

# ANNUAL REPORT 2012

ASPIRE SUPPORT SERVICES LIMITED



Aspire Support Services Ltd trading as Aspire

ABN 26 154 156 215

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Tony Tinlin – President**



**Bruce Gilding– Vice President**



**Cheryl Golley – Secretary**



**Noel Sargent – Treasurer**



**Fe Coleman – Public Officer**



**Jamie Gay – Director**



**Wolfgang Schwarz –Director**



**Andrew Cottrill – Director**



**Sheryl Follett – Director**



**Jim Symon – Director**



**Elizabeth Pogson - Director**



**Kerry May – Director**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**Nigel Stone**

## VISION

To have a community where all people are empowered and supported to exercise freedom of choice, enabling them to achieve their individual goals and live the life they choose.

## MISSION

We will be the premier provider supporting the unique needs, aspirations and choices of individuals with a disability and their families.

## CORE VALUES

- Respect for the individual
- Understanding and responsive to individual needs
- Integrity and trust
- Innovative and flexible
- Quality and professionalism

These values empower and respect individual choice and recognise the importance of families and carers.

## PURPOSE

- Empowering individuals and families to make choices
- Openness to flexibility and change into the future
- To provide highly skilled and professional staff
- To raise awareness and social understanding in the wider community



# PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Tony Tinlin - President

Nigel Stone - Chief Executive Officer

The first six months of Aspire until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 has been a challenging, yet rewarding time for the newly formed Aspire Support Services Ltd. Throughout this period we have facilitated the integration of Woodstock, Kalparrin and on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, Cooinda. The Board of Directors have taken the time to develop the organisation's Vision, Mission, Core Values and Purpose whilst also nurturing their own working relationships.

During the first six months we have seen the development of new service types such as Supported Accommodation which has provided us with new service users and new challenges. We have used this time to strengthen our relationships with our funders in NSW and Victoria and we have identified the need to continue working on compliance and quality assurance measures.

The Board of Directors have embraced the idea of Person Centered Approaches and the prospect of a changing funding landscape into the future including a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Whatever the funding landscape will be in the future Aspire Support Services will adapt an approach that puts the person with a disability at the centre of service delivery.

A central focus of our Board has been creating a culture of strong Governance and a number of our Board members have undertaken training to enhance their skills in this area by completing the Australian Institute of Company Directors Governance training. Other Board members had completed this training at an earlier time.

Throughout this 6 month period our Early Intervention service was consolidated at the Charles Sturt University site and they are now working hard to provide a fully integrated service with the Universities Child Care Centre.

A major focus of bringing the three organisations together has been ensuring a smooth transition for staff and service users. A lot of time and effort has been put into creating a seamless transition for all concerned and whilst the task is not completed, great progress has been made.

We are still in the process of winding up the three previous organisations and the transfer of the remaining assets has now been completed.

Our staff should be congratulated for the way in which these amalgamation tasks have been undertaken. This has been an exciting journey and we recognize the significant contribution our staff have made to the success of the organisation.

Finally, we have always stated that by bringing these three organisations together, it would create opportunities and we believe that this has been achieved. We have been asked to support new service users who have specific needs and we have seen the growth of some service users to reach independence. We have also witnessed some great opportunities created for our staff. Some of our staff have taken the opportunities presented and had outstanding successes in their skill development and career paths.

We will continue to shape Aspire Support Services so that it is adaptable to any funding landscape that is in place in the future as well as being able to meet the changing needs of our service users.

# OPERATIONS

## Brian Hillas - Manager

My role as CEO of Kalparrin came to an end on 31st December, 2011 and I hit the ground running on January 1st, 2012 as the Operations Manager of the newly formed organisation.

The Operations Manager reports directly to the CEO and covers a range of reporting lines as described in the corporate structure, with the managers of Accommodation, Day Programs, Respite Options as well as the Intake team, Family Support coordinator and Project Officer reporting through my position.

Each service delivery manager and coordinator receives supervision and mentoring weekly or fortnightly as required and key performance criteria will be agreed and implemented for review quarterly and annually in a formal performance review.

I also have the responsibility of acting as a signatory on bank and finance transactions together with monitoring of expenses and approval of operational invoices.

The merger of the two organisations in January required bringing together systems, policy, procedures and communication technology including internet and telephones. This was compounded with the introduction of a third partner Coinda on April 2nd. All of the above processes were again tested particularly in terms of the communication and telephone systems.

It became apparent after approximately 2-3 months into the merger that the electronic communication and storage system was insufficient for our ongoing needs. There had been in excess of 500 maintenance tickets in the first few months that were actioned by myself and our technology maintenance company. These technology interruptions were taking up an enormous amount of time to action on a daily basis. This was rectified mid-year with new technology.

