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OUR VISION

A fair and inclusive community.

OUR MISSION

Providing exceptional services that support people to improve their lives.

OUR VALUES

- Courage
- Integrity
- Choice
- Innovation
- Collaboration

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Children

WE WILL SUPPORT
CHILDREN'S LEARNING,
DEVELOPMENT AND
WELLBEING TO BECOME
SUCCESSFUL LIFE-LONG
LEARNERS

Older Citizens

WE WILL PARTNER WITH OLDER INDIVIDUALS TO CREATE EXPERIENCES THAT STRENGTHEN PARTICIPATION, CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

Individuals and Communities

WE WILL WORK
ALONGSIDE INDIVIDUALS
AND COMMUNITIES WHO
ARE CHANGING THEIR
LIVES FOR THE BETTER

Our Organisation

WE WILL CREATE AN INNOVATIVE, AGILE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGANISATION THAT IS PERSON-CENTRED

ENVIRONMENT OF CHANGE





Bruce Papps Chief Executive Officer

Reflecting on a full 12 months is always a challenge as an enormous amount happens over that period and at the date of this annual report so much has happened since the end of the financial year. The rate of change in our sector, and in the community, means that all of us must be increasingly agile and responsive, but we must also be conscious of the members of our community who are experiencing disadvantage and for who the rate of change can be more challenging.

This focus of Northside on children, and on members of our community needing support, remains a strong constant in our environment of change.

Northside itself has gone through some changes since our previous year with a very different Board and a new Board Chair. Our Board is extremely engaged with the Northside Executive and we believe we are well placed to strategically address our current and future challenges and benefit from opportunities. I wish to thank Stephen and the Board for their positive impact and interest.

As stated above, Northside operates in an environment of continuous change and scrutiny, and 2017–18 was no exception with the following just being a sample:

- The Commonwealth Government completely changed the subsidy scheme for early childhood education centres requiring significant administrative effort to prepare ourselves internally and assist our families;
- Our largest early childhood centre, Harrison, was subject to a formal Assessment and Rating process by the

ACT Government regulator, with our result being an outstanding Exceeding rating;

- Our aged care services went through their 3 yearly quality audit by the Commonwealth Government regulator, and we were very pleased with our positive results with all Home Care Standards being met; and
- Our Housing First team continued to ensure the growing number of people considered "Out of Scope" for the NDIS due to complex pyscho-social health continue to access the vital support they need.

Something that never seems to change is the energy and quality that Northside's people exhibit in the delivery of the huge range of education, support and engagement services that we provide. Our frontline staff and teams are the heart of our organisation. Capably supported by our Managers and Executive, it is incredible what our teams achieve, and coming from a commercial professional services environment, I can state genuinely that what organisations such as Northside deliver for the resources available is extraordinary. This would be the same across the community services sector.

A huge thanks and record of appreciation to all of our people and teams, and our community.

The coming year will be equally exciting and challenging as we prepare for new models of funding aged care services, working with the ACT Government on their new early intervention model, and universal access to early childhood education for 3 year olds. We are also continuing our advocacy for early childhood education and for people to access safe, permanent and affordable homes.

I would also like to acknowledge our many partners and stakeholders that play such an important role in what we do.





Stephen Brand Chair of the Board

It has been a privilege to chair the Board of Northside Community Services this year. I would like to acknowledge all Directors for the time and dedication to their duties, particularly Deputy Chair, Ilea Buffier and Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, Pui Cheung.

There has been substantial change in Board membership over the past few years and new Directors this year. Jeff Cafe and Matt Sierp have provided valued experience and perspectives and new knowledge. Directors Leanne Gibbs and Paula Gonzales have continued to provide insights and contributions from different skill and knowledge sets, and we thank Angela Morella, who resigned as a Director this year, for her time and dedication to Governance at Northside.

A question we ask ourselves from time to time is, 'what is our point of difference from the for-profit sector?' The answer, I believe, is in the motivation behind our business model. We are 'not-for-profit'. The underlying and principal motivation behind Northside, and certainly the entire not-for-profit sector, is to improve the human condition of people living in our sphere of influence.

