



# Annual Report 2022-23

*The blossoming of Living My Way*



## Throughout this Annual Report, you'll find illustrations of flowers and blossoms. They represent abundance and flourishing, and first appeared in our beautiful origin story booklet, "Becoming the lucky many."

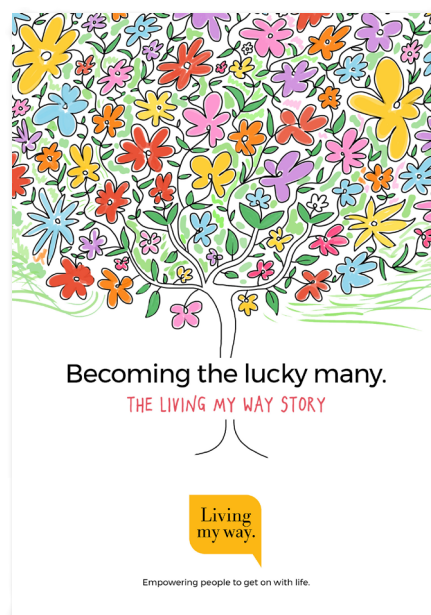
It was produced this year to honour our 30th anniversary. We went digging to rediscover the story of our beginnings, and the three decades since of staying true to that original mission.

It has been a profound and inspiring experience to hear those stories: who was there, how they came together and what fuelled their determination to protect and foster the rights for each of us to live our own lives – in our own way.

The 14 original Members had tasted true independence for the first time through a groundbreaking pilot study for people with significant physical disability. They thought of themselves as the Lucky Few, and when they came together to form our organisation their vision was to expand opportunities for others. They wanted the Lucky Few to blossom into the Lucky Many. They knew we would always be stronger together.

We've learnt a lot this year. We're so proud of how we started and we're proud of where we're going.

This Annual Report tells the story of how, together, we are continuing to flourish.



[Get PDF of book here.](#)

## Acknowledgement of Country



Living My Way acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Pictured are the blossoms of the *Melaleuca ericifolia*, commonly known as the tea tree. Celebrated for its aromatic foliage and medicinal use, the tea tree holds a hallowed place in Aboriginal heritage and continues to flourish along the coastal regions of New South Wales, spanning from the eastern reaches to the southern shores. Photo credit: Michael Keogh.

# Contents

Chair's Message	6
CEO's Message	7
Our Members	8
Our Team	20
Support Workers	21
Head Office	25
Executive Team	27
Our Community	28
Our Organisation	30
Our Organisation's Health	34
Our Vision and Values	38
Our Board	39
Acknowledgements	42

## So much can happen in a year



1 Jul 2022

### CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

Our team is realigned and our arms are open wide. Welcome to our first People and Culture and Service Planning teams

11 Jul 2022

### COMING TOGETHER IS THE BEGINNING

The refreshed Board of Directors and our newly established team meet at our head office

5 Sep 2022

### MOVING WITH THE TIMES

Introducing our first Quality, Risk and Training team

26 Sep 2022

### IT'S HERE

All staff can now enjoy rostered days off

24 Nov 2022

### SOME NEW FACES

Say hello to our three new Directors

14 Dec 2022

### BRINGING IT BACK

Our Work Health and Safety Committee is back

9 Jan 2023

### IT'S A FIRST

Our first trainee, Samantha, has arrived



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**6 Feb 2023**

## IMAGINING THE FUTURE

The Board of Directors and Executive team meet to plan for the next strategic cycle

**1 Mar 2023**

## PHEW!

Finally, we can relax our COVID-19 policies and procedures

**2 Mar 2023**

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Our Seven Hills satellite office is open

**17 Apr 2023**

## SOMEONE NEW

We welcome our new Company Secretary, Jeanette!

**25 May 2023**

## CHEERS TO 30 YEARS

Time to celebrate the Lucky Few becoming the Lucky Many

**28 May 2023**

## EXTENDING OURSELVES

It's audit time. Let's extend our scope to include high-intensity daily personal support

# Chair's Message

*As I write this, I am filled with pride and gratitude. The past year was a testament to what we can accomplish working together. Our year has been filled with resilience, determination and a lot of heart, all aimed at making life better for our Members, team and the community we're all a part of.*

## Big cheers to a milestone anniversary

To me, the standout moment of the last 12 months was definitely our 30th anniversary. It was a tribute to our founders who championed the right for self-determination and independence for people living with disability. As we deep dived into our heritage, we uncovered our rich history that revealed how the aspirations of our founding Members continue to shape our choices and decisions today. Beyond the milestone celebrations, this anniversary highlights the enduring ethos and values our founding Members instilled in our organisation.

I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our visionaries for their lasting mandate of independence, dignity and inclusion.

## A year of notable alignment and progress in governance

Looking back at what transpired over the past year, we have shown we can roll with the punches. Our determination to provide better services and support, and to look after the wellbeing of our Members and our team guided us as we faced challenges and embraced opportunities to deliver even better quality services.

*Our determination to provide better care, and to look after the wellbeing of our Members and our team guided us as we faced challenges and embraced opportunities to deliver even better quality services.*

It is worth mentioning that we enhanced our team with the addition of a new in-house Company Secretary, Jeanette Brooks. Jeanette's extensive knowledge and experience in policies, procedures, risk and compliance make her a valuable addition to our team, providing clear guidance on governance issues for both the Board and the organisation.

There were two initiatives that hit a high note for me: to make sure Living My Way is and remains a safe working environment, and that we continue to strive to be reliable and nimble for our Members. Through continuous watchfulness, unceasing accountability, and active Member engagement, we have maintained a culture that nurtures confidence and delivers quality care.

## Having meaningful conversations and connections

We are always grateful for the input we receive from our Members, from our team and from the wider disability community. You remain a compass that keeps us on the right track. I am referring to initiatives such as our focus groups, surveys, check-ins and networking events, to name a few.

## A bright road ahead

We are ready to spread our wings. Since October 2022, we've welcomed 10 new icare participants and opened a satellite office in Western Sydney. This expansion shows a commitment to our mission: to grow the business not for the sake of growth, but to help more people with disability.

As long as I am your Chairman, I am here to ensure we keep our founding Members' spirit alive, and we remain faithful to our credo:

***"Empowering people to get on with life".***

**Peter Strohkorb** Chair



# CEO's Message

*This last year at Living My Way (LMW) has been a beautiful combination of the old and of the new. Of celebrating the established excellence forged by our founding Members through our 30th anniversary, but at the same time preparing the organisation for the change season ahead, with the Disability Royal Commission and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review on the horizon.*

On the first day of the new financial year, we were straight down to business as we stood up the new organisational structure. This initiative has refreshed every function within the organisation, but importantly it created two new portfolios and teams designed to improve service quality and service response for our Members. The People and Culture and Quality, Risk and Training portfolios and the Service Planning team have already made their mark, with a bumper year in Support Worker recruitment and training.

It has been so encouraging to watch each team in the new structure make a valuable and concerted contribution to the success of Living My Way (LMW) this year. We continued to keep Members safe with a good supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) across the year; we supported Members through the changes to the SCHADS award; we kept Members more regularly informed and updated by distributing our newsletter, The Living Well, on a bi-monthly basis; we invested in systems upgrades to enhance Member supports; and we improved our internal conversations through the development of a staff intranet. Thank you to the entire LMW team for their collegiate approach to making the new structure work for the benefit of our Members.

In a world where virtual meetings have become the norm, I was so pleased to have actual human-to-human contact with the LMW community this year. In July 2022, the Board of Directors made a trip to the head office to meet the team, to learn directly from them about our work and to celebrate the achievements of our Members. Early in 2023 the

*It has been so encouraging to watch each team in the new structure make a valuable and concerted contribution to the success of Living My Way this year.*

Board of Directors also met face-to-face with the Executive Team to begin important conversations about our next strategic cycle. But more importantly, I was so thrilled to meet with many of our Members and supporters in May 2023 at our 30th anniversary celebration event.

There is richness and diversity in the membership of the organisation and that was clearly evident and celebrated as we gathered for the 30th Anniversary. Please can I say a big thank you to all those Members who were willing to share their stories on the day, both founding Members and contemporary Members, and for those Members who simply turned up to show their support. The LMW story continues to be written by us all – as our origin story told us, 'Coming together is the beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success'.

