



# Sydney Community Services



SYDNEY COMMUNITY SERVICES  
- HELPING YOU TO ENJOY AN INDEPENDENT, COMFORTABLE LIFE AT HOME

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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LANE COVE (HEAD OFFICE), 1 POTTERY LANE, LANE COVE  
HUNTERS HILL 46 GLADESVILLE ROAD, HUNTERS HILL

[www.sydneycs.org](http://www.sydneycs.org)

# Chairman's and Chief Executive's View

HOME  
DELIVERED MEALS

21,772

735  
GARDENS  
AND HOMES  
MAINTAINED

274  
HOME  
MODIFICATIONS

LINEN  
838  
BEDS CHANGED

## Message from John Devine Chair of Sydney Community Services

I start this reflection on the past year with a note of great sadness. Our highly regarded Board Director Deborah Hutchens passed away at the beginning of November 2020. Deborah had been a Board Member of Lane Cove and North Side Community Services and then Sydney Community Services for over six years. Deborah was a conscientious member of the Board bringing considered input to the discussions. She always had the benefit of the community in her thoughts and advice. We will miss her insight and good humour very much.

Deborah was one of ten Board Directors of Sydney Community Services. Our role is to set the strategy of the organisation and oversee the direction, governance and fiscal decisions of the organisation as a whole. Directors are appointed by members of the organisation and each year present the financial statements and an overview of the past twelve months to the members for approval.

Directors are volunteers who give up their time willingly to attend monthly Board meetings, committee meetings and workshops around strategy and specific subjects like marketing. They bring their own expertise from their past careers

and life experience. All are members of the local community and undertake to keep abreast of the burning issues in the local area.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Sydney Community Services. Without local people giving up their time and local knowledge the organisation would not exist. Over 300 volunteers work closely with our dedicated staff meaning that we can deliver services and support to residents who need our help to remain active, independent and happy in their own homes.

This year has been a very challenging one for Sydney Community Services. The Board has asked me to publically acknowledge and thank all the staff, led by our CEO Gillian Batt, for the way they have proved to be adaptable, dedicated and industrious and ensured that all our clients have received the services and support they have needed to stay safely in their own homes.

Board Directors of Sydney Community Services are John Devine (Chair), Warren Bell (Vice Chair), Deborah Hill, Rod Cooke, Ian Longbottom, Peter Fay, James Shevlin and David Brooks-Horn. Alexandra Meldrum and Dr Carl Wong joined The Sydney Community Services Board in August 2020.

## Message from Gillian Batt CEO of Sydney Community Services

2019/2020 has been a year like no other. The latter half of 2019 was a normal time with clients receiving their services at home and the Park View Room bursting every day with people having conversations, playing games, sharing lunches and afternoon teas and watching movies. There were regular bus trips to places of interest and delicious meals in cafes and restaurants. Little did we know that life as we knew it would change completely.

In the first six months of 2020, COVID-19 made its presence known and changed the way we did everything. We continued to provide all our essential services, but with various modifications. People concerned about leaving their homes called on us to provide home delivered meals and many new clients have been surprised by the quality and range we offer. But we remained completely reliant on our committed team of volunteers who continued to turn up despite the limitations posed by the pandemic. We provided full PPE training, face masks and hand sanitiser and asked clients to put a table outside their front door so physical contact could be minimised. Volunteers also kept their distance upon arrival to ensure the client was able to receive the meal in person, while using that

opportunity to assess the client's health at the same time.

Our linen service provided clean sheets and towels to those unable to make their beds alone, despite the limitations of physical distancing. We checked in with all our clients and fortunately many had friends or relatives who could make their beds for them. Where that was not possible our nurses and personal care assistants took the place of the regular volunteers and made their beds for them.

Throughout the pandemic we kept in touch with all our clients, offering emotional support and practical support such as shopping, either in person or online. We also offered advice and emotional support as well as financial counselling and emergency food parcels. With the support of Harris Farms and the charity Touched By Olivia we were able to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to families in need, including women and children staying at Delvena Women's Refuge.

