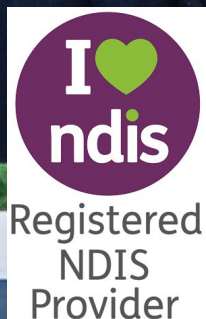




FOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

2019-2020



Registered
NDIS
Provider

Our Vision

**CREATE ENDLESS
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.**

Our Mission

**FOCAL EMPOWERS A
LIFE OF CHOICE BY LISTENING
AND WORKING ALONGSIDE
YOU TOWARDS YOUR GOALS.**

Our Values

- **WE LISTEN AND EMPOWER**
- **IT'S ABOUT YOU AND YOUR DREAMS**
- **WE DELIVER WHAT YOU NEED AND WANT**
- **REAL COMMUNITY CONNECTION**
- **WE GO WHERE YOU WANT TO AND NEED TO**
- **WE PROVIDE A SAFE PLATFORM TO
NURTURE GROWTH**

BOARD MEMBERS

PATRICK ALBINA | CHAIRMAN

RUSSELL SWINTON | TREASURER

SOPHIE MCCLEARY | SECRETARY

NAOMI MEADE | BOARD MEMBER

ANDREW CLARK | BOARD MEMBER

SALLY PRESTON | BOARD MEMBER

SHARON WANG | BOARD MEMBER

Our dedicated board commit to attend up to 16 meetings per year. They volunteer their time and expertise to help guide the organisation.

6 CANNING STREET | NORTH IPSWICH 4305

07 3812 2014 | ADMIN@FOCAL.ORG.AU

OUR STORY SO FAR

From the de-institutionalisation of disability care, to the reform of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Focal has always supported individuals towards leading brighter, more fulfilling lives.

In 1968, Queensland changed its health service focus and the Ipswich Special Hospital became the Challinor Centre. Challinor provided training and care for the 'intellectually handicapped' to develop the capacity of people with intellectual disability.

In 1973, Challinor Centre staff went on strike. In response, volunteers and family members went in to help the residents, who realised that their standard of care could be improved.

In a community meeting that followed, everyone recognised the need of a support organisation for Challinor Centre residents—who either had no family, or had family that could not see them. In February 1974, the Friends of Challinor Aid League (F.O.C.A.L.) was born. Parents, the community, parliamentarians, and the general public came to show their support at Focal's inaugural meeting.

Focal's legacy of doing what's best for the community and in particular for people with disability lives on.

Whilst we have expanded our services to include accommodation, respite care, advocacy and community access, the needs and wants of the individual are still at the centre of everything Focal does.

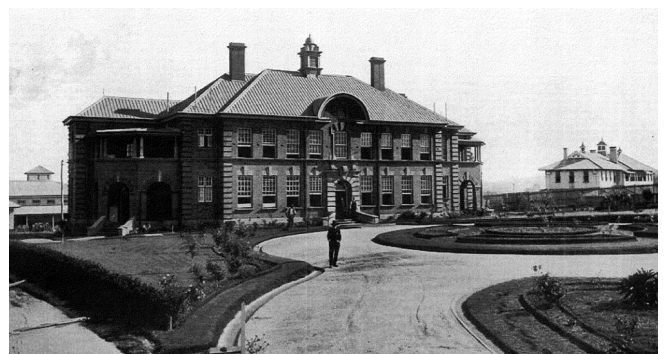
We actively promote the rights of our clients, and support them to be independent.

We do this by providing a range of dynamic individual and group services, which are designed to accommodate the needs of individuals and their carers.

As the disability sector continues one of Australia's greatest reforms, Focal is primed to help individuals and their families benefit from the NDIS.

We are expanding our services and expertise towards supporting the whole community, including children and seniors.

Focal strives to foster genuine economic and social participation, for the betterment of individuals and the community.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We are very fortunate to be in the company of tough people, resilient to the challenges of our time and with the determination to achieve the outcome. Everyone on the Board and the CEO clearly see your effort and perseverance, and for this I would like to express our admiration and gratitude.

Throughout 2019–2020, Focal has continued to increase our services across south East Queensland, with teams particularly growing in the areas of Logan, Brisbane and Ipswich. As Focal is on the cusp of employing over 200 employees, we are proud to support more than 600 individuals and families throughout South East Queensland. A big thank you to all our employees for the passion they share every day and to all of you that continue to trust us to achieve their needs and goals.

Despite being overshadowed by the COVID-19 crisis, 2019–2020 has been a year full of achievements including Focal's successful outcome in meeting the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Standards.

