

# lifebridge

australia ltd.

*Supporting people in our community*

## ANNUAL REPORT



2014-15



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## Welcome Message from our Chairperson and CEO

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to read the Annual Report for 2014/15.

Once again, it has been an eventful and significant year for Lifebridge.

Several key decisions were made that signalled the commitment of the Board and CEO to ensuring that Lifebridge is well prepared for the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the Aged Care reforms.

We are proud to say that there were many achievements that came to pass as a result of these decisions, however one of the three key highlights over the last year was the organisational name change from Lifebridge East Inc. to Lifebridge Australia Ltd.

Converting to a company limited by guarantee will provide greater flexibility in the future, enabling Lifebridge to broaden its horizons by operating interstate. As an organisation that is located on the state border, this will offer immediate benefits when funding boundaries are lifted.

The second significant highlight was the introduction of mobile devices for the day-to-day operations. These mobile devices will improve efficiencies in the transfer of information between staff across Lifebridge. It will also assist in more timely and accurate processing of invoices which will be essential for ongoing organisational sustainability.

And thirdly, a decision was made to *review and redesign* the organisation's business model. Both of these activities are just part of a business review and modification that we understand is necessary to ensure that, as an organisation, we remain agile and competitive in the new working environment.

It is believed that these highlights exemplify our commitment to remain proactive in moving us forward; in preparing Lifebridge for the future and improving our ability to seize new opportunities that will present themselves in these reforms.

Of course, as exciting and necessary as change can be, it doesn't come without its challenges.

We have found that the most effective method to deal with complex tasks is to break them down and deal with them one piece at a time.

There will be a need for: continuous meaningful communication and engagement with people; a clear definition, introduction and cultivation of a new workplace culture; good workforce planning; the re-examination of organisational processes and systems; and the development and implementation of new models of service whilst maintaining the usual course of activities.

These are just a few examples of the complexities that the Lifebridge team has been navigating, and will continue to do so in earnest in the coming 12 months.

This is a historical time.

Lifebridge has the opportunity to be part of history and to create something that is truly unique.

As we work with our customers, their families and each other, we will create a service that is second to none in providing exactly what people want and need. Our vision will come to life as we continue to ensure independence and inclusion for the aged and people with disability in our community.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the Lifebridge team for the commitment and professionalism that has been demonstrated over the past year. It is gratifying to know that staff and volunteers acknowledge the need for change, and their willingness to continue learning, developing and conquering new ways while continuing 'business as usual' are truly admirable qualities.

To the Board of Directors, we offer our sincerest thanks for the ongoing commitment to Lifebridge and for the unity in which we have, and will continue, to govern through extraordinary times of change.

As Chair and CEO, we look forward to working alongside each of you in the coming year as we transition for the new world, and we shall do so with confidence and eagerness.

Milena Morrow  
Chairperson

Bronwyn Mitchell  
CEO





## OVERVIEW

Established in 1987, Lifebridge Australia Ltd is a not-for-profit organisation that provides a range of support programs to people with disability, people who are frail aged, people with dementia and their carers.

Lifebridge provides opportunities for people to connect with their community, and achieve their full potential whilst maintaining and developing key life skills in a supportive environment.

Using the principles of Montessori and person centred approaches, Lifebridge continues to build a partnership with customers that is supported by our purpose.

Lifebridge will continually aim to maintain a standard of excellence in all that it does and be ready to collaborate and seize the opportunities that the reforms bring to our sector.

## VISION

Lifebridge aspire to see independence and inclusion for the aged and people with disability in our community.

## PURPOSE

Lifebridge understand and enable its customers to live life their way so they can always achieve their potential and remain as independent as possible.

## STRATEGIC GOAL

Our Strategic Goal is to secure a sustainable future for Lifebridge that allows us to support our customers.

## VALUES

### Excellence

We seek to excel in everything we do and deliver the best outcome for our customers.

### Integrity

We are true to our word and actions, and our behaviours reinforce this.

### Innovation

We strive to find new or better ways of doing things to meet our customers' needs.

### Professionalism

We are customer focussed, outcome driven and businesslike in the way we work.

### Respect

We are one team that respects our customers' individual rights and potential as well as our colleagues' skills, talents and contributions.

### Trust

We earn and instil trust by listening, being open, communicating well, being transparent and accountable for our actions.



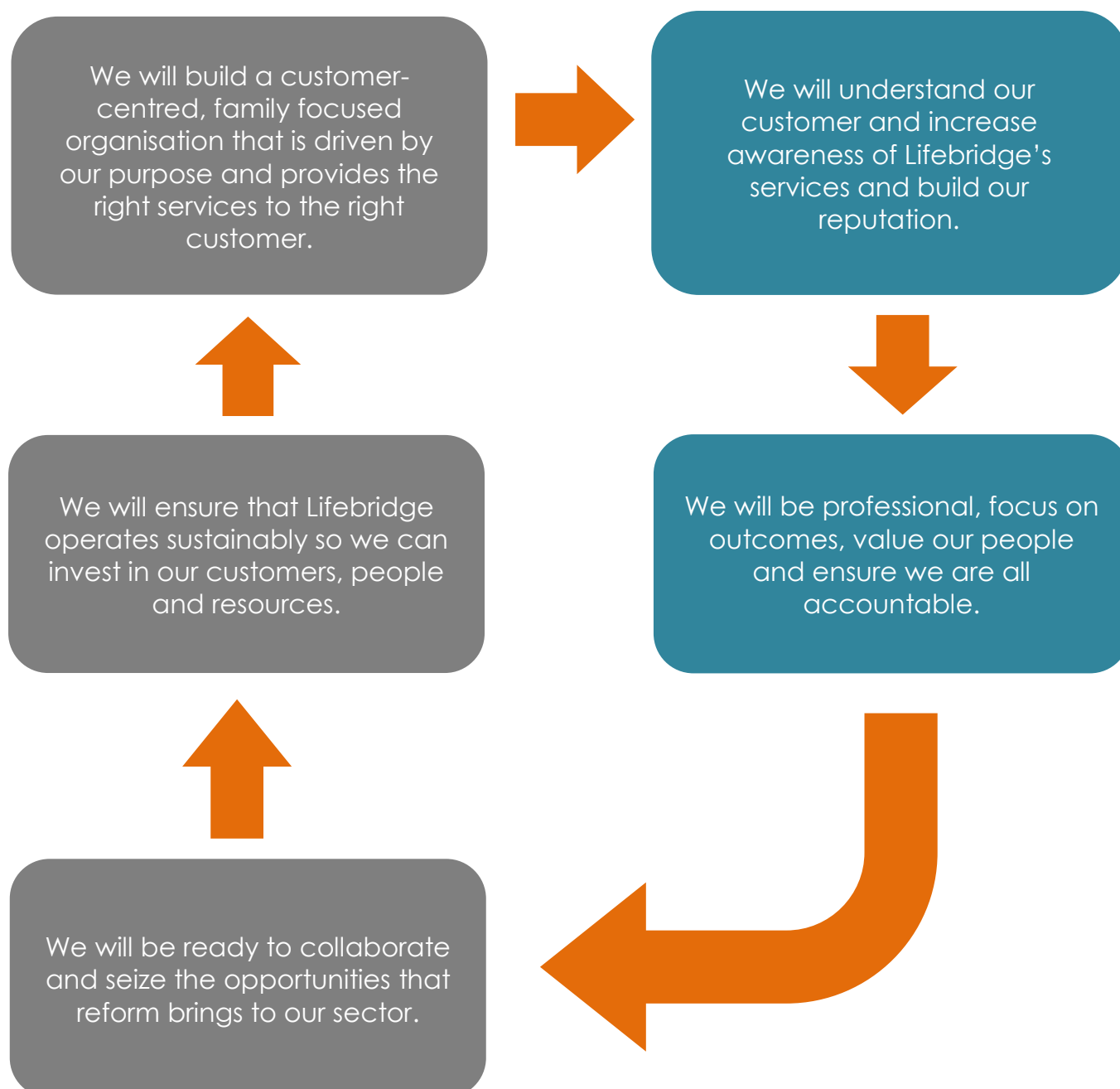
## STRATEGIC SUMMARY & TRANSITION PLAN

With the full rollout of the NDIS in the Tweed region from 1 July 2017 and the introduction of the Aged Care reforms commencing 1 November 2015, our strategic focus has been on progressing the business to meet the imminent changes whilst maintaining a service of excellence.

Lifebridge has developed a Transition Plan to ensure that a solid foundation is established from which it can deal with any future eventuality to meet the needs of its customers and prospective customers in years to come.

The plan has been developed around five strategic pillars that represent key drivers for a sustainable and customer focussed organisation. The pillars align with Lifebridge's Vision, Purpose and Values with individual outcomes and measures.

## OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Milena Morrow MAICD – Chairperson**

Milena's background includes a Diploma of Accounting with 16 years' experience in finance, training and over 20 years working in the disability sector. Milena was also a business owner/operator for several years.

Other positions currently held: Chair of the Tweed Shire Council Equal Access Advisory Committee; Chair of Living My Way Limited (Sydney-based), NSW government appointed (Ambassador / Champion initiative) to promote *Living Life My Way*. Milena is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is also a writer and professional editor accredited through the Australian College of Journalism.

Appointed to the Board in 2007

### **Jenny Hicks – Public Officer**

Jenny's background includes over 20 years' experience in tertiary adult education, particularly in the areas of childcare and nursing.

Jenny is a Registered Nurse and her qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts [UNE], Cert IV in Training and Assessment, Cert IV in Aged Care.

Appointed to the Board in 2005

### **Raja Jata – Treasurer**

Raja's background includes more than 18 years' experience as a business advisor and consultant.

Has run a number of companies, led complex strategies within large corporations and advised on technical projects as an external consultant.

Appointed to the Board in 2014

### **Dr Claire Treadgold – Director**

Claire's background includes nearly 20 years' experience in non-profit management, with a particular focus in health and community services. She currently runs her own consulting business.

Her post-graduate qualifications include a PhD in Education, a Masters of Arts in Communications and Graduate Diplomas in Educational Studies and Adolescent Health and Welfare (Oncology).

Appointed to the Board in 2014

### **Garry Smith – Director**

Gary's background includes local government town planning, governance, human resources, finance and legal matters.

His areas of expertise include Corporate Governance, Strategic Planning, Human Resource Management, Conflict Resolution & Budget Preparation and control.

He is involved in many community groups, is a life member of Murwillumbah Apex Club and a member of the State Emergency Services.

Appointed to the Board in 2010

### **Rebecca Mussett – Director**

Rebecca's background includes nearly 20 years in the aged care and not for profit sector, primarily as General Manager or Chief Executive Officer of residential aged care facilities as well as Director of various companies and/or Boards.

Rebecca holds a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in Industrial Relations, Health Management and Quality Management Systems, has completed the AICD Director's Course and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Appointed to the Board in 2014

### **Norman Henstridge – Director**

Norm's background is in acute healthcare having worked in pathology, hospital administration, radiology in the public and private sector, and commercial organisations.

Norm is on the Board of the Tweed Heads and Coolangatta RSL Sub-branch, having served as Treasurer for six years.

Norm has a Degree in Applied Science, an MBA from Queensland University, is an Associate Fellow of the ACHSM and a Member of the AICD.

Appointed to the Board in 2014





## THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

### **Bronwyn Mitchell - CEO**

Bronwyn has a Bachelor of Arts with a Psychology Major, Diploma of Counselling, Diploma of Management and a Cert IV in Work Place Assessment and Training.

Bronwyn has extensive experience working in the juvenile justice system and management in the disability and aged care sector.

After 15 years as Manager for Aged & Dementia Services of Lifebridge, Bronwyn was appointed as CEO in June 2014.

### **Brian Crouch - General Manager - Corporate Services**

Brian started work as a relief bookkeeper for Lifebridge in 1998. He has been involved in the financial; management of the organisation since then.

He oversees financial budgets and reports and ensures that administration systems are operating efficiently.

Brian is a Life Member of his local surf club having been on the Board for twenty years and as Treasurer for 12 years.

### **Robert Rees – General Manager Aged & Disability Services**

Robert has qualifications in Business Management, Workplace Leadership, Training and Community Services.

Robert has held senior management positions in the not for profit and state government arenas and he also has experience in Youth Justice, Children's Services and small business management.

### **Marty Mac Anally – Finance Manager – Corporate Services**

Marty is a Certified Practising Accountant, has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting), Diploma in Business Management, Graduate Certified in Applied Finance and Investment Valuation Analysis.

Marty has extensive experience in accounting, corporate taxation, auditing and financial management.

Marty is also Treasurer of an incorporated local Youth Service.

### **Kylie Baird – Human Resources Manager**

Kylie has tertiary and post-graduate qualifications in Human Services, Human Resource Management, Management, Welfare, Disability, Training, WHS, RTW, and Children Services.

She has a diverse range of experience in the human services industry ranging from child care to aged care, including training and development, workplace health and safety, people and culture, and management.

Kylie was also a board member for a local community based organisation for over seven years.

### **May Stanley – Disability Services Manager**

May has a Diploma of Community Services Disability, Cert IV Frontline Management, Cert IV Training & Assessment and 12 years' experience in managing and coordinating disability services.

May has extensive experience in Community Housing, Support Accommodation, Crisis Intervention, Outreach Services, Disability Enterprise and Mental Health.

### **Lia Gett – Aged & Dementia Services Manager**

Lia has tertiary qualifications in Allied Health, Safeguarding, Public Health and Project Management.

Lia has been a member of various advisory boards, pathway management boards, and has successfully managed and delivered various projects.

### **Terri Alexander - Executive Assistant**

Terri's qualifications include a Diploma of Business, Advanced Management Skills for Executive Personal Assistants.

Terri has extensive experience in Not for Profits, Government and private sector organisations.



## THE LIFEBRIDGE TEAM

The greatest asset that Lifebridge has is its 212 paid and unpaid staff members. Each person brings their unique skills and talents to provide the activities that are required to run an organisation as diversified as Lifebridge.

Over the past twelve months a number of initiatives have been implemented for professional development and to improve business practices that will simplify processes in line with the transition plan.

### Introduction of Customer Management System (TRACCS)

Lifebridge has introduced a high-level customer management system (TRACCS) to ensure real-time reporting and access to timely and accurate information when needed.

To complement this system, we have introduced mobile devices that provide staff with the freedom to access and report information when and how it is required. This offers greater flexibility and responsiveness to address and meet our customers' needs.

Although this has been a challenging time as we work towards the integration and implementation of these new processes, staff have exhibited a resilience and determination that is admirable.

Lifebridge is committed to ensuring the success of this initiative and will continue to provide training and technical support as the system becomes fully operational.

### Workforce Coaching Training

All Lifebridge Managers and Coordinators have participated in workforce coaching training which will ensure that staff and volunteers not only feel supported in their role, but are encouraged to set goals, build on their potential and enhance their work performance.

It is intended that this will be developed and rolled out to all staff and volunteers in the coming year.

## Workplace Health and Safety

During the year our Workplace Health and Safety Committee members have been meeting monthly to improve safety awareness.

Key achievements included:

- The revision and implementation of a new injury incident management system.
- Attendance by Lifebridge Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) at a Workplace Health and Safety consultation course.
- In-depth training for HSR's, Support Coordinators and Managers in Incident Investigation

Lifebridge is dedicated to continuously improving Workplace Health and Safety.

## Reward and Recognition of Long Service

In January 2015, twenty staff members were acknowledged and recognised for their service of ten years and over to Lifebridge.

This is an outstanding demonstration of commitment and dedication to the organisation's purpose and vision.

These staff members embrace the philosophy of putting the customer at the heart of all they do.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

Number of staff employed as at  
30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 – 147

Full time workers- 18%

Part time workers- 57%

Casual staff members -25%

Proportions of staff with over  
7 years of service – 48%

Proportion of staff over the  
age of 50 – 58%

Proportion of Female  
staff members – 71%

Proportion of Male  
staff members- 29%

Number of Volunteer  
staff members- 65





## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Move from Dungay to Tweed**

Lifefridge moved its Head Office and Disability Operations to the old Southern Cross University campus site at Caloola Drive, Tweed Heads.

- **Third Party Verification**

Lifefridge has been verified in accordance with the NSW Disability Service Standards

- **Name and entity change**

Lifefridge registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee on the 25 March 2015. This will enable Lifefridge to operate interstate. As an organisation that is located on the state border, this will afford greater opportunities.

- **PCYC partnership**

PCYC Tweed and Lifefridge have been piloting joint ventures for community inclusion activities.

- **Art awards**

Ten artworks, from the Lifefridge Art Program, chosen as finalists in the Challenge Art Competition. This competition is open for all persons with a disability living in NSW. Another great achievement from our talented artists.

- **“Us the Band”**

Another win for the “Us the Band” at the Gold Coast Music Eisteddfod.

- **Aged and Dementia Services partnership with the Anglican Parish of Kingscliff**

A partnership has been formed that provides opportunities for inclusion with the wider community and a focus on building community relationships.

- **Communications — iPads**

People with dementia have been maintaining independence and inclusion through personalised communication activities using emails and Facebook with distant family members.

- **Mobile devices**

100 tablets introduced to the workforce for improved work efficiencies and communication.

- **Planner employed and development of individual plans**

Lifefridge has employed its own planner to work with families in understanding and preparing for the NDIS.

- **Adoption of Transition Plan and engagement of Business Consultants**

Lifefridge has adopted a transition plan to assist in preparing for the aged care reforms and the NDIS. Business Consultants have been engaged to support the ongoing business development in line with the reforms.

- **AAA rating for Food Services**

Once again the Lifefridge catering service received an AAA rating as part of the NSW Food Standards Audit.

# OUR SERVICES

Lifebridge currently provides an extensive range of support services for over 1500 people in the disability and aged care sectors across the Far North Coast.

The organisation offers a professional, caring and creative learning environment that specialises in using the principles of the Montessori philosophy.

INDEPENDENCE &  
INCLUSION

LIVE LIFE  
THEIR WAY

PERSON  
CENTERED

MONTESORRI  
APPROACH

DAY AND GROUP PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY ACCESS

FLEXIBLE RESPITE SERVICES

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

CARER SUPPORT SERVICES

SIBLING SUPPORT SERVICES

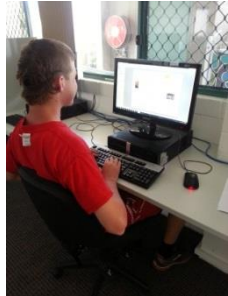
SELF MANAGED SERVICES

CATERING SERVICES

GROUP ACCOMMODATION

SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES

INFORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES



## DAY PROGRAM SERVICES

There were many highlights in Day Program Services over the past year. Regular and newly introduced activities provided participants with the opportunity to build on their knowledge and skills, with many people achieving goals they had been steadfastly working towards.

Day Programs also provided a number of special events which gave customers the opportunity to have a break from routine to spend time building social skills, friendships and connections within their community.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In partnership with the PCYC at Tweed Heads, activities such as Boxation, Personal Training, Zumba and dancing have been a huge success.

Our Condong lawn bowls group also continues to be a popular activity for our customers.

Due to the change in our location from Murwillumbah to Tweed Heads, customers can now access Robina, Tweed Heads and Elanora Libraries, with participants developing new skills and further enhancing their life experience in the community.

### NEW PROGRAMS

One of our new programs introduced in 2015 was the Communication and iPad Program.

iPads were purchased to provide participants with the opportunity to learn new skills and to further develop their fine motor, numeracy, literacy and communication skills.

In addition, a variety of educational applications have been purchased, and communication aids have been trialled for a number of individuals. Many of our customers have benefited from the introduction of these additional resources.

2014/2015 has seen the introduction of more skills-based activities which customers can choose to participate in. Personal development sessions give our customers the opportunity to learn personal and community life skills, including personal and road safety, along with local emergency services information sessions.

### ART PROGRAM

The Art Program continues to provide our artists with a qualified art instructor, where customers are encouraged and supported to submit art works in local and regional competitions. In 2014, ten of our artists' works were selected as finalists in the Challenge Art Competition.

Art works have often been purchased by members of the public which has been a valuable personal achievement for these artists.





## ACCESS AND INCLUSION AWARDS

A team of participants from the Independent Living Skills Program recently assisted the Lifebridge Catering Team. The team competently catered the Tweed Council Inclusion Awards held in December 2014.

Volunteer Students from St Joseph's High school (Banora Point) also attended the evening to provide mentoring and support to participants.

Catering for and serving 200 people on the night was such a success that they have volunteered again for this year's event.

Feeling inspired and confident from this experience, two of our customers are now completing their Certificate 11 in Kitchen Operations at Kingscliff TAFE. Participants in the Creative Arts Programs were able to display their works during the evening, with many gorgeous pieces of art being purchased by members of the public.



## COOKING UP A STORM

Merinda Biles (*pictured right*) is well prepared and ready for her course, as she donned her chef's uniform.

The course Merinda has chosen is the Certificate II in Kitchen Operations at Kingscliff TAFE.

In fact, a group of Lifebridge customers have all recently commenced this course together.

This presents a great opportunity for them to learn the skills of cooking in a commercial kitchen," said program writer Di Clark.

"Our budding chefs are now on the way to learning new skills and have stated that they are loving it."



## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Lifebridge's new Planner, Roachelle Hewittson, has given customers and their families the opportunity to choose and work towards Individual goals.

Our customers' goals are forming the basis for changes in our Day Programs, which allows Lifebridge to move closer to its own goals of being innovative and truly person centred.

New activities will continue to be introduced within Day Programs and customers and families have been given the opportunity to have input and provide feedback about new and existing programs.

Supporting our customers to achieve goals that are important to them is central to the success of Day Programs.

## KIM ACHIEVED HER INDIVIDUAL GOAL

One of Kim Jackson's goals was to attend a John Farnham concert, her favourite singer.

Kim (*pictured right*) discussed attending one of his concerts with Lifebridge support coordinator, Mark Dewhirst, who found out he was doing a concert in Brisbane within seven weeks. "We had to work fast to ensure Kim could achieve her dream goal of attending his concert," Mark said.

Kim was assisted to contact the ticket special needs line and book her tickets for the concert.

Kim recently spoke at a Lifebridge Future Planning open night and oozed excitement when she was able to let everyone know what she had been doing and showed off her T-shirt, program and Olivia Newton John CD.

Kim announced that Olivia Newton John is now her new favourite singer.





## MONTESSORI APPROACH

### The Montessori Approach Sparks Community Involvement.

The development of a successful partnership between the Anglican Parish of Kingscliff (APOK) and Lifebridge Aged and Dementia Services is providing increased opportunities for customers to form social relationships with members of the wider community.

In 2014, representatives of the Parish met with Lifebridge staff to learn about our approach to working with people with dementia. The outcome of this meeting was the donation of 10 iPads to the Cottage and expressed their interest to form a collaborative partnership to improve social, emotional, cultural and spiritual outcomes for Lifebridge customers through the Montessori approach.

People living with dementia and the frail aged have limited opportunities to meet new people and form relationships outside the home which places them at increased risk of social isolation, loneliness, depression, and in turn, at greater risk of developing a cognitive disorder.

*Reference - a recent survey conducted by Alzheimer's Australia reported that 59% of people with dementia thought that people avoided them and 41% wished that they had more contact with people in the community (Alzheimer's Australia, 2014).*

These factors provide the conceptual basis for the current partnership program developed between (APOK) and Lifebridge.

Following a series of meetings, a core group of 12 volunteers expressed interest in providing 1:1 or small group social

interaction with Lifebridge customers at the Cottage. They attended educational sessions on dementia, applying the Montessori approach when working with people with dementia, and how to maximise communication prior to attending the Cottage.

The APOK volunteers commenced at the cottage in April and already strong relationships have been formed with Lifebridge customers.

The Montessori approach endeavours to support people to have a strong sense of self, become more confident and to be challenged at a level that is appropriate for them in a safe, supportive environment.

The social outreach partnership initiative with APOK is making a valuable contribution towards meeting these goals.

### Photos above:

1. David uses an iPad to give Nancy a guided tour of the ship he served on during WWII.
2. Marion and Kerry share a love of music and singing which has formed the basis of a strong friendship.
3. Kevin participates in a weekly small group playing table games including cards and rummikin.
4. Bob and Ralph chat in the garden. Bob is the only male customer left in the cottage group on a Wednesday. When offered the opportunity to change his day to another with more men attending, Bob replied "I would rather continue as I am so I can see Ralph each week".
5. Cottage garden flourishes.
6. Marg with Maureen and Olga selecting artwork to colour.





Cornerstones of achieving wellbeing within the Montessori approach is the support of the individual and support of the environment to best enable the person.

Montessori principles can be applied to enhance the physical environment and provide areas that stimulate the senses, a calming retreat for quiet time, or create opportunities for customers to get their hands dirty in the garden. A fundamental Montessori principle is to support people to be challenged at a level that is appropriate for them, maximises their independence and enables them to make contributions to their community.

Jacob and Fred embody this principle translated into practice at the Cottage. Jacob had a working career and maintains an interest in building, maintenance and gardening, and has chosen to spend his time at the Cottage in the garden and working with our gardener/handyman, Chris.

### An Interview with Jacob

*What did you wish to achieve when you joined Lifebridge?*

"I didn't know what to expect. I have amnesia following brain surgery and all I wanted from life was to get my old memories back. Now I realise that I can make new memories and I'm very excited about that. That's my new goal in life. I've met a lot of new people and I'm already able to remember their names and that makes me feel good.

"Sometimes when I'm talking with people who knew me before the operation, I feel left out of things because they assume I remember when I don't. Making new memories is giving me something to talk about."

*What does it mean to you to be able to work in the garden and with Chris?*

"I love it. It means that I contribute and do something worthwhile. I look forward to coming and my wife is happy that I am happy. I feel so much better about myself. Before I came here I was getting depressed sitting at home and not doing anything. Now I know that I can still do all the things I used to do - the specialist tells me that I am using my muscle memory. I really love going to Bunnings with Chris - it's my favourite."

"My new goal is to be well enough to stop being a customer and come in as a volunteer. My specialist is very pleased with my progress and told me to keep coming to Lifebridge. I told him 'no worries there', I love it."



### An Interview with Fred

*What did you wish to achieve when you joined Lifebridge?*

"I wanted to mix with other people and to be physically active. It's also important that my wife has a chance to have some time to herself."

*What does it mean to you to be able to work in the garden?*

"I was here when the gardens were in the planning stages. I remember looking at the plans and trying to picture how they would look. It means a lot to me to help finish them off and keep them looking good.

It makes me feel better about myself to have a purpose. I worked as a soil tester for Gold Coast City Council for 39 years so I enjoy being outside.

"It's important for me to remain physically active as I have Parkinson's disease and the more I can do the better it will be for me. I will stay independent for longer."





### **Murwillumbah Social Group**

In response to an increasing demand, a second social group operating from Murwillumbah has been formed.

The group is based at the Murwillumbah Community Centre in Knox Park and offers a stimulating social program formulated monthly by members of the group.

This month the group spent time planning a fishing day. Kevin is a keen fisherman and he will bring his fishing rods and tackle and is available to teach others in the group to catch fish at one of the favourite venues, the Boathouse at Salt.

Some members enjoy working with iPads while others look forward to regular card games.

Each month the group comes to Kingscliff to select and exchange books from the Cottage library and this activity is usually combined with a walk along the waterfront.

Other venues recently enjoyed by the group include Currumbin Wildlife Park, Murwillumbah Museum and the Madura Tea Plantation.

Each month the group has a BBQ where the men enjoy cooking while the ladies prepare the salads and side dishes.

Above photo: members of the Murwillumbah Social Group perusing library selections at the Cottage.

### **LAST WORD FROM BARBARA**

"Often sitting and chatting is the best part of the day, not doing anything, just enjoying each other's company.

I love being part of this group and mixing with different people because it prevents loneliness".





## LITTLE MEN'S GROUP

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder often find social situations difficult and can find it hard to make and keep friendships.

Some of the reasons they might find it hard are because they can't work out what other children are thinking and feeling, or how to solve social problems, such as what to do when they disagree with someone.

It can also be a challenge for children with autism to adjust to doing something new – both activities and people.

The Little Men's Group was set up to give children on the spectrum an opportunity to learn how to develop friendships and try new things.

Jye, Cayden, Zac, Owen and Kalahan are "The Little Men's Group".

This group meets one Saturday a month and is led by support workers, Mel, Bryce and Ryan.

Mel talks to the boys and their parents to find out what they would like to do each month.

So far they have gone go-karting, to Laser Skirmish, swimming and to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary with some taking on the Tree Top Challenges offered there.

While having a great time, all the boys have learned many things, such as considering what others might like to do and taking turns.

The group has many ideas about what they would like to do in future and we look forward to hearing about their escapades!





## Sibling Camps

Lifebridge was successful in obtaining a community grant from the Commonwealth Bank for a "Weekend Siblings Camp". This camp took place at Hosanna Farmstay at Stokers Siding.

The needs of siblings are often unacknowledged from parents, the community and the Government. They are an 'at risk' group whose needs as individuals are so often unmet.

Siblings of children with a disability often live in a family situation that involves considerable stress. They may lack the understanding, emotional maturity and coping skills that are needed to deal with their experiences. This camp celebrated the contribution they make to the family and developed the children's understanding of their unique place within the family unit.

The children had the opportunity to network and form connections with the other siblings, and the freedom to share their stories in a safe environment with others who have similar experiences.

Activities at the farm stay included: farm tour, camp fire, treasure hunt, tractor rides, kayaking, animal feeding, visiting the glow worms and spending hours at the dam with a diving board.

### A message from Layla

I mostly liked being around other kids that had the same family challenges as me.

I liked helping out around the farm and my favourite was the tractor ride. While we were on the tractor ride I learnt about the history of Hosanna, how to steal an egg from underneath a chicken and how to tell the difference between the gender of cows.

I learnt how to milk a cow and learnt how to do things I never knew I could do like jumping off the diving board & learning how to read a map.

To make things even better I would prefer healthier food options like salad & fruit for snacks.

I like the monthly outings but I only decide to go if it's to a place that sounds enjoyable. I liked going to the air factory.

### Parent KH wrote:

Both of our younger daughters attended the siblings camp and had a fantastic time. They both felt very safe, supported & surrounded with a happy & positive vibe. It was wonderful to see them so happy & hear all the tales of their adventures.

Both my husband & I are very grateful to be involved with Lifebridge. We encourage our daughters to make their own decisions in regards to which monthly events &/or camps they would like to attend.

For our family the sibling events are an opportunity for our two younger daughters to get out & about and attend fun places that are now a lot more challenging for our entire family to visit as one.

We also feel the sibling days provide our girls with the chance to meet other children who may have a family member who suffers from a disability. We encourage our girls to form new friendships within the groups & over time hope they feel comfortable enough to discuss the similar challenges and many emotions that come from living with a disabled relative.

Sibling outings are all about having lots of fun!!

### Parent JM wrote:

My younger two boys attend the sibling group and it gives them a break from two older brothers who have needs and behaviour issues.

The Support Workers are so giving and makes each child feel special. They both look forward to going on the Siblings outing each month.

My two older boys have been going to respite for many years and I love that they can go out for the day with a Support Worker and choose what they would love to do. It makes them feel special also. I also love that the four of them go out on the same day so my husband and I get a Saturday off.





## ABOUT KEIRAN

Kieran is a Lifebridge customer who has been receiving specialised support from Lifebridge support worker, Chris.

Chris has a special interest in mentoring and supporting others through health, fitness and personal training.

Kieran has struggled to fully realise his potential but he has made great steps forward with Chris's support and guidance.

Chris and Kieran share an interest in nutrition, fitness and body building.

When asked what it means to him to work with Chris, Kieran said:

"Just that I have someone who shares the same interest, has a very open and understanding mind and who is always willing to talk, help and give advice no matter the situation.

Since I have been working with Chris he has not only taught me stuff about fitness, bodybuilding and nutrition, but also about life in general, and has given me a different view on the outside world and what is going on in it.

"Chris is an incredibly inspirational and positive person and has been a great mentor to me with everything and I truly appreciate his help, advice and friendship."



## Jake's great day to remember

Seeing customers discover something that brings them real enjoyment is one of the best things, according to Lifebridge support worker, Jade.

One of Lifebridge's long-time customers, Jake, has three favourite things to do: eating good food, swimming and listening to music.

As one of Jake's key workers for three years, Jade also has a passion for the same things, particularly music.

"One afternoon while having afternoon tea with Jake, I played a new EP by a band called, *Benjalu*," said Jade. "They have a blues, roots, rock sound."

"Jake is non-verbal so you have to be very aware of his body language and reactions in order to know if he is enjoying something or not."

Jade said that there was one song that came on and his reactions surprised her. "He grabbed both my hands and leaned forward with a huge smile and looked directly into my eyes, you could see the joy," Jade said.

Touched by the moment she had shared with Jake, Jade sent a message to the band to tell them. "The band was overwhelmed by the story and immediately contacted me and asked when could they meet Jake and play for him," she said.

"Six months later the lead singer contacted me and said he would be in town and would love to catch up. So I called the Support Coordinator Di and organised to pick Jake up for the afternoon."

Lead singer Ben came and sat with Jake and Jade in the park at Coolangatta, playing his guitar and singing.

Jade and Ben watched as Jake sat and clapped along in time to the music for the whole afternoon. "Jake couldn't wipe the smile from his face for the rest of the day," Jade said.

It was a special day that I'm sure we will all never forget."



## SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund (SAIF) was established to build innovative, community-based supported accommodation places for people with disability.

This initiative addressed the shortfall in supported accommodation and respite for people with disability and their carers, and also recognised that appropriate housing and support arrangements are critically important to supporting younger people with disability.

Supported accommodation helps to take pressure off ageing carers who currently have little certainty about what will happen to their children when they are no longer able to care for them.

In April 2012, Lifebridge and North Coast Community Housing (NCCH) successfully obtained Commonwealth funding through the Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund (SAIF) to build a 4 person home in the Tweed Shire.

The property was opened on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013 with three people moving in and in 2014 a fourth person moved into the house.

Two of the three adult residents had never lived away from their parents before, nor experienced any of the joys and challenges or moving and living permanently out of home.

All four residents are now settled into the house and are enjoying an independent lifestyle with the option of support from Lifebridge support staff should they require it.

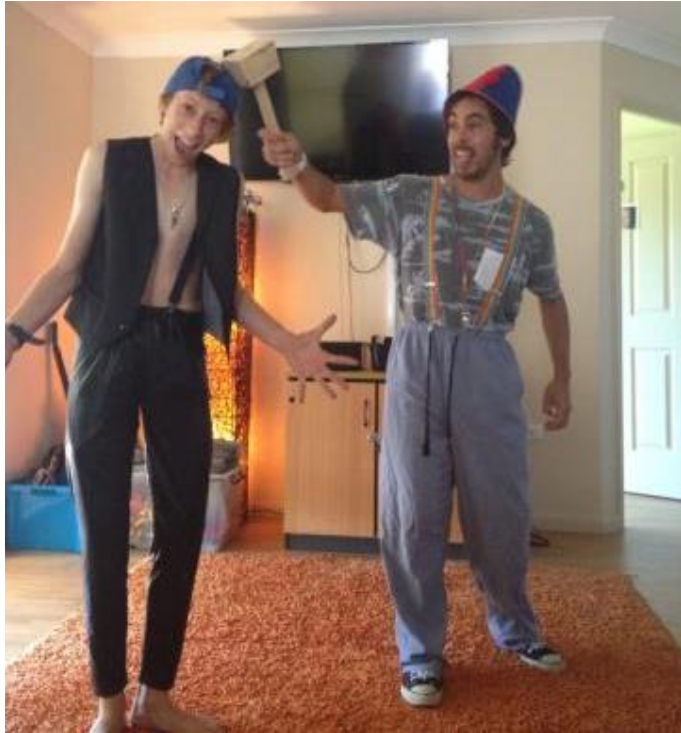
Thanks to all the support staff that assist us to live our lives, our way.



### Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund







## CHILDREN AND TEENS RESPITE HOUSE

The Children and Teens Respite House is a facility based respite service which provides short-term care for children with disability between the ages of 6 and 18.

The service enables the carers to have a well-earned break from the demands of caring for their child, while providing the children with high-quality care within an enjoyable and supportive environment.

The service operates year-round and is staffed 24 hours a day during weekends and school holidays.

Children and teens participate in a range of activities, such as trips to the cinema, bushwalking, swimming, musical activities, circus classes and trips to amusement parks.

The support staff at the Children's Respite House would like to thank the parents and carers of the children that we have the privilege of working alongside.

We have had a lot of fun!







## LIFEBRIDGE CATERING SERVICES



Over the last 12 months, Lifebridge catering has seen a significant growth in functions, with our diverse customer base including: Rotary, NSW education, TAFE, Alzheimer's Australia, Access & Inclusion Awards night, local agencies plus internal catering.

Under the expertise of Lifebridge's Catering Officer, Nigel Blackburn, catering work has been steadily growing with a variety of functions such as the Tweed Shire Council's Seniors Information Hub buffet luncheon, and a breakfast function for Home Instead Senior Care.

The functions are all catered from the Cottage kitchen at Kingscliff. Working on these functions, either in the kitchen or in service, are a team of volunteers.

"The volunteers help is an invaluable contribution without which we simply couldn't do all the work involved," Nigel said.

The catering team at the Cottage are Belinda, Kim, Lynn, Veronica, Shauna and Darren, and Nigel said that his dedicated team are the backbone of the operation where no task is too much to ask.

"They always give 110 per cent."

The focus in the coming months is to continue to offer a varied and exciting function menu that caters for all occasions and budgets, and to build networks and relationships with other agencies and government bodies.

Lifebridge Catering are always happy to offer a very competitive quote for your next event, large or small, and the standard is always the same.



# AUDITORS STATEMENT

LIFEBRIDGE AUSTRALIA LIMITED  
ABN 35 023 657 150

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF LIFEBRIDGE AUSTRALIA LIMITED

### Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report Lifebridge Australia Limited (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015, the statement of profit or loss, statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

### Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Corporations Act 2001 and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error.

In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the company's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001. We confirm that the independence declaration required by the Corporations Act 2001, which has been given to the directors of Lifebridge Australia Limited, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Lifebridge Australia Limited is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Corporations Regulations 2001.

Name of Firm: GRANT & BRADY

  
PETER R. GRANT

Name of Partner: PETER R. GRANT

Date: 28 October 2015

Address: 107 Murwillumbah Street

MURWILLUMBAH

NSW 2484