



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

**SENSES
AUSTRALIA**

Your partner
in disability services

OUR VALUES

As an organisation our values of respect, integrity, excellence and innovation guide us every day.



RESPECT

We respect our clients, their family members and other significant people in their lives, and we respect our employees and recognise the role each of them has to play.



EXCELLENCE

We are committed to excellence and strive to continuously improve. We are passionate about being 'the best we can be'.



INNOVATION

We look for creative ways of assisting clients to meet their goals and are open to ideas and constantly seek new and better ways of working.



INTEGRITY

We are honest with others and with ourselves, always do what we say we will do, and accept responsibility for our actions.

CONTENTS

Board President and CEO Report	1
Therapy Services	5
Deafblind Services	11
Community Living Services	15
Family Support Services	19
Regional Services	21
Community Partnerships and Supporters	27
Our People	31
Our Structure and Our Board	33
Financials	35



BOARD PRESIDENT AND CEO REPORT

This financial year, Senses Australia continued its proud history of delivering excellent disability services that enrich the lives of our clients and their families. We have been trusted by West Australians since 1896 and have adapted and innovated to successfully meet the challenges of transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Outgoing Chief Executive Officer Debbie Karasinski oversaw, expanded and transformed service provision during her distinguished 16 year tenure. In January, Senses Australia welcomed new Chief Executive Officer Lisa Brennan, whose extensive experience includes major government projects, health service delivery and reform. Lisa's focus has been on positioning Senses Australia as a provider of choice within a new environment that saw WA join the NDIS. The transition involves navigating different funding models, as well as new compliance, engagement and delivery considerations. Lisa's enthusiastic leadership has seen Senses Australia approach this landscape with an emphasis on leveraging from sound fundamentals with an innovative outlook.

In 2017-18, Senses Australia embarked upon a process of review, corporate restructure and strategic planning to ensure financial sustainability and the ability to embrace new opportunities. Throughout this time our staff engaged with this process while maintaining their exceptional work with clients. The Board provided stable, strong governance oversight in order to support success. Where opportunities for growth arise, we now have an organisation that is agile and can respond swiftly, while continuing to deliver high quality community supports that have a genuine impact on people's lives.

In 2017-18, Senses Australia had 1246 clients, up from 1032 in 2016-17. Total revenue of \$22.73 million and provided 265,417 hours of direct service to clients in the metropolitan area, Wheatbelt and South West region. It was a solid year of consolidation and bedding down changes that included expenditure on transformation and other non-recurring costs.

One of our answers to the new challenges has been to bring services closer to where our clients live. In 2017-18 we saw, through the opening of our Margaret River and Northam centres, what an impact a local presence can have. We have established a vibrant local presence in both centres and have been embraced by the local community.

There are plans to establish a south-eastern metropolitan service centre, with a permanent location in Armadale, where we sub leased premises in 2017-18. These service centres join our existing regional and metropolitan centres in Busselton, Bunbury, Bassendean and Burswood to form part of an extended network of Senses Australia sites that will ultimately spread to Joondalup, Midland and Rockingham.

The high quality of our services are reflected in the stories of individual clients' achievements. Clients like Dillan, who was struggling living out of the family home and with a little support was able to make positive lifestyle changes that addressed his physical health, independence and community access. In 2017-18, helping clients set and reach goals like these led to lots of incremental victories with big outcomes.

Sometimes the goals were ambitious from the start. Seven year old Tamira defied the odds and progressed beyond what was thought possible after being placed in an Alternative Family Care Arrangement and supported by the Senses Australia team to achieve her goals. These stories show how teamwork and collaboration can reach wonderful ends. This goes beyond individual clients to their families as well. Our SuperSibs workshops, for

"Senses Australia's priority is to support people with disability to live a life as independently as possible and in a way that they choose."

Colin Emmott
President, Senses Australia Board

example, allow siblings of children with disabilities to share their feelings, ideas, concerns and questions.

Our organisation has worked hard to foster a positive, flexible working environment to support our valued staff across all locations and roles. There are many individual stories of extraordinary effort, these include Senior Orientation and Mobility Instructor Paul Garwood, whose innovative contribution included the Be My Guide app. Jane Hunt, Senior Speech Pathologist, who was awarded two Health Workforce Scholarships and the 2017 Senses Australia Service Excellence Award for out-standing service and contribution, and Manager, Business Quality and Excellence Claire Parry, whose skilled work in quality and compliance gave us such a sound base from which to carry out frontline work. Support Worker Sally Sims helped two deafblind clients achieve profound personal goals and volunteered her musical talents to help make our Walk Around Burswood such a success. These examples contribute to a culture of excellence at Senses Australia. Passion has been exhibited at every level in the day to day work carried out by staff throughout the organisation.

The Board supported the strategy to decentralise our services. A property working group was formed to facilitate the strategy going forward. Board members have individually and collectively been very giving of their time and support. They have passionately undertaken their governance role and provided consistent strength through their guidance. Their tireless efforts are greatly valued and appreciated by Senses Australia. The Board has expressed full confidence in the strength and ability of the executive team to lead our organisation during this period of change. This would not be possible without the commitment of our staff members who continue to exemplify the values of Senses Australia in a client centred approach.

As this Annual Report shows, the orientation of Senses Australia to client satisfaction is a priority of the first order. This can be seen not just in numbers but in the success stories that are being told here. These stories highlight how management and staff at Senses Australia have continued to go above and beyond to form partnerships with clients that are authentic and lead to effective outcomes.

As we move into an exciting new era, we remain confident in our ability to embrace change while staying true to our values of respect, excellence, integrity and innovation.

Finally, we would like to thank all our funders, donors and volunteers who all contribute to enabling us to deliver the excellent services we provide to some of our communities most vulnerable members.