However, the governance duty of the Board is also to ensure financial viability. This is becoming more and more challenging as competition increases, funding models change, and outcomes are measured in more empirical or financial ways, rather than in terms of the improvement in the human condition. These challenges are not going

away and will be a feature of our immediate and long-term future.

The Board acknowledges the culture of dedication and service to the clients of Northside demonstrated by the staff and senior management. Rewarding and close relationships with our community is what characterises the service delivery of the Northside staff. It is true that many of our community service delivery environments are on the fringes of society with some serious risks and challenges. Nevertheless, Northside staff go about their work with the best interests of our clients at the forefront of their mind

The Board also acknowledges the professionalism of our early childhood teams who have demonstrated exceptional quality of service delivery in the past few years with outstanding outcomes for children and strong results in reviews undertaken by the regulatory body.

A huge thanks to our Executive - Kate, Anna and Carrie - and their extraordinary teams for all they have contributed to our clients, children and families, and community over the year.

In conclusion I would like to thank our CEO Bruce Papps and our Executive team, who have helped to develop a strong working relationship between senior management and the Board. This does not happen without dedication to working with the entire Board, myself as Chair and other leaders on the Board.



AHGHLY SPECIALIST TEAM



Kate Cvetanovski **Executive Director, Community Services**

This year marked a significant change for the Community Services team in relation to the way we define our team's purpose and differentiate ourselves from being known as a 'regional community service'. With such a vast and diverse mix of services and programs, sometimes we can make the mistake in thinking of ourselves as a 'jack of all trades' which insinuates that we are a 'master of none'. This is absolutely untrue.

We are a highly specialist team working together to protect and action two fundamental and universal Human Rights – these being: The Right to a Home, and the Right to be Part of a Community.

Human Rights reflect the minimum standards that need to be met for people to live with dignity. This is the 'why' in the "why we do what we do".

Article 25 – A Home: All human beings have the right to a home, enough money to live on and medical help when we are ill.

This year, Northside's Community Service team combined seven of our program areas into one team. This team works from a Housing First approach to our service delivery. Essentially, this means that the priority issue to be resolved for any individuals or families engaging us is to support them to access a home of their own or to stay in their home if there was a risk that they may be forced to leave.

Housing First recognises that stability is more likely to be achieved if an individual or family who has experienced homelessness has an affordable, safe and permanent place to live. Further to this, access to housing in this instance is not provisional on participation in support.

'Northside Housing First' encompasses all Northside programs and properties associated with the provision of safe. affordable housing and the ending of homelessness. This currently includes Common Ground Canberra, Staying in Place Outreach, Women's Accommodation Program, Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) for older people, Community Assistance and Support Program (CASP), our Head Leased properties and our Youth Engagement team. These areas are now combined into one team that works together to focus on safe, permanent and affordable housing solutions for the individuals who engage us in their lives.

As a result of making housing outcomes a priority focus, our team has been able to support 253 People including 70 children under the age of 14yrs, to stay in place or to find their way home.

Article 29 – A Community: All human beings have the right (and responsibility) to be part of a community

The Northside team has been heavily involved in community development and engagement across Canberra's north for more than 20 years. Our experience goes beyond the traditional approach of supporting groups and programs to become self-sustainable. Our Community Engagement team works with people to implement projects that reduce barriers to social and economic participation. We see community development as a vital opportunity to harness the strengths and skills of individuals and communities and to provide them with opportunities to use them.

The team work from an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach which has a clear set of principles, which act like a compass not a map. The five core principles of ABCD are:

- 1. Citizen-led
- 2. Relationship oriented
- 3. Asset-based
- 4. Place-based
- 5. Inclusion-focused

Embedding this approach in our work has seen us involved in some incredibly meaningful and important projects and given us the opportunity to partner with community champions and advocates dedicated to increasing inclusion and participation in their neighbourhood.

We love being part of our local community and our team are never more happy than when working alongside individuals, community groups, business traders and government teams to address wicked social problems or deliver out of the box innovative initiatives. This year we have been happy to watch the community take the lead and use their strengths and social capital in whatever way they choose.