I am very pleased to present this annual report, and I believe everyone involved with LMW can be proud of the changes and adjustments we made during the year to ensure that our Members have been well supported and valued.

Thank you, as always, to our dedicated Board of Directors who have supported our team in their endeavours throughout the year.

**Mark Turley**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Our Members

ANGELO

# A way out of this joint

***When you lose your mobility, it preys on you that you'll lose respect and dignity too. I'd always been an out and about bloke, a leader at work and amongst my friends. I'd be there for them and then get up, give them a hug and walk myself off home.***

When paralytic polio finally caught up with me, I really bucked against a wheelchair. I thought, 'No way, you're not gonna get me in that!' But my resistance made life really difficult. I couldn't get out and do normal everyday things for myself or with the family.

My wife Deb was often onto me about it and finally one day, I just said to myself, 'Hey mate, what are you doing?' So I did get in the wheelchair and I know now that I should have given in earlier. I was so much

happier once I did. I got my taste for independence back and I realised there was just one small thing still standing in my way. That small thing was a step at my front door!

Living My Way is always asking me, 'What else do you think would make your life better?' And I remember saying one time, 'I want to be able to get out of this joint myself without any help.' Before long, the wheels were turning and the NDIS had agreed to our plan to eliminate the step and build direct ramp access. Mission complete and life changing. Now I can get out and about myself. I can see a movie on my own, do more with the kids.

If I could offer one word of advice to anyone in the same situation as me, I'd say, 'Don't wait like I did. Use whatever will help you keep getting out there.'

**Angelo, Member**

***And I've got a smile on my face. I'm not like this struggling, cranky old man anymore. It's amazing because I get so many hellos in the wheelchair now. It's like 'Hey mate! Hello mate!'***





## Our Members

EMILY

# Creating a life of opportunity

***We love the creative work of Emily Dash. As an artist, producer and advocate, she is challenging the perceptions of disability and is an exceptional talent.***

Emily's creative work in her films 'Groundhog Night', 'The Cards I'm Dealt' and 'Valiant' is shining a spotlight on the intersection of disability and queerness and achieved rave reviews.

Her work brings greater awareness about the disability community and the range of sexual spectrums.

For our anniversary celebrations, Emily crafted and performed a short film called '[A Seed of a Dream](#)', and our audience loved it. Her film reminds us that support is a human right for people with disability to help build an equitable and inclusive life.

Thanks Emily, for being an advocate and voice that encourages the world to challenge their perceptions about people with disability.

***The disability community is full of people across the whole range of the sexual spectrum. There are a lot of us who don't conform to heteronormativity.***



## Our Members

GARTH

# On the road again

***Five years ago last week, I was travelling to a friend's wedding in Ireland when I got very sick. I was able to return to Australia a few months later, for more treatment and eventually I became an amputee. Suddenly, it was like everything I knew had been taken away from me. I had to re-learn from scratch.***

During those first three years, I wasn't too concerned about not driving. There was so much going on that I didn't miss it all that much. I had family and Support Workers helping me get to appointments and my wife could drive, of course. It's funny. I thought I'd miss it more but it didn't bother me... until it did. I had my prosthetics by then.

I think it was the long drives I missed. We'd always loved them. Driving up the coast since when I was a young guy with my mates heading to Byron for music festivals and then with my wife and family. I would always do the bulk of the drive. It was that feeling of driving on the open road that I missed.

It took a while to get my licence back. I first had an assessment with an Occupational Therapist and then came the special training and practice. The learning process took 10-12 hours and it was good after 20 years to brush up on driving skills.

It's a thorough and gradual process with a specialist driving instructor taking me through the steps. We progressively went on to busy areas, and then eventually highway driving. I wanted to feel 100% confident, and ready to handle most driving situations. The only modification I needed was an attachment to my steering wheel and an automatic vehicle.

By the time I had to do the test, I felt very ready for the open road but it probably took me a month of driving until it was just second nature. It was a funny thing because I'd driven for 20 years before and now, mentally I found I had to remind myself, 'Oh, I'm an amputee now, you have to be more careful with how you do things.'

One of the funniest things was picking up my daughters from school for the first time. They didn't quite remember me driving and then there I was. It took them both a while to register and they're kind of like, 'Why are you in the driving seat?'

Haha! What was I doing there? Don't you love kids!

**Garth, Member**

*These days Garth and his family are rocking it on the road together with long drives and holiday adventures up and down the coast. Garth drops his kids to school most days, picks them up, and is a happy chauffeur to sport and all the other family activities. He's back sitting behind the wheel and no-one asks why.*

***It's just been this gradual journey, week by week. I had to learn how to feed myself again, I had to learn how to put a shirt on again, I had to learn how to balance. Just little things like picking up keys or a coin, or feeding yourself and making a cup of tea, just simple things.***



## Our Members

FIONA (GARTH'S WIFE)

# Always moving forward

***We both agreed early on that our only way forward is to keep moving, and that has remained throughout our journey.***

In the early days being a physio with Intensive Care experience helped me feel at home at the hospital. I knew the health lingo and understood how it all worked, which was sometimes good and bad.

The love Garth has for his family made him determined to get cracking as quickly as possible. 'I don't have a choice, I have two little girls, and I'm not wallowing or giving up.'

When he came home from the hospital, I went back to work three days a week. I don't know how we would have survived without our Support Workers, as before Garth had his prosthetics, we all needed more help. Our Support Workers took over some of that role from me, and I think that was nice for Garth as well.

They supported our daughters and helped our family where we needed it. We've had both of our Support Workers right from the beginning, helping us all the way through, and we trust them with our family. We also couldn't have done it without our own family and friends who have been with us the whole way.

Garth is just a normal Dad but also a superhero in the eyes of his daughters - they don't see disability as a barrier at all. He loves nothing more than doing the normal running around for our kids... so much so that 18 months ago, we had another one!

**Fiona**  
(wife of Member Garth)

***He set his sights on running blades, then driving, and now learning golf. He doesn't see limitations and always says 'I can't do that yet.'***



## Our Members

HANNAH

# What one woman on a mission can do

***We are so proud of Hannah Diviney. As an advocate for the rights of all people with disability, she's a stand out.***

Over the past year, Hannah made international headlines when she called out some of the world's biggest popstars, Beyoncé and Lizzo, for using an ableist slur. And amazingly, they listened, and changed their lyrics. That's making change on a BIG scale!

And the world loved it. Suddenly her message had an audience of old and young, from diverse backgrounds and situations. Her name and her words appeared on the BBC and NBC, and in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. She was named 'The Voice of Now' at *Marie Claire's* 2022 Women of the Year Awards and graced the cover of *The Australian Womens Weekly*.

Hannah is a multi-talent, starring in *Latecomers* for SBS alongside Angus, another Member. *Latecomers* was created by people with cerebral palsy.

***Thanks Hannah for your feisty (and stylish) work to show the world that the best assumption about people with disability... is no assumption at all!***



Hannah Diviney  
@hannah\_diviney

Waking up this morning to hear @Beyonce has heard and recognised the disabled community's call to remove ableist language from her music is an incredible feeling. Where she leads, the music industry follows. Big thank you to Bey + her team. I'm so grateful ❤️

9:48 AM · Aug 2, 2022



Photo at left by Julie Adams for *The Australian Women's Weekly*  
Photo above by Steven Chee for *Marie Claire*

## Our Members

ANGUS & HANNAH

# The Latecomers

*“Depictions of people with disability are still vanishingly rare on TV. Often played by actors with no lived experience, even when cast appropriately, these roles are usually relegated to sidekick status sans sex life. Co-creators Emma Myers and **Angus Thompson** – writers with cerebral palsy – shake things up with a glorious bang in this saucy, sassy and seriously snappy dramedy co-written with comedian **Nina Oyama**. Thompson also stars alongside **Beyoncé** and **Lizzo**-checking activist **Hannah Diviney** (a revelation) as adults tired of watching their carers root around and wanting in on the action. Easily the funniest, frankest Australian show of the year.”*

Stephen A Russell, Flicks



Photo by Renata Dominik



Our Members Angus Thompson and Hannah Diviney starred in a six part SBS miniseries called *Latecomers* last year. Angus co-created the series. Both Angus and Hannah have cerebral palsy.

