



mpower inc.

Celebrating
40 years
1975 - 2015

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

*"A community inspired
and empowered by people
of all ages, abilities and
differences."*





**Quality
Improvement
Council**

'Yes ... we are
a QIC accredited
organisation'

✦ Reception
✦ Administration

Toy Library ✦

Play Group ✦
Jubilee Room ✦
Therapy Room ✦



Celebrating
40 years
1975 - 2015



Who Are We

2015 marks a significant anniversary for Mpower as it celebrates 40 years of service, supporting families and individuals in south west Victoria to have real and meaningful connections to the communities they live in.

The organisation was formed in Warrnambool in 1975, by families who had children with disabilities but no access to speciality services apart from those provided in Melbourne.

Over the years the organisation has grown to become an accredited agency that has a reputation for being inclusive and highly professional, demonstrating innovative, responsive and contemporary practice in the provision of a range of disability services for people from birth to their senior years who require assistance.

Mpower is committed to being a well-recognised agency within south west Victoria. We are dedicated to being a service provider and employer of choice for aged and disability services.

Based in Warrnambool, our services are managed from a building which meets the needs of clients, other specific community groups and the requirements of the services we provide. Our services are provided by quality staff in a respectful and flexible manner and in a way that empowers families and individuals.

A full range of outreach services are provided to people in Hamilton, Portland, Geelong and other urban centres. Services are provided in or close to the communities where people live and those that surround them.

We pride ourselves on instilling new learning which encourages personal development, innovative thinking and identifying creative solutions to challenges and change.

We aim to be seen as the place to contact for services, resources and information enabling families and individuals to have real and meaningful connections to the communities they live in.

***We
work in close
partnership with the
community, corporate
entities and governments
to achieve quality aged and
disability services that are
appropriate and that
respond to people's
needs.***



Our Vision

‘A community inspired and empowered by people of all ages, abilities and differences’

We will focus on our vision and direct all activities towards its achievement.

Our Values

Respect

Beliefs, feelings and values of individuals are acknowledged

Empowerment

Person and family directed services recognising individual's strengths

Quality

Professionalism and quality in everything we do

New Learning

Encouraging personal development and innovative thinking

Our Mission

‘To be a leader in quality aged and disability services enabling people to have meaningful connections to their communities’

Our Patron



Mr Geoff Handbury AO

Mr Geoff Handbury AO has been Patron of Mpower since 2010. Mr Handbury promotes the mission, values, aims and objectives of the organisation and Mpower is delighted to have him as our Patron. Mpower acknowledges Mr Handbury's generosity in donating \$100,000 towards the redevelopment of the new respite and therapy facility.

Governance - Committee of Management



David Beggs - President

BVSc MVS
Veterinarian
Warrnambool Veterinary Clinic;
Faculty of Veterinary Science,
The University of Melbourne
Member of the Management Review
& Staffing Sub Committee
Joined board in 2005



Neil Ballard - Vice President

B Ec, Dip Ed
Rural Access Project Officer
Warrnambool City Council
Member of the Policies & Procedure
Sub Committee
Member of the Management Review &
Staffing Sub Committee
Joined the board in 2011



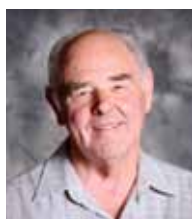
Phillip Annett - Treasurer

BBus Acct & HRM, Dip Mgmt
Business owner
Vehicle & Equipment Finance
Member of the Finance & Audit Sub
Committee
Joined the board in 2008
Resigned in January 2015



Brad O'Connor

Bachelor of Commerce (Deakin), Member of the
Institute of Chartered Accounts of Australia (ICAA)
Accountant
Wannon Water
Member of the Finance & Audit Sub
Committee
Joined the board 2013



Vern Robson

P.S.M., C.P.A.
Trustee and Company Director.
Trustee for the A.L. Lane Foundation
Member of the Finance & Audit
Sub-Committee
Joined the board in 2001



David Beard

Diploma of Management, Bachelor of Education
Secondary Teacher
Emmanuel College
Joined the board 2013



Adam Kempton

LL. B , B. Ec.
Lawyer, Company Director, Business
Proprietor, Not For Profit Board
Memberships
Joined the board in 1997



Helen Bayne

B.Comm; Cert IV in workplace training and assessment,
Masters in Ed (in progress)
Senior project broker
South West Local Learning & Employment Network
Joined the board in 2013
Member of Policies & Procedure Sub Committee
Member of Management Review and Staff Sub
Committee

Life Members

Cath Lourey

Glynis Purcell

Judy Jongebloed

Gail Horne

Phyllis McLeish

Sue Henry



CEO & President's Report

All the services we provide and the work we do is aimed at achieving this vision.

Welcome to the 40th annual report of Mpower – what an amazing milestone for a community organisation that started from a small group of concerned parents and community members in someone's lounge room 40 years ago. One of the strengths of Mpower is that while it has grown and changed dramatically over 40 years the single reason for our existence hasn't changed. Mpower developed to support families who were caring for a child or family member with a disability; today we are still here supporting the same needs in the community. People with a disability, their families and carers remain at the centre of Mpower services – through its mission and vision and through the services it provides every day of the year.

The year has been one of internal process reflection followed by change and consolidation as we continue to work towards sector transformation with the National Disability Insurance Service. (NDIS).

Sector change

Through the 2014-15 year the major focus of everything we did was to address the changes required to adjust to new service requirements in the competitive market place of the NDIS.

After launching in July 2013 across five trial sites and spreading to a further three sites in 2014, the NDIS continues to enjoy bipartisan support from all levels of state and federal governments. The NDIS has celebrated many successes with users' stories providing hope for a better life for people with disabilities. Many people in the trial sites have enjoyed the new levels of support and choice realized through their new plans.

Equally, and as expected, the NDIS has not come without its difficulties; no reform of this magnitude could take place without many and varied teething problems. The problems are being acknowledged, although for providers in the trial sites sometimes too slowly, and gradually issues are mostly being resolved.

The disability service sector's peak body - National Disability Services (NDS) has played a pivotal role in support and education for its members and the disability sector in general about the changes and the work required by agencies in preparation for the NDIS rollout.

Mpower has maintained its membership of NDS and with our CEO completing her third year of membership of the Victorian NDS State Committee we have close appreciation of the work the NDS does in the background to support the outcomes of disability providers. Mpower management staff and Committee of Management members have availed themselves of many opportunities both locally and in Melbourne for training and information updates provided by NDS.