This audit provided the Focal team with an opportunity to review our ways of working and gain clear feedback about what we can do better for our clients.

CEO REPORT

Focal has experienced another year of growth and the pandemic situation has tested Focal processes to their fullest. Through adversity, the organisation has still been able to complete its mission, to deliver essential services to our clients and the community. In addition Focal completed some very important milestones:

- Completely virtualising Focal's back of office has allowed us to deliver services wherever is needed and offers full flexibility to Focal employees.
- Maintaining contacts and providing essential services to all with new safety protocols.
- The implementation of a new ticketing system to streamline communications ensures that we stay in touch and respond to enquiries in a timely manner.

Going forward, Focal is still on track with its objectives of sustainability through growing geographically where we are invited by the community. In addition to this we will increase the range of services we deliver to cater for a broader range of clients.

Ultimately, Focal will continue to provide support in areas of the community it identifies as major needs such as working with young people, supporting clients with more complex behaviour as well as exploring with the community how to deliver affordable respite and accommodation solutions.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

Despite the challenges of Covid restrictions, 2019–2020 was a year of growth at Focal in our third year of the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (**NDIS**). Focal saw a steep increase in client demand in the greater Ipswich area and greater Brisbane and Logan areas.

For most of Focal's clients, this was the second year of review of NDIS plans and a lot of time was spent working with you and your loved ones to ensure you were getting the most from the NDIS process and planning.

Overall, we have seen a big increase in the support available to all and working with the NDIS has allowed us to serve a greater number of individuals whilst still maintaining our strong community connections. This is what makes our Focal service delivery so personal and unique.

Our organisation complies with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)* for the period 2019–2020.



FOCAL MANAGEMENT TEAM



Mickael Blanc
CEO



Deborah Thomas
Operations Manager



Sharon MacKinney
Support Coordination Manager



Heidi Crittenden
Service Manager



Kerri Siebenhausen
Service Manager

OUR 2021 GOALS

1

Re-design services delivered in a group format.

The pandemic has allowed us to reorganise our services across leisure/social connection and personal growth/life skills building.

This includes the introduction of photography and filmmaking, as well as the extension of some existing services. A broad range of new services are in the works as we continue to adapt with Covid restrictions.

3

Investing in our communities.

Capitalising on our growth, Focal has committed to provide unique opportunities in the communities we support and as such Focal will deliver three brand new hubs in the areas of Ipswich, Brisbane and Logan over the 2020/21 financial year.

2

Tailor made leisure services.

Leisure services have been reviewed and will be more inclusive in order to cater for individual needs. Overall, those changes will give our clients more choice and options.

Stay tuned as the majority of these services will re-start when circumstances permit.

4

Design and pilot a respite service.

Design and pilot a respite/short/ medium term service available at a central location to support Ipswich and the Western suburbs of Brisbane. This initiative will provide clients and their family with the ability to access holiday style apartments with amenities including a swimming pool, tennis court, spa and outdoor areas in a central location. Focals specialist teams would be available to support clients from 1 day up to 3 months depending on need and goals identified by the NDIA.