As a result of using an Asset-based approach, 2018 saw us working alongside 41 community, business and government partners and harnessing the skills, strengths and ideas of more than 3500 members of our community.

A Specialist Service

Our team has established a reputation for never settling for the minimum and for always raising the standard of outcomes for people in our community. We do this by committing to not just providing housing but providing a home that is safe, permanent and affordable. We commit to moving beyond just living in a community and demand people are recognised, valued and active in that community.

This explains why we are the people who should be doing this work. Our team demonstrates 'courageous practice' every day with little fanfare or accolades. We love and believe in what we do and the community and individuals recognise this in the outcomes we achieve together.

THE STRONGEST START IN LIFE



Anna Whitty **Executive Director, Children's Services**

It has been another extraordinary year in Children's Services at Northside!

This year has been one of significant change and challenge, both locally and nationally, for the Early Childhood sector. I am really proud of, and inspired by, the extraordinary and courageous professionalism and commitment of the entire Northside Children's Services team.

In the face of challenge and change, this commitment and professionalism ensures that we continue to provide the highest quality early childhood education for the children accessing our centres.

This includes upholding children's dignity and rights, holding ourselves accountable to the highest standard of professional identity and ensuring that rigorous systems and processes are in place to ensure children and educators are at all times safe and free from harm.

In addition to the complex and intentional teaching and learning that happens each and every day in a Northside classroom across all of our Early Childhood Centres, there are a couple of highlights that I'd like to share.

Assessment and Rating Results

In 2018 the National Quality Standard was amended, and one of the key aspects of the changes was that achieving an Exceeding rating was more challenging.

Harrison Early Childhood Centre went through the Assessment and Rating process in May 2018, under the new system and received an overall rating of Exceeding. Northside's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement has meant rigorous systems and processes are embedded into day-to-day practice and operations to ensure all of our Centres are Meeting and Exceeding all of the requirements of the National Quality Framework.

Civic Early Childhood Centre has an overall rating of Meeting, and our Majura, Harrison and Treehouse Centres all have an overall rating of Exceeding the National Quality Standard.

I am extremely proud of these results. We know that quality early childhood education can and does change lives - giving children the strongest start in life.

I am also so proud of, and inspired by, the committed educators at Northside. Our results are a true reflection of their expertise, professionalism and unwavering commitment to children and the importance of early childhood education.

The Framework

As part of our ongoing commitment to advocacy for children, educators, families and the importance of early childhood education, we launched The Framework website, dedicated to all aspects of the National Quality Framework (NQF).

Our vision for The Framework, is to provide a much needed (and until recently, absent) platform for both national and local conversation, discussion and analysis of all of the complexities and aspects of the National Quality Framework- from federal and local policy, through to the implications of working with the NQF on the ground and in classrooms.

The Framework is an important platform that will continue to strengthen our advocacy for children by leading the conversation about the National Quality Framework and the right of all children, regardless of circumstance, to access early childhood education.

Raising our voices

This year also saw Northside take on a sustained and committed role in raising our voices against the Federal Government's new "Child Care Package".

These reforms undermined the principles of universal access to early childhood education. Children who would most benefit from greater access, those at risk of vulnerability or disadvantage, have had their access slashed.

The reforms also eliminated Priority of Access guidelines for services. The guidelines were a crucial safety net for children and families at risk of vulnerability and disadvantage.

Northside took a strong advocacy role in opposing these reforms, and was one of the very few early childhood organisations in Australia to do so. We provided many submissions to Senate inquiries, as well as appearing on multiple media outlets to advocate for the children and families who were worse off as a result of the Child Care Package.

This advocacy process also led us to develop a policy response to the Package, and articulate our vision for how Australia's early childhood education sector could work. Our vision is founded on three key principles:

- All children have a right to access early education
- 2. The early education system should be funded in the same way as the primary and secondary education
- 3. Early education should be free for all families

I am very proud of this vision, and it will be the key focus of our continuing advocacy efforts. The full vision can be viewed online at northside.asn.au/ECECVision.