A scene from the making of 'Latecomers'. Photo by Renata Dominik



## Our Members

### ALEX & WARWICK



## Alex and his love of the outdoors

*I'm Alessia, Alex's Mum. This is what he's been up to this year...*

Alex loves a challenge, and we are all about giving him the freedom to be a regular teenager, whenever possible.

He has always loved sport and anything physical, both at school and within our local community. Alex had to give up contact sport early on due to his epilepsy, but we love to see him active and having fun with mates.

This year, Alex competed at a multi disability school competition where he won four medals including three gold and one silver all in the field events. We are proud and it's a great achievement.

His personal training sessions are a real highlight, and he feels fit and happy from the weekly sessions. His trainer keeps him on his toes with boxing sessions, and we know it makes him feel great.

We know Alex will keep achieving and exploring everything life has to offer, and never turning away from a new challenge.

## These boots were made for talking

***Warwick may not make boots for a living, but his efforts rival any master craftsman. Life gave Warwick a unique challenge, that required him to become a shoemaker...***

My wife, Lynn, and I are a public speaking team. We enjoy nothing more than travelling to new communities to share our experience and knowledge with church communities. We love our adventures together but I've had Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease for many years. My feet are twisted inward which creates quite a few challenges for walking and standing and footwear can help a lot.

I took matters into my own hands for nearly a decade and transformed my own ordinary shoes into the weirdest creations you could imagine. I couldn't walk without them.

And then, a while down the track and through NDIS support, I received my own custom-designed orthotic boots. They were crafted exclusively for my needs. When I slipped my feet into those custom boots, I can't tell you how much difference it made.



Warwick's new boots

These boots transformed my life. Now I can enjoy staying active and keeping up my mobility at the gym and pool. After all, "I didn't spend all those years making shoes for me to fall apart!"

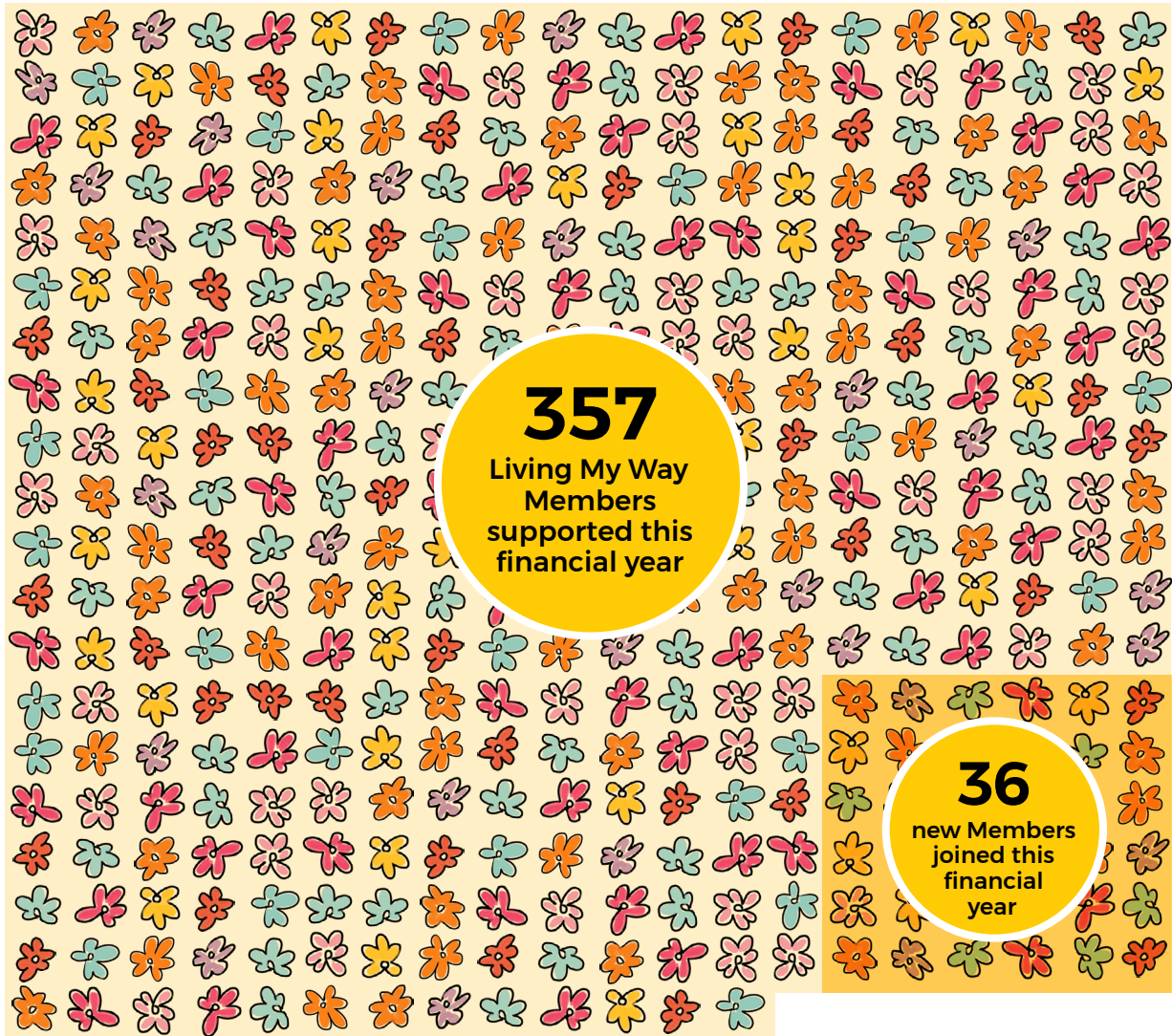
My wife and I continue our travels together, with my trusty boots a constant companion ready to step into life's new adventures.

**Warwick, Member**



# Membership highlights

Total Number of Members as of 30 June 2023 **393**



*In this financial year, our primary focus was directed towards enhancing the quality of our services and recruitment of workers, rather than solely pursuing membership growth.*

# Your success is our success

Every year we are amazed by what our Members can achieve. From overcoming complex needs and health-related issues to obtaining the financial resources to just get on with life, these achievements collectively demonstrate your strong determination to fight for what you want and need. We are so proud to be able to ease your access to the resources and support you deserve.

**During the budget plan reviews, we achieved some remarkable results. For instance, we assisted one Member in securing an amazing 485% of their initial allocation.**

Working with Members to help get more NDIS funding is a big win for us. It matters because these additional financial resources have ushered in a range of positive opportunities, including greater independence, heightened levels of support, and the pursuit of personal aspirations like learning to drive. In short, enhancing your choice, enjoyment and overall quality of life.

### What does success look like?

We try to always go above and beyond in catering to your unique and specific needs. We were able to secure appropriate accommodations, facilitate home modifications, ensure access to important healthcare interventions – such as funding for a registered nurse to provide high intensity support – and obtain a power wheelchair to enable life saving beachfront patrols.

### What has everyday success looked like for some of us?





# NDIS Review

*In April 2023, Living My Way held focus groups with Members and their primary carers to gather their insights and firsthand experiences of the NDIS. The sessions focused on the four key questions presented by the NDIS Review.*

The audio and transcript files submitted enabled the personal experiences, concerns and solutions of our Members to be heard, along with the submission from Living My Way.

### Members and carers expressed their primary concerns about the NDIS, which revolved around:

- ✿ the bureaucracy and complexity of the Scheme
- ✿ the capability and transparency of the NDIS
- ✿ the perceived lack of emphasis on individual participants

### These concerns often resulted in feelings of:

**Stress**

**Frustration**

**Exhaustion**

**Disempowerment** and

**Uncertainty**

particularly when circumstances changed.

### Several potential solutions emerged, such as:

- ✿ increased communication with participants
- ✿ transparency
- ✿ active listening by the NDIS
- ✿ a reduction in the need for annual plan reviews
- ✿ enhancements to the expertise within the NDIA
- ✿ increased State government involvement
- ✿ expansion of disability support services to alleviate pressure on the NDIS.

Members and carers also recognised that while the NDIS may be flawed, it represents an improvement over the previous system. Features like funding that follows the participant have increased choice and control, enabling our Members to lead more empowered lives.

These valuable insights and perspectives shared by our Members and carers will undoubtedly contribute to the ongoing efforts to refine and improve the NDIS for all its stakeholders.

## In Memory

We remember and honour the lives of our Members and dear friends who have passed. Though they are no longer with us, their impact and strength continue to inspire us all.