Colin Emmott
President,
Senses Australia Board



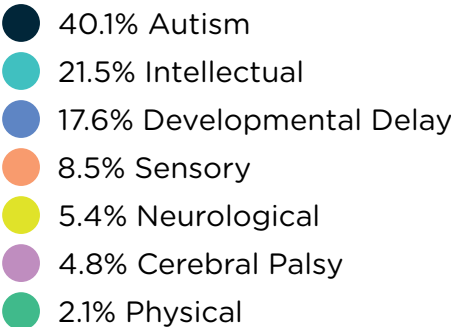
Lisa Brennan
Chief Executive Officer



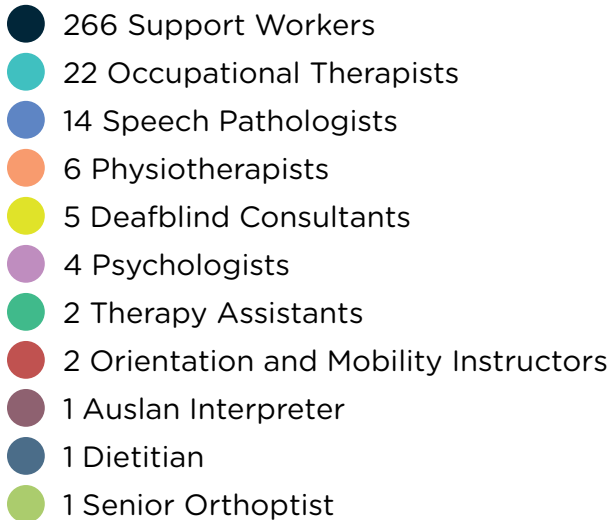
OUR SERVICE



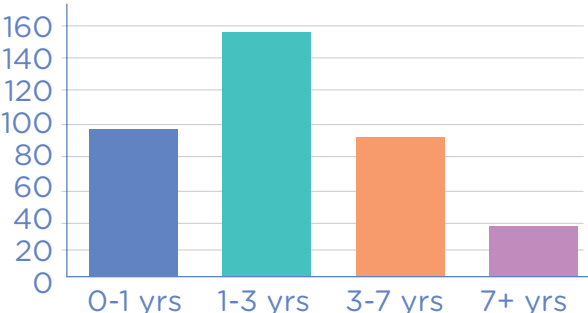
OUR CLIENTS



OUR PEOPLE



EMPLOYEE YEARS OF TENURE



WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

We believe that everybody, without exception, has the ability to shine.

We begin by sitting down with individuals and their family to discuss their needs. Then together, we develop a detailed plan to help achieve goals, aspirations and dreams. It's this human touch, evident from the get go, which sets Senses Australia apart.

Senses Australia is not diagnosis or disability specific. Instead, we focus on individual needs. We have both a long track record and a widespread reputation for delivering exceptional quality disability care services. How do we know? Simple... Our clients, from right across Western Australia, tell us so.

NDIS

Senses Australia is passionate about enabling people of all ages to live the life they choose. Our disability services are personalised to each client while supporting their families and carers. In December 2017, it was announced that WA would join the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This replaces the WA NDIS. The transition of participants to the NDIS began in April and the full roll out is scheduled to be completed by 2020.

Senses Australia, a registered NDIS provider, has responded to these changes in a client-centred manner, running free workshops for people with disability, their families and carers that explain the NDIS and how it will operate for individuals. We are ensuring staff are supported and that our policies, processes, procedures and systems are aligned to the NDIS environment.

Registered NDIS Provider

Supporting
Choice
Enriching
Lives



THERAPY SERVICES

Senses Australia's Therapy Services make a tangible difference to client's wellbeing, relationships, independence and community connection.

In 2017-18, committed staff provided high quality professional disability services to people of all ages.

Through our work, clients enjoyed choice and control in achieving goals in their individual plans. This was achieved in partnership with our passionate team of:

- Speech Pathologists,
- Occupational Therapists,
- Psychologists,
- Physiotherapists,
- Social Workers,
- Dietitians,
- Orientation and Mobility Instructors,
- Orthoptists,
- Deafblind Consultants,
- and Therapy Assistants.

GROUP THERAPY AND INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

In 2017-18, group therapy and individual services included:

- Gymnastics
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Protective Behaviours
- Language Boosters
- Literacy Spot
- Early Movers
- Playgroup
- Starfish Hydrotherapy
- Social Skills Group
- Strong and Steady Group
- Circle of Security
- Sensory Services
- SOS (Sequential Oral Sensory) Program
- Art therapy groups for Adults and Children
- Connect with AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)
- Adult Communication using Technology
- Community Aids and Equipment

WORKING TOGETHER

Collaboration is a vital component of Senses Australia's services. In 2017-18, close relationships were maintained with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), Local Coordinators and NDIS Support Coordinators so that clients' plans could be effectively implemented.

Relationships were established with Facilitatrix and Lighthouse support coordination agencies in the Wheatbelt and metropolitan areas. Therapy Services also worked to assist Local Coordinators in the South Metropolitan area begin the transitioning of clients to NDIS.

The Sector Engagement and Service Development branch of Department of Communities worked with Senses Australia's Positive Behaviour Support team, assisting with the development and integration of Positive Behaviour Support principles throughout Therapy and Community Living Services.

Sighted guide and communication guide training was successfully delivered to staff. This valuable training is also offered to people outside the organisation.

Employees enhanced their professional development with additional training, such as a two day autism spectrum masterclass which equips them with the most up to date knowledge in this area. Senior staff provided work shadowing and mentoring opportunities, particularly in the areas of sensory loss, autism, sequential oral sensory, feeding therapy, complex disability and equipment.

COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITIES

In 2017-18, Senses Australia continued to support undergraduate students by providing clinical placements. Therapy Services hosted five allied health physiotherapy students from Curtin University, who acquired skills, knowledge and experience in assisting people with disabilities.

Matthew Wittorff, Executive Director Operations, lectured at ECU Joondalup with the 4th year Occupational Therapy students in their Disability unit on Deafblindness and Siblings.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Fostering community ties between our clients and their families is a priority for Senses Australia.

Numerous events, camps and get togethers took place throughout the year. Regular social gatherings allowed clients and staff to share knowledge, maintain friendships and offered the opportunity for new social connections to be made.

Two of our much anticipated annual events which bring people together, the Children's Christmas Party and the Walk Around Burswood, were again highly successful in 2017-18.

Our annual Children's Christmas Party saw 60 families gather to share fun and food in the beautiful shady setting of Hyde Park. The water playground, face painting and balloon artistry provided entertainment for clients and their siblings for a magical Christmas celebration. Staff volunteered their time to help make the occasion a memorable one.