In the later part of the reporting year Mpower engaged Sward Dawson to undertake a consultancy and provide an 'NDIS Readiness Assessment' report. The report provided an overview of the necessary reforms covering areas of; cost structure, systems, culture and governance. The outcomes of the report will be used as a focus for strategic planning for the coming 12 months work.

As we are aware that many of those using our services are anxious to understand more about the NDIS and how it will affect them, we have been mindful of providing information as it emerges. Late in 2014 we held a forum for service users and stakeholders to cover two aims - provide information on the latest news of NDIS and also gain feedback on what people want in the future and how well we are currently meeting their needs. Further to address these needs we have provided many articles in our monthly newsletters and 'E-mini' communiques on different facets of the NDIS and changes to the emerging system as we become aware of them.

CEO & President's Report

System Development

A major part of the reforms we are undertaking is 'service re-engineering' which is being led by our accountant Helen Conheady. This constitutes an in depth dissection of the tasks that make up a program/activity followed by where possible a consolidation of tasks into a more efficient and effective model. The outcome can see staff roles realigned into new emerging tasks related to the new service model.

Another major change in our systems has been the introduction of a Client Management System (CMS). The purchase of a CMS was a high priority for several member agencies of Community South West (CSW) and was therefore undertaken as a joint project. A project brief was developed and tenders called for a consultant to undertake the work of seeking the most appropriate system for the agencies involved. A rigorous process of due diligence was carried out by the group culminating in the decision to purchase Carelink+ which will meet Mpower's system needs under NDIS.

Quality Service Provision

We are proud of the outcomes we are achieving with some of our very vulnerable, high needs clients in disability services. Mpower was approached as an organisation of choice by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to provide care and support for several 'out-of-home' children and young people with disabilities. The disability staff and support workers are justly proud of their achievements with these young people. The attitude our staff have to caring for and supporting these people is something I as the CEO am also very proud of. I had the good fortune to hear a group of workers discussing one of the clients in a manner that led me to think they were discussing one of their own children –such was the tone of fondness and enjoyment as they shared the quirks of the person they all share the care of. This experience was one of the most rewarding I have had in many years of working in the community sector; I was absolutely delighted when I understood what I had just overheard.

The face of service provision is changing in Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) as families avail themselves more and more of the range of therapist services we are now providing. Plans for the future include providing groups through the school holidays which will build development skills for children and provide a break for parents and carers. The groups will also provide the opportunity for parents and carers to have extra time with siblings to meet their holiday needs as well.

Throughout the year we have absorbed two positions into the existing structure as staff have moved on to other pursuits. This has been in line with our efforts to cut our overhead costs, assisting in bringing down our unit costings. An internal advertisement brought interest from three staff with Mark Barling being appointed to the role of Quality Coordinator. This move also fitted well with our strategic aim of supporting empowerment and new learning in staff.

Throughout the year plans have been finalised to put the redevelopment of the new respite and therapy property to tender. The aim is to have the building complete for service provision in early 2016. The redevelopment will provide service specific surrounds to support therapy services for Early Intervention families and respite facilities for children and young people with disabilities as well as carers of older people.

Funding for the redevelopment has been a major focus over the past year. Building on the generous donation of \$100,000 from our Patron Mr Geoff Handbury, AO early in 2014 we have a healthy total of \$300,000+ committed through until 2016 from local philanthropic trusts and local individuals. Mpower is very grateful for the support it has received for this vital resource to provide a high standard of services to the community.(see page 31 for a list of donors)

An important way of providing quality services sees Mpower continue to develop and nurture new and existing partnerships across the community sector. Strong relationships with Brophy Family and Youth Services, Warrnambool City Council, Lyndoch Living, Bethany, Western District Employment Access, Westvic Staffing Solutions, STAY Residential Services (Hamilton), Kyeema

(Portland) continue to prosper providing the capacity for an extended range of services to people in our communities. Partnerships with STAY Residential Services and Kyeema allow the ongoing provision of holiday and after school respite programs in Hamilton and Portland respectively.

Mpower is also pleased to support the ongoing relationship with Deakin University which sees trainee doctors and therapists visit our Early Childhood Intervention Services as part of the paediatric unit in the course. Approximately 6-8 students visit throughout the year in their placement rotations and observe children with learning delays or disabilities working with specialist staff.

Once again Mpower is thankful for the support of a dedicated group of skilled volunteers providing direction for the organisation on our Committee of Management. These volunteers continue to give their time generously to the ever changing requirements and knowledge levels required as the sector moves consistently through and towards major change.

Not since the heady days of de-institutionalisation have boards of not-for-profit organisations been faced with change of the substance required by the onset of the NDIS.

We have a number of very generous volunteers providing building maintenance, program assistance and community transport. Mpower is indebted to these people for their generosity and commitment.

Mpower looks confidently to the future and sector changes as an opportunity for growth and diversity in a system that will ultimately provide more choice and control for people who have in the past been marginalised. Mpower's highly skilled staff are energised by what they see as an enhanced system that will provide the basis for embracing the opportunity offered by these coming changes.

CEO - Kerry Nelson

President - David Beggs



Our Key Infrastructure Project

Development of a Respite and Therapy Facility

Preparations for the redevelopment of a new \$1 million respite and therapy facility continued in 2014-15. The facility will be located opposite Mpower's head office at 84-86 Koroit Street, Warrnambool, with the property having been purchased the previous financial year.

The project will provide respite and therapy services for people with disabilities and ease long-term space problems in the existing Mpower office. The existing house will be converted into a purpose-built facility and will also include 11 car parks at the rear of the premises.

Various age groups from preschool to aged people and their carers will be able to access the facility, that will include a self-contained one bedroom unit with fully accessible ensuite facilities for respite purposes as well as a large open activity/utility space to be used for Mpower school holiday programs and youth groups.

The project has had the generous support of our patron, Mr Geoff Handbury AO, who has previously donated \$100,000 towards the purchase of the property, and the Isobel and David Jones Foundation who have donated \$10,000 towards the redevelopment of the grounds.