Carrie Chappell Chief Financial Officer

In my first twelve months as the Chief
Finance Officer after returning from
Maternity Leave, the year has seen some
exciting challenges and opportunities
present itself to the Corporate Services
team. Throughout the year we have focused
on improving back end functionality to
stream line processes enabling us to provide
both timely and valuable information to both
teams as well as Northside as a whole.

Although a deficit of \$61k, the operating results for the 2018 financial year were very promising, accounting for less than 1% of revenue and a significant improvement on the prior year's deficit of \$260k (2.5%). The key reason for the deficit this financial year was the development of new business streams, including our Professional Leadership and Practice program which was in its first year of operation and saw an investment in developing the business and programs delivered to the early education sector in the ACT.

Further to the comprehensive income includes the revaluation of a Northside-owned-and-operated property which increased in value by more than \$2m.

Cost containment has been a focus this financial year while we evaluate and ensure that appropriate value for money is received through all our costs. This process included the restructuring of programs, and bringing services internal to ensure that quality and value is controlled and maintained. This has

resulted in an increase in employee costs, and subsequent decrease in service delivery costs.

The cash position has increased marginally from the prior year and continues to be monitored closely as we continue to consider our investment in technology and systems while still maintaining a healthy cash reserve. Further to this, borrowings were re-negotiated this year which has improved the overall current ratio.

As with the rest of the sector, the shortto-medium outlook will be challenging as we invest in and prepare for the changes in Community Services, with more of our services transitioning to client-directed care, and continuing to enhance and improve the administrative and compliance requirements of Children Services.

A focus on systems and processes will continue in 2019 as Northside identifies the role that technology will have in streamlining and improving stakeholder engagement and enabling a frictionless experience in all areas of Northside services.

But after all the graphs are developed, spreadsheets saved and signatures applied to Budget papers, what really stands out to me after this year is how the Corporate Services team I work with have conducted themselves in supporting the rest of the organisation.

Our clients are the people at Northside who work with their clients in the community, and we take our work just as seriously as our colleagues do.

They don't often get as much recognition as they should, so I'd like to thank my team for their dedication and professionalism, and look forward to continuing to improve the work we do so that the rest of the organisation can improve their work with the Canberra community.

EARNIG AND LEADING

This year saw Northside formally launch a new program as part of our Children's Services area: Professional Leadership and Practice (PLP). This business area was focused on providing workshops, consultancy and development services for the ACT early education sector.

Since 2016, there has been no Government funding for sector professional development in early education – despite how important educators are to children's outcomes. In the ACT, there has been no local provider for training and support services that actually operate services in the ACT.

With the new Child Care Package, changes to the National Quality Standard and ongoing political funding issues, we have developed the PLP to ensure the ACT is not left behind in these changing times for the sector.

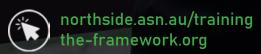
Beginning with a series of workshops in 2017, the PLP has now expanded to include audits, in-service professional development, operational management consultancy, and a range of advocacy intiatives.

At Northside, we have focused on ensuring that all our sector support services are directly aligned with the National Quality Framework, the regulatory framework that sits over every early childhood and school age care service in Australia.

We've been fortunate over this year to work with a range of providers and services in the ACT, from other community service organisations to standalone committee-run centres. While we've been gratified by the positive feedback, we've mostly been pleased that professionals in the ACT have been so glad that there are more professional learning options in the ACT thanks to the PLP. While other States and Territories have a strong history of community-based sector support, the ACT has been less well-served. We don't believe that has to be the case, and we strongly believe that there is value in having sector support provided by people who actually work in that sector every single dav.

In addition to our paid services, we have remained committed to providing free and easily available resources to the entire sector. In early 2017 we launched The Framework, a freely-accessible website that features news, analysis, opinion and practice discussions on all aspects of the National Quality Framework.

Through the PLP, Northside is committed to leading the development of a strong voice for children, educators and services in the ACT.







INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT

In the 2017-18 financial year, the Aged Care and Inclusion team of 46 paid and unpaid workers provided 41931 hours of service to our 350 clients in Domestic Assistance, Personal Care, Social Inclusion and Transport.