For clients aged over 18, the annual Walk Around Burswood saw about 40 clients take this wonderful opportunity to come together and socialise while walking around the river, with support from staff who volunteered their time. A picnic after the walk capped an occasion that brought old friends together and saw new friendships emerge.

“The Annual Walk Around Burswood is a lovely social opportunity for people to catch up when they often otherwise can't.”

Holly Coopes
(Therapy Coordinator)



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HBF RUN FOR A REASON

In May's HBF Run for a Reason, Team Senses Australia took to the streets of Perth with an astonishing 145 people on board – the largest charity fundraising team. This year, we raised funds to support our Therapy Services in memory of Emily Becker, a beautiful eight year old who passed away last year. When Emily was just one month old, she developed meningitis, resulting in an acquired brain injury which left her unable to walk, talk or eat. Emily embraced life in a way that touched those who met her, including the Senses Australia therapists who joined her journey through

life. Services Emily received included speech pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Emily's big brother Ben joined the Senses Australia team and was the biggest individual fundraiser, inspiring all with his extraordinary commitment. Ben, who raised more than \$9000, and fellow team member Keely Anderson, who raised \$1106, each received a prize for their fundraising efforts. Congratulations to Ben and Keely, to all who participated, and a massive thank you to everyone who supported Team Senses Australia.



TAVE

Like most six year olds, Tave loves sport and playdates with friends. His diagnosis of autism meant he needed support to fulfil his dreams and with help from Senses Australia's therapy team, Tave has worked hard to achieve his goals. He has enjoyed junior cricket, the Ninja Kids fitness program and many playdates. He is connected to his community and has significantly reduced levels of anxiety and stress.

"The support we receive from Senses Australia is amazing. They have gone above and beyond in supporting Tave achieve his goals. It has given Tave the opportunity to be a kid and be out there."

Jade, Tave's Mum



SUPERSIBS PROGRAM

At Senses Australia, we pride ourselves on going that step further in supporting the families of clients. In 2017-18, our SuperSibs program continued to give the siblings of children with a disability a safe, relaxed space in which to learn skills and make connections that help them feel they are not alone in their experiences.

Sibling relationships are the longest and most enduring relationships throughout a person's life, they make up a child's first social network. The reaction of a child to their sibling with a disability affects the development of both children, which has an impact on the whole family. Half of all siblings report having a brother or sister with a disability is a negative experience, so it is essential to provide skills and knowledge to help change this. For example, our workshops teach siblings how to cope with the negative reactions of others to their brother or sister's behaviour or appearance. They also give siblings time to address concerns while being the centre of attention, in a positive, fun environment. Participants get the opportunity to connect with other children and form friendships which extends their support systems beyond the program.

Where there is a parent discussion group at the same time, the program provides parents with an opportunity to learn about common sibling worries and how to deal with them.

"Many didn't know other kids are in the same situation as them. They had fun, played games, got to understand their sibling's disability, shared their stories, concerns and made new friends."

Matthew Wittorff,
Executive Director Operations

Workshops this year included SuperSibs for first timers and SuperSibs Take Two, where children who had previously attended could reconnect with friends and continue learning. The family of one attendee said their daughter **"absolutely loved it. She told me that she had made a friend her age and they could share feelings and experiences"**.

Supersibs is a non funded program. Senses Australia run this vital program via money generously donated through our fundraising efforts.

DEAFBLIND SERVICES

Our Deafblind Services assist people of all ages who are deafblind or have a sensory impairment. Services are offered through the combined efforts of our Deafblind Consultants, Occupational Therapists and Orientation and Mobility Instructors and are available across the Perth metropolitan and regional WA.

A State Government grant of \$120,000 was obtained to assist Western Australians with deafblindness, as well as those with a single sensory impairment, to understand and engage with the NDIS. Senses Australia ran six workshops with sign language interpreters and 15 individual sessions to support people with deafblindness or single sensory impairments better understand the scheme.

In 2017-18, Senses Australia received an Australian Government grant of \$475,000 to establish and implement a National Deafblind Information Hub. This interactive online resource is now under development and will build on the existing Deafblind Information website previously created by Senses Australia: www.deafblindinformation.org.au

The aim of the Deafblind Information Hub is to provide information:

- to service providers and community organisations on how to effectively interact with a person who is deafblind;
- on how to provide accessible information and environments to Australians who are deafblind
- that is specifically tailored to people who are deafblind and their support networks about the NDIS.

The hub will set up a Deafblind Consultancy service to assist individuals and their families navigate the NDIS. It will also develop a National Peer Mentoring Program for people who are deafblind.



Photographer: David Baylis

ENDING THE ISOLATION PROJECT



Ongoing research continued to develop a valid and reliable screening tool to identify older Australians with combined vision and hearing loss. This was undertaken in collaboration with Curtin University and the Australian Government Department of Health. This tool is currently undergoing validation assessment. In addition, a number of resources have been developed as part of this project including an information booklet and a training video for staff in aged care settings.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Senses Australia Deafblind Consultants Karen Wickham and Dr Meredith Prain, along with clients Linda Fistonich and Vanessa Vljakovic, presented at the Deafblind International European Conference on Deafblindness in Denmark in September. Karen, whose subject was her research on the experiences of children with deafblind parents, also helped facilitate a preconference session on Usher syndrome. Vanessa also presented at the World Federation of the Deafblind conference in Spain, supported by Senses Australia Deafblind Consultant Melissa Evans.



SUPPORT FOR WEST AUSTRALIANS WITH DEAFBLINDNESS

A major milestone was met this year, with assistance from Senses Australia, the Deafblind West Australians support group became an incorporated body. Established by Senses Australia in 2007 as the West Australian Usher Syndrome Support Group and supported by us since then, the group has grown considerably and we were incredibly proud to see the group's hard work in achieving autonomy. The group is overseen by a dedicated board comprising of nine people with deafblindness.



INNOVATION

With \$195,888 of grant funding, Senses Australia began developing the Be My Guide app. The app was developed to assist people with vision impairment orient themselves and travel independently, though support accessed via their mobile device. Market research was conducted before the development phase. This identified that those who might use this technology require a fail safe system, that if they activate it, would always receive a response. As a result, a pool of volunteers was recruited to ensure all calls are answered. The Be My Guide app shows inspired thinking in action at Senses Australia. When used, the app will activate the camera, microphone, GPS and compass of the user's smartphone to assist their helper effectively direct them to their destination. The app is now being trialled prior to its launch.