TREASURER + OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

Deborah Thomas, Operations Manager
Russell Swinton, Treasurer

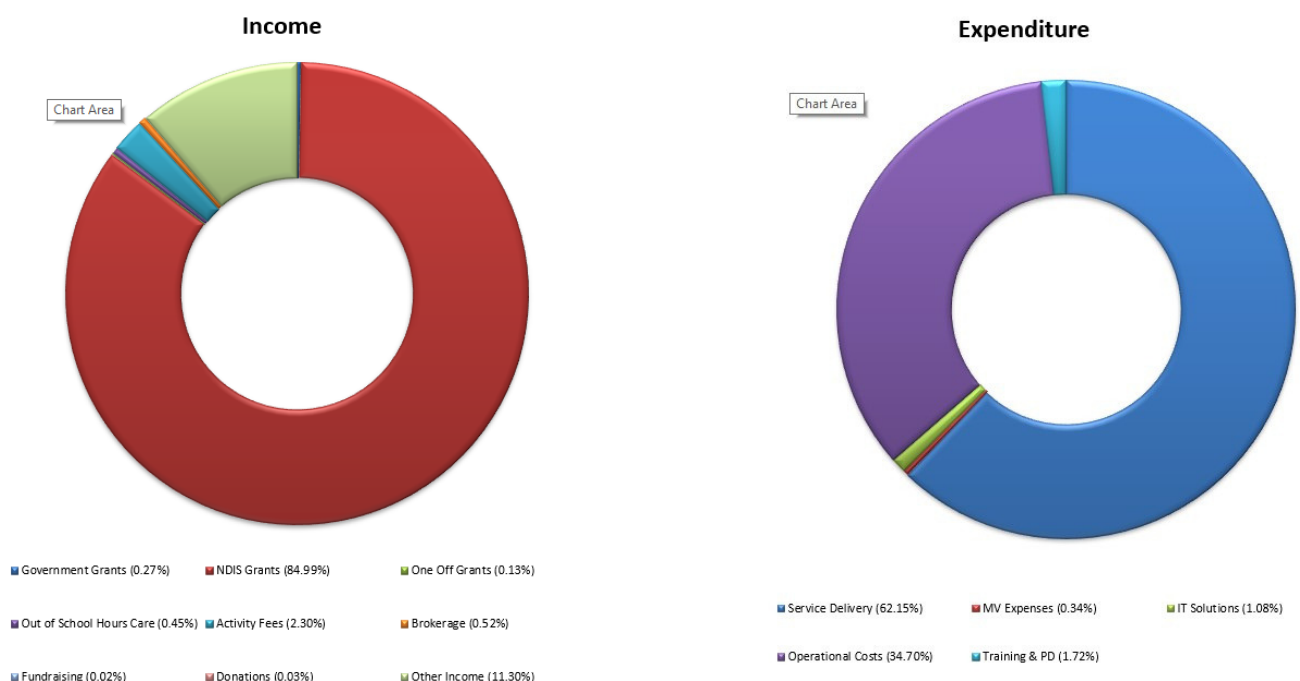
Wow, what a year it has been. Not only have we stood up to the challenges that we constantly face with the NDIS but we have also survived and continued to grow through the COVID-19 crisis. We also successfully completed our first audit under the new NDIS quality and safeguards standards. What a team we have here at Focal!

Our primary goal continues to focus on improving process by fully utilising the organisational resources in a more efficient manner to ensure the continued financial sustainability of Focal as it operates under the NDIS framework. We will also be concentrating of the growth of the organisation with the expansion into the Booval & Mt Ommaney Hubs.

In the 2020 Financial Year – Income increased by 57.39% and Expenditure increased by 43.15%

Focal will re-invest nearly 1.3 million dollars of the surplus noted on the 2018/2019 Financial Reports into further development and training for our staff, increasing our transport fleet, additional resources and IT solutions to further enhance the services provided to our clients. Focal will also invest into additional hubs to prepare for the growth of the organisation over the next 18 months.

The Financial results for the 2019/20 Financial Year are summarised here:



COMMUNITY HUBS

Focal will deliver three brand new Hubs in the areas of Ipswich, Brisbane and Logan.

These places have been selected to facilitate community access and provide a safe environment where clients can socialise and grow.

These will be rolled out as follows:

- Booval Fair Shopping centre: Official opening 5th November 2020.
- Mt Ommaney: Opening to public planned for early 2021.
- Logan: Location still under consideration.

By being more present in communities, Focal fulfils its duty to support and empower whilst providing alternatives to more traditional services which no longer align with choice and control.



SUPPORT COORDINATION

2019/2020 has seen great changes in the Focal Support Coordination Team.

Although the COVID situation has been difficult in recent times, the team continues to grow and exceed expectations. Whilst supports have considerably grown in the greater Ipswich region, the Team also supports Participants on the Bayside, North Brisbane, Gold Coast and Toowoomba areas.

Some achievements of the Team during the past year include:

- Patricia successfully moved one of her participants Don from an Aged Care Facility into SDA accommodation with MS Springfield. Due to the success of this move, the NDIA interviewed Don and Patty together and used this for media releases. This story was also published in the Queensland Times as the Team has supported Don since the implementation of his first NDIS Plan.
- Participant Stephen has lived in an aged care facility for a number of years and after a couple of trials in different SIL accommodation Stephen has found his home, with the assistance of his Support Coordinator Prue. He is loving his new sense of freedom and his ability to live independently. Making this story even more unique, one of Stephen's best friends Des is currently transitioning into the same home as the men have chosen to reside together. Spending nine (9) years in the aged care facility, Des is eager to begin his independent living with Stephen whilst still seeking a third tenant.
- Glen had spent his life living in his family home with his mother, however upon her passing was unable to continue in the home. With the assistance of his brother Ross and Support Coordinator Mick, temporary accommodation was located and he has successfully transitioned into a SIL house. Being there for almost twelve (12) months, Glen has developed an excellent relationship with his housemate and has been developing his independence.