A public appeal was launched in 2014-15 with the aim of raising \$750,000 towards the funding of the redevelopment.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations received from:

- AL Lane Foundation
- Blue Illusion
- Ern Hartley Foundation
- Handbury Foundation
- J Slorach
- Jones Family Foundation
- The Midfield Group
- C Murray
- P Rauert
- V Robson
- A McKenzie
- M McWhirter
- R Lee
- RACV
- The Gall Family Foundation
- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- The Myer Foundation
- Uniting Church Evening Group
- Vedmore Foundation

Having a dedicated respite and therapy facility opposite our head office is a perfect outcome for the agency and the community.



Our Services

Mpower provides a range of programs and supports for families of children, young people and adults with disabilities

Personal Support:

Mpower has a team of qualified and caring personal support workers who can provide support to individuals in their home or in the community.

Deaf Access Victoria:

The DeafAccess program assists community organisations and services to work more effectively with deaf and hard-of-hearing people by raising awareness in the local community about their needs and the problems they experience.

Information relating to deafness or hearing loss is provided for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, their families or carers, services that work with deaf and hard-of-hearing people and for the general community.

Sturgeon View Holiday House:

Available for hire, Sturgeon View Holiday House has been designed to cater for people with a wide range of disabilities. Sturgeon View is situated at Dunkeld.

Integrated Family Services:

The Integrated Family Services program aims to enhance the safety, stability and development of children and adolescents by focusing on building the capacity of parents, carers and families to meet these needs. A suite of services is offered including:

- family counselling
- parent support
- mediation
- managing children's behaviour
- group work
- case-management for families with higher needs.

Community Transport:

Community Transport provides flexible transport arrangements for those with disabilities to allow them to attend health or community support services.

Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS):

ECIS aims to improve the lives of infants and children 0-6 with a disability or developmental delay and their families through the provision of specialised early intervention support. A range of services are provided including speech and occupational therapy, developmental assessments, family support and co-ordination and support to early childhood and care settings to promote access and meaningful participation.

Disability Respite Programs

These programs are designed to: enable participants to take part in both Mpower activities based in the community and other community activities of choice, and are available for families of children, young people and adults with disabilities.

The programs include:

- School Holiday Programs
- Weekend Getaways
- Active Oceans
- Youth Group/High Flyers

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Available for registered individuals and families.

Our Services

TOY LIBRARY

The special needs toy library provides information for parents and lends play materials and educational toys and equipment to facilitate the growth and development of infants and children with disabilities. Borrowing is available for people of all ages.

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Mpower provides a range of supports for carers:

- of any age caring for older people who are frail aged and 65 years and older
- of people of any age who have dementia
- over the age of 65 caring for a person with a disability.

SUPPORT PACKAGES

Mpower provides a range of support packages consisting of different levels of funding to purchase services to meet the individual needs of the client/family. The packages include Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) and Better Start.

“It was good to have someone that could help me with the information I needed and was unsure how to obtain.”



Service Data Highlights

118

*Children provided
with an Early
Childhood
Intervention
Service*

72

*New carers registered
with Mpower Support
for Carers Program*

1696

*Hours of respite
for older carers
provided*

41

*New families joined
the Early Intervention
Program*

65

*Clients were
supported by the
Integrated Family
Services Program*

175

*Families supported
through the Parent
Support Program*

4387

*e-newsletters
distributed and*

2106

*newsletters sent
out by post*

24

*Community education
sessions presented
by DeafAccess*

32

*Families supported
with their transition
from kindergarten
to school*

12

*Families regularly
attend weekly Totally
Awesome Parents
(TAP) group*



Service Data Highlights

91

Children supported through Helping Children with Autism and Better Start programs

2204

hours of counselling and support provided to carers of those aged 65+ years

1709

Youth group hours provided

1584

Hours of Weekend Getaways provided

4452

Hours of School Holiday Program provided

STURGEON VIEW HOLIDAY HOUSE

Sturgeon View Holiday House is now available for booking. Sturgeon View offers fully self contained holiday accommodation in Dunkeld, the foot of the Grampians.

Individuals and families requiring special needs facilities as well as general public are welcome at Sturgeon View. The house is wheelchair accessible throughout and has been specifically designed to cater for guests requiring special needs facilities.

For more information www.mpower.org.au and bookings phone Eda on 0416 756 681.



Our Year in Review - Early Childhood Intervention Service

Overview of Program

The Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) aims to improve the lives of infants and children 0-6 with a disability or developmental delay and their families through the provision of specialised early intervention support. A range of services are provided including specialist teachers, speech and occupational therapy, accessing funding packages, family support and co-ordination and support to early childhood and care settings to promote inclusion and meaningful participation.

Families who are offered early intervention services at Mpower can expect to be allocated a Key Worker whose role is to support the child and family's needs, including implementing therapy programs, service co-ordination and planning, advocacy, information and advice, emotional

support and identifying and addressing needs.

Mpower is a panel provider and registered with the Commonwealth to provide services to children eligible for Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) and Better Start funding.

The HCWA program is a Commonwealth funded program for children with autism aged 0-7 years. Better Start, also funded by the Commonwealth, is for children aged 0-7 years with one of the disabilities listed as eligible, including cerebral palsy, Fragile X, down syndrome, and moderate vision or hearing impairment. Therapy services are provided across the region in homes, schools, preschools, childcare and other community settings. These services are delivered in addition to State funded ECIS.

Quality Improvement

- The year 2014-15 was one of change for the ECIS team with new manager Louise Jellie taking over in July after the long tenure of Julie Pech. The focus was on continuing to provide a responsive and effective service across the course of the year.
- We were fortunate to be able to appoint three new staff during the year- Abby Fraser, a full time Speech Pathologist, Edda Thompson a part-time Occupational Therapist and Kelly Lynch, Early Intervention Worker who offers behavioural support consultations. These appointments have strengthened our ability to provide support not only to ECIS families but also those taking part in the Better Start and HCWA programs.
- Six children were registered for using their NDIS funding with Mpower Early Childhood Intervention Service. The Early Childhood Intervention Manager has played a key role in ensuring the ECIS team is prepared for the full roll-out of NDIS and able to provide the range of supports required by children and their parents.