BE MY
GUIDE



CLIENT JOURNEY

SAGE

Students at one South West school are sharing the journey of a client who began with very little speech and has blossomed with the help of Senses Australia therapists. Sage has global development delay and the key word signing that she was introduced to was taken up by her education assistant and teacher. Both attended Senses Australia key word sign workshops and used these skills in the classroom with Sage's kindy friends. A special focus was on sign combinations that allowed friends to interact with Sage and ask her to play. As a result Sage's inclusion with her peers at playtime has skyrocketed. A flow on effect saw parents ask Sage's mother to teach them signing at their regular coffee get togethers.

COMMUNITY LIVING SERVICES

In 2017-18, our Community Living Services had an exciting year full of change, learning and development.

Our services in this area encourage independence and offer quality support to all clients. Services include:

- Group homes
- Community access
- Independent living skills
- School holiday programs
- Camps
- Assisting with therapy goals
- Respite
- Support Coordination

Through these services we support people with a range of accommodation choices, from 24 hour, seven days a week shared living arrangements to shared living with drop in supports. Our Support Workers attend the homes at different times of the day and night to provide support, while encouraging independence.

Team members provide assistance with:

- personal care
- daily household chores
- engaging socially
- attending appointments
- planning holidays
- and maintaining close relationships with family and friends.

Our dedicated team worked alongside clients and families in developing individual plans, insuring each client made the most of their NDIS funding. This resulted in 100% retention of clients transitioning to NDIS. Many clients requested that the Supervisors become their Support Coordinators, which led us to establish Support Coordination as a standalone service.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2017-18

- 42 Red Cross community access clients transferred their services to Senses Australia after we were chosen as provider of choice from a number of disability organisations.
- Team members learned new skills in running holiday camps, a service which is now available to all our clients.
- Positive Behaviour Strategies were implemented into our group homes. This saw positive changes in client living environments.
- Support Coordination was introduced as an additional service.
- A Team Leader role was established in the South West and worked to embed standardised Community Living Services practices.
- Our Support Worker acknowledgement program was introduced. Recognising the commitment of team members in achieving positive goals and outcomes, while embedding a work ethic of social inclusion, assisting clients to live the best lives they can.

OPENING OF NEW GROUP HOME

We recently opened a new group home in the Perth city area. This has given our clients the opportunity to live in a modern home in the community rather than relying on public housing and its associated waitlists. The home is bright and cheerful, with stylish furnishings donated by IKEA. It is close to the city and convenient transport links. Currently it is home to two Senses Australia clients who live active lives in the community and with their families, while enjoying the benefits of living close to the city.

A positive change to the model for group homes

CLIENT JOURNEY

DILLAN

Dillan was vulnerable and struggling when he started with Senses Australia. The 24 year old man with an intellectual disability and cerebral palsy had grown isolated after moving out of the family home. With the support of his therapy team, Dillan's quest for a more fulfilling and enjoyable life began. Through this collaborative partnership, Dillan started part time volunteer work, began TAFE study and created a social group. He was funded for a bicycle, which he uses to visit family and attend social events.

Dillan joined a local gym and is improving his physical health. With Senses Australia's help, Dillan harnessed newfound determination and ambition to make profound changes, showing the powerful outcomes that can be achieved when support is tailored to the unique needs of an individual.



CAMPS

This years camps were full of fun activities that built on teamwork, social skills, positive behaviours, new experiences and best of all new friends.

Camps are designed to build friendships, new skills and strengthen bonds within a team environment, which in turn increases independence, confidence and self image.

Our first camp was held in Narrogin in November. Additional camps were held throughout the year at:

- Woodman Point Recreation Camp, Coogee
- Kerem Adventure Camp, Bullsbrook
- and Landsdale Farm School, Darch

Camps will continue to be held as a positive activity, available to children and young people of all ages.



“For Jesse, camp means fun, freedom, independence and a chance to socialise whilst experiencing new things (and 24/7 attention)! For me it is a chance to make time to take a break with my other children”