We have had some additional financial support for meals and nursing, but all other services have been funded through our own resources and kind donations.

# Services Breakdown – 2019-2020

The number of SCS services delivered dipped 16% from 36,367 in the previous year to 30,526 in 2019-2020. This dip was anticipated, given the enormous impact of the pandemic.

8428 **Home Nursing** visits took place across 2019-2020 – a figure that cannot be compared with the year previous owing to changes in the reporting structure. Despite referrals only being accepted based on capacity, we continued to see an overall increase in the service towards the end of this financial year.

**Home Delivered Meals** experienced 13.3% dip from 25,116 in the previous year to 21,772 in 2019-2020. However, food runs boomed during the pandemic lockdown, increasing by 30% and prompting SCS to borrow two freezers from Lane Cove Council. Home delivered meals also rebounded in May (2109 delivered) and June (2094 delivered).

The end-of-year figures for **Social Support Groups** tell an interesting story. In 2018-2019, 25,746 hours were delivered. In 2019-2020, that number fell 25% to 19,150 hours. However, social support group numbers have been hit hard by the impact of the pandemic, with most groups forced to remain 'in hibernation' since late January/early February. Had this not been the case, a strong upwards trajectory for these services looked highly likely.

Despite the constraints of lockdown, the **Linen Service** saw an increase in uptakes, from 797 beds changed in 2018-2019 to 838 this year. This figure was reached with the help of the Nurses who were able to step in for volunteers who were unable to help having been deemed "vulnerable" during lockdown.

Similarly, despite the pandemic, **Podiatry Visits** increased from 2144 in 2018-2019 to 2395 this year.

The **Advisory Service** remained comparable with the previous year with some 500 hours delivered in 2019-20 versus 546 in 2018-19.

**Social Support for Individuals** (which includes the **Shopping Service** and **Phone Shopping**) registered 4,278 hours of service this year, only a slight decline on the previous year (4,563).

**Home Modifications** fell from 319 in the previous year to 274 in 2019-2020, owing to the fact that lockdown prevented Occupational Therapists from conducting in-home assessments.

The **Carers Support** service witnessed only a small drop in hours on the previous year from 1807 hours to 1734 hours this year, despite the effect of the pandemic.

Hours dedicated to **Disability Support** fell 25% from 15,349 in the previous year to 11,504 in 2019-2020. Despite the drop caused by the pandemic, from late March onwards disability groups resumed their Social Club, Different Degrees Drama and Creative Movement classes via Zoom, and operating under COVID-19 safety recommendations, the social and recreational group, walking groups and 184A Art Group.

The **Reach Higher Program**, which aims to support and empower young people and their families who have difficulty accessing basic supports due to extenuating factors such as isolation and financial disadvantage, continued. SCS continued to implement material aid-based supports prior to the occurrence of crisis points.

During the pandemic, there was a 10-fold increase in the number of families in need of crisis supports. SCS worked in partnership with local grocers, churches and community members to source and deliver food and necessities such as toiletries. The **Pandemic Support Program** was quickly overhauled so that it functioned in a COVID-19 safe manner, which included mandatory social distancing and sanitisation. Due to the exemplary efforts of staff, all families in need received support in a safe and helpful manner.

PODIATRY

2395  
HOME VISITS

DOMESTIC  
ASSISTANCE

708  
SERVICES  
PROVIDED

8428  
HOME NURSING  
VISITS

500  
HOURS OF  
ADVISORY

During the pandemic, there was a  
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in need of crisis supports

