high quality training throughout Australia. This will enable development in the portfolio of TACT with additional trainings in the development to be offered in 2022.

TACT is also expanding its networks throughout Australia in 2022 by implementing resources to source, support and appoint State-based TCI consultants in NSW, WA and QLD. This will enable us to increase our training offerings in those states by having available and local training professionals with state and sector specific knowledge and context as well as reduced expectations of travel should border closures occur.

TACT will also host a new website and registration process for 2022 as we near the closing stages of a review with our external partners Headjam and Cornell University's Residential Childcare Project. This will enable refined and automated administrative processes as well as a smoother and more engaging interface for our client base.







# BACHELOR OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Allambi Care Bachelor of Human Services has continued its success with 15 students continuing their studies and graduating at the end of 2021, and another 11 will graduate in 2022. In June we were able to celebrate the graduation of our 2020 cohorts and the outstanding achievement of having 44 individuals successfully complete, which is currently 100% graduation rate of students through the program.

Excitingly, Allambi Care has been recognised as a finalist for the Large Employer of the Year in the NSW Training Awards for its education pathway for staff, with the winner announced in October and going on to the National Training Awards later in the year. This is a wonderful recognition of the hard work and dedication of the BHS and Learning and Development Teams and the student's continued success.

One of the many highlights of the degree has been student's final projects as part of their Field Placement and Capstone Project Units. Students have chosen topics and areas of interest outside of their everyday role which has provided them an opportunity to delve deeply into an area of practice and to provide recommendations to the Allambi Care Executive Team. It has increased collaboration across departments and strengthened relationships with supervisors and teams. It has also led to positive organisational and sector outcomes as students have had the opportunity to research and work towards improved outcomes for clients, staff and the sector. Some examples of that work include:

- Effective interventions to reduce the risk of children of parents with a mental illness from developing psychosocial dysfunction.
- The role of supervision in child protection: an opportunity for improved client outcomes.
- Collaboration practices between child protection services and the impact on families they jointly support.
- Improving outcomes for care leavers: maintaining supports until 21 years of age.
- Adapting service delivery from an adult housing crisis model, to a trauma informed therapeutic youth model designed to address the essential developmental needs associated with youth homelessness.
- Methods to improve mental health support for young people transitioning from OOHC, and ways to improve the leaving care process.





# IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The Allambi Learning Centre has been in operation for 15 years this year. The original doors opened in 2007 at the PYCY Windale and were successfully operating there until 2012 when funding ceased and forced the program to adapt into a new flexible model of home education. This program ran for 12 months while the new Learning Centre was under construction at Fraser Parade Charlestown, officially opening in January 2014. We developed the Learning Without Walls education model in 2015 that provided a research-informed and outcomes-driven approach to teaching complex young people.

While our facilities and programs have continually evolved over the years, one steady factor remained the same, and that was our common goal of providing an alternative educational pathway for disengaged young people who did not fit the mould of mainstream education.

Despite numerous efforts to have our education department and model financially recognised, our Learning

Centre and Education Department are still unfunded through the Department of Communities and Justice. It also does not receive government funding from the Department of Education state and federal budgets due to not being accredited or registered through the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Lack of funding and accreditation presents significant challenges regarding the ongoing operational costs and access to quality education. These challenges have led us towards our newest and most exciting venture yet.

In response to the increasing number of young people in out-of-home care who are chronically disengaged, expelled, or suspended from mainstream and alternative school options, Allambi Care will be applying for the Learning Centre to become a registered Special Assistance School. It will specialise in education for vulnerable young people who have experienced disadvantage and/or trauma.

The ultimate goal of the Learning Centre was always reintegration into school or community pathways. The purpose of the Allambi Care school will remain the same. Our school will provide a safe and welcoming space where young people can experience acceptance, healthy connections, and positive relationships regardless of their educational circumstances.

There are considerable benefits that the school will be able to offer once registered and accredited with NESA. These include, but are not limited to:

## Access to quality alternate education

As stated, there are increasing numbers of disengagement and marginalisation of students in out-of-home care having access to alternative educational pathways that cater for their complex needs. The Learning Centre cannot offer creditable awards (such as the

RoSA and HSC). By having a registered school, students who are disengaged or otherwise marginalised through the public system will have access to engage in a flexible alternative and be eligible to obtain a RoSA award.

## Improved Outcomes for Children and Young People in Out of Home Care

Education makes a crucial contribution to the development and wellbeing of all children and young people and is an essential gateway to better life opportunities. For students in care, education can provide a pathway out of disadvantage. The Learning Without Walls Education Model, which has been evaluated and proven to produce quality literacy, numeracy and social and emotional improvements, will be embedded in the core operations at the school.

## Funding

Due to not being registered with NESA, the Learning Centre is currently not eligible to receive funding for its operation. Registered schools through NESA are eligible to receive funds from federal and state budgets allowing us to continue to do the exceptional work we do.

## Staff

Currently, staff are not eligible to continue with their teacher accreditation status whilst employed with Allambi Care. Being registered will allow our team to continue with their accreditation with NESA and be active members of the NSW Teachers Institute, which will lead to greater staff satisfaction.

The application to NESA is a yearlong, multifaceted process that involves significant development of new policy and procedure, governance, curriculum planning, and school operations development. We are currently on track to having our application ready for submission at the March 2022 deadline.

## Moving to online learning at the Allambi Care Learning Centre

The word ‘unprecedented’ has been overused in the past year, however it continues to be appropriate for the period of disruption that we have experienced in the educational world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in schools closing their doors across the globe, creating the most significant disruption of education systems in human history. As a result, education changed dramatically with a shift from traditional classroom learning to a time of fast-paced changes and unforeseen challenges. Teachers were tasked with the seemingly impossible – to adapt and deliver education in a new challenging online learning environment.