Sharyn, Jesse's Mum

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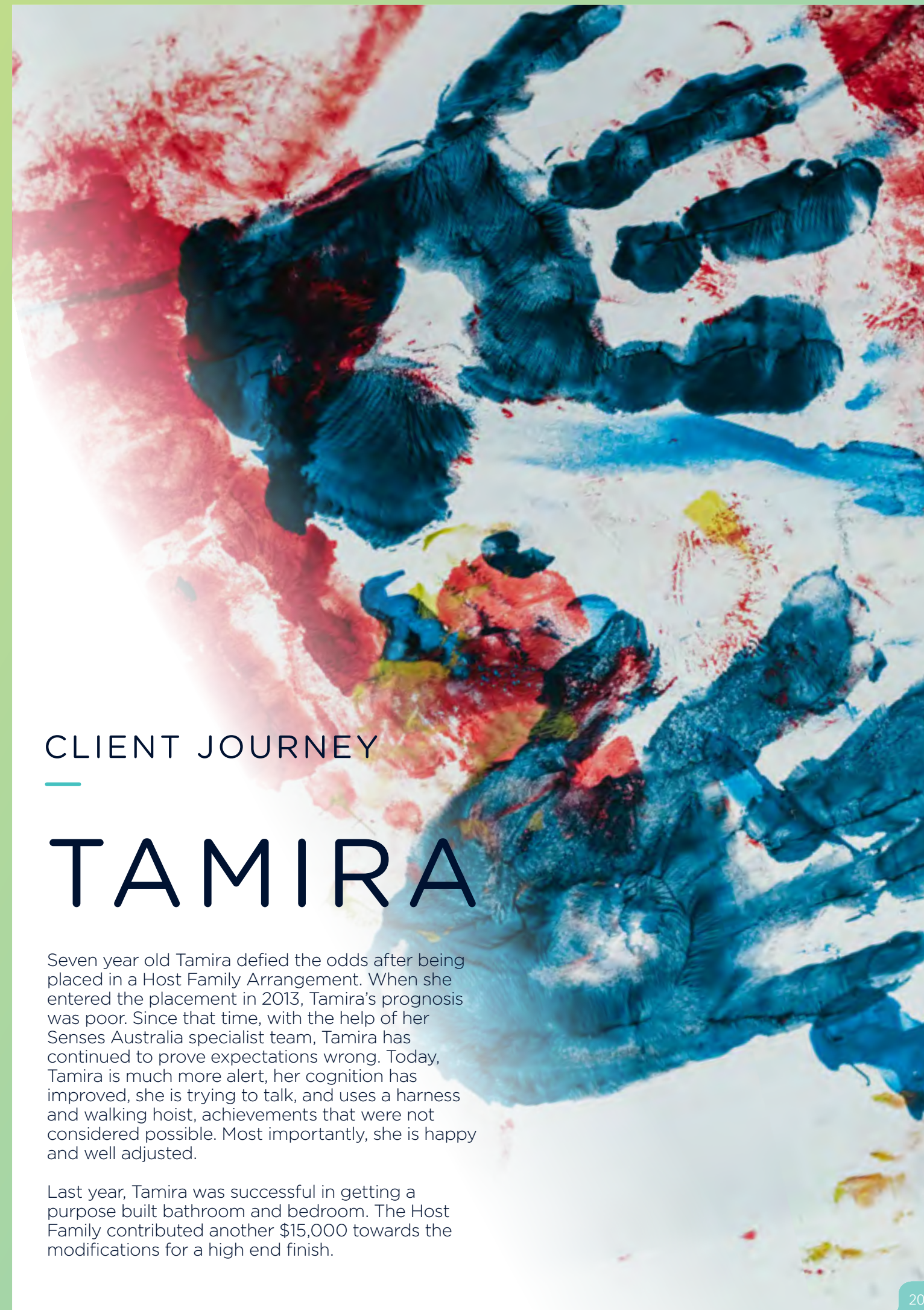
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Senses Australia's Family Support Services include Host Family Carers, who play a very special role in the lives of individuals with disability. This service ensures clients are given a safe, stable and nurturing environment for those who are unable to live with their families for various reasons, or when the families need regular respite. Host families are supported to provide a suitable and welcoming home environment for adults and children with disabilities.

Since its inception in 2012, Family Support Services has grown and in 2017-18, offered innovative accommodation options for individuals with complex needs while working in partnerships with the Department of Communities. A rigorous assessment process and matching system resulted in satisfied clients. Open communication, accessibility and transparency were key to our success.

There were 19 Alternative Family Carers, who all received regular contact to comply with the Agreement for the Provision of Host Family Care. Our Coordinators complete monthly wellbeing reports for all Department of Communities clients, and monitor and assist Host Family Carers achieve client goals. The Host Family Carers are regularly evaluated in accordance with agreements.

The development of a training package with Karen Hull, a specialist in the field of trauma and attachment, was implemented into the Family Support Program. Alternative Family Carers completed an accredited one-day training course. Feedback included positive comments on the quality of the content, and its relevance to day-to-day practice at home with the individuals they support. All Family Support Coordinators attend training regularly to maintain current knowledge and skills required to support Host Family Carers.



CLIENT JOURNEY

TAMIRA

Seven year old Tamira defied the odds after being placed in a Host Family Arrangement. When she entered the placement in 2013, Tamira's prognosis was poor. Since that time, with the help of her Senses Australia specialist team, Tamira has continued to prove expectations wrong. Today, Tamira is much more alert, her cognition has improved, she is trying to talk, and uses a harness and walking hoist, achievements that were not considered possible. Most importantly, she is happy and well adjusted.

Last year, Tamira was successful in getting a purpose built bathroom and bedroom. The Host Family contributed another \$15,000 towards the modifications for a high end finish.

REGIONAL SERVICES

It has been a year of milestones and success stories for our regional areas with the establishment of two new vibrant regional service centres in Northam and Margaret River. This has enabled the expansion of our Therapy and Community Living Services throughout the South West and Wheatbelt regions.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY SERVICES

A comprehensive transdisciplinary Regional Services team serviced the South West and Wheatbelt regions including the Busselton, Margaret River, Bunbury and Northam hubs. This team comprised of:

- Speech Pathologists,
- Occupational Therapists,
- Physiotherapists,
- Support Workers,
- a Psychologist,
- a Social Worker,
- a Sensory Specialist Services Consultant,
- an Auslan Interpreter,
- and a Therapy Assistant.

EXTENSION OF SERVICES

The extension of services to include a Psychologist and Social Worker in 2018 meant that clients benefited from a more holistic approach to services, with a range of social and psychological interventions being offered. The services now include counselling, psychoeducation, cognitive behavioural therapy, parenting support, sibling support, housing support and advocacy, SuperSibs workshops and an adolescence social skills group. Therapy staff interacted closely with support staff and supervisors to create a wraparound service for clients in this region.

AMELIA HOUSE RESPITE

Amelia House respite service in York offers a wonderful place where clients can stay and unwind to increase their confidence and skills. Staying at the house with other people gives opportunities to engage and interact socially in a safe and supported environment.

At certain times the house is exclusively available to children and other times it is exclusive to adults. Ensuring clients are making connections and having interactions with people their own age.

SOUTH WEST EXPANSION

At the end of 2017 Senses Australia Lower South West expanded to incorporate the Upper South West and form a South West Region. The Busselton hub operated with a purpose fit out to incorporate a hot desk open plan design with a therapy gym and appointment room.

Our hub in central Bunbury utilised an open plan office space and therapy room.

In August, the Margaret River office was officially opened by the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Disability Services, with a sensory motor gym room for physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy for both children and adults.

Senior Physiotherapist Robyn Stewart said:

"Success could be seen in the confidence and skills developed by clients like young Bobbi, whose love of imaginary play was interwoven into the gym space during physio time. Moving physiotherapy services from home to the gym helped Bobbie adjust to feeling safe in a space outside of her home."

"Similar success was enjoyed by eight year old Margaret River Primary student Skye. She has used the gym to gain new mastery of skills through regular physiotherapy sessions after school."

The gym gave clients an engaging, high quality avenue for development outside the home.