I am pleased to advise that we are conducting reviews of all service delivery areas, by consulting with families to find out what it is that they require, in an endeavour to meet those needs at the highest standard we can provide. The managers of each program area are striving to meet the challenges of providing programs and services to meet the individual needs as well as meeting with families to review files and information. Program managers are also involved in the implementation and development of systems to assist with the service delivery.

Each day within Aspire brings new challenges and opportunities and I look forward to the future growth and development of Aspire to cater for the needs of families and service users.

# HUMAN RESOURCES

## Mardi Weber - Manager

The initial six month of Aspire Support Services has been huge in terms of 'all things' Human Resource.

During the last six months (the beginning of the post merge phase) all staff have worked extremely hard to come to an understanding of the new organisation with its redefined goals, objectives and new emerging culture. As with most post merger phases, the first six months have been challenging. Despite this, staff have maintained the delivery of quality and professional services, that has been an absolute credit to all involved, and has confirmed that we have a very professional body of staff who are focussed on delivering high quality services to people with a disability.

With the three organisations combining into one, much larger, new organisation, many changes have occurred in order to achieve our new goals. Staff were more accepting of the change when it was clearly explained pre-merger and highlighting the many possibilities and opportunities the change would offer.

Some of the changes have included:

Redefined structures

Redefined roles

New colleagues

New systems

New processes

New policies

New frameworks

Working out of new locations

Part of managing the change has involved recognising the culture of each previous organisation. The many levels of values and traditions held by one organisation may not have been shared by the other. However, together we are now developing a new culture in which staff and service users thrive.

We have worked hard to clearly establish effective lines of communication with all staff, and have redefined the purpose of the organisation by creating a compelling vision statement, mission statement, core values and objectives. As an organisation we are building a belief system based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and have created a new set of common goals that we all work toward.

It has been a busy six months, but in that time we have proven that we are an organisation with a capable workforce who can adapt to change. This will prove to be a great advantage as we move into the future landscape of the Disability Sector.

# ACCOMMODATION

## Nicole Read - Manager

The Aspire accommodation program commenced in January with the continuation of the Adult Respite house, previously operated by Kalparrin, and the Children's Respite house, previously operated by Woodstock.

During the year we had a request by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) to accommodate two young persons under the emergency response program with a view to transition into drop-in support and ultimate independence.

One of these two has since achieved independence with their own unit and drop-in support assistance, for the continuation of living skills development. The other person has moved to an independent unit with staff support in an adjoining unit to continue daily living skills training for independence at a later stage.

In early June we were requested by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to provide emergency accommodation support to an additional individual who required 2:1 staff support on a 24 hour basis. It is envisaged that the individual will move to less intense support in the near future and share accommodation with others.

The Adult and Children's Respite houses both have accommodation for five individuals at residence, and also provides emergency accommodation assistance when required. These have been operating successfully to support families in need for over five years and continue to offer respite on an allocated, time limited basis. The allocations are made on a priority of access based on the individual needs of the family. During the reporting period 14,636 hours of service were provided at the Children's house and 15,424 hours were provided at the Adult house.

There are currently 82 families accessing the respite facilities and this will increase as family needs change and new families are introduced to the broad range of services available at Aspire. The accommodation services are supported by a mix of core staff and a casual pool who work across other service delivery areas.

Many of the support staff are undertaking additional qualifications this year and all staff are offered the opportunity to undertake further training and development as identified. The accommodation team would like to thank all staff and management for their contribution during the year and look forward to working with everyone in the New Year.

# DAY PROGRAMS

## Hayley Niad - Manager

The amalgamation of Kalparrin, Woodstock and Coinda has made it possible, through economies of scale, to develop an even more responsive Day Programs service. During the reporting year we have supported 44 service users for Day Programs and other leisure activities.

From the beginning of 2012, we continued to maintain strong relationships with a variety of community facilities and services, including the Moresby Park Community Centre, Henty Community Health Centre, Murray Valley Centre and Wodonga Leisure Centre, Brown's Lagoon, Jindera Football Club, Wewak School, and a multitude of other venues for service delivery. We are very grateful for their continued support to Aspire, which helps service users to gain more opportunities for community involvement and personal development.

At the same time, we were able to welcome two new service users and expand our programs, including a regular Meals on Wheels run each Tuesday and flexible arrangements for Day Programs service users with Respite Options and Supported Accommodation. We have supported five staff members as they undertake studies at Wodonga TAFE, which will enable them to contribute greater knowledge and expertise to their invaluable work at Aspire. Sadly, we have had to mourn the loss of a long-standing service user to the program, whose memory will always stay with us.