- ✿ Graeme Channell
- ✿ Sally-Anne Monahan
- ✿ Amylia Neverly
- ✿ Kenneth Beattie (Founding Member)
- ✿ Jake Lawler

- ✿ Andrew Aliferis
- ✿ Susan Dixon
- ✿ Lindsay Melbourne
- ✿ Farah Karimipour
- ✿ Andrew Bamford

# Member Survey 2023 – a snapshot of discoveries

In April 2023, we carried out our yearly Member Survey because we can always do better. The feedback and insights we received from our Members are truly valuable, and we're taking your input to heart. We're committed to incorporating Members' feedback into our ongoing efforts to make our organisation even better. It's all part of our dedication to continuous improvement.

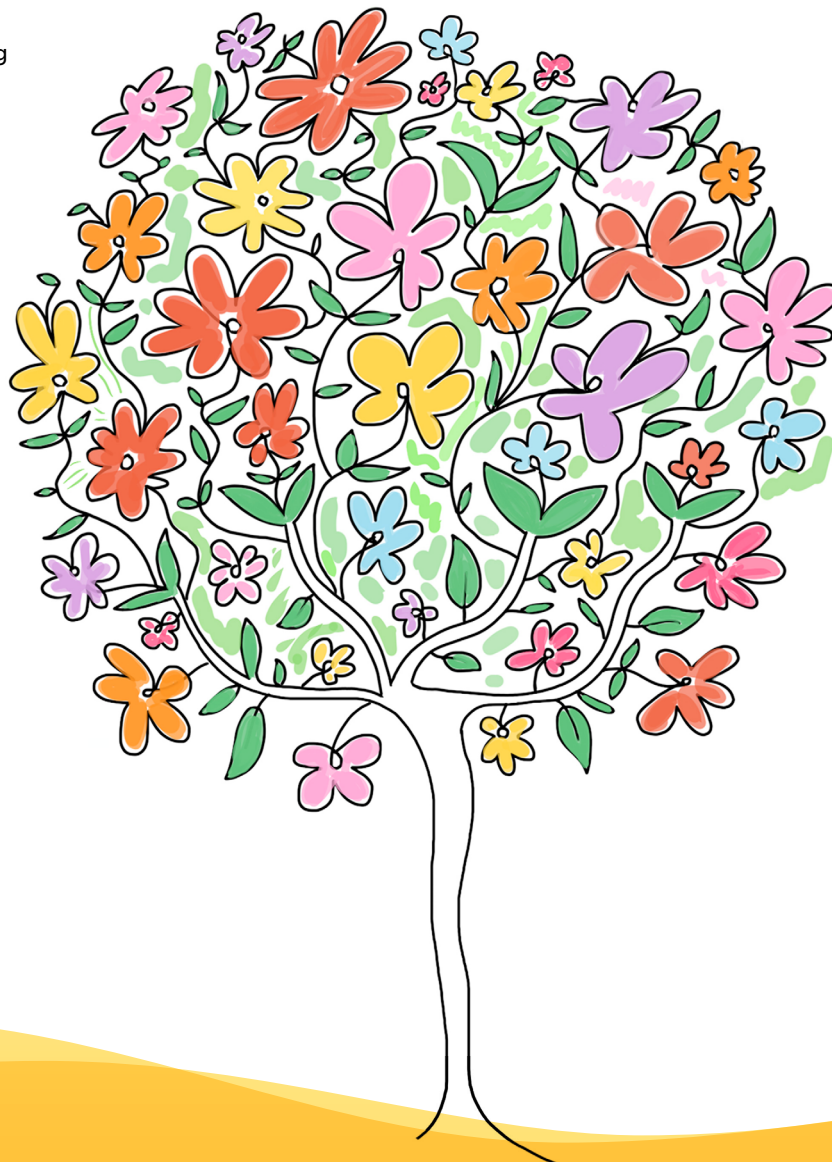
**89%**  
of our Members express feeling respected and valued through their interactions with Living My Way, where a non-judgmental approach is consistently advocated

A notable  
**83%**  
of our Members conveyed satisfaction with the services they experienced through Living My Way

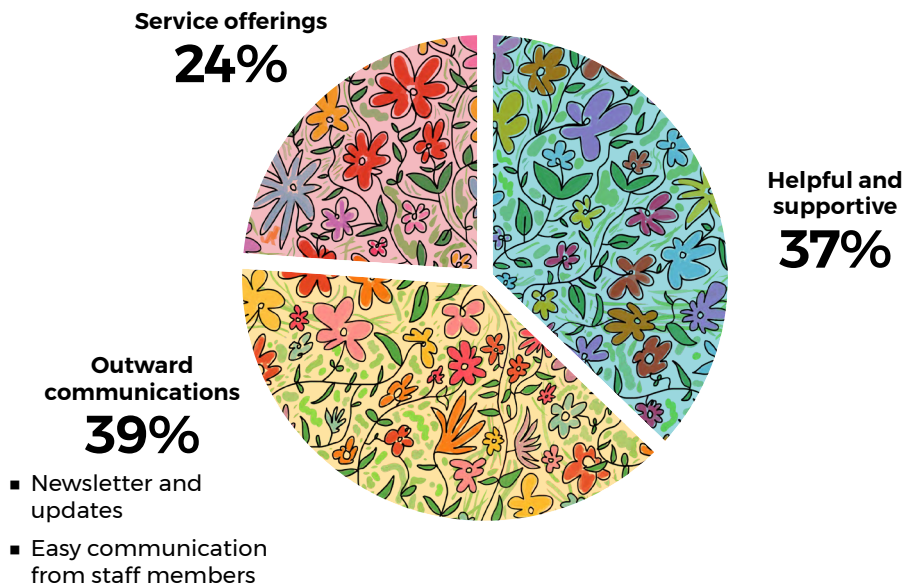
An impressive  
**90%**  
of our Members acknowledge that Living My Way's team demonstrates a profound respect for their individual cultures, values and beliefs

**79%**  
of our Members express a strong sense that their suggestions, ideas and concerns are not only heard but also actively addressed by our team

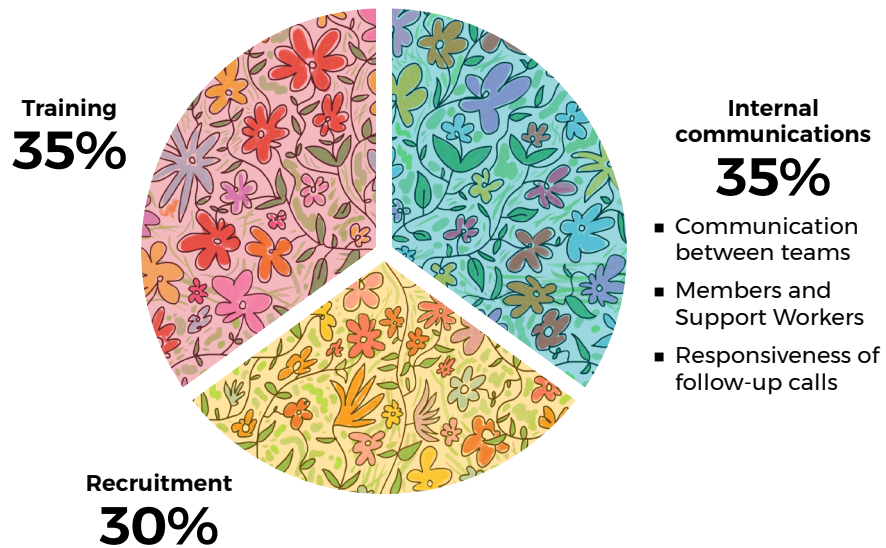
**88%**  
of our Members have indicated that they would recommend Living My Way's services to anyone in need of support



## Top three strengths



## Top three areas of improvement



We are committed to using the feedback to make well-informed decisions and enhance the experience of our Members.

Our goal is simple: address concerns and introduce positive changes to enable our services to keep up with the evolving needs and expectations of our Members.

# Not just living life, but living it well

*Our team are a passionate bunch. We love the fact that we get to help people for a living, but life is about more than just work. It's about being able to be there for those you love, having the freedom to go on exciting adventures, and feeling like you're a valued member of a community.*

30 years ago, our founders campaigned for the right to not just live life, but to live it well, and today that's what we continue to strive for. For our Members and our staff. So when a lot of us were changing jobs this year, we went looking for an organisation that could offer flexibility and staff-friendly conditions. We were in high demand due to industry-wide labour shortages, so we had our pick of positions. It's no surprise that we picked Living My Way.