NORTHAM OPENING

Senses Australia became the first comprehensive disability service provider in the Wheatbelt Region when our centre in Northam was officially opened in February by the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Disability Services. The centre has two treatment rooms, office space, an area that will be fitted out as a therapy gym and independent living skills kitchen space. A sub leasing arrangement has been negotiated with Carer's WA which will result in interagency benefits.

REGIONAL GROUPS, EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

KEY WORD SIGN WORKSHOPS

Senior Speech Pathologist Jane Hunt conducted Key Word Sign workshops throughout the South West. A remarkable amount of signs were taught and participants left feeling confident in their ability to sign and understand key words. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

PREPARING FOR THE NDIS WORKSHOPS

Occupational therapist Katy Anderson ran 'Preparing for the NDIS' workshops in the Upper South West region, with much interest received from these communities. Locals reported that Senses Australia was the first disability provider to engage in their towns and this is expected to have a big impact on client acquisition in these areas. Katy has been also running these sessions as requested in the Lower South West.

AUSLAN COFFEE GROUP

The Auslan Coffee Group allowed people in Busselton to get together, socialise and build local friendships. These groups are run in the Busselton office every two weeks over four terms, and are an important opportunity for clients who are isolated to use Auslan beyond ordinarily limited occasions.

TEDDY BEARS PICNIC

Rainbow foam and lots of messy fun was provided by the Senses Australia stall at the annual Teddy Bears Picnic during the Festival of Busselton. The promotional material and information we featured saw a number of families request follow up contact.

AWARDS

Some outstanding work from Senses Australia staff in the South West region was recognised in 2017-18. Senior Speech Pathologist Jane Hunt was awarded two Health Workforce Scholarships and received the 2017 Senses Australia Service Excellence Award. The Lower South West therapy team received a Certificate of Commendation in the 2017 Rotary Allied Health Awards for outstanding contribution to allied health regionally. Senses Australia in the South West also received a Certificate of Appreciation from Geographe Educational Support Centre for donating the Friendship Student Award at their 2017 Day of Celebrations.

CLIENT ACQUISITION

The ability to offer both therapy and support services as a wraparound approach as well as the presence of a full, experienced transdisciplinary team operating from local hubs attracted new clients. Specialist services such as Sensory Services and Auslan interpretation that we offered with locally based staff was a positive point of difference.



CLIENT JOURNEY

JESTER

While five year old Jester had difficulties with the motor components of speech, he had always had a lot to say. Jester's Senses Australia Speech Pathologist said his understanding of language was a huge strength and in January Jester was provided with a high tech communication device (a "Liberator Rugged" with "Words for Life" software) that enabled him to communicate in a way that he was previously not able to do. The progress Jester made when using his device has already been remarkable. He is starting to use it for a much wider range of purposes - not just to request items, but for sharing thoughts, asking questions and making comments. His mother, Katie, said Jester loved his device, and had achieved many successes with its help.

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“Now I know what he is trying to tell me. Jester loves using his device to request to play with his favourite toys (trains, cars, and Lego). He is also using his device to interact with his school friends, to ask for a 'high 5' or a 'turn' in a game.”

Katie, Jester's Mum



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QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE

Our robust quality assurance activities saw the organisation meet all six of the National Standards for Disability Services, as determined by the Department of Communities Disability Services.

Senses Australia manages its quality activities to ensure compliance with the WA Quality System, while at the same time prepare for the changes to quality and safeguarding arrangements under the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework, effective July 2020. The internal audit program continued to provide certainty about the quality of services delivered and compliance to both internal and external requirements.

During 2017-18 improvements were made to policies, processes and procedures to better meet quality standards, manage risk and meet compliance obligations.

Compliance management was an area of focus, with Senses Australia's compliance management software being increasingly used to capture and manage compliance obligations, and continuous quality improvement activities. A comprehensive analysis of legislative requirements related to the NDIS was conducted to ensure that our policies, processes, procedures and systems adequately aligned to this operating environment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

In 2017-18, Senses Australia met the changing service delivery landscape with developments in ICT to help support an increasingly mobile workforce. We rolled out self service ICT solutions which enabled staff to securely access information anywhere they have internet access via computers or mobile devices. This included applications to aid in recruitment, on boarding and learning management. Benefits include savings in recruitment time, elimination of paper, and centralisation of sensitive files.

In the final quarter of 2017-18 Senses Australia implemented the latest suite of Microsoft Office integrated applications and services. This investment saved costs in replacing aging servers and gave us a shared, secure communication platform which connects our people while they are out in the community.

Research is underway to source a more efficient, NDIS ready, customer management system for roll out prior to 2020.

CLIENT JOURNEY

JOHN

Senses Australia therapists have supported high school teacher John since his discharge home from the Quadriplegic Centre. John has experienced tetraplegia since a recent car accident. He engaged in intensive hand therapy with our Senior Occupational Therapist, with the end goal of feeding himself. John wanted to be able to go to a restaurant with his family, sit and interact with them, eat his meal and require little to no support. At the end of June he was able to feed himself lunch for the first time without support. John is ecstatic about his hand function progress and feels it has made a real difference to his life.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTERS



It takes a special kind of person to make a powerful commitment that will make a significant and lasting difference to people with disability.

Over 2017-18 we have had many generous contributions in the form of monetary donations, estate proceeds and gifts. We appreciate all our donors and thank you for making a difference. Your help in supporting us has had a positive impact on the lives of our clients and their families.

FOUNDATIONS, TRUSTS AND BEQUESTS

Senses Australia is very grateful to the following individuals, trusts and foundations for their combined contributions of \$365,000 to the work of Senses Australia:

- Harold Redcliffe
- Marjorie Parsons
- Anne Bluntish
- Alexander Poad
- Doreen Letcher
- Gerty Ewen
- Walter Kommer
- Marcus and Molly Stone

THE GIFTING TREE

The Gifting Tree is a spectacular gold tree, located at Senses Australia's head office in Burswood. It was established in 1993 to recognise contributions to Senses Australia over \$2,500 or a contribution of goods or services valued at \$5,000. A gold leaf is inscribed and placed on the Gifting Tree and the recipient is presented with a Gold Leaf Certificate.