Highlights

**Department of
Education and Training
grant received to assist with
access to training**

**Three new therapists
appointed, including a
dedicated behaviour
support consultant**




Our Year in Review - Early Childhood Intervention Service

Empowerment

- Encouraging more joint visits to families for therapists/teachers resulted in an increased collaborative approach and opportunities to learn new skills, whilst a change to intake practice aimed to have the ECIS Manager or Co-ordinator plus the Key Worker involved in a family's first visit, improving service co-ordination and outcomes for the family.
- Our playgroups have continued to grow and are well utilised and valued by parents. The Tuesday Pre-Kinder Group has provided opportunities for children to learn new skills and increase their confidence, whilst the more relaxed and informal setting of the Friday Play and Learn Group has been very well received.
- Thirty-two children received transition to school support and successfully commenced school. Transition to school practice or services included planning with parents, completing applications for funding with parents and schools, meetings, consultancy and visits to schools. A transition to school matrix to help with the sharing of information was offered for each child starting school.

Respect

- At the end of 2014 the Early Childhood Intervention Manager, Louise Jellie, in conjunction with speech pathologists from the Department of Education and Training, presented the 'Autism Spectrum Disorder: Planning a Successful Transition to School' session to six families. The sharing of information between family, key worker, kindergarten teacher and school has been proven to increase the probability of a successful start to primary school for children with ASD. This highly valued program will continue into the future.
- The partnership with the Deakin University Medical Program continued with a number of paediatric rotation students visiting Mpower during the year. This partnership provides opportunities to promote the services that Mpower can provide to families who are eligible to receive Early Childhood Intervention Services and or DSS funded supports.



All families are different and we aim to use available resources in the best way possible to meet the needs of the children and families we work with.



New Learning

- Mpower was fortunate to receive a grant of \$12,763 from the Department of Education and Training that was used to provide a range of new learning opportunities, including collaborative in-house key word signing, key worker training, cross-cultural awareness and good documentation. The grant also enabled three staff to attend the Biennial National Early Childhood Intervention Conference in Brisbane, with new learning on evidence-based practice shared with the team on their return.

Goals for 2015-16

- Continue to provide a high quality and effective Early Childhood Intervention Service
- Maintain our capacity to provide services under the HCWA and Better Start schemes
- Be ready for the full roll out of the NDIS

GEORGIA AND CHARLIE OFF TO SCHOOL

It's off to school for the first time for some of our Early Childhood Intervention families.

Georgia and Charlie started school this year and mum Jess said they are loving it! Many children and families worked hard throughout 2014 to get ready to go to school.

We love to celebrate the achievements and successes of the children who receive services through Mpower and going to school is one of them.

In 2015 we had 30 of our Early Childhood Intervention children starting school in 21 different schools across the region.



"He has come so far in these last two terms"



Our Year in Review - Disability Services

Overview of Program

Our disability programs are designed to enable participants to take part in both Mpower activities based in the community and other community activities of choice, and are available for families of children, young people and adults with disabilities.

The programs include:

- School Holiday Programs
- Weekend Getaways
- Respite for Older Carers packages
- Active Oceans
- Youth Group/High Flyers

Quality Improvement

- During the year Mpower worked with MacKillop Family Services to provide support for a young person with an intellectual disability. This led to a successful application from Mpower to the Department of Human Services to be a provider of Out-of-Home Care.
- Supporting the needs of a young person in Kinship Care we provided regular weekend respite and activity support and also worked in partnership with Child Protection, Placement and Co-ordination to begin providing 24 hour care to another young person via a contingency plan.

Empowerment

- School Holiday programs were offered in Warrnambool and Hamilton, and funding provided to Kyeema in Portland to assist them with service delivery. We also provided funding to STAY Residential Services in Hamilton to provide an after school respite service.
- Active Oceans continued to provide activities from October - December and February - April. Funding was provided to Kyeema to enable the program to be run in the Portland area. Trips to Waurin Ponds Leisure Zone and to Cape Bridgewater were popular and during term three we were able to provide 10 children with individual swimming lessons. The skills learned will enable these children to join mainstream swimming and water safety lessons.
- The Youth Group/High Flyers operated on alternate Fridays offering teenagers the opportunity to socialise with their peers. The Youth Group targets teenagers with a disability, whilst High Flyers is for teenagers with high functioning autism.
- Nine weekends of respite were offered throughout the year for four participants each weekend. Grouped according to age, ability and friendship groups, the weekends were delivered from Mpower's Koroit Street property and a holiday rental at Tower Hill.
- The Respite for Older Carers packages provide up to 24 hours of respite per month for families where the carer is over the age of 60 and caring for someone in their own home. People choose to either access the recreation programs, have an individualised service or a combination of both to meet their needs. Funding from the Respite for Older Carers packages enabled six people from Warrnambool and six from Hamilton to participate in weekend respite programs provided monthly on a Saturday and once every four months for a full weekend. This program also supported two people to participate in the Hampden Hurricanes and currently 20 families from areas across the region are in receipt of this package.
- Six people were supported via individual support packages and one via Futures for Young Adults. Support is individualised to meet the person's goals and requirements, including support to access the gym, maintain the family home and develop independent skills.

- A number of agencies purchased the services of our support staff to work with their clients, with a 100% increase in hours provided. These included Barwon Health, Moyne Shire, and Gateway Support Services.
- Support was provided to one person via TAC/ WorkCover funding.
- We were able to provide four families with respite via a high needs package that funds up to four hours of respite per week where there are complex medical or behavioural issues or for families with more than one child with a disability.

Respect

- Key word signing has been used effectively with clients, improving communication and enabling greater independence and decision making.

New Learning

- Our staff benefited from the key word signing training provided by Louise Jellie from the ECIS Team.
- Training opportunities were accessed by our staff, including self-advocacy, medication, CPR, epilepsy and parent support.

Goals for 2015-16

- Maintain engagement with all our current clients and families and continue to ensure that all new clients and families have a positive experience.
 - Continue to ensure our services meet all compliance requirements and operate within our current funding parameters.
 - Plan for the roll out of the NDIS, thinking innovatively about what we can and will provide, and how we can expand our services and strengthen our Out-of-Home Care capacity.
- Also consider how our intake team can provide all new clients with a seamless entry, and ensure that our client management system can provide a single, central storage of all client information.


Highlights

Positive outcomes for clients

Registration as an Out-of-Home Care provider

A significant increase in brokerage hours provided to outside agencies





***“Family centred approach
– took family needs
into consideration when
planning for our child.”***



OCEANIA STEPS OUT

Unedited version as written by Oceania

I have been a part of High Flyers with mpower since August, 2014. Initially, I was riddled with nerves about going and found the thought of the program very overwhelming.