The Team supported clients both over and under 65 years via the Commonwealth Home Support Program, Department of Veteran's Affairs Program, Aged Care Packages, National Disability Scheme and Community Assistance and Support Program funded programs.

But the impact of the team is not just numbers.

The Explorers group, with the aid of volunteers and group members shared their cultures, cuisines, languages and memories of South Korea, The Philippines, Italy and Portugal. They tasted the cinnamon goodness of the drink Sujeonggwa from South Korea' Greeted each other "Magandang umaga po" (Good Morning) in Tagalog; discovered the passion of a football match in Italy; and made their own version of the centuries old craft of Azulejos from Portugal.

The team shared the likes, dislikes, and outside experiences of beloved pets with their owners via the PAWS program.

They connected with friends and family worlds apart through their newfound IT skills gained via the iSeniors program.

Our clients shared their histories and memories through their photos and cherished mementos while the team were in their homes.

Our clients discussed future goals and the hopes of tomorrow with our transport drivers

Our team and clients shared, reached out and grew in the past year and will continue to do so.

Throughout the last year our Engagement team has never been busier! Over the past 12 months, two Social Housing tenants have moved on from Common Ground into private rentals- opening up the opportunity for two new tenants and ending their experience of homelessness in the ACT. All 20 Social Housing tenants are successfully maintaining their tenancies, and a number of Social Housing tenants have reconnected

with family over the past 12 months. One tenant has recently re-established contact with their son after almost 10 years of no contact.

Over the past 12 months we have helped over 80 older citizens experiencing homelessness or unstable accommodation find safe and affordable homes. This has been greatly aided by the strong working relationships with COTA and Housing ACT, but also by the connections and networks established across the Canberra community.

Over 100 individuals were supported by the Northside Women's Supported Accommodation Program over the past 12 months- that's around 40 families with over 70 children experiencing homelessness, most often as a result of family or domestic violence. The Women's Program also partnered with a number of organisations to deliver workshops around healthy relationships and various wellbeing techniques and will continue to source this for the next year.

The Community Assistance Support Program (CASP) has supported more than 100 people over the past 12 months. Almost 75% of all clients supported in CASP identified that they have a mental health issue and would like support with this, and half of these clients were assisted to apply for services under the NDIS.

Over the past 12 months the Y.Engage team has redesigned the model of Youth Engagement to become more cost effective and divert funding away from overheads directly to the frontline. This gives us a greater focus on engaging those youth identified as most at risk and on supporting them to achieve the most relevant and sustainable outcome in relation to their wellbeing.

The team have focused on creating opportunities for disengaged young people to contribute to their community, particularly

through the Youth Leadership program and the development of a Youth Reference Group to provide advice and oversight to the revised Y.Engage model.

This year we continued to partner with the CIT Yurauna Centre for our ConnXtions - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Readiness Program. Over the past 12 months 20 students have completed the Certificate III in Community Services, almost half of these students have gone on to further courses and a quarter of students have secured some form of employment.

The program's partnership with CIT Student Support (Counselling) has resulted in a social worker attending classes on set days every week. These regular visits have built rapport with students and have resulted in an increase in students accessing crucial counselling services that improve their educational outcomes.

Over 60 community events and activities were delivered over the past 12 months by the Community Development team- reaching a total number of almost 1000 community members.

A number of community led groups were facilitated by Northside, including the development of a Gungahlin Art Group developed and maintained by Gungahlin residents, a Cooking Circle situated out of Common Ground, and the Neighbourhood Project which works to activate community members in the new suburb of Moncrieff.

Northside Community Development continue to partner with the CALD community, in particular the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum and Canberra Multicultural Women's Forum, and advocate for community driven initiatives that are led by its citizens.

We look forward to strengthening our work with the community and working with the exceptional and courageous people all around Canberra.



SPEAKING UP



This year saw a variety of complex policy and legislative challenges that touched on a lot of the work Northside does every day.

The Child Care Package, the biggest legislative reform to family subsidies for early childhood education in a decade, was debated and discussed before finally coming into effect in July. Northside contributed to stories on TEN Eyewitness News, WIN News, ABC News 24 and ABC Canberra Radio, as well as having an opinion piece published on ABC News.