## What sealed the deal for new staff?

*Not-for-profit salary packaging, rostered days off, excellent learning and development opportunities, free parking, an inclusive culture and of course, the following benefits:*

### Benefit: Hybrid work arrangements

*"For me, I can jump on early in the morning, do a couple of hours of work, drop the kids off at school and then come into the office. You know, it's little things like that, that help manage situations at home that pop up from time to time. So yeah, it's huge."*

John

### Benefit: Rewards and Appreciation program

*"I was busy snapping pictures of our other Heroes Award recipients when my name was announced as a winner. I was completely surprised, and it really made my day to be recognised in such a lovely way. I had a lot of fun deciding how to spend my voucher which was a real treat!"*

Vivienne

### Benefit: Flexible hours

*"My son's preschool recently organised a fundraising fun run. It was at 3pm on a Thursday – so right in the middle of my work day – but I really wanted to be there. It was important to show up for my son, and I didn't want him to feel like his mum didn't think of him as a priority. Since we can be flexible with our hours, I was able to leave at 2:30pm, get to my son's fun run at 3pm, throw confetti on all the kids as they went through the obstacle course, and then be back online by 4:30pm. My son had the best time, and I was so happy that I was able to be there for that moment. The break also energised me. I had an incredibly productive couple of hours after that."*

Lucy



# Where would we be without our Support Workers?

***Our Support Workers are a crucial part of our story of independence and choice.***

When we were gathering the stories for our 30th Anniversary, we heard so many amazing stories of the special relationships that carers have with Members and their families. And the ingenious ways they discover together to get on with life.

One of those stories was told by Board member, Ken Ferris about his 25 year relationship with his Support Worker, Maureen. In the coming year, we'll be making it our mission to share more stories from Support Workers and the Members they work with. There's so much learning and inspiration in them.

Keep your eye out for our Member newsletter, on our website, and across our social media channels.

### Ken and Maureen – Support Worker story

*“Maureen worked for me for 25 years. She could walk in the door to get me up in the morning and she'd say, 'Good morning, Ken' And I'd say 'Good morning, Maureen.' She'd shower me, she'd dress me, do the whole morning routine and we didn't need to say a word again until I got into the kitchen. Then she'd say, 'What do you want for breakfast?'*

*It was like an old married couple on a comedy show on TV. One leans down, the other one opens the cupboard, gets something out, the other one closes the cupboard door. Some mornings I'd have some fun just by testing to see if we could still do it!*

*Maureen was in every major event in my life in those 25 years – always there, in the background. Literally at all the births, deaths and marriages. When my sister got married, she was there. And when my sister had her first child, she was there too.*

*And then there was the day my grandmother died. She'd been living in the house with us and my sibling and I were very close to her. It sounds silly, it's a simple thing but on the day, I was pretty upset and wasn't thinking. And Maureen asked, 'What clothes do you want to wear today?'*

*I picked out a pair of jeans that were incredibly faded: black, old worn jeans that were comfortable and Maureen looked them up and down and showed 'em to me. 'Do you really think*

*they're the right pair to wear today? I don't think you should wear them today, Ken.' And she was right, so right.*

*Then there was the day that I finally got to move out of home.*

*Yes, Maureen was there. She packed me up, helped me move to my own home, set up the wardrobe. When I bought my first house with my first partner, Maureen was there. And when that relationship failed, Maureen moved me back into the room she'd moved me out of 10 years before.*

*With your Support Workers, sometimes it's a friendship, sometimes it's 100% professional only and sometimes something in-between. But all the major events in our lives happen because of the quality of their care.”*

**Ken Ferris** (Founding Member and current Director of the Living My Way Board)



Maureen

## Our Team – Support Workers

SHAHEEN

# They take care of us, so we take care of them

We're really focused on the wellbeing and happiness of our Support Workers, because let's face it, the work that they do can be really tough. I think it's really important to individualise how we work with our Support Workers, because they face unique challenges every day. We chat about how they're going at our regular check-ins and we involve them in problem solving group discussions so we can find solutions together.

*"I especially love it when we recognise and reward the Support Workers that our Members have raved about."*



Our Heroes Award winners this year

## Our Team – Support Workers

JANINE & ERIN

### Putting our heads together

***I'd only been with Living My Way for a couple of months, when I was bowled over at seeing the passion and empathy of our Support Workers in full flight.***

It was at a meeting to discuss a young Member, just 13 then, whose behaviours sometimes really challenged the people supporting him. There were three Support Workers, the Support Coordinator, Behaviour Support Practitioner and some of the Service Planning Team, who had all gathered to share ideas, experiences and impressions.

Despite the challenges, his Support Workers kept turning up day after day for their shifts, and it was just so beautiful to hear them talking about how they could make life better for him. They were so open about what they had tried, sharing what worked and what didn't and keen to try new things. And this led us to be able to better identify his triggers and put a whole range of new strategies into place. The behaviours decreased. It was amazing. It was all due to this little group focusing on him and finding ways to work differently together.

**Janine**

### The perfect fit

***I've been a Support Worker for the last six years, and moving into this work felt almost easy. Right from the start it was exactly what I had been searching for, and felt like the perfect fit. Working and helping people has always been my happy place.***

I've been amazed by how small changes like respecting people and giving them the opportunity to make their own choices in life can really make a big difference.

We get better all the time at understanding his likes and dislikes and anticipating Isaac's needs. I've been supporting him for a few years now so it's great to feel more confident in what he needs and really enjoy the chance to help.

We work in pairs and together with Isaac's broader support team, we're always putting our heads together and looking for new ideas on how to improve life for him.

When I first started, Isaac spoke just a few words, but now it's all changed. Watching Isaac's vocabulary develop has been really exciting and now he tells us what he needs.

I will never forget the first time he started using our names, and I could tell he really knew our team.



*Erin with Isaac*

It was heart warming. Sometimes when we wrap up a shift we share a smile and say "Isaac shared so much great information today." There are so many new words now and he talks to us all the time which I love.

I find it really satisfying building those connections, and helping to make everything run smoothly. I have seen real changes from compassionate support and watching the transformation is rewarding.

**Erin, LMW Support Worker**

## Our Team – Support Workers

### It's kind of lovely

*"I've been employing my own Attendant Carers for over 30 years now and I always choose people who I think I will like talking to; people I click with. When you have to do personal care for hours every day, there's something boring about it. Everybody else can just shower and get dressed quickly and jump in the car and be gone, but we've got to do these slow processes.*

*It's much more enjoyable if I can do it with someone I like talking to.*

*One time, a work friend of mine was staying at my place and she was having a coffee and overheard me with the carer in the bathroom doing personal care. She called me up later and said, 'I was a little jealous of you. You two were chattering your heads off, laughing and laughing. It was kind of lovely... like girls in boarding school.'"*

Karen, Member

### Making a difference

*"I consider myself as being quite independent, however my vision impairment poses some challenges. Navigating new environments can be tricky sometimes.*

*My Support Workers are always there to help me and truly understand my needs. I'm not saying our Support Workers have to be our best friends, but I feel blessed that mine are kind, genuinely care, and go above and beyond for me. Joan is the best to go shopping with, from scanning use by dates, to finding a bargain, shopping trips are not the same without her.*

*Sometimes it's as simple as saying, 'Let's go through the left door.'"*

Marilena, Member



Karen groovin' in Brighton, 1986



Karen with Support Workers Luqi, Alexia and Ariel, 2022



## Our Team – Head Office

SAM

# Let my work adventures begin



My first Expo

The office scene is brand new to me – the hum of conversations, the clickety-clack of keyboards, is like a whole new world.

My new colleagues are amazing. Warm smiles and encouragement all the way. If my first impressions are anything to go by, I know I'm in the right place. Their genuine kindness and excitement to have me on board is reassuring, and they are ready to welcome me into their work family.

***"The atmosphere hasn't changed a bit and is still the same today."***

Sam

### ***First day, first job.***

I walk into the office and I've got butterflies the size of elephants in my stomach. It's excitement and nervousness all at the same time. I'm ready to start my new role as a Trainee, and my first job out of school.