2017-18 INSCRIBED GOLD LEAVES AND CERTIFICATES

The following companies, community organisations and individuals were recognised with inscribed gold leaves and certificates for their contributions during 2017-2018:

- Mr Gene Tilbrook
- Ben Becker
- Mr J Simpson
- Cape Bouvard Investments
- The Stan Perron Charitable Foundation Ltd

2017-18 GOLD LEAF CERTIFICATES

A gold leaf certificate recognises those who have contributed between \$1000 and \$2499 to Senses Australia, or goods or services valued between \$2500 and \$4999. In 2017-18, the following companies, community organisations and individuals received certificates:

- Mr and Mrs A Phelan
- Nando's Willetton
- Nando's Belmont
- Mr Terry Prindiville
- West Coast Street Rod Club Inc
- Mr and Mrs M Elphick
- Mr and Mrs J Glass
- Mrs Beverley Fitzgerald
- Mrs Loma Toohey
- Mrs Betty Caven
- Mr Peter Hackett
- Mrs Carolyn Anderson
- Ms Keely Anderson
- GVM Solutions
- IKEA Perth

Your support
makes a huge
difference to
the lives of
our clients

YOUR SUPPORT

We are very grateful to all our supporters for your contributions.

In 2017-18 a generous bequest of \$50,000 was donated to purchase low vision equipment. Through this kind donation we have been able to partner with a number of low vision suppliers to purchase and hire equipment used to enhance the lives of many of our clients with low vision. Equipment such as:

- alarm clock and bed shaker,
- TV amplifier,
- assistive listening devices such as Roger Pen and Williams Sound PockeTalker Ultra,
- and the OrCam MyEye, an intuitive smart camera that clips onto regular spectacles, which assists people who are vision impaired to read, recognise faces or objects.

These items make a huge difference to the lives of many of our client who live with low vision.



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Senses Australia acknowledges the Government of Western Australia Department of Communities and Australian Government Department of Health.

GRANTS

Senses Australia acknowledges:

- **Ending the Isolation (Australian Government Department of Health)**

This project assists people working in the aged care sector to identify older Australians with combined vision and hearing loss and provide education and evidence-based resources. The goal is to minimise the impact of this isolating disability on a growing population.

- **Deafblind Information Hub (National Disability Insurance Agency)**

A grant was received to establish and implement a National Deafblind Information Hub, which is being developed and will comprise of an online resource for people to learn about the NDIS, a consultancy service and a peer mentoring program.

- **Navigating the NDIS (Government of Western Australia Department of Communities)**

Senses Australia delivers workshops, individual consultation sessions and resources for people who are Deaf, blind or deafblind. These help people understand and navigate the process and outcomes sought with the implementation of the NDIS.

- **Be My Guide App (Government of Western Australia Department of Communities)**

Senses Australia was awarded grant funding to develop an app that supports people with vision impairment to access support via their mobile device to orient themselves and travel independently.

- **E-Therapy to Regional Areas (Australian Government Department of Education)**

A Non-Government Centre Support grant was received for a capital works project, which enabled Senses Australia to install web-based video-conference facilities and the software to support this. The facilities extended the accessibility of our services.

- **Refit of Northam Office Garage (Australian Government Department of Education)**

A Non-Government Centre Support grant allowed Senses Australia to convert part of the Northam office building (previously a garage) into a space that incorporates a sensory gym, kitchenette and training room. This increased our ability to support clients in the region.

CLIENT JOURNEY

LEVI

In 2016, with support from their Senses Australia therapy team, Levi and his mother Anastasia embarked on an epic journey to obtain a modified wheelchair accessible vehicle. This vehicle was identified as an integral part of Levi's ability to live life safely and socially. Anastasia was not going to let any challenges get in the way of her son's needs. She remained undaunted by twists and turns along the way and with the help of her local community and a Facebook fundraising page, ultimately raised a massive \$19,000 towards the cost of the vehicle. The remaining cost was secured via the Senses Australia therapy team from Make a Difference and WA Charity Direct - totalling \$36,200.

Anastasia's goal is being realised and it is one that will make a huge difference to Levi's life in negotiating safe community access, medical appointments and social outings. The Senses Australia team is proud to have played a part in this incredible achievement. Now that sufficient funds have been sourced to cover the cost of the new vehicle, the family is in the final stages of this process, awaiting the outcome of an application to NDIS for the remaining funding to cover the modification costs and achieve their long awaited goal.



OUR PEOPLE

At Senses Australia, we are proud of the passion and commitment shown by members of our team across all roles and locations. Our organisation rests on the unshakeable belief that **“We are all equals”** – with each other and with our clients. Our staff see beyond disability to the person and form genuine, respectful relationships through which individual goals are achieved and ambitions are realised.

JANE

A Senior Speech Pathologist who has worked with children and adults for more than 30 years. In the past year, Jane has been awarded two Health Workforce Scholarship program bursaries from Rural Health West. Jane received a Certificate of Commendation in the 2017 Rotary Allied Health Awards for outstanding contribution to Allied Health regionally.

Jane was awarded the 2017 Senses Australia Service Excellence Award. Jane is completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Special Education: Complex Communication Needs and Literacy.

“Jane empowers people to overcome barriers to communication. She advocates and promotes creation of ‘communication accessible environments’ to support individuals in everyday life.”

Rebecca Hunt, Manager
Regional Services



SALLY

Sally's contribution to Senses Australia has been outstanding, both professionally as a Support Worker and personally as well. Two of her clients are blind and Sally worked alongside Paul Garwood for sensory orientation to help these clients extend their access to the community. Sally took these clients on holidays. One enjoyed the wonders of Margaret River and the other visited family in the Albany region. Her work within one of our group homes was recognised with her appointment as Team Leader.

“Sally volunteered to perform and sing at the Annual Walk Around Burswood. This added pizzazz to the evening and we thank her for the wonderful music and her highly valued contribution.”

Karina King, Manager
Community Living Services



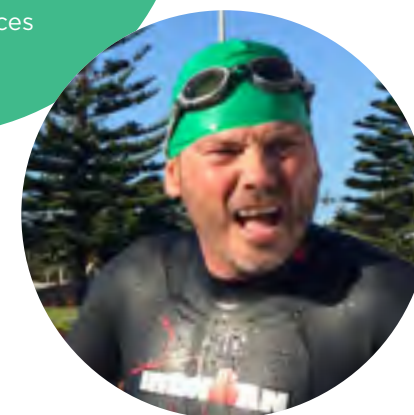
PAUL

Paul is a Senior Orientation and Mobility Instructor whose enthusiasm underpins the professional skills he has brought to Senses Australia since 2015. Paul built the Orientation and Mobility Service from the ground up to an outstanding quality. His expertise in vision impairment, ability to problem solve and respect for clients' strengths, has led to consistent positive feedback from clients and colleagues.