Northside used those platforms to highlight our significant concerns about the new Package, and particularly how it would affect children and families experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability.

Northside has also been a powerful voice in advocacy for stronger homelessness policies and funding. Northside joined other organisations in the sector in calling on the Federal Government to overturn a Bill that would have put funding for homelessenss services at risk. We also took part in the

"Everybody's Home" campaign to call for an end to Australia's housing crisis.

Northside's Pet Assistance and Wellbeing Service (PAWS) Program also received attention this year, with an article in The Canberra Times highlighting the challenges faced by pet owners when they fall ill.

Northside joined 10 national NGOs at Parliament House to hold a joint press conference to urge the Federal Government to stop cuts to the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS). This service provides asylum seekers with a basic safety net of support.

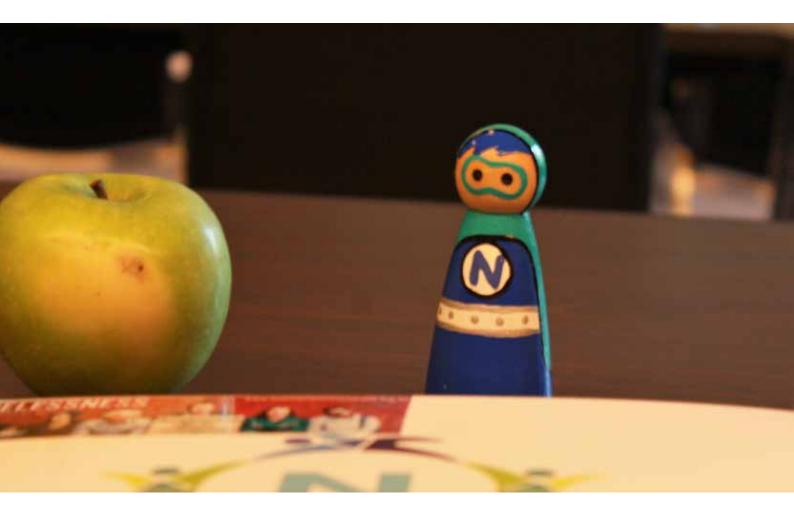
As well as working alongside our community across all of our programs and services, at Northside we strongly believe that we also need to be a voice for our community. In Canberra we know that disadvantage can often be hidden, and that those who are already experiencing vulnerability are often not heard. We will continue to amplify their voices every way we can.







WORKING TOGETHER



This year, as every year, we had the privelege of working with a range of individuals, organisations and peak bodies. We thank each and every one of them for the support, collegiality and commitment to the Canberra community.

Funding Acknowledgements

ACT Community Services Directorate

ACT Health Directorate

Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs

Commonwealth Department of Health

Commonwealth Department of Social Services

Partners

A Gender Agenda Families ACT

ACT Australian Chinese Association Full Throttle Boxing

ACT Education Directorate Global Sisters

ACT Rescue and Foster Inc Gold Creek High School

ACT Shelter Harrison School

ACU Institute of Child Protection Studies Home Nurse Services

AIDS Action Council of the ACT Homelessness Australia

Amaroo School Housing ACT social Housing and Homelessness

Paws2Play

Argyle Community Housing Team

Belconnen Community Service Housing ACT Tenant Relocation Team

Canberra Early Morning Centre IKEA Canberra

Canberra Gay and Lesbian Qwire Legal AID ACT

Charles Sturt University

Lyneham Commons

Children's First Alliance Mercy Foundation

CIT Yurauna Centre Multicultural Women's Forum

Common Ground Canberra Board
PCYC Canberra

Common Ground National Community of
Practice Pets and Positive Aging

Community Housing Canberra Project Independence

Community Options Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

Council of Homeless Persons Victoria Trevs@Dickson

Dementia Australia U.S Embassy Canberra

Dickson Traders Association Woden Community Service

Dr Beth Macgregor Youth Coalition of the ACT

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR WORK ON BEHALF OF ALL THE EXCEPTIONAL AND COURAGEOUS PEOPLE OUT THERE IN THE CANBERRA COMMUNITY.