The Allambi Education Team were required to move our operations online when the lockdown was enforced this year. Our excellent Teachers and Education Staff were required to shift their focus to online platforms such as Zoom and Seesaw and were set with the monstrous task of engaging our most vulnerable over a computer screen.

For our Learning Centre students in 2020, we had limited engagement online with only 10% attendance. The online world for our students was daunting. The world as they knew it was changing, and engagement at school over a computer screen was even more challenging.

As a team, we learned from the 2020 lockdown and revised, adapted, and improved our delivery for 2021. We learnt that we needed to maintain relationships in new, creative ways and adjust our expectations. Our attendance and engagement rates skyrocketed this year, with our Learning Centre student’s attendance rising to 60%.

In a recently completed survey, students were asked a few questions about their experiences so far this year. When they were asked what their favourite part of learning from home this year was, this is what some of them said:

**“I liked this year because we did our Friday Circle Time day with everyone. My favourite Circle Time activity was playing the emoji guessing game with all the teachers and other kids in the group class.”**

**“My favourite part was that the Learning Centre let us take home the iPads and my teacher let me borrow books each week because the library was shut.”**

**“I liked doing the drawing activities on YouTube with my teacher. We also got to play games called Alpha Bucks and do heaps more games.”**

The Learning Centre will be transitioning back to face-to-face learning in Term 4 2021. It’s safe to say that while our young people enjoyed their time over the screen, many of them were happy to receive the news that the Learning Centre doors were soon opening again.



# FOSTERING AND PERMANENCY



# 05

## Foster Care Recruitment and Training (FCRT)

NSW, as well as most states in the country continue to report an ongoing shortage of foster carers, as the demand for home-based placements is higher than ever. As such, we have continuously advertised to attract new carers to Allambi Care through TV, print and social media. We set a goal of recruiting, assessing and approving 30 new carer households in a 12-month period, and I am happy to say that we are on track this calendar year to achieve this goal. All of the FCRT team have worked hard to achieve this, working around all of the challenges the pandemic has caused.

This year also saw the development of the on-line learning portal for carers. There are currently 7 different trainings available to carers, and this will continue to be developed over the next 12 months. I would like to thank all of the trainers for passing on their wisdom to our foster carers by recording such high quality training, as we have had to rely on this method of delivery to our carers due to face-to-face training being cancelled as a result of COVID restrictions.

## Foster Care

We have seen a slight reduction of children and young people in our traditional foster care program over the last 12 months. Whilst there are many factors that influence this, I will note two significant contributors. Firstly, recruiting enough carers who are suitable to have older (8 to 15 years old) children and young people placed with them continues to be a significant challenge. And secondly, referrals from DCJ for young children (0 to 5 years) to agencies have significantly reduced, resulting in some carers waiting a long time for a child who is suited to their specific family circumstances. We currently have 127 full-time foster care placements, as well as 3 children who live in NSW, however are under the responsibility of the S.A. Government. This is a 6

percent decrease from this time last year. Whilst the numbers of children and young people do fluctuate, in the last 12 months 7 young people 'aged out' of care, and we were delighted to see another 2 young people exit care due to a Guardianship Order for them with their carers.

Under the banner of Foster Care sits our Family Time coordinator and associated staff. I would like to acknowledge the important work they do, as they support the children and young people to experience quality time with their family. There are currently 19 staff who serve in this way, and they are doing a great job. We believe that connection to family, culture and community is vital to our children and young people reaching their full potential, so I would like to say thank you to all those who help to make this a positive experience for all involved.

## Therapeutic Home-Based Care (THBC)

This time last year the THBC program consisted of 7 placements. It is exciting to report an 85% increase in the last 12 months as the number of young people has increased to 13. More importantly, a number of these young people have transitioned from Intensive Therapeutic Residential Care, which is such a pleasing result for them and their carers. It has been so pleasing to see these young people move into a home-based care setting, where they can enjoy one set of caregivers and a much more 'typical' living arrangement. We hope to offer more young people this opportunity over the coming year, as it truly is life-changing for both young people and their carers.

It would be remiss of me to not thank the many staff who I have the privilege of working with in the Fostering and Permanency Department. Each person has a significant role to play, from an initial conversation with a prospective carer, to submitting a young person's After Care Plan when they exit care,

there's a common theme among them all. They are child-focused, empathetic and passionate about doing the important work we do. I have heard so many examples of staff not only going above and beyond to help children and young people, but this has extended to the children's families, the foster carers and each other. This year has been challenging for so many reasons, however the team work and care shown to each other has been nothing short of amazing. It is due to this supportive culture that I am confident of overcoming any challenges the future may bring, and I look forward to the year ahead because of the amazing people I work with.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the foster carers who in my opinion, not only have the toughest job, but by far the most important one. They are the ones who are there day-in, day-out for the children and young people and their commitment and sacrifice is inspiring. We are so fortunate to have such wonderful foster carers, who continue to be such strong advocates for those who sometimes struggle to have a voice. For our carers, covid has had a significant impact again this year, however once again, they have risen to the challenge and continued to show flexibility, adaptability and empathy to ensure the children and young person's needs are being met. Thank you to every single carer for the positive difference you are making to children and young people's lives on a daily basis. I think you are all remarkable!

**TIM REED**  
**DIRECTOR – FOSTERING**  
**AND PERMANENCY**

# CLINICAL CARE



Rees finished his internship program and is now a Registered Psychologist. Excitingly, we welcomed Meagan Robinson to our internship program at the beginning of the year. Meagan is currently our Provisional Psychologist based out of our Victorian Office.