My diagnosis was only very new to me so I didn't know anyone else with it or what to expect, however the program soon became the thing that I looked forward to each fortnight.

Both the workers and other teenagers were very welcoming in my first few weeks, and made me feel like a part of the group very quickly.

As everybody is in the same boat with their Asperger/Autism-ness, I was never made to feel like the odd one out, like what can happen at school.

High Flyers has been a great social outlet from school, as year 12 can be very stressful, and I didn't have any respite. As I have a very small network of friends, having a place to go every two weeks to do fun activities with has been amazing-I felt like a normal person with no limitations!

Each fortnight, we either go out for dinner, get take away or cook, as well as doing a fun activity such as bowling, go karting, going to the park/playground, going to the movies and gaming.

I love board games, so I very much enjoy having someone to play them with...even Monopoly!!

Even though the group is small, a lot of us have similar interests, so there is always something to talk about. I have especially loved the many conversations about Harry Potter! I am very appreciative of High Flyers, as it's given me a place where I can just be me and enjoy myself.



Our Year in Review - Deaf Access

Overview of Program

DeafAccess supports rural and regional communities to plan and develop strategies that enable deaf and hard-of-hearing people to become more included in their local communities.

The work covers nine local government areas across the Barwon and Western District Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) areas.

Funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, DeafAccess aims to produce real change for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, with its projects having the potential to benefit over 60,000 people with a hearing disability and

approximately 200 signing deaf people living in the region.

One DeafAccess worker is based in the Barwon area (DeafAccess Geelong) focusing on the deaf signing community within Geelong and surrounds, whilst the other works across the region concentrating on hard-of-hearing related issues.

During the reporting year Mpower was fortunate to employ Mark Gravalin on a short term contract while the co-ordinator took 18 months unpaid leave. Mark as a previous incumbent in the role was able to provide a smooth transition and continuation of the program in a very professional manner.

Quality Improvement

- DeafAccess worked with the Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre providing guidance on having a 'deaf-friendly' service, and after reviewing their tourist hospitality kits collaborated with the Dunkeld and Hamilton tourist organisations to assist them in promoting and using this information.
- DeafAccess participated in a review of the Building Inclusive Communities (BIC) program by KPMG Consulting on behalf of DHHS. As the Barwon region is a trial site for the NDIS, input from DeafAccess on how it and other providers of the BIC program can fit into the NDIS has been extremely important.

Empowerment

- Participants at the Archie Graham Centre were provided with information on how to make the best use of auditory assistance devices and Shuttle Loops in particular. DeafAccess's role as an effective advocate was demonstrated when the Victorian Electoral Commission was contacted regarding lack of captioning on some of their on-line videos. Prompt action was taken to rectify this situation. Advocacy on behalf of a young person for access to interpreters to enable them to meet job requirements was also successful.
- In collaboration with Barwon Community Centre, an iPad class delivered in Auslan was organised with an average of six people attending each month.
- Mpower DeafAccess Geelong surveyed the Geelong deaf community to determine which courses and workshops would be accessed at local community centres and neighbourhood houses if Auslan interpreters were provided. The survey results were submitted to DHHS and the Neighbourhood Houses Group and will guide future discussions.
- In collaboration with Barwon Health and audiologists, DeafAccess worked to improve the current system of communication between patients and professionals in Geelong, aiming to provide Auslan interpreters for patients and staff at the University hospital and clinics.
- A Geelong Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Expo was very successful with a grant of \$3000 received from the Deafness Foundation. Organised by the Geelong Hearing Awareness Week Network, co-ordinated by DeafAccess Geelong and sponsored by the City of Greater Geelong, over 300 people took advantage of the stalls, NDIS and service information, guest speakers and promotions that were available.

New Learning

- Guidance and advice on how to improve access for deaf or hard-of-hearing people was provided to a range of businesses and events. These included local cafes, Everyone's Business Forum, Port Fairy Folk Festival, Waves of Change Conference and Fun4Kids Festival.
- An audit of Shuttle Loop systems located on council premises was undertaken and, compared to last year results showed a greater number were displayed and in working order. The promotion and use of these portable, counter induction loops has increased.
- Disability Awareness training was provided to staff at three south west councils.

Highlights

Increased use of assisted hearing devices

Collaboration with Barwon Health to increase access to Auslan interpreters



Goals for 2015-16

- Learn from the experiences of the Geelong NDIS trial site through utilising the DeafAccess Geelong co-ordinator to educate, prepare and collaborate with other DeafAccess workers. This will enable a smooth roll out of the scheme, particularly in remote areas where isolation and distance bring extra challenges.
- Promote and carry out training to aged care facilities and Certificate IV in Aged Care courses.
- Promote good communication to tourism venues in the south west.

Highlights

Input into the review of the Building Inclusive Communities program

Geelong Hard-of-Hearing Expo 2014



Strengthening Parent Support Program

The Strengthening Parent Support Program (PSP) offers support to parents of a child/children with a disability aged 0-18 years.

In October 2014, the program was delighted to accept a donation of \$500 from King's College. The funds raised by the students through cupcake sales was presented to Lil Ward (Disability Services Manager) and Sandy Joyce (PSP Co-ordinator) at a full school assembly. The students were keen to support Mpower and in particular the Strengthening Parent Support Program to provide a day out for mothers from the Mpower Pre Kinder group. A trip to Timboon on Melbourne Cup Day provided an enjoyable day out and break for the parents who attended.

Through the Strengthening Parent Support Program, parents are supported in a variety of ways, with an emphasis on information sharing and the opportunity to network with others in a similar situation.

The program has maintained contact with each of the support groups throughout the region, ensuring that the PSP Co-ordinator connects with the group on at least a quarterly basis.

Information is shared with parents and includes upcoming parenting programs, services available or information relevant to a specific disability.

All new parents who access Mpower are informed of the availability of the PSP Co-ordinator. Parents can then be linked into appropriate support groups or be given information about services available.

Parent Support Groups include: Hamilton Disability support groups, Hamilton Parent/Carers of Kids with Additional Needs, Portland Autism Support Group, Our Special Kids Are Awesome (OSKAA) Portland, Down Syndrome Support Group, Dyspraxia Awareness Group, Warrnambool Autism Support Group and Early Intervention Support Group.

GOING BLUE FOR AUTISM

Mpower went blue and opened its doors to help raise the profile of Autism in the region.