Overall, the last financial year has seen significant growth in participants engaging with the Focal Support Coordination Team, meaning an increase in the recruitment of Coordinators.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE
DELIVERY



SERVICE DELIVERY

We have maintained service delivery for individuals and group activities and have done this in a manner that aligns with the Queensland Health directives. Whilst we saw an initial drop in client attendance, things have slowly picked up and intake is at an all-time high.

This has provided an opportunity for growth seeing us successfully promote new members to the team. In addition we have three new Level 3 Service Support Officers managing their own case load which was necessitated by the increase in clients joining us. It is envisaged that we will continue to recruit additional level 2 and 3 resources to best support your clients.

We also had the opportunity during this challenging time to obtain free training for qualifying staff and continue to go through mandatory training, medication and manual handling.

We are excited to be part of the growth and expansion of services both in Ipswich and the greater Brisbane area and are continuing to work and strategically plan to ensure quality services are provided throughout the organisation.

Working through the pandemic has given us the opportunity to rethink and redesign the way we support individuals and groups.



AGED CARE

We are pushing the delivery of Home Care Services that are more accessible and overall offer a better quality service which is currently available in the market.

In consultation with clients we can provide twice as many services as they are currently getting for no additional fees or exit fees. Any extra fees will then be put back into the community.



GROUP SERVICES

The service groups at Focal have undergone some exciting and challenging times over the past year. Overall, the pandemic has brought about its challenges, however, it has also provided us with a unique opportunity to reflect upon and review our group services.

The 'Social Group' concept was born to bring people and smiles back together and inject a little bit of sunshine into our days. The Covid19 guidelines and restrictions were complied with in accordance with health, safety and hygiene policies.

With the right balance of leisure, life-learning activities and services here at Focal, we will be able to cater to a wider range of needs and interests.

It is essential that we receive and encourage feedback from our clients, parents and staff alike so that we can all continue to improve the quality of our services. We would love to hear from you.

Stepping Out

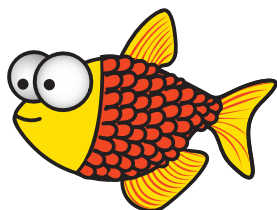
Following this service being put on hold we are currently in the process of reinstating this service.

This service is a key part of the Focal leisure suite of services where clients get socially interact and build strong friendships through participation in activities of their choice.





FISH + TIPS.



This service has seen participants fishing in various locations and sees clients excited to get the catch of the day.

We have only been running small groups during Covid19 this year.

HORIZONS GROUP SERVICES.

Aimed at supporting Individuals with more complex needs this is an activity-based service operating from the Focal Hub at Canning Street.

Some of the group's activities include arts and crafts, music and disco, cooking, physical recreation, community activities and linking.

This has strongly been impacted from a number's perspective due to Covid19 as we have only been able to provide support for 4-6 clients with 2 support staff.

Once the Booval Hub opens, we look forward to being able to utilise the larger space at 6 Canning Street and service a greater number of clients.

PATHWAYS.

There is a plan to rename this range of services which focus on lifelong learning and personal growth. This Life Skills suite of Focal services will have a focus on maintaining social inclusion and skill building.

This will be achieved through experienced-based learning such as utilising public transport and travel, training to access the community, job search/resume writing and cooking in a supportive environment.

Clients are supported in searching community events for their planner to ensure activities and ideas are shared. In those groups, focus can be on supporting the transition of young adults out of school.

Finding employment and participating in the community is an important part of living independently.

This service is not being delivered at present but will be reinstated as part of the restructure and will align with the client's identified goals for building independence and life skills instead of the focus being on leisure activities. Clients can cross over in the future to multiple group services for life skills, leisure and other activities of choice.

CREATIVE CRAFTERS.

This service has slightly changed and is running across multiple days instead of just the one.

In this group environment, clients explore skills development through DIY activities and woodwork. In a socially inclusive environment facilitating connections, the group works on many projects throughout the year whilst sharing the food they prepare.

DANCE TROUPE.

Focal has dance enthusiastic staff who guide clients through self-expression and choreographed activities. Clients can showcase their talent at community events where they are invited to perform locally including the Focal Christmas party.

This was temporarily put on hold due to COVID but has since been reinstated.

GEN X.

This group services an older age bracket of individuals providing them with a space to interact with peers of a similar age.

We have been able to keep small social groups running each day implementing Covid19 restrictions.