Within the behaviour support area, there has been much diversity and expansion. Our Behaviour Support Practitioners have continued to provide specialised direct services across environments. Practitioners have built on proficiency in meeting NDIS behaviour support requirements and applied for specialist registration with the NDIS. Navigating the NDIS space at times can be challenging, but our Practitioners have received ongoing positive feedback from external independent specialists at Restricted Practice (RP) Panels. Of note is our comprehensiveness of Behaviour Support Plans and RP fade out plans. We welcomed two new Practitioners, Nathan Trimble and Lucy Knight to our team each of whom has gained provisional registration with the NDIS. Several ABA trainings have been provided this year, of note one to the Foster Care Department with over 40 carers and staff in attendance; each time our Practitioners have received positive feedback on their expertise and knowledge.

There have been several positive developments around increasing access to Speech Pathology services. The inclusion of a Speech and Language screening assessment pilot as part of the Needs Based Assessment (NBA), provides an opportunity for earlier identification of young people with speech or language difficulties when they transition into care. The recent purchase of a digital version of a key Speech Pathology Language Assessment has allowed assessment to continue online during lockdown. This, coupled with the positive response of clients to online therapy, has made teletherapy a welcome addition to the therapy tool kit and provides an increase in options for young people to access Speech Pathology services during and beyond the Pandemic. Recent Training in Lego Group therapy has opened up a fun and motivating research-based option for developing social communication competencies.

2021 has been a year of growth and evolving practices. As with most areas of service provision across the agency, maintaining quality standards in relation to clinical support services has been an evolving challenge over the past 12 months. The children, families and young adults we support have demonstrated incredible resilience when faced with increasing restrictions, and it has been important to maintain clinical services which are easily accessible and adapted to the needs of the individual. The use of telehealth and online meeting platforms has allowed direct therapy or skills training services to continue uninterrupted where possible. Whilst adhering to safety measures, psychological assessments for prioritised cases have been delivered, despite these services being unavailable to many people in the general community.

There has been significant clinician growth this year within the Psychology Internship Program. Our Internship Program now runs predominantly internally, with three Psychologist's being Board Registered Supervisors. Rees Carman, Ashley Asara and Becky Burgess passed the National Psychology Exam. Each clinician put in substantial study time over a few months to achieve this fantastic result. Earlier this year,

This year we celebrated Autism through a series of short videos, shared within Allambi and the community. Each video showcased some of our Participants on the spectrum, their talents, achievements, passions, and skills they have learnt with the support of inspiring individuals and teams; this provided a platform for autistic people to share and challenge our perception and what is possible. The project aimed to share the many positives of autism and the valuable contributions autistic people make to our community and highlighted some of our amazing staff and their connections with the individuals they support.

The past year saw the TBRI-trauma-based workshops go ahead mainly on Zoom. This allowed carers from Melbourne, Central Coast and across the Hunter region the ability to participate. TBRI continues to be very successful in helping carers help the children in their care. Theraplay, Filial and trauma focused modalities continued with great success.

The East Lakes Adolescent and Family counselling service entered the first of a 5-year renewal of contract and restructure as a Targeted Early Intervention Program. This has involved adopting new systems, revised program logic and targets for activity including information/advice/referral, counselling provision, and skills groups for youth and parents/carers. Tuning in to Teens, Engaging Adolescents, LoveBites, Boys and Masculinity skills groups continued to be provided via telehealth.

We look forward to 2022 bringing bigger and brighter opportunities for our clinicians and clients. We are excited to announce the Clinical Department will be servicing the community from the beginning of early next year.



10



# OUTREACH

# SOCIAL WORK OVERVIEW



## Individual Clients (July 2020 – current)

### Youth Hope

Hunter – 14 clients  
Central Coast – 10 clients

### Better Options

7 clients

### HYAP

2 clients

### Medicare

1 client  
2 (to commence individual Circle of Security shortly)

### Residential Care

1 client

### Secure Connections

1 client

### Total: 36 clients

Social Work students have worked with 6 siblings of clients whilst being on placement at Allambi

## Groups

### Men's Program

Facilitated 2 rounds  
Currently under evaluation

### Restoration Support Group

Currently online – 2 regular participants

### Parenting Support Group

Currently online -10-12 regular participants

### Circle of Security

Currently running first round at Secure Connections  
3 clients to complete program individually under Medicare by Dec 2021

## Student Placements (July 2020-July 2021)

### UON Third Year Social Work Students

2 Student placements hosted

### UON Final Year Social Work Students

3 Student placements hosted

### UON Group Program Development

Overseeing 1 group program

### ACU Bachelor of Human Services

2 Student placements supervised

### Total: 7 individual student placements supervised

1 Group Program supervised

## Training facilitated

### Strength Based Approach (3 rounds)

All Outreach managers and teams trained over 3 rounds

### Group Supervision

Allambi Care Senior Managers

### Narrative Therapy an Introduction

Social Worker team and students

## Programs Developed

### Men's Program

Mindfulness Group for Secure Connections  
Mother Craft Skills training Program for Secure Connections  
Supported Playgroup Sessions for Babies and Toddlers  
Fathers and partners Program for Secure Connections

## Professional Registrations

### Manager - Client and Family Specialist

Fully registered as Accredited Mental Health SW and seeing Medicare clients.  
Currently exploring VOC registration.





### Other Highlights

#### Breathe

- Ongoing monthly wellbeing sessions for staff in person and online
- Monthly sessions for teachers and students accessing Learning Without Walls

#### Practice Reflections

- Social Workers have ongoing involvement in the training and facilitation of more complex practice reflections

#### Lecturing at Uni

- In April 2021 the Manager - Client and Family Specialist, was invited to facilitate a community lecture on Child Protection from a Strength Based Perspective to Social Work students at the UON on their campuses on the Central Coast and in Newcastle. We received positive feedback from UON following the lectures.