The Warrnambool and Surrounds Autism Support Group celebrated Autism Awareness Month during April and encouraged local people and businesses to turn blue to improve understanding of Autism.

Mpower supported the campaign and also provided a meeting space for the group.

The group wants to change the perception of Autism that the kids are either like "Rain Man" or are naughty and in need of more discipline. With the help of Mpower, the group used Autism Awareness Month to better inform the community about the spectrum of autism.

"As parents we not only have to deal with the day-to-day pressures of having a child with Autism, we also have to deal with the community's lack of understanding," group co-convenor Debbie Ricketts said.

"There are some amazing people with Autism and many who have fantastic skills such as drawing or maths, but they struggle socially."

Mrs Ricketts, the mother of eight-year-old Isaak who is autistic, said about one in 100 people have Autism but not a lot is known in the wider community about the broad spectrum of the condition.

"Even my family didn't really know anything about it until Isaak was diagnosed. Unless you know someone with it, you don't really know much about it."

The Autism Awareness Month promotion included a 'Show Blue for Autism' day for the community.

The support group has been a blessing for Mrs Ricketts and other families. "I was feeling a bit lost before I got involved with Mpower and the support group," she said. "It's nice to have an understanding of why things are happening and to be able to talk to people with the same issues," she said. "As the support group flyer says 'Autism, Aspie, ASD or Autism, Whatever you call it, we understand the rollercoaster.'"

Isaak has received speech therapy, occupational therapy, behaviour therapy and early intervention support from Mpower and was involved with the playgroup. "That was very helpful and Isaak has been able to make great headway over the years," Mrs Ricketts said.



Our Year in Review - Integrated Family Services

Overview of Program

The Integrated Family Services (IFS) program aims to enhance the safety, stability and development of children and adolescents by focusing on building the capacity of parents, carers and families to meet these needs. Intensive family support is provided to families where either the children or the parents have a disability and there is an identified risk to the family's well being.

A suite of services is offered including:

- family counselling
- parent support, including the Totally Awesome Parents (TAP) group that provides potentially at-risk parents with information, companionship and community access and opportunities to learn basic skills and interact positively with their children.
- mediation
- managing children's behaviour
- group work
- case-management for families with higher needs.

Quality Improvement

- The 2014 annual client survey resulted in a 100% satisfaction rating indicating that IFS workers understood and helped to meet family needs, were flexible in service delivery, respected confidentiality and privacy, were supportive and helped individual families deal with their respective challenges.

Empowerment

- Forty-nine clients were provided with financial support, with an average of \$211 per family. This reflected the increase in significantly complex family issues and financial hardship experienced by families who were supported this year.
- There was a marked increase in the provision of emergency relief in the form of fuel vouchers reflecting the complex needs of our clients.
- Community education was provided to the Families with Mental Illness program and the Southwest Carer Respite Network.

Respect

- The TAP group moved from fortnightly to weekly meetings following feedback from a TAP group team building day and the Mpower 2014 October forum. This resulted in increased attendance and new members joining the group. The use of the Mpower bus for transporting group members to and from activities also assisted in increased accessibility.

***'Regaining
my confidence as a mum
and having a trusting worker
help me with things I struggle
doing myself'***



New Learning

- In partnership with South West TAFE placement support was provided to students as required.
- Staff participated in new learning opportunities including Dual Diagnosis in Practice, Applied

Suicide Intervention Skills, Closing the Gap Indigenous Health, No Bullshit Therapy, Money Minded, Single Session Work and Sexually Abusive Behaviours in Adolescents

Goals for 2015-16

- Ensure the TAP group is provided with membership to access the Mpower Toy Library to enable members to borrow age appropriate educational games and equipment for their children.
- To provide the participants of the Totally Awesome Parent (TAP) peer support group with a range of activities, discussions, presentations and outings to develop and enhance skills in the areas of:
 - Parenting
 - Social inclusion
 - Financial management and
 - Home environment



TOBEN'S STORY

Life is busy for little Toben and his parents Narelle and Warren Purchase. Narelle and Warren have been raising Toben with support from Mpower programs including Integrated Family Services (past), Totally Awesome Parents (TAP) group and Early Childhood Intervention Services.

Narelle and Warren attend Mpower with Toben for speech therapy and Early Childhood Intervention Services to support Toben with his learning and development including sign language. Narelle informed that she is pleased that Toben was 'happy to come' along to his speech therapy session with Abby Fraser as it makes life easier knowing he is comfortable attending.

The Purchase family has had many 'good' experiences with Mpower beginning back when Narelle was pregnant with Toben and they began attending TAP support group for parents with learning difficulties at Neighbourhood House. Narelle and Warren explained they like going to TAP group with Mpower group facilitators because they like 'meeting people' and 'learning about things, like keeping our child safe'. They have also learnt strategies managing Toben's behaviour as a busy toddler and skills for being 'good parents together'.

When talking about their Mpower journey Warren shared their past involvement in the Family Services program saying 'it was good having Family Services staff visiting and talking' about different challenges faced when caring for Toben when he was a baby. Warren said they were doing good things with raising Toben and it was good to have staff visiting and support them.

Narelle and Warren continue to attend TAP group with Toben and when asked if they would like to say anything about Mpower Warren said 'they are all very good' and 'they're friendly, always there if you need help'.

Our Year in Review - Carer Support

Overview of Program

The Carer Support program provides information, support and referral to carers of people who are 65+ years who are frail aged and have a chronic illness or disability or people of any age if they are caring for someone suffering from dementia.

Quality

- The 2014 annual carer survey resulted in a 97% satisfaction rating for the services that were provided, with 78% of carers indicating that their life had improved since engaging with the service.

Empowerment

- The Carer Support program provides information, support and referral to carers of people who are 65+ years who are frail aged and have a chronic illness or disability or people of any age if they are caring for someone suffering from dementia.

Respect

- Carers from across the region who were registered with the Carer Support program were provided with a number of opportunities for social connection, respite and education via a variety of activities, including a number of day trips to local, regional and metropolitan events and venues, and a Men's Day Out.
- Carers were provided with the opportunity to participate in the Southwest Regional Carers Conference.
- Carers from across the region were again offered the opportunity to attend Port Fairy movie matinees with a significant increase in attendee numbers.
- The Terang Carer Support Group was co-facilitated by Mpower and the Terang and Mortlake Health Service (TMHS) and saw an increase in attendance, averaging ten people each month. Having the use of the TMHS bus and driver enabled carers to access events as part of Carers Week.
- The Warrnambool Carer Support Group facilitated by Mpower continued to attract a consistently pleasing number of carers, with 18-25 people attending each monthly meeting. A variety of guest speakers presented on topics including healthy ageing and staying connected, diabetes education, falls prevention and balance, and information technology.
- The Hamilton Carer Support Group, co-facilitated with Western District Health Service, enjoyed a number of social outings funded by Mpower and also educational and information sessions.