Celebrating my 18th birthday with the team

CHRISTINE

*I've always liked to get my teeth into those legal things... I'm like a dog with a bone.*

# Christine changes pace

***Christine Burke has been a superstar at Living My Way for the past 14 years and has now soared into a whole new galaxy – semi-retirement.***

She's been much loved and appreciated. She's renowned for her tenacity and going the extra mile for our Members. We can't thank her enough for all she's done over the years. Her work with Members transitioning to the NDIS has been invaluable.

Christine played a key role in our Work Health and Safety Committee over many years, and her wisdom and experience helped shape many of the guidelines that we continue to follow today.

To celebrate Christine's incredible contribution, here's just a glimpse of the many special shout-outs from Members and their families.

***"Christine always had a solution for every problem and nothing was too hard. I wish her all the best in her retirement."***

Gerry, Member

***"Your many years of dedication as my Support Coordinator have made an important impact on my life and I'll always be grateful for your support. Thank you for being an essential part of my NDIS journey."***

Emily, Member

### Invisible barriers

*“When I joined Living My Way a bit over a year and a half ago, everyone was working in silos. The teams were rarely talking to each other. I knew that if we could improve our internal communication between the teams and get everyone to collaborate more, it would improve outcomes for our Members. The realignment was designed to do just that...and it worked.”*

Brooke

### Hi, how was your weekend?

*“What do I like about our office? The camaraderie. People actually genuinely say hello in the morning. Viv’s a classic, she’s always a smiling ray of sunshine when everyone walks through the front door. I’ve worked in organisations where you go into a kitchen and people don’t even talk to each other, but it’s different here. People are friendly and warm. As Mark would say, ‘When you get out of bed, are you happy to come to work?’ Well, 99% of the time I have been since I started.”*

Janine

### I’m not used to this

*“It was a regular Monday afternoon and I was at my desk. When I’m really focused on something I tend to block everything else out, so at first I didn’t notice Brooke walking towards me. She tapped me on the shoulder, and with a big smile on her face handed me a candle. Usually people walk up to my desk with questions, updates and paper fresh from the printer, so this was a first, and I’m pretty sure the confusion was written all over my face. She said it was because the team had noticed all the hard work I’d put in recently, and wanted to give me a token of appreciation to say thank you for my efforts. I’ve worked for over a decade and that was the first time I’ve ever been spontaneously rewarded like that. I placed that candle on my mantelpiece like a trophy when I got home.”*

Lucy



## Our Team – Executive Leadership Team

# Our Executive Leadership Team

***Our Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is a nice mix of professionals, each bringing their unique expertise to the table, which includes experiences in the disability, aged care and child care sectors.***

United behind our vision and purpose, the team help to chart a clear and actionable strategy. This not only benefits our Members, but supports the entire LMW team to do their best work.

Mark has shaped the ELT to steer the organisation toward a fresh strategic direction that places people's well-being at the forefront. He also champions our organisational culture centred on our values.

Our ELT are also aligned in their personal values of honesty, fairness, kindness and hope. They have helped to shape a powerful caring culture where we can do anything – if we do it together.



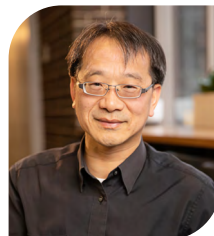
**Mark Turley**  
Chief Executive Officer

*"I count it as an absolute privilege to get up every day and do the work I do at Living My Way. I came to Living My Way to learn from the people who knew far more about the sector than myself."*



**John Fawcett**  
Executive Manager  
Operations

*"It's essential that our Members have a say in shaping what our services look like. This focus has reinforced the realignment and gives us renewed optimism that we're on the right track."*



**Frankie Poon**  
Executive Manager  
Finance, IT and  
Assets

*"At the end of the day, our Members want reliable quality service. Our strong financial health gives us the opportunity to reinvest in our services. This will enable long-term sustainability of support for our Members."*



**Janine Lundie**  
Executive Manager  
Quality, Risk and  
Training

*"No matter our role, the connection between Members and us has to be built on trust. We all have a part to play and when we do, it's better for everyone."*



**Brooke Anthony**  
Executive Manager  
People and Culture

*"We all pitch in to get things done. I would say, hand on heart, that the people we employ are truly Member-focused and understand how their role can help Members meet their aspirations."*



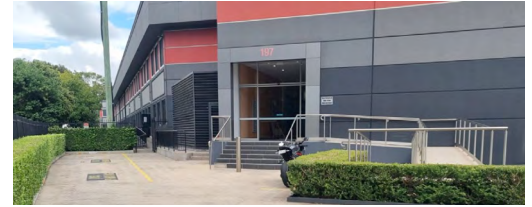
**Joanna Spencer**  
Executive Manager  
Marketing, Brand &  
Communications

*"Storytelling is how we invite our Member voices to shine and share something meaningful... We want to inspire, engage and educate our community through real stories."*

## Community connections

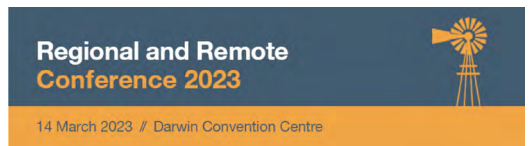
### Satellite office open in Seven Hills

To enhance service convenience for Members and Support Workers located in the Western Sydney suburbs, we opened a satellite office (conveniently located near Seven Hills train station) in March 2023.



### NDS Regional and Remote Conference in Darwin

In March 2023, Brooke participated in the NDS Regional and Remote Conference held at the Darwin Convention Centre. The conference spotlighted an impressive synergy between various regions – especially the top half of WA, NT, and QLD – pooling efforts to boost participant outcomes. Central to the discussion was the challenge of overcoming geographical barriers, ensuring the availability of essential resources and personnel.



The event adopted a culture of learning and adaptability, underlining the significance of effective participant communication, collaborative troubleshooting, and smarter financial management. Armed with valuable insights from an array of ideas, everyone left with a feeling of hope and grateful for the chance to drive progress in service provision.



### ShireABILITY Art Award

On 3 December, we celebrated International Day of People with Disability by teaming up with the Sutherland Shire Council for the very first ShireABILITY Art Award, and we're glad we did. It was a resounding success, drawing 53 submissions from local Shire residents with disability, and highlighting the artistic talent of people with disability in our community.



## Our Community

### STEPtember



We stepped up during STEPtember month, and together with other organisations and individuals across the country, we helped to raise over \$9 million for people with cerebral palsy!

**Our top stepper was Brooke who took over 446,000 steps during STEPtember!**

### Thank You Commbank!

Commonwealth Bank Menai received a considerable amount of positive feedback regarding our efforts in collaborating with people with disability within our local Menai community. As a gesture of support for our mission, they generously contributed \$500 towards our cause.

### Ready-Set-Connect

Maintaining a strong network with fellow service providers enables us to exchange insights and provide mutual support. In the pursuit of knowledge sharing, there's no substitute for direct communication. That's why we took to the roads, traveling across Sydney from West Ryde to Gymea, to engage with various local communities.



Joanna Spencer (centre) with event organisers Don and Amy

### Sydney Disability Expo 2022



### Attending conferences matters more than what you think

Over the past year, we actively participated in approximately 30 conferences, seminars, and webinars to remain well-informed about the latest developments in our sector. We were able to share our voices and meet some of the most inspiring disability advocates in the sector.



### Having a Say Conference 2023

#### Contemporary Governance and Leadership Summit

24 October 2022 // Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, BCEC



## Our Organisation

# About us

Despite half our team being casual workers and undergoing a realignment at our head office, we managed to retain **80% of our employees** over the past year.

## Meet your team

LMW Support Workers	<b>54</b>
Full time head office staff	<b>28</b>
Part-time head office staff	<b>11</b>
Temporary/contract head office staff	<b>1</b>

**This shows that most – or more specifically 57% – of our team are Support Workers,** the friendly faces who so many Members trust and rely on to experience the independence we all want.

*In addition, we also support Members who employ a total of 291 of their own Support Workers.*

## New faces over the past year

Head Office	<b>23</b>
LMW Support Workers	<b>33</b>
Employ Your Own Support Workers	<b>77</b>
icare	<b>30</b>

**Our Members wanted more Support Workers, so that's exactly what we put our energy into delivering.**

We often come across heartbreaking news stories highlighting the challenges faced by people with disability, including poor living conditions, abuse, and discrimination. These reports hit close to home, motivating us to take proactive measures to prevent similar situations from occurring under our care.