#### Groupwork Program Development with UON

Third year Social Work students are currently developing a 6-8 session group program for Allambi on Women who use Violence and Struggle with Emotional Regulation. This project is being overseen by the Manager - Client and Family Specialist.

#### Secure Connections

- Research and development of program proposal
- Develop Program flyer
- Furnishing and setting up of the house
- Launching proposal to DCJ
- Meetings to set up partnerships and service networks
- Program Development
- Documentation and procedures
- Referrals and admission
- Program management
- Program reporting

### Parenting Support Group

Being a parent is one of the most challenging but also potentially one of the most rewarding experiences in the world.

Although it is great to learn new skills through attending parenting programs, it is just as important to stay connected, remain motivated and become confident in the continuous application of the skills we have learned. There is no better form of support than having someone, who understands and knows what you are going through, in your corner to cheer you on. Someone who can celebrate your parenting successes with you and coach and cheer you on when things become difficult.

The Allambi Care Parenting Support Group creates a space where parents can come together, share their experiences, and learn from each other in a safe and supportive space. The group is facilitated by Karina Walker, one of our Social Workers, who skilfully guides and supports parents in making the most of the time they spend together.

The Parenting Support Group meets weekly on a Tuesday. Although the focus of the group is on connecting parents and providing support; the sessions are themed around topic discussions, such as self-care, self-worth, connecting with myself and my child, parenting through a positive lens and enjoying being a parent.

Karina creatively engages parents in personalised activities related to the group theme for each week. She has done an amazing job at establishing this group and keeping parents connected. Despite the most recent COVID outbreak, forcing this group to go online, Karina has managed to keep the momentum of the group going, having 10-12 parents joining her for group on Zoom each week. Karina informed that the parents who attend “keep coming back and saying that they enjoy the program and find it to be beneficial. Some of them are now asking to bring their friends along to the group”.

Here is what our parents have to say about this group:

**“The program gave me ideas on things I could implement with my family home”.**

**“The group helped me consider my values and focus on what is important”.**

**“I will definitely recommend this group to others, Karina is an excellent facilitator”.**

**“I have learned different ways to connect with my children”.**

**“I have learned how focussing on self-care and positive self-talk can be beneficial for my mental health”.**

**“I have learned to set realistic goals for myself and my family”.**

**“The group members gave me support and encouragement to continue doing what I am doing. They let me know I am not alone!”.**

### Individual Client success story

C you have been introduced to Social Work Support on 21 October 2020 due to concerns about your mental health shortly after being admitted to hospital following a suicide attempt. C you reported having daily suicidal ideations. You presented as being severely depressed.

You were observed to not care for your own needs, your immediate environment, nor the needs of her 11-year-old daughter. You reported going for days without showering, preparing food or attending to her daughter’s needs. C, it soon became apparent to me that you feared leaving your home as you refused to engage with mental health services or any other supports in the community. Your environment presented to be cluttered and unhygienic, with weeks of dishes and laundry observed to be piled up throughout the home. It took you a long time to trust me, build rapport, engage with me, and agree for me to visit you regularly. I used a strength-based approach and motivational interviewing techniques to assist you to work towards change. You agreed for me to support you in working towards improving the state of your home and decluttering the house. You also agreed to see your GP and to have your medication reviewed. Your mental health slowly started improving.

We set small achievable goals together and I celebrated each small success with you. When challenges occurred, we worked in a solution focused manner to identify and plan strategies to address these challenges. I started noticing you paying more attention to your personal hygiene and taking showers before my visits. I also noticed how you started taking more responsibility for your environment, slowly getting involved in cleaning and decluttering your home and taking responsibility for the dishes and laundry. These changes happened in small steps, in what seemed to be a long period of time. At times you lost motivation and went back to old habits. During these times I were there right alongside you to cheer you on and motivate you to keep going.

By May 2021, I started noticing you wearing lipstick and polishing your nails. Your hair also presented as being washed when I visited. You told me that you have been investing time in caring for yourself. At this stage we worked towards your sense self-worth and positive self-esteem. We celebrated every small reported and observed change together. You told me that you have taken up an old hobby again and showed me the Lego piece you have completed. In July 2021 you informed me that you wanted to apply to volunteer at the local Vinnies Shop. I encouraged you and you started volunteering one day a week shortly thereafter. You told me that you enjoyed volunteering at the shop and that it gave you a sense of purpose in life. You were offered another day which you accepted. C, my involvement with you and your family ended in August 2021, as it became clear to me that you have found confidence within yourself to challenge your social anxiety and participate in your community. I provided you with a letter of encouragement, reflecting on your achievements as well as information on the supports available to you within your local community on our last visit. In your feedback about our service involvement with your family you mentioned how much you valued and appreciated my support and that you will miss my visits to your home.

C you know you still have a long way to go but am so happy to see how far you have come in addressing your trauma related mental health issues and facing up to your social anxiety. Lockdowns and COVID-19 have been adding additional challenges, but I trust that the skills you have learned and the changes you have made will be a beacon of light for your pathway into the future.

# YOUTH HOPE



Some de-identified program feedback

**“The most valuable part of the program for me was, the constant encouragement that I AM ENOUGH and capable of doing anything, really helped me reframe my mindset”**

**“The most helpful part of the Youth Hope program for me was having one on one meetings with my Caseworker, and having someone to reach out to at times of crisis. The referrals that were made to other services to assist us, and the presenting programs were also really great”.**



## Case Study that demonstrates adaptation during COVID restrictions.

### Background

Aboriginal family, all children have previously experienced OOHC placements as young children.