Paul created the “Be My Guide” app, designed to help people with a vision impairment. He brings a philosophy of working with, rather than for the person to empower his clients.

“Paul came into the organisation with significant experience and enthusiasm. Paul has developed an outstanding service, for which clients are now being specifically referred.”

Caroline Paine, Manager
Therapy Services



CLAIRE

Claire's role as Manager, Business Quality and Excellence is vital for giving Senses Australia a firm foundation on which to build service excellence. She is responsible for the Quality Management System, internal audit program and compliance obligation, all of which require a disciplined, highly skilled approach. In 2017-18, Claire completed several major projects, including setting up and managing the NDIS Transition Program and reconfiguring the risk and compliance system to cater for organisational restructure.

“It is thanks to Claire's efforts that Senses Australia continued to be well prepared for the NDIS rollout. Claire's expertise, professionalism and dedication impresses and inspires the whole leadership team.”

Evan Nunn, Executive Director
Corporate Services



OUR STRUCTURE



OUR BOARD

COLIN EMMOTT

Colin Emmott was a Partner of HLB Mann Judd until 30 June 2018, having been in the profession for over 35 years. He now acts as a Board Director and advisor to family businesses. A former Registrar of the Pharmacy Registration Board of WA since its inception in 2010, Colin was also Registrar of both the Chiropractors and the Optometrist Registration Board for over 25 years prior to National registration. Colin is also the Independent Chair of ReddiFund Ltd and Mates in Construction (WA) Ltd. He also sits on the Board of the National Body, Mates in Construction (Aust) Ltd. Colin is also a Director of Nolan UDA Pty Ltd a private company supplying commercial and industrial textiles throughout Australia. A Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand, Colin holds a Bachelor of Business from the WA Institute of Technology (now Curtin University). He is a Registered Tax Agent. Colin joined the Board in April 2014 and has been President since April 2017.



JOHN GROPPOLI

Appointed to the Board in 2005. John was a partner of national law firm Deacons (now known as Norton Rose Fulbright) from 1987 to 2004 where he specialised in franchising, legal compliance and corporate governance. He was Managing Partner of the Perth office of Deacons from 1998 to 2002. John left private practice in 2004 and became Managing Director of Milner's Brand Marketing and Aviva Mann Optical Group until June 2018 when he retired. John is a director of ASX listed entities Automotive Holdings Group Ltd and Stealth Global Holdings Ltd.



RUTH SHEAN

Dr Ruth Shean is a non-executive director on state and national boards, with a special interest in human services and governance. She was previously the Director General of the Western Australian Government's Department of Training and Workforce Development. Her other previous government roles include Commissioner for Public Sector Standards, Director General of the Disability Services Commission (from 1999 – 2006), and Director General of the Department for Community Development. Ruth has also been a non-government CEO (of the Cerebral Palsy Association), and has held leadership positions on both state and federal government reviews and committees. She has also been on governing councils of both Curtin and Murdoch Universities. Ruth joined the Board in June 2011.



BRUCE CAMPBELL-FRASER

Bruce Campbell-Fraser is Head of Media and Government Relations at Water Corporation. Bruce has extensive public policy, media and advocacy experience having worked as a senior government advisor to Premiers and Ministers – both in Western Australia and for the Commonwealth. Most recently, Bruce served as Manager of Media and Public Affairs at the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia. Bruce joined the Board in November 2011.



BETH GORDON

Beth Gordon has worked in the international mining and professional services industries in site, project and corporate roles in China, Indonesia, UK, USA and Australia. She has considerable experience working with multiple stakeholders from diverse cultural and technical backgrounds on commercial, strategic and community issues. As an interim executive and consultant, Beth advises boards and executive management on strategy and risk management, commercial and continuous improvement initiatives. A member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia and New Zealand, Beth joined the Board in February 2014.



DANNY MURPHY

Danny Murphy is Managing Director of LWP Property Group Pty Ltd; LWP specialises in development of medium to large scale residential projects including syndication, project management, marketing and selling of projects under its control. Danny has over thirty five years experience in the urban development industry in Australia including a period of 13 years in a range of senior positions with a national land development company. In 2000 he formed LWP to take over the property operations of Sanwa Property Group Pty Ltd. Danny is a Chartered Accountant, has a Bachelor of Economics (Adelaide University) and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and Member of the Governance Institute. He is a member of the Finance Council of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth and Chairperson of the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation and Huntlee Academy (NSW). Danny was elected to the Senses Australia Board in 2015.



BILL CUTLER

Bill Cutler joined the Senses Australia Board in January 2005 and was President from May 2014 until April 2017. Bill continued as a Director until November 2017. Bill has a working background of 42 years in banking, including offshore postings in Fiji, Hong Kong, Singapore and London. Bill has held the positions of Deputy Chief Manager, London and Head of Banking Operations, Perth.



FINANCIALS

Financial overview of continuing operations for the year ended 30 June 2018.

WHAT WE EARNED

Total Revenue: \$22,730,127

- 79% Grants
- 13% NDIS
- 2% Fee for service
- 2% Fundraising activities and bequests
- 1% Property, facilities and equipment
- 8% Fundraising activities and bequests



WHAT WE SPENT

Total Expenses: \$23,511,743

- 73% Salaries and employee benefit expenses
- 22% Administration expenses
- 3% Property expenses
- 2% Depreciation expense



WHAT WE OWN

Total Assets: \$15,315,033

- 33% Cash and cash equivalents
- 30% Property, plant and equipment
- 30% Financial assets
- 7% Other assets



WHAT WE OWE

Total Liabilities: \$9,081,544

- 9% Trade and other payables
- 42% grants in advance (unearned)
- 24% Bequests (Capital - unearned)
- 6% GST
- 1% Employee entitlements





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Providing disability services in the
Perth metropolitan area, South West
and the Wheatbelt.

ABN: 931 691 951 27



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