To address the gaps in our policies and identify potential risks, we established the **Quality, Risk and Training team**. However, our approach goes beyond simply ticking boxes to meet industry standards. We genuinely invest in training because the health, safety, and well-being of our Members and team comes first.

Over the past year, we've completed a series of training courses. Here's a glimpse of what we've been up to:

- ✿ Hazards
- ✿ Stress management
- ✿ Infection control
- ✿ Incident reporting
- ✿ Work health and safety
- ✿ Manual handling
- ✿ Zero tolerance for abuse
- ✿ Infection control
- ✿ Professional boundaries
- ✿ Catheter care
- ✿ Bowel care
- ✿ Medication management
- ✿ Stoma care
- ✿ Severe Dysphagia
- ✿ Enteral feed
- ✿ Wound care
- ✿ Mealtime management

## We are one, but we are many

While English may be the language that we all share, we love that our team reflects a rich mosaic of backgrounds and experiences. And they can connect with you in these languages too:

- ✿ English
- ✿ Cantonese
- ✿ Mandarin
- ✿ Hokkien
- ✿ Malay
- ✿ Greek
- ✿ Hindi
- ✿ Urdu
- ✿ Tamil
- ✿ Nepali
- ✿ Newari
- ✿ Portuguese
- ✿ Spanish
- ✿ Italian
- ✿ Arabic

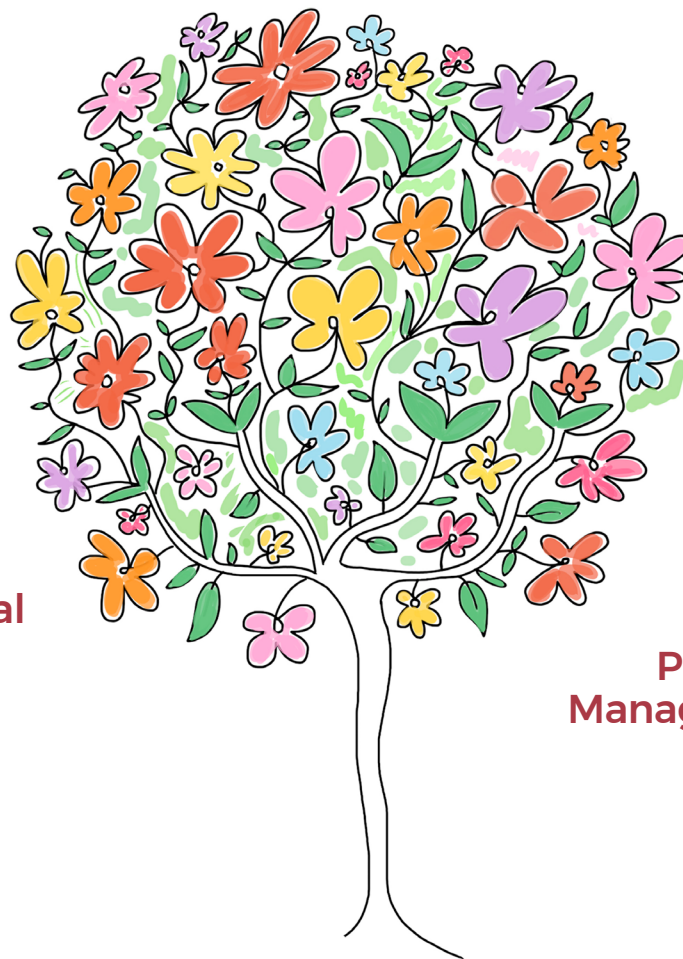
Just to name a few.

# This is how we support independence

*We are still the one and only organisation in NSW to offer NDIS participants the unique freedom to bring or employ their own Support Workers.*

## Employ Your Own Support Worker Services

LMW Support  
Worker  
Services



Support  
Coordination

Occupational  
Therapy

Plan  
Management

## Coming together, no matter how you're funded

*We're a not-for-profit, so it's never been about the money.  
It's always been about helping you live your way. So whether you're self-funded, on NDIS, claiming insurance, using icare or going through Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA), you can trust us to make the most of the funds you have.*



# 30th anniversary celebration





# 30th anniversary celebration



## Our Organisation's Health

# 30 years ago, our organisation was created by Members for Members

As a not-for-profit, any financial margin enables Living My Way to continue to provide a quality service that Members can rely on.

Today, our financial goals remain the same. To maintain strong financial health, so that we can continually re-invest back into our services and programs.

Revenue	\$16,120,341
Total Assets	\$10,019,024
Surplus	\$983,191

Over the past year we have invested our **surplus funds** into enhancing the value, depth and reliability of our services.

### How we've enhanced the value and depth of our services

- ✿ Realigned the head office team to improve communication and efficiency
- ✿ Established a Quality, Risk and Training team
- ✿ Established a Service Planning team
- ✿ Increased training
- ✿ Welcomed a registered nurse and company secretary
- ✿ Improved accessibility of our service through setting up a Western Sydney office
- ✿ Extended our service scope

### How we've enhanced the reliability of our team

- ✿ Established a People and Culture team
- ✿ Welcomed 133 more Support Workers
- ✿ Invested in our employee value proposition to attract and retain the best people
- ✿ Invested in our systems

### **"Let's invest in readiness."**

***Our new Service Planning Coordinator started not too long ago, and she shared how different her previous workplace was compared to LMW. Let's delve into the story of that stark contrast.***

In her previous job, she worked with a for-profit provider, and her induction as a Support Coordinator was just four hours. The very next day, she was already visiting clients. The business owners made it clear to her, "This is billable time. You got to be out there earning money." So she plunged into action.

Before this experience, she had never worked with disabled people... or was it people with disability? Uncertain about the correct terminology, she felt lost and unprepared. She grappled with feelings of confusion, vulnerability,

and doubt, fearing that she couldn't provide the high-quality service her clients deserved. Naturally, she began searching for a better position within a different organisation.

Now, she's with us because she knows we are committed to investing in her. Her two- to three-week induction started some time ago, to ensure she feels self-assured, prepared, and fully equipped to carry out her role. Only once she reaches that level of confidence and readiness will we introduce her to you.

# Financial highlights

22% revenue ↑,  
despite industry-  
wide workforce  
shortages

4.9% investment  
return and 7.8%  
capital growth in  
portfolio investments

Continued growth  
in revenue from  
non-NDIS streams

<i>Revenue</i>	<i>FY2023</i> \$	<i>FY2022</i> \$	<i>Change</i>	<i>FY2023</i> <i>Distribution</i>
Funds from NDIS	14,058,326	12,320,134	14.1%	87%
Funds from State Government	1,278,857	843,545	51.6%	8%
Other Member Receipts	783,158	15,008	5118.3%	5%
	<b>16,120,341</b>	<b>13,178,687</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Our Organisation's Health

*There's only 13% of providers that don't charge at the maximum rate, and we're in that 13%. A lot of what we do to help our Members is behind the scenes.*

Mark Turley

*We're pretty much in the top 5% for financial health considering other service providers that are the same size as us. This means we can invest in the quality of our services in the future.*

Frankie Poon

*I'm really proud of two things. One is the constant focus on where the organisation came from. Virtually every discussion that we ever get into always comes back to why we were formed in the first place. And that's stopped us heading off in certain attractive financial directions. We've always come back to say, 'No, that's actually not what we're about.' I think that's really strong.*

*The other one is a sharp focus on the dollars. We've always had a very, very strict focus on how the money is spent, and what it's been on in order to make sure that next year, we've still got money to continue investing in the support that our Members need.*

Peter Whyntie



# 30 years on, and our vision hasn't changed

We remain fiercely loyal to the original reason for our existence:

**More people getting on with life**

## The values we live by

- ✿ Trustworthy and helpful
- ✿ Flexible
- ✿ Respectful
- ✿ Consistent quality

## Moving with the times

Over the last 30 years our industry has evolved, our tech has evolved. We've evolved.

So this year, it made sense to bring our constitution up to speed. Because we have things to do, and we're not going to let outdated rules stop us.

## 6 Pillar Strategy



We are taking all that we've heard, observed and learnt this year to ensure our Members keep blossoming and living the lives they choose.

We're excited and have already started planning our next 3 year strategy.

Stay tuned!