The parent was the victim of domestic violence from the children’s father, whom she is no longer in a relationship with. Following the children returning to the parent’s care they were linked in with Brighter Futures due to ongoing child protection concerns. During this time there was limited engagement or progress towards goals to increase child safety. Upon referral to YH V was reluctant to engage in another service provision.

### Reasons for referral

Habitability of the home, the home was in squalor conditions and vermin issue.

Educational neglect, all children had low school attendance ranging from 20%-50% attendance. One child had not attended school in 7 months prior to referral.

Disability of children. One child has a learning disability, concerns for another child’s development including speech, hearing and potential learning delay. The parent refused to have testing and assessments done.

### Engagement and outcomes

Upon engagement the family were open and allocated with DCJ and a joint initial was conducted upon DCJ closing support provision. Following the initial house visit the parent had limited engagement with YH CW, she would cancel HV or not be present for scheduled visits. YH CW took a relational approach to build rapport. HV were conducted on the front veranda, usual assessment processes were not undertaken as this created anxiety for the parent. CW spent time building trust, and engaging in practical items that the parent had identified needing support with. This was particularly hard due to COVID restrictions, where some of the usual methods to connect and establish engagement were not always possible.

To overcome the immediate challenges of COVID, funding was secured to provide the family with laptops. From here virtual appointments, meetings and assessments were able to carry on despite restrictions. Cultural Support Officer was brought in to create cultural safety for the family and supported the family in ascertaining medical appointments and assessments through Awabakal.

Following this HYAP funding was obtained to support the family in improving the state of the home including skip bins, multiple pest sprays and new appliances as their washing machine was broken. The parent was supported in her wellness which improved her mental health and wellbeing, which had seen a particular decline due to COVID. The parent was able to increase the state of the home, 1 room at a time with support from CW.

SW worked with the young person on healthy relationships, sexual health, engaged her in the LIT program and

well I am program to increase her self esteem and sense of self worth. FSW supported the young person to return to school in a full time capacity with increased supports. Virtual school meetings and online learning were supported through COVID to ensure there was no lapse in this.

Upon exit, the family were soundly linked in with Awabakal for their general health and mental health needs. The young persons were being actively assessed to support both the school placements and NDIS. Despite the multifaceted complexities faced by this family, paired with COVID challenges, the Youth Hope team were able to adapt and ensure our support period was as effective as possible.





# HOMELESSNESS



During the last financial year, Allambi Care's Lake Macquarie Homeless Support team have supported 494 young people and accommodated 51 young people between the refuge and transitional properties. With the ability to offer long term housing solutions with the Rent Choice Youth product the homelessness teams have successfully housed over 120 young people into their own independent living arrangements and have worked vigorously to build relations with property developers seeing the value in creating accommodation options for young people.

Below is a case study of the ongoing relationship between the SHS teams to assist with the continuation of care between both teams.

(Real name as the young person has given permission to share)

Robert first came to Allambi Care in June 2019 after a referral was made by his education support service, Path2Change, for additional accommodation support following a breakdown in the relationship between him and his father. There was significant verbal abuse and conflict within the home which caused Robert's mental health to severely decline.

We were able to support Robert to move into our transitional property in Toronto where he was able to further develop his independent living skills such as cooking and cleaning, which he was really eager to learn, as well as support to navigate Centrelink to ensure he was on the right payments. As Robert was already attending ALESCO, we identified him as being a desirable candidate for the Rent Choice Youth program.

After being accepted into the Rent Choice Youth program, Robert soon moved into independent living which is where he has been living for the past 18 months. Robert's new accommodation allowed him to better engage with his education and transfer to Cooks Hill ALESCO campus where he graduated Year 12 at the end of 2020. Since then, Robert has enrolled in TAFE and is currently completing a Cert IV in Community Services. Robert has always had an interest in wanting to help others and being part of his community as seen by his involvement with the Newcastle Poverty Action Alliance last year and Hunter Homeless Connect days as well as his work experience with St Vincent De Paul's society.

Robert's mental health and relationship with his father has improved significantly since he has been living independently and he has so far achieved all his goals. Robert is an amazing young person who is thriving on the Rent Choice Youth program.

The Homeless Team have seen an influx of young homeless couples/families that require assistance and are often turned down supports due to presenting as a couple. Below is a case study of a family the team is assisting.

A young couple referred to the SHS Outreach team on the 24th of November 2020. Both presented with drug and alcohol issues, child protection issues in relation to their children and homelessness. SHS have provided support and advocacy for the couple to obtain secure housing to allow the couple to engage in mental health supports, drug and alcohol supports, domestic and family violence

supports, cultural supports, education and to commence their journey of restoration for their children. Fast forward 10 months the couples restoration is progressing positively, they are working with services to prevent future addiction issues and child protection worries. Both young people have remained consistent with their goals to provide a secure environment for their children to return to and be the best parents they can be. The couple remain within our transitional housing options and are working closely with the team to secure a longer term family home.

The Homeless Youth assistance program aged for 12 to 15 year old's on the Central Coast has assisted 50 young people and their families experiencing factors that are placing young people at risk of homelessness, 28 of these young people were accommodated within the refuge and 16 of these were successfully restored to family preventing ongoing homelessness. The developing relationships with service providers on the Central Coast has seen an increase in continuous care options to assist families long term after finishing the HYAP program.



# FAMILY SEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT



The Family Search and Engagement (FSE) team are currently working on the restoration of 5 children who are currently being cared for by the Allambi Care team. In this reporting period, the FSE team along with case managing departments supported 9 children to legally live home with their birth parents or other family members. The FSE team are also currently working on behalf of 4 other children currently in care, to explore the possibility of restoration over the next 12 - 24 months, a typical length of time to restore a child back to their parents successfully.