New Learning

- Mpower staff were provided with a range of new learning opportunities that included training sessions on Applied Suicide Intervention Skills, Managing Challenging Behaviours, Performance Management and Mental Health First Aid.

Highlight

**Seventy-two new carers
registered with the program
in 2014/15**



BARB'S STORY

Barb Pickett's involvement with Mpower began almost 10 years ago. Barb soon became a part of the program and initially received financial assistance to attend appointments, help to purchase aides and equipment and the provision of respite for John (her husband) so she could tend to her own business matters or sometimes just to have a break from her caring role.

During her time as a member of the Carer Support program Barb participated in many of the group's activities and functions. Barb said "I enjoyed the friendships and the camaraderie and I got to do things I simply wouldn't have got to do under the circumstances."

When asked about particular highlights Barb exclaimed, "It would have to be the trip we went on to see The Phantom of the Opera a few years ago. The Princess Theatre is such a beautiful place and it enabled me to escape and let go of my worries for just a little while..... oh, and don't forget the trip to French and Saunders - that was hilarious and just what we all needed."

One thing we are all certain of is change and Barb has seen many over the years with her involvement at Mpower. "I remember when the meetings were held at the office (in Koroit Street) and then at the Southern Way conference room," Barb said. The current venue for the carer support group meetings is Deakin on Timor. "It is a lovely, welcoming space to catch up with friends and to talk about our issues and share ways to cope."

Sadly, Barb is no longer a member of the Carer Support program as John's condition has deteriorated and he is now in full time care at Lyndoch Living in Warrnambool. Barb spends time with John as often as she can and still attends the Parkinson's Support Group with him on a regular basis. This has obviously been a difficult period for them both but Barb is determined to stay positive and live her life to the fullest.

When queried if Barb had any tips for carers she, in her enigmatic fashion, she smiled and said, "Lighten up and laugh. You need to have a sense of humour. Of course you get frustrated and upset sometimes but you have to remember that won't change anything. But a good laugh...that can change everything. "



Our Year in Review - Administrative Services

Overview of Program

The Administrative Services team is responsible for a wide range of business management functions including: quality improvement, HR and personnel functions, data collection, promotional and marketing functions including the production and distribution of Mpower newsletters, IT and client management systems, maintenance of the database, property management and payroll.

Quality Improvement

- Sturgeon View, our purpose-built holiday house, was returned to holiday rental and had its first guests. The house was promoted widely with special needs networks, allied health services and tourism operators in the region.
- The Community Transport service was well utilised, with a 78% increase in the number of trips provided and 50 extra volunteer hours. Clients scheduling appointments to coincide with existing Community Transport bookings enabled this increase to occur.
- All personnel files were audited in preparation for the QIP accreditation.
- The Mpower database was reviewed and the newsletter component updated resulting in greater efficiencies, with a reduced number of mail outs and an increased number of email recipients.
- The first edition of 'e-mini-news' was delivered in January. Sent out mid-month, this is in addition to the regular monthly newsletter.
- NDIS preparations continued and a number of processes were identified to improve economy and efficiency. These included:
 - » a review by our accountant of programs and processes, allowing program managers to view staff positions and costings for greater efficiency
 - » a streamlining of processes used for casual staff shift work
 - » new rostering systems
 - » a review of property and vehicle insurance



Highlights

*First edition of
e-mini-news delivered*

*Retained Accredited Agency
status for 2015-2018*

*NDIS preparations
continued*



- A new Client Management System was identified in collaboration with several Community South West members.
- Care Monkey, a new innovative parent controlled electronic medical form was investigated, and will be adopted, initially with Disability Services clients and then used to enable parents to register expressions of interest for the School Holiday program on-line. This will improve service co-ordination and reduce duplication of effort.

Respect

- Mpower reinforced its values-driven culture by working with HR consultant Gavan Cooper to improve staff supervision agendas and staff appraisal documents, ensuring they were reflective of the organisation's commitment to Quality, Respect, Empowerment and New Learning.

Empowerment

- Client stories were gathered by managers for use in the monthly newsletter. A database of these is now being collected for use in future promotional material.
- We co-ordinated and delivered an NDIS Readiness Forum that provided us with information on client needs and preferences that will be used for future program planning.

New Learning

- Administrative staff undertook training in areas including Gemba Management, NDIS Efficient Pricing Methodology, Legal Issue in Managing Volunteers, Payroll, Challenging Conversations and Microsoft Access.

Goals for 2015-16

- Continue to prepare for the NDIS by streamlining our processes and practices to ensure our services are high quality, competitively priced and are what people want to purchase.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Avis Patten and Gary Ryan enjoy being in the driver's seat. Each week Gary and Avis donate about three hours of their time to help Mpower clients to attend appointments. It's a task they not only enjoy but one which is appreciated by their many clients.

As volunteers in Mpower's Community Transport program they take people to medical appointments, to pay bills and complete other tasks such as having their hair cut. They also provide a friendly face and a helping hand along the way.

Avis gets as much out of her volunteering as her passengers. "I find my role very rewarding and always try to help out when I can, she said." Many of those using the volunteer transport service have no other way of getting to their appointments.

Gary is a more recent addition to the Community Transport volunteer team. The former manager of the Ryan's furniture division now cares for his wife Betty who is living at Mercy Place Warrnambool and battling Alzheimer's disease. "I'm caring for Betty but I have time on my hands to give something back to the community," he said.

"This is a great thing. I don't mind driving and I enjoy having the opportunity to help people. Sometime there's no other way for them to get around. They are mostly older and have health or mobility issues and they are very appreciative of the service," he said.



Our Workforce

* Represents staff members not active at 30/6/15.