# Our Board

*Thirty years ago, Living My Way began as a small group of wheelchair users with disability who joined forces to share resources, protect their independence and advocate for others. Those early Members saw themselves as the Lucky Few and magnificently led a mission to bloom into the Lucky Many. And bloom we did - from just 14 to over 390 - and growing.*

Through those years of effort, today we are a significant organisation operating in a very different world. It's a world that offers huge opportunities and enormous complexities, and we are very grateful to be guided by our current Board.

This past year has seen the LMW Board emerge stronger than ever with a professional diversity encompassing expertise in advocacy, legal, finance, technology, strategy, governance and marketing.

Beyond financial metrics, our Board continues to prioritise the safety and well-being of Members while maintaining organisational integrity. And to stay relevant, the Board tackles strategy with boldness, innovation and forward-thinking.

Many have lived experience of disability; all have the passion.



# Our Board

## Peter Strohkorb

*Chair: 2017-2023*  
*Special Responsibilities: Director of the Nominations & Remuneration Committee*

Peter's impressive career in marketing and management spans two decades.



*"What truly fuels my commitment to Living My Way is a deeply personal connection. I was inspired to support our mission after seeing the positive impact of self-managed in-home care during my mother's battle with Parkinson's disease. This heightened my sensitivity and awareness of the importance of having quality care for the people who need it."*

## Peter Whyntie

*Vice Chair: 2019-2023*  
*Special Responsibilities: Director of the FRAC Committee*

Peter is a consultant specialising in risk management and compliance, with over 35 years experience. Initially brought in to assess LMW's risks, he soon took on the role of Director and has been pivotal in bolstering our risk management framework and elevating our practices.



*"Our Board of professionals brings a mix of lived experiences with the expertise to guide and govern the organisation into the future."*

## Ken Ferris

*Founding Member and Director: 2013-2023*

Ken Ferris, a founding Member of LMW, plays a pivotal role on our Board with his astute understanding of disability and as a valued advisor and sounding board. Ken's professional background includes active advocacy within the disability community and board roles for various disability organisations. Ken manages his own businesses, specialising in disability car hires and mobility equipment. He is a formidable force in our organisation.



*"I've never been accused of being polished. I say it like it is."*

## Suzanne Colbert AM

*Director: 2022-2023*  
*Special Responsibilities: Deputy Chair of the Nominations & Remuneration Committee*

Suzanne, a disability advocate for 33 years, draws her commitment to inclusion from personal experience with her late husband, John Little, a wheelchair user. As the founding CEO of the Australian Network on Disability, she champions collaboration to address the unique challenges faced by people with disability. Quality care is paramount to Suzanne, and her core philosophy revolves around autonomous choices for people with disability rather than convenient ones for service providers.



*"We're all in this together."*

## Huw Thomas

*Director: 2017-2023*  
*Special Responsibilities: Chair of the Nominations & Remuneration Committee and Director of the Investment Committee*

Huw Thomas is a multi-skilled professional with a diverse background in organisational culture, value streams, and technologies. Huw has a "no limits" mindset, encouraging LMW to pursue bold, innovative initiatives and brave goal-setting to create a positive impact for Members. Huw brings a wealth of leadership expertise to the table.



*"We need to defend the values upon which Living My Way and NDIS are bounded, which is about empowering people to take control, and to not take that control away."*

## Sarah Lukies

*Director: 2022-2023*  
*Special Responsibilities: Chair of the FRAC Committee*

Sarah Lukies believes in purpose-driven work that aligns personal values with the organisation's mission. With a legal background, Sarah excels in navigating regulatory complexities to drive impactful change. She has been active in the disability sector for eight years, focusing on early childhood intervention and autism support. Sarah's commitment to ensuring access to disability services drove her to become deeply involved in the implementation of the NDIS.



*"A deep-rooted tree can survive a storm."*



## Richard Moore

*Director: 2022-2023*

*Special Responsibilities: Director of the FRAC Committee*

Richard's decision to join our Board stems from a desire to leverage his skills and experience with other nonprofits.

He has extensive advocacy, stakeholder relations, and organisational sustainability expertise. Richard emphasises good strategic governance and is a firm believer in cultivating a positive and passionate culture to achieve both the organisational mission and the well-being of its team.

*"It's the feeling I got from the organisation when we first met. How passionate they are."*



## Frank Burke

*Director: 2017-2023*

*Special Responsibilities: Chair of the Investment Committee*

Frank was inspired to join our Board through a personal experience with a friend's child who has cerebral palsy.

He brings over twenty years of finance and accounting experience, specialising in operational and commercial support in a fast-changing environment. He has led crucial finance initiatives, collaborating closely with management teams, and ensuring effective financial control and risk management.

*"We're here to empower people to take back control of their lives."*



## Sanjeev Gupta

*Director: 2017-2023*

*Special Responsibilities: Director of the Investment Committee*

Sanjeev enriches our team with his knowledge of complex digital transformations. His passion lies in harnessing the power of innovative digital technologies to streamline processes, enhancing our services to Members and amplifying LMW's values. Throughout his career, he has consistently championed purpose-driven innovation, particularly emphasising the significance of system transformation and cybersecurity.

*"Digital transformation helps us stay relevant."*



### Past Chairs:

- ✿ Kevin Byrne
- ✿ Ken Beattie
- ✿ Phyllis Harding
- ✿ Milena Morrow.

Know more about our Directors here:  
[www.livingmyway.org.au/our-team](http://www.livingmyway.org.au/our-team).

# Acknowledgements

***We always say “we are stronger together” and this list proves it. Thank you everyone for your magnificent support, generosity and belief over the past year.***

We couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you to the organisations who are financially supporting our Members:

- ✿ NDIS
- ✿ icare
- ✿ Department of Health and Aged Care

We would also like to thank the organisations below, who we have listed in alphabetical order.

- ✿ 3Bridges
- ✿ Australian Federation of Employers and Industries
- ✿ Club Central Menai
- ✿ Disability Intermediaries Australia
- ✿ Good Foundation
- ✿ Graeme Green Chartered Accountant
- ✿ Guide Dogs Australia
- ✿ Gunnedah Hill
- ✿ HSM IT
- ✿ Kilimanjaro Consulting
- ✿ National Disability Authority
- ✿ National Disability Insurance Agency
- ✿ National Disability Services
- ✿ One Community
- ✿ Only Human Stories
- ✿ Physical Disability Council of Australia
- ✿ Spinal Cord Injuries Australia
- ✿ Sutherland Shire Council
- ✿ Trienary Pty Ltd
- ✿ Ucity
- ✿ WSC Group



Mark Turley (CEO), Moya Sayer-Jones (Only Human Stories), Suzanne Colbert (Board)



John Fawcett with Josh Al-Din from Go Supply

## Seed of a Dream

In a world saturated with shame,  
Blame, and the same conversations,  
There are those who blazed a trail, set the earth aflame,  
They made up our history, and fought for us to be where we are today.  
Without them, what would we have gained?  
So let's take the chance to celebrate,  
And embrace a legacy.

Because we may be a community of Members,  
But we are also members of the community.

And so let us give ourselves permission,  
To live life of our own volition.  
We will be accepted without conditions,  
Because we are done waiting and paying the price of admission –  
Yes, it is our turn to speak now  
And you best believe we will speak out loud,  
Finally heard and allowed to be proud.

And we will never let you forget  
We deserve to have our needs met with dignity and respect.

And rest assured, we are always prepared for the unexpected.  
Even as the seasons change,  
When life is messy and the most steady ground shakes,  
We will simply move with the landscape in our own direction.

Each of us still has a place – and a universal right to feel safe,  
to take up space and opportunities.  
And redefine possibilities,  
Opening up exactly the life we want to lead.

Whether to live independently, raise a family,  
Expand our reach and advocacy,  
Or some other achievement,  
It all begins with synergy:  
It's a seed of a dream, blossoming with the support that we need  
To live in our own way.

**Emily Dash**  
Member

*For our 30th anniversary celebrations, Emily crafted and performed a short film called "A Seed of a Dream" reminding us that support is a human right for people with disability.*

[Watch the short film here.](#)

Living  
my way.

Phone: (02) 8525 4000 Email: [operations@lmwl.org.au](mailto:operations@lmwl.org.au)

[livingmyway.org.au](http://livingmyway.org.au)



Registered NDIS Provider

*Coming together is the beginning,  
keeping together is progress,  
working together is success.  
Together we're stronger.*