The Family Search and Engagement team also work in collaboration with case managing department's to find the family of children in care, and most importantly connect the children to their family members. It is often found

that the families of children in care are eager to be a part of the child's life, and Allambi Care are committed to ensuring children they care for are not only supported by the Allambi Care team but also their birth family. The Family Search and Engagement team have completed family finding work on behalf of 48 children in their care. This is a six weeks intensive piece of work, where the team have found up to 80 other family members, unknown to both Allambi Care, DCJ and often the child we are caring for. The hard part of the work, is connecting the children to their families however extremely rewarding, and the lifelong outcomes for children who are connected to family, is vastly better than those children who are not.

## Family Finding

(YP) had been in OOHC since 2005, aged 6 months old and transition to Allambi Foster Care in 2008. YP transitioned to an ITC placement in 2015, and has maintain a wonderful connection with his Fosters Carers.

YP had some family time with his mother up until she passed in 2016, and a few visits with one sister until YP no longer wanted to attend.

Through family finding, 7 additional siblings have been identified and YP has been reconnected with his Father and Step Mother. Four of the siblings reside only 15 minutes from YP, whom 3 siblings have never met YP and hope to develop a relationship with him. YP's Father had not seen him since he was 6 months old, his Father currently lives in SA with his partner and their twin 6 year old daughters. YP also has 6 step siblings and hopefully connect to his paternal aunts, uncles and cousins that his father has a close relationship with.

YP's Father and Step Mother put together family videos with photos and songs of themselves and YP's twin siblings. ITC supported YP by updating him of the family finding process and showing him his new family tree and the family videos. ITC had a strong relationship with YP, and for a long time YP has expressed he did not want to be connected to family but after the videos were shown to YP the first thing he wanted to do was call his Dad. YP and his Father now have regular phone contact, and he has loved getting to know his father and his Dad is so happy to be reconnected with his son. The plan is for YP to get to SA to meet his Father, Step Mother and young siblings in person. Along with his two older siblings (26 and 24) who also reside in SA and his extended paternal family.

YP's half-brother (24) and sister (26) also wrote YP a letter and photos and introducing themselves, as YP was unaware/had never met them. YP's older sister (23) also wrote a letter with photos to YP, hoping to reconnect and introducing YP to his new niece.

YP's family were so grateful for the family finding process and were so thankful for the opportunity for the family to be reconnected, and a sense of belonging with lifelong family connections developed for the YP.



# 08

## ITC & NDIS

Program numbers

	NDIS	ITC	SIL/TSIL	ICM	Out of guidelines	Total
Current	63	68	29	6	3	168
Overall	66	94	41	24	3	228

Throughout the year the ITC and NDIS programs have celebrated successes and overcome many challenges. Navigating working from home, and restrictions regarding face to face get together has been particularly tough on the team. Despite these issues we have continued to see positive progress within these programs.

The NDIS program currently services 63 participants. Over the past year we have put a lot of thought around the support provided to our NDIS participants, our innovative and creative team are looking to conduct a full review into the entire program to ensure we're providing the best quality care possible to all participants.

We're currently servicing 29 young adults within our TSIL and SIL program. Throughout the year we have seen 10 young adults successfully graduate from our TSIL and SIL program. I'd like to congratulate these young adults for their perseverance and commitment, we wish you all the luck into the future. We have seen growth in our TSIL and SIL program recently, to promote further growth within this space we're currently putting together a team of frontline staff who're specifically trained to work across the TSIL and SIL space.

The ITC department have coordinated several step downs to alternative models for the young people cared for in ITC, including 9 step downs to TSIL, 4 to Therapeutic Home Based Care (THBC), and 3 to Kinship Care. As always, the ITC team have put their all into supporting our young people through these transitions and deserve great recognition as a result of their amazing and hard work.

Allambi Care currently support 67 young people within our ITC program. In our ever changing industry, innovation has traditionally been one of Allambi Care's strong points. In keeping with this theme we have adapted the ITC program to ensure the ongoing development of staff and growth within the program. A complete and complex review of the entire program has occurred, with Allambi Care's Needs Based Framework and the guidelines provided by the Permanency Support Program at the centre of the planning. From this review we have implemented a new staff structure which aligns with Allambi Care's key values, exiting new training packages and a coaching position for each role within the program, ensuring growth for employees and longevity of staff.

The values underpinning the reviews conducted in the ITC and NDIS department and subsequent changes can essentially be melted down to one question "How can we get back to grass roots care work, to best support and work alongside the young people and participants we care for?"

We continue to work alongside DCJ and other service providers within the industry to ensure the ongoing success of Allambi Care's three Interim Care Model (ICM) houses. Within these houses Allambi Care continue to provide short term therapeutic care to young people, with wraparound services that pave the way to a positive transition to Restoration, Kinship Care or Foster Care. More recently, due to the support requirements of the young people residing in one of the ICM houses Allambi and DCJ have worked together to organise an Out of Guidelines funding arrangement to ensure the care needs of these children, in addition to the ongoing work towards a long term permanency goal can be achieved.

As always, the staff within the ITC and NDIS programs have gone above and beyond in their passion, persistence and their commitment to others. I'd like to personally thank all staff for their enthusiasm and acknowledge their dedication in working with all young people and participants within our program.