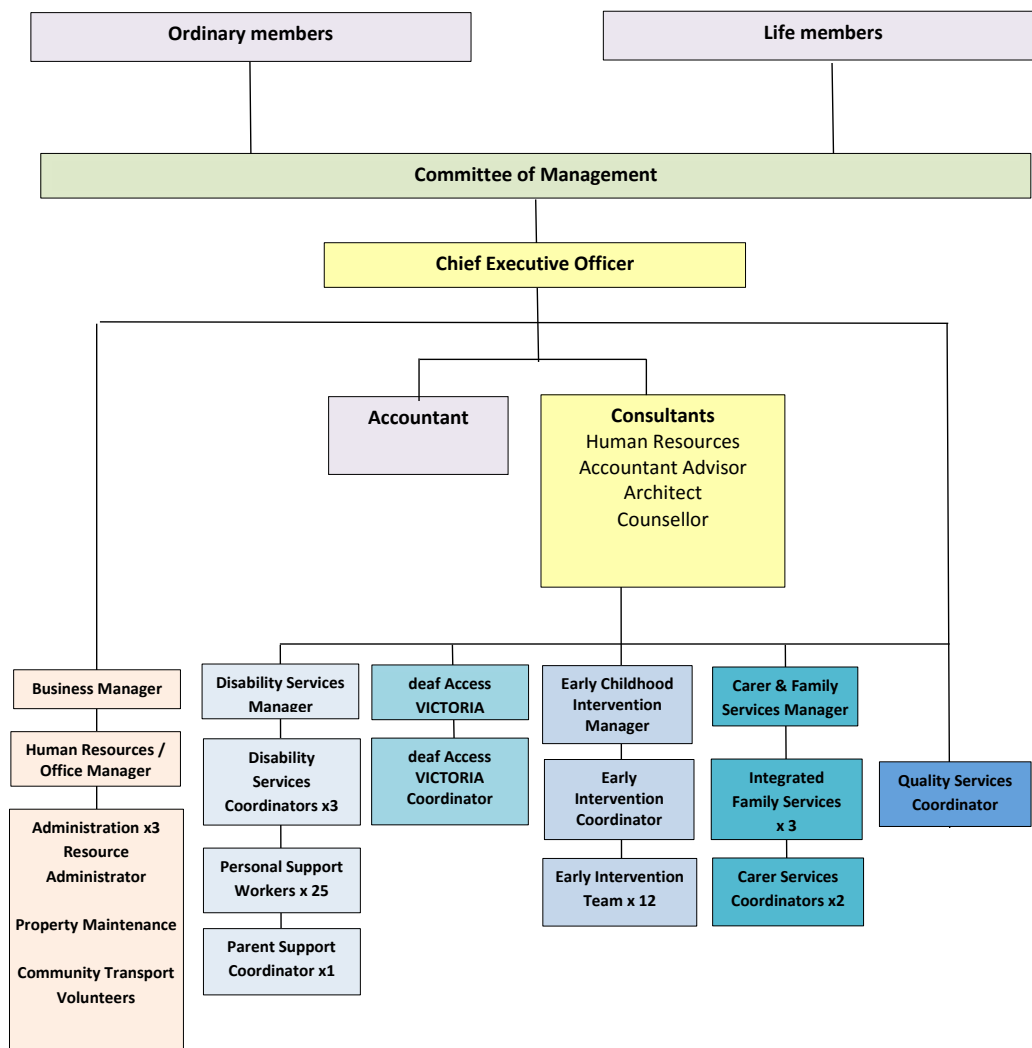
Our Staff

Mark Barling
Amiee Bennett*
Lindy Boyle
Luke Campbell*
Robyn Carroll
Emma Chittick
Prue Clancy*
Heather Clue
Rachel Condon
Helen Conheady
Jillian Crighton*
Betty Dwyer
Herlinda Eykels
Abby Fraser
Janine Gapes
Jason Gilmour
Rachael Gladman
Erin Gleeson

Jennifer Gleeson
Mark Gravolin*
Eileen Green
Debbie Harman
Trent Harman
Daniel Hayes*
Wesley Isles
Sandra Joyce
Fiona Gurney
Louise Jellie
Wendy Jones
Amanda Kearney
Rachel Kenny*
Jessica Lambert
Kelly Lynch
Rachel Malady
Claire Manson
Barbara Moore

Wayne Morden*
Patrina McConnell
Dianne McFadden
Cheryl McKinnon
Patricia McLean
Jenny McMahon
Nicole Neild
Kerry Nelson
Donna Newell
Ashley Nice
Emma O'Brien
Paul O'Rourke*
Leah Patterson
Frances Pearson
Julie Pech*
Rachel Peters
Joseph Purtill
James Reid

Irma Rentsch*
Wayne Rogers
Isaac Rothman
Melissa Rush
Penny Ryan
David Skinner,
Peta Smith*
Kirsty Sutcliffe
Maria Svent
Tracey Tanner
Edda Thompson
Jahzeel Tromp*
Matthew Turner
Joy Vicary
Shona Waller
Lil Ward
Yvette Wilkinson
Michael Wright





Staff distribution

Program Area	Full time	Part time	Casual	Total
Administration	5	4	1	10
Deaf Access		2		2
Early Intervention	3	10	1	14
Disability Services	3	1	26	30
Carers	2	1		3
Parent Support		1		1
Family Services	2	1		3
Respite Network		1		1
Grand Total	15	21	28	64

Volunteers

Volunteers are a highly valued and essential part of the Mpower workforce, particularly through the Community Transport program.

Mpower staff and management would particularly like to thank all volunteers contributing throughout the year including:

- Judith Brian
- Roy Clarke
- Garry Ryan
- Paul Hanlan
- Marilyn Johnston
- Rosalie Murnane
- David McDonough
- Avis Patten
- Gail Rutter
- Chris Carroll
- Zoe Evans



Our Workforce - Representation

Mpower Representation in the Disability, Community and Business Sector

Committee Member	Victorian State Committee - National Disability Services (NDS)
Vice Chair	Community South West
Chair	Lyndoch Living Inc.
	Regional Advisory Group for Kindergarten Inclusion Support
Executive Member	South West Carer & Respite Network
	South West Disability Network
Steering Committee	Enabling Women
	Everybody's Business
	Hampden Hurricanes
	Active Oceans
Chair & Governance Member	South West Child & Family Services Alliance – Service Development
	Alzheimer's Australia (VIC) Dementia Reference Group
	Deaf Access Statewide
	Industry Advisory Committee – South West TAFE
	Great South Coast Early Years Network
Working Groups	ECIA Early Childhood