We would like to take a special moment to thank all of those who have made the transition from Kalparrin to Aspire as successful as it has been. Chief among those deserving of accolade is Nicole Read, who worked with the Day Programs for 13 years as a support worker and then as Manager. Her dedication and effort in developing and enhancing the Day Programs is appreciated, and the families and service users were sad to see her move on to another area of Aspire. Also deserving of recognition is the Board of Directors, whose wisdom and guidance make all the difference in our success, as well as Operations Manager Brian Hillas and Chief Executive Officer Nigel Stone.

Last but certainly not least, we would like to extend our warmest gratitude to the service users, families, and support workers that make this organisation such a special place. Thank you for all that you do.



# EARLY INTERVENTION

## Rachael Webb - Manager

### **New centre**

January 2012 marked the opening of the new children's centre at Charles Stuart University (CSU) where early intervention is located alongside the Murray Children's Centre. The integration of these two services has been occurring at a steady pace, with our team working with Sydney Allen and Michelle Smith from CSU. The aim is to continue working towards a more integrated approach to children's service delivery for all children who access both services. During the reporting period 1976 therapy hours were delivered.

### **Students**

There has been twelve, 4<sup>th</sup> year medical students attend early intervention as part of their studies in paediatrics. John Douglas supervises the students whilst they are in Albury and part of the program has them involved in the autism parent and child group. This continues to be a successful program with all students commenting on how much they have learnt whilst observing and playing with children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, and listening to the parents talk about their child.

### **Presentations**

I have presented at CSU to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year education students this year on what early intervention is and why it's so important. Our Speech Pathologist and I presented to the child care staff on communication and language for young children. We received positive feedback regarding this presentation. We plan to implement more training and workshops next year with the staff.

### **Better Start and Helping Children with Autism**

This year has also seen the commencement of Better Start services at Aspire. Better Start is a federally funded program to increase early intervention services for children until their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday for children diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, hearing or vision impairment, or Fragile X Syndrome. . Aspire continues to offer services under the Helping Children with Autism funding. This is also part of a federally funded program aimed at increasing early intervention services to children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder until their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday. Both of these programs are offered speech pathology, occupational therapy, outreach visits and family based training.

### **New staff**

Miranda Heinrich and Brianna Kirk have been employed to replace Natalie Wilkinson and Natalie Reardon as the speech pathologist and occupational therapist at Early Intervention. Brianna comes from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance and Miranda from Ageing, Disability and Home Care. They have fitted into the team quickly and bring with them many new and exciting skills.

# RESPIRE OPTIONS

## Michelle Potter – Manager

The Respite Options program that was previously administered by Woodstock Support Inc. continues to operate as part of Aspire’s services. Programs are planned and based on an allocations process. The program incorporates respite for Ageing Parent Carers, Home and Community Care (HACC) with a broad range of services including, “In Home” and in the community.

Some of the services provided have been targeted at specific age groups such as Peer Support and the Siblings groups which are held in both NSW and Victoria. We also undertake specific programs for HACC service users in NSW for people in the 65+ age group.

Some of the recreational activities undertaken included weekends at Lake Hume, Sail ability, trips to the movies, ten pin bowling and swimming.

The HACC program for over 65’s provides opportunities for the Frail Aged to access the community, develop social networks with new people and in some instances re-engage with the community, while their carer has time for themselves or just simply a break from their caring role.

The younger groups are encouraged to develop social, living and life skills whilst enjoying the company of other children. We see this as a valuable opportunity to provide more than respite for the carer.

The Respite Options program employs up to 38 staff members to support a wide variety of programs and people. The program provided 9,841 hours of service in the reporting period. Respite Options continues to use community facilities when delivering programs and places such as the library and other community venues as necessary. The program continues to develop partnerships with other agencies, government and other community organisations.

Programs are delivered in the Local Government areas of Albury and Greater Hume and also reach to Corowa, Mulwala and other locations across the Riverina Murray.



# FINANCIAL REPORT – 30 JUNE 2012

## TREASURER - NOEL SARGENT

The Financial Statements to 30 June 2012 reflects the financial performance of the merged organisation from 1 January 2012. The Operating Surplus of \$697k represents funding not yet expended. Aspire has the benefit of holding considerable cash reserves that were transferred from the merged organisations.

The transfer of the accounting from each of the merged organisations has taken considerable effort and continues to be fine tuned. The formation of a Finance Sub-committee will assist with the detailed monitoring of the financial performance of the organisation going forward.

Capital Expenditure of \$130k has been necessary to facilitate the merged operations since 1 January.

The transfer of Fixed Assets is not reflected in the 30 June 2012 Financial Statements as they were not transferred until 1 July 2012. The Leave Provisions reflect the liability of the staff transferred into Aspire from the merged organisations.

The initial Budget for 2013, while being a first attempt given the developing nature of the merged businesses, will give a meaningful comparison to measure the performance of each program. Monitoring of individual service user programs will become an important function as we approach the implementation of the NDIS and will be a challenge over the coming year.

Copies of the financial report are available on request.