# RESIDENTIAL SERVICES VICTORIA

# 009

#### **VIC Team**

1x Manager  
1x Intern Psychologist  
1x Case Manager  
1x SIL Caseworker  
1x People Support and Culture Officer  
Residential Case Workers

#### **VIC Clients**

22 Clients currently cared for  
Tender allows services for 8 additional clients  
2 restorations of kids to families  
(1 individual 3 siblings)  
1 foster carer signed off (no children placed yet)  
44 Young people supported in placements over the past 12 months (30 September 2020 - 30 September 2021)

2021 has been a year of growth for the Victoria Team in terms of placements, team members, knowledge and experience.

The Victoria team was proud to be successful in the tender application process, with three placements in the Gippsland region and one in South Melbourne. Allambi Care will support an additional 8 young people through this contract, bringing the total number of clients supported to 30 in total through residential programs. As relative newcomers to Victoria, this is a huge achievement for our organisation.

True to Allambi Care's Needs Based Framework, the team have continued to work with The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide creative and flexible supports to meet clients individual needs through the use of Targeted Care Packages (TCP). Allambi's innovative work with the department has provided opportunities to clients and their families in the ways they are supported.

Planning for the expansion of services continues with Support from NSW Fostering and Permanency Team, Victoria have assessed and signed off one foster care placement with plans to expand this service continuing.

Despite the ongoing challenges of Covid and 6 separate lockdown/curfew orders, the Victorian team is stronger than ever. Working collaboratively as a team, they continue to develop their knowledge of the Victorian out of home care system growing as a team as well as individuals. The team in Victoria continues to grow with the addition of new caseworkers appointed to support the Residential Program and Supported Independent Living (SIL) Program and a People, Support and Culture Officer appointed, based in Victoria. With new appointments in Victoria the team are working more autonomously in areas of training and recruitment while still being supported by the NSW office.

We look forward to continuing to expand our Victoria services and providing innovative pathways and opportunities for the young people and families we work with.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

# 10

## Overview

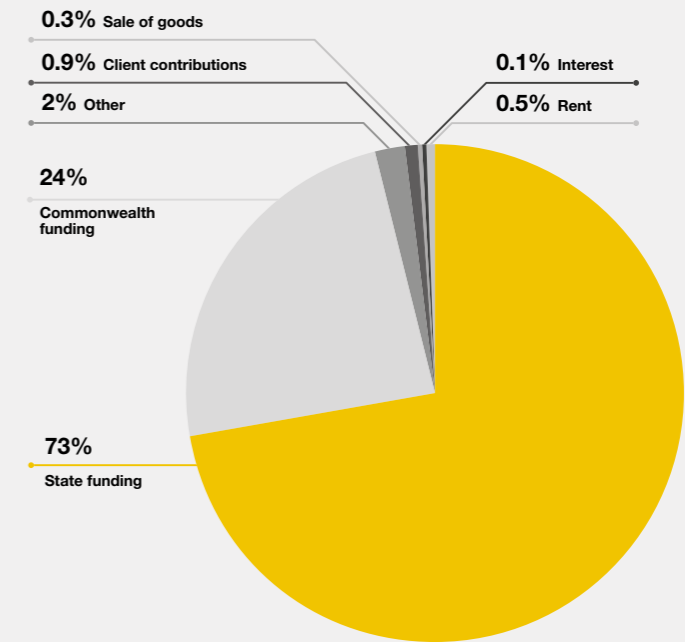
In the 2020/21 financial year Allambi has achieved an operating surplus of \$1.7m.

## Income & Expenditure

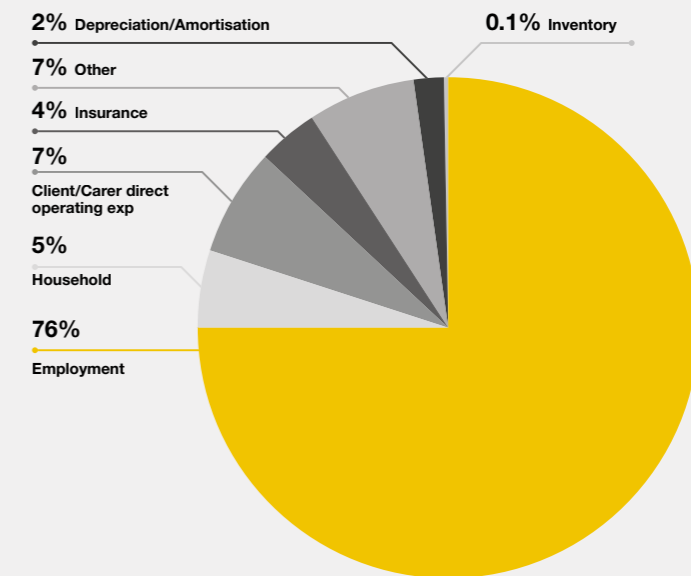
Income has increased from prior financial year by 9.57% or \$7.7m. Expenditure has also increased by 7.3% or \$5.9m during the 2021 financial year. The majority of expenditure relates to employment costs which represent 76% of total expenses.

Outlined below is the breakup of income and expenditure for the 2021 financial year:

### INCOME



### EXPENDITURE

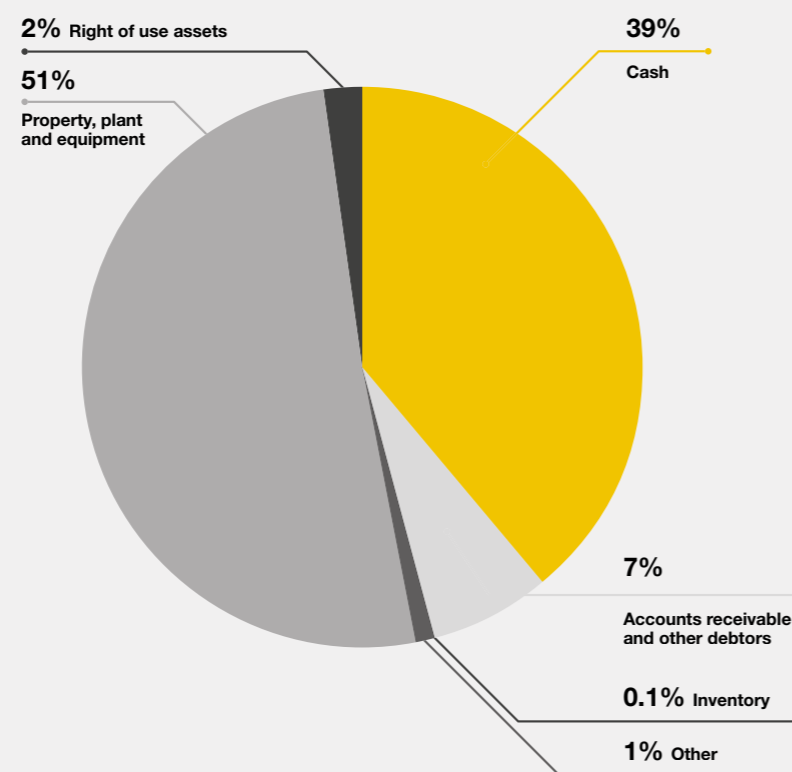


## Balance Sheet

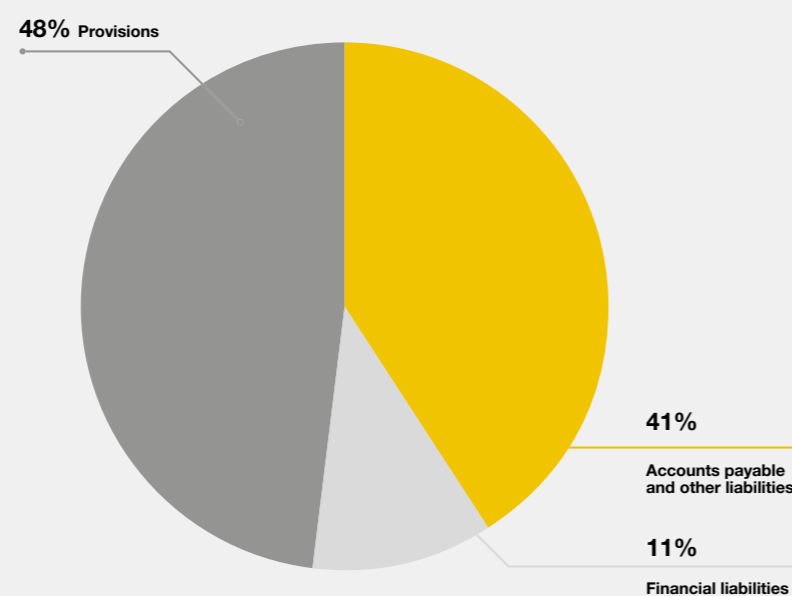
Total assets have decreased by \$0.7m or 1.2% compared to 2020. Capital expenditure during the financial year has equated to \$0.6m. Total liabilities has decreased \$2.4m or 15.2% compared to 2020. Net assets have increased 4.03% to \$44.8m.

Outlined below is the breakup of assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2021:

### ASSETS



### LIABILITIES



## FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	2021 \$ 000's	2020 \$ 000's	2019 \$ 000's	2018 \$ 000's	2017 \$ 000's
<b>INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE</b>					
Income	87,929	80,249	73,682	73,898	71,319
Expenditure	86,196	80,330	69,753	70,293	67,595
<b>Operating Surplus</b>	<b>1,733</b>	<b>(81)</b>	<b>3,929</b>	<b>3,605</b>	<b>3,724</b>
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>					
Total Assets	58,232	58,916	53,672	45,445	39,645
Total Liabilities	13,477	15,894	10,569	9,066	6,871
<b>Net Equity</b>	<b>44,755</b>	<b>43,022</b>	<b>43,103</b>	<b>36,379</b>	<b>32,774</b>
<b>CASHFLOW</b>					
Cash at 1 July	22,625	18,917	18,281	12,364	12,862
Cashflows from Operating Activities	1,080	7,632	3,202	8,368	6,031
Cashflows from Investing Activities	(439)	(3,497)	(2,566)	(2,451)	(6,529)
Cashflows from Financing Activities	(719)	(427)	-	-	-
<b>Cash at 30 June</b>	<b>22,547</b>	<b>22,625</b>	<b>18,917</b>	<b>18,281</b>	<b>12,364</b>

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT



Allambi Care celebrated its 40-year anniversary this year – we’ve been here for the kids since 1981.

As part of this celebration we released a new brand campaign that featured many of our Allambi staff kids. They were seen on TV, on bus sides and across many unique locations in Charlestown Square.

We’re super proud of the work we do, and how Allambi has grown over the years. This campaign is a celebration of our core reason for being here, for the kids.



# CONNECT WITH US

**Community participation and donations allow Allambi Care to continue our work in supporting those who need it most.**

We pride ourselves on creating positive experiences for the many individuals and families accessing our services or care. Where possible, we appreciate the community's involvement in facilitating social value and inclusion for those we care for.

## **Donate Online**

You can pledge a single or periodic donation to Allambi Care by visiting [allambicare.org.au](http://allambicare.org.au) or contacting us on (02) 4944 5900 to arrange alternative methods of payment.

## **Fundraising Events**

Allambi Care participates in a number of local events throughout the year. You can contact us by visiting [allambicare.org.au](http://allambicare.org.au) if you are interested in volunteering your time, or would like to nominate Allambi Care to be the beneficiary of your next event. We are always appreciative of any efforts that aim to communicate our cause and would be happy to provide support for your event where possible.