# Thank you to our Funders and Supporters

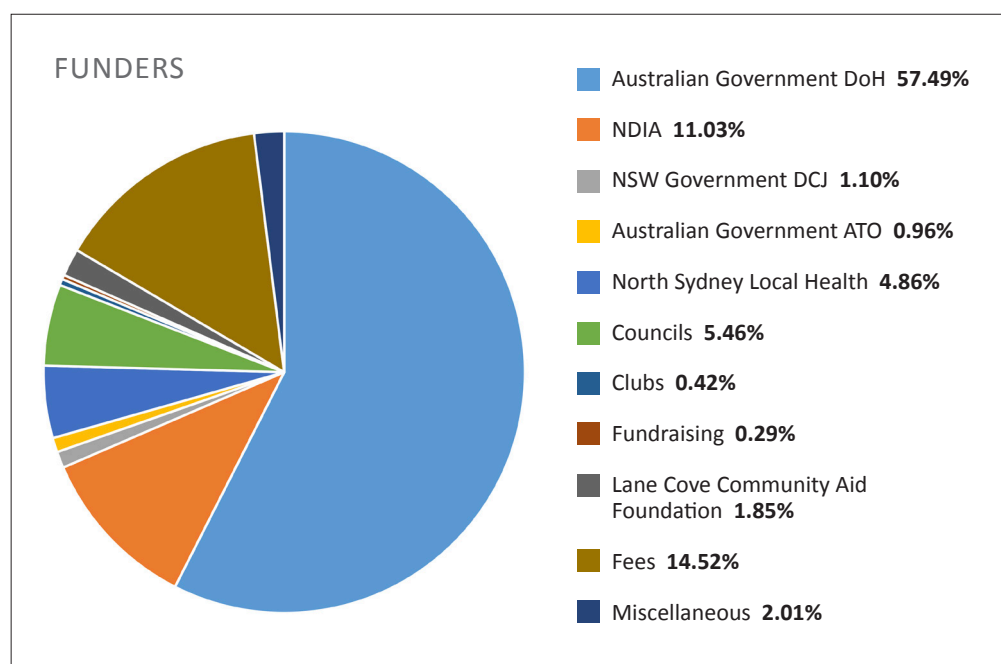
On behalf of our consumers, Sydney Community Services wholeheartedly thanks our generous funders, especially Commonwealth and State bodies and councils. Your support is vital to our essential local services.

**SOCIAL  
SUPPORT GROUPS**  
**19,150**  
**HOURS**

**SOCIAL  
SUPPORT  
INDIVIDUAL**  
**4278**  
**HOURS (PHONE  
SHOPPING, ONLINE  
SHOPPING)**

**DISABILITY  
SUPPORT GROUPS**  
**11,503**  
**HOURS**

**CARERS  
SUPPORT  
RESPITE CARE**  
**1734**  
**HOURS**



- SUPPORTERS**
- Australian Government Department of Health
  - Australian Government Department of Social Services
  - National Disability Insurance Agency
  - NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice
  - Department of Veterans Affairs
  - North Sydney Local Health
  - Lane Cove Community Aid Foundation
  - Lane Cove Council
  - City of Ryde Council
  - Willoughby Council
  - Hunters Hill Council
  - Trent Zimmerman MP
  - Anthony Roberts MP
  - Gladesville RSL and Community Club
  - Chatswood RSL
  - North Ryde RSL Community Club
  - Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
  - Hunters Hill Food and Wine Festival and its organising committee
  - Help Street Foundation
  - Northcote
  - IGA Hunters Hill
  - Hunters Hill Hotel
  - Longueville Hotel
  - Raine & Horne
  - Rotary Club of Lane Cove
  - Discover Hunters Hill
  - Lane Cove Fun Run
  - Hunters Hill Quilters
  - Streetsmart Action Against Homelessness
  - Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill
  - St Mark's Anglican Church Hunters Hill
  - C3 Church Lane Cove
  - Gladesville Boronia Park Uniting Church
  - Gladeshill Presbyterian Church of Australia
  - Westpac
  - Dooleys Lidcome Catholic Club
  - Probus Club Hunters Hill
  - Mixed Probus Hunters Hill
  - Ciena Australia – corporate volunteers
  - Harris Farm Market
  - Ryde District Mums
  - Happy Hens
  - Touched by Olivia
  - Gladesville Eastwood Rotary Club
  - Hunters Hill Rugby Club
  - Community Builders Program
  - Bags with Dignity
  - Hallam Avenue Tennis Club