We are anticipating that we can resume the newly designed groups soon and are working with our families and Clients to assist us in this process.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB.

Our After Hours School Care services have been ongoing since June and we have recently welcomed some new attendees. We further continue catering the support/activities to the interests, special needs and goals of each child. As always, all of these areas are facilitated through our interaction with the children and numerous play-based learning activities.

We would personally like to thank all of the staff who support the children and families within these services. They go above and beyond to ensure the children are safe, engaged and having a great time. We want to acknowledge the hard-working team members who make this possible. We could not do this without you.

FAB FOCAL SCHOOL HOLIDAY CLUB

It was great to see a lot of the FAB Focal members transition into the young adults' social groups this year. We have already gained and are still gaining new interest and attendees to our FAB Focal Club.

During the year we visited a number of places including Woody Point Redcliffe, Warner Brothers Movie World and engaged in many different activities. The feedback on the Road Trips/ Big Days Out has been very positive.

This year with Covid19, we did a lot more on the ground activities like Photography, Fun with Exercise, Soccer and Cricket. We have seen a lot of friendships develop and everyone continues to thrive from program to program.

The next holidays will be similar to the last but with extended hours. Some of the plans are to go fishing (which has been very popular), visit the cinema, go bowling and continue fun and fitness.

Due to demand we will soon be starting a Saturday Social Group once a month where the children can do similar activities to the FAB Program, only on a weekend.

Group Activities for children (Sunnybank).

Focal's holiday service in Sunnybank Special School officially commenced in December last year and has since welcomed 24 attendees from various schools around Brisbane, as well as new staff members. During the Dec-Jan school holidays, we hosted a number of learning and play-based activities in the centre, and also invited special guests to entertain and educate the kids, including: The Urban Reptile Shows team, SuperSteph Magic and Greek Santa. Recreational excursions to the local pool at Mt Gravatt and Zone Bowling were also great fun for the kids during the summer, in which we saw the children building confidence in their skills and community participation.

Services were re-commenced in early June, where we endeavored to maintain our philosophy and high-quality service in accordance to the new COVID safety protocols. Our recent June-July holiday program was adjusted to be entirely centre-based with limited intake on number of attendees for ease of compliance with social distancing regulations and sanitisation. Regardless, the children responded and engaged positively to the activities, which included: mini PJ parties, movie days, jumping castles, crazy science and plenty of outdoor play!



DOING LIFE TOGETHER

SIL HOUSING





HUMAN RESOURCES

**Over the last
6 months we
have
recruited
over 50
Support
Workers.**

Focal is proud to have over 200 employees working in the community.

With the advent of a large number of clients with mental health needs joining the organisation, Focal has set up a team of a specialist Support Workers.

With the implementation of new hubs, Focal will continue growing local teams with campaigns targeted at Logan and Brisbane.

The new Focal HR Officer is looking into traineeships with the Apprenticeship Board with the intention of creating a Focal talent pool.

We are also working with a range of organisations to give the opportunity to young people and individuals interested in joining our industry to start on their journey to support the community.

This year and 2021 will see a new learning management system implemented that will provide employees with access to more than 75,000 courses for free. It will provide them with the option to further their skills and knowledge thus meeting Focal objectives of creating endless opportunities for all.



NOW HIRING

MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS

We successfully recruit top workers through social media.

**We are attracting
a high level of
candidates and
becoming an
employer of
choice.**

MARKETING + BRANDING

Since the 1st of July we have ramped up our brand building.

At the end of June, we recruited a Marketing Officer to start to build the brand and look at communications both internally and externally.

The focus has been on creating content that allows us to share homegrown organic stories that reflect the work that we do on a day to day basis and outcomes our clients achieve.

Handmade, on the ground videos and imagery has replaced stock photos and shares the voice, message and emotion of our client and what Focal really stands for.

In 2021, we plan to roll out marketing campaigns for both internal and external communications to increase public awareness and seek out opportunities within the local communities for our clients.

We get to inform, entertain, advocate and support the community we live in.

Be sure to follow us on social media:

[www.fb.com/focalcommunityservices](https://www.facebook.com/focalcommunityservices)

www.instagram.com/focalqueensland

www.youtube.com/focalcommunityservices

www.linkedin.com/focalcommunityservices

26.8%

increase in followers in
12 weeks.

200

photos and stories
shared.

55

videos curated.



We thank you for your
ongoing support of
our service.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of our clients, families, friends, staff, Board Members and partners who make everything we do so special.

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