



# Sydney Community Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2019



# CHAIRMAN'S AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S VIEW

*The year has been a busy one for Sydney Community Services. We have implemented a number of new programs and services and also taken the opportunity to review existing services and look for improvements and efficiencies.*

*New Aged Care Standards were introduced in July 2019 and in the run-up to their implementation we had our three-yearly audit by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission of our services based at Hunters Hill. We are pleased to report that we met outcomes required by the old standards. With the ongoing Royal Commission into Aged Care, we expect yet more demands and rigorous assessment in coming years.*

*Earlier this year we undertook a staff survey to see how our people felt about working for the organisation. We had a very positive response with 97% reporting that they felt their work made a positive impact and 92% of our staff inspired by the work we do.*

*We ended this year with a surplus of \$81,716 from an income of \$5,053,782 which is a pleasing result in this, our second year as the merged entity of Sydney Community Services.*

*We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors, staff and our hundreds of incredible volunteers for their time and diligence which has made Sydney Community Services a truly great place to work and volunteer and has enabled us to support our consumers in a very personal and holistic way.*



JOHN D DEVINE, CHAIR



GILLIAN BATT, CEO

*"Our goal is to continue to grow and provide more services while capitalising on our strong foundations: our expertise in and our passion for delivering local, holistic community care."*

**I**ndependence and enablement, health and wellbeing, and vital community connections are at the core of our services.

Activities for eight days each week for seniors and people with a disability are developed with consumers' input.

In-home nursing, delivered meals and other health and domestic supports are complemented by programs alleviating isolation such as social day trips for various groups and twice-monthly seniors' lunches, a raft of games groups, language and technology classes, gentle exercise and dance sessions, cultural celebrations and meetings for five national groups.



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



### Partnerships

SCS invests in the next generation of community service workers and we value the knowledge and ideas that placement students bring. Vibrant partnerships with tertiary educational institutions this year included:

- **Western Sydney University** – 1500 hours of placement for BA and Masters of Social Work students
- **Sydney University** – 400 hours of placement
- **Macquarie University** – PACE Program – students as mentors for Targeted Early Intervention program plus interns for disability services– 350 hrs
- **Meadowbank TAFE** – 960 hours' placement
- **Australian Catholic University** – 300 hours of placement

### New Program – Targeted Early Intervention

For the first time in its long history, SCS provided services to young people. We transitioned our Community Builders Program into a Targeted Early Intervention Program (TEI) as per a Department of Communities and Justice directive. TEI's Reach Higher program supports school students and their families in the Hunters Hill LGA with educational, wellbeing and financial supports to help avoid crises.

### New Program – Be Connected

We initiated free technology sessions for seniors wanting to make the most of their devices. The weekly two-hour sessions with digital mentors, supported by a Federal Government grant, were incredibly popular and will continue in 2019-20.

# SOCIAL SUPPORTS FOR GROUPS

## Community Hubs

We refurbished and reopened our Community Hub at Hunters Hill with a State Government grant and invaluable help from an army of volunteers. The Community Hub is the base for more than 18,000 hours' support for seniors and people with a disability.

With consumers' and carers' input, SCS designs day programs for 65 culturally diverse and high-needs seniors who attend SCS' Hunters Hill-Ryde Community Hub. Activities are tailored to consumers' needs in different groups: a men's, a women's and a mixed group, a Chinese group, plus a 'young at heart' group for people needing assistance with mobility or cognition. There was great feedback from consumers when four-year-olds from Greenwood North Sydney Child Care came to play, sing, build Lego and draw with our seniors group. This year we also trialled a seniors' disco: it was so popular it became a weekly activity that's increasing people's stamina session by session.

Lane Cove Community Hub is a very social venue with a calendar crammed with events for seniors – from table tennis to cards and other games, exercise and mindfulness sessions to monthly bus trips and twice-monthly lunches hosting between 30 and 60 guests.

## Culturally and linguistically diverse groups (CALD)

SCS runs social support groups and more for seniors from Afghan, Iranian, Italian, Spanish and Chinese backgrounds. There's strong uptake of activities – which we arrange with community leaders – including day trips, information sessions, craft workshops, exercise classes and cultural celebrations.

## Supporting people with a disability

SCS helps people with a disability not only to socialise but also to make their artistic mark in the world. Our Different Degrees Drama Ensemble is now joined by two new groups, the 184A Art Group and Dance Ensemble. Our next big performance will be at the 2020 Sydney Fringe Festival.

It's been a big year for our Social and Recreational Disability groups – both in numbers of consumers with mild-to-moderate disability and the range of activities. A North Ryde RSL Community Club Grant expanded consumers' horizons with theatre, dance, marine and wildlife attractions through Merlin passes plus Taronga Zoo Friends memberships. More regularly, our adult consumers enjoy sailing supported by SailAbility and music sessions with Penny Martin.

Disability consumers benefited from 1,000 hours' support from dedicated volunteers and students. One volunteer, Isabella Wilks, was awarded the 2019 Young Volunteer of the Year Award by City of Ryde.

We provided  
a total of  
**28,000**  
hours' social support  
for groups of  
all kinds

We provided more  
**8,000**  
hours of social  
support to CALD  
groups



More than  
**17,500**  
hours of activities  
for NDIS  
participants

# CONSUMER INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMS

*We set up a new domestic assistance service – **household cleaning** – with additional Commonwealth Home Support Programme funding to service consumers in 2019-20. The new household cleaning service will complement our other supports for independence for seniors and people with a disability.*

**In-home nursing** - Our consumer independence team of Registered Nurses and Personal Care Workers regularly reviews consumers' changing needs to ensure comprehensive care evolves as it should, helping to avoid illness and hospital admissions and enabling consumers to stay independent. The team not only provides clinical and personal care but takes a holistic approach which includes taking a meal, feeding a pet or changing a bed during a home visit.

**In-home podiatry** - SCS arranges registered podiatrists as often as every eight weeks to treat housebound patients and assess ongoing needs. The service covers the entire North Shore from the Sydney Harbour Bridge to Hornsby.

**Home-delivered meals** - Our team of staff coordinators and volunteers continues to bring nutritious meals – 29,000 this year – to people at home. Our meals co-ordinator regularly reviews suppliers to ensure quality and value and this is reflected in consumer uptake: 80% of people who try our meals order them again.

**Home modifications and maintenance (HM & M), and gardening services** - HM & M work is done by registered tradesmen while gardening services rely on teams of generous volunteers supervised by our qualified gardeners.

**Maintenance** jobs include minor carpentry, plumbing and concrete repairs or pressure cleaning.

**Modifications** our tradesmen typically make are installing hand-held showers, internal and external 'grab' rails, ramps to replace steps – among other things. SCS tradesmen made homes safer with more than \$280,000 in modifications work this year.

**Gardening** services include weeding, pruning and cleaning pathways for safety plus advice on making gardens easier to access and maintain.

Gardening teams were involved in two community projects this year. At the Meyers Ave Community Garden project in Hunters Hill, old garden beds were replaced with new beds, with help from the Botanic Gardens Community Greening Team. At Blandville Court, Gladesville, our gardeners worked with residents on a successful makeover of outdoor spaces.

## Linen

Friendly volunteers visit fortnightly to swap used linen and towels for fresh and make beds. As well as fresh linen, consumers enjoy a chat with a friendly visitor.

SCS nurses and personal care staff spent

**4,870**  
hours keeping locals healthy and at home



SCS tradesmen and gardeners spent

**10,000**  
hours making homes safer, accessible and manageable

# INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL SUPPORT

## Volunteer home visiting

Our volunteers don't just visit; they work with consumers to recognise their strengths and pursue goals, and their work has nurtured a range of creative activities.

## Medical transport

A handful of volunteers made more than 100 medical transport trips with local consumers.

## Accompanied shopping and other individual social supports

Community need has grown, so services such as accompanied shopping (and other individual supports) have seen hours up by half to more than 180 hours each month.

## Support for carers

SCS services for adult carers include advocacy, resources and support through six established carer support groups in Ryde and Hunters Hill, plus:

- Flexible respite
- Preventative and early intervention, counselling and emotional support
- Information, education and training including culturally appropriate resources
- Referral and support to access other services

## Community Visitors Scheme

Intergenerational visiting in residential facilities was up this year. A Lane Cove family whose mum is our registered visitor says they have 'adopted a granny'. Her teenagers accompany her on weekends to visit their resident, so the teens get to interact with an older person and hear their stories, while the resident benefits from the company of all the family. Another volunteer visitor brings her delightful four-year-old daughter; Miss Four's visits are warmly welcomed, not just by the visited resident but by everyone on the floor.



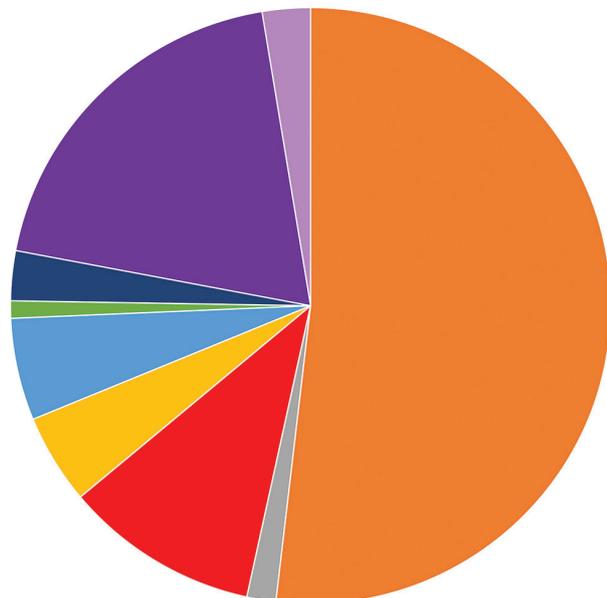
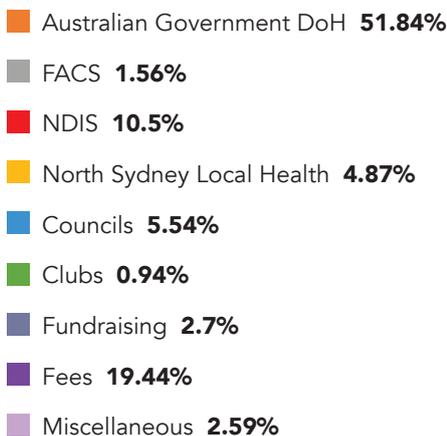
*"Human connection, relationships, compassion and understanding will stay central to our services and our role as an easy access point to complex aged care and disability services."*



## Events and funding

On behalf of our consumers, Sydney Community Services wholeheartedly thanks our generous funders, especially Commonwealth and State bodies and councils. Your support is vital to our essential local services in this, our 58th year. And we look forward to ongoing positive collaborations in 2020:

- **Australian Government Department of Health**
- **Australian Government Department of Social Services**
- **NSW Department of Communities and Justice** – Targeted Early Intervention for families and young people
- **Lane Cove Council**
- **Hunters Hill Council**
- **City of Ryde**
- **Gladesville RSL and Community Club** – sponsors our ongoing successful community art program and annual affordable Art Expo
- **Chatswood RSL** – supporting Different Degrees drama workshops
- **North Ryde RSL Community Club** – opened up new experiences for two Sydney Community Services groups of adults with a disability, with a grant for special events and activities including theatre, marine and wildlife attractions
- **Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club**
- **Hunters Hill Food and Wine Festival and its organising committee** – the festival is organised and attended by our community – which got behind us again this May. Despite grey skies and fewer visitors, the 2019 Festival donated \$13,500 to SCS
- **Discover Hunters Hill**
- **Lane Cove Fun Run** – Lane Cove Public School organisers made SCS a beneficiary this year
- **Rotary Club of Lane Cove**
- **Probus**
- **URM Group** – United Resource Management Group
- **Hunters Hill Quilters**
- **Streetsmart Action Against Homelessness**
- **Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill**
- **C3 Church Lane Cove**
- **Gladesville Boronia Park Uniting Church**
- **Gladeshill Presbyterian Church of Australia**
- **Lane Cove Country Club**
- **Westpac**
- **Holden**
- **Ciena**
- **IGA**
- **Hunters Hill Hotel**
- **Longueville Hotel**
- **L J Hooker**
- **Dooleys Lidcome Catholic Club**
- We would also like to thank the many private individuals who donate funds to SCS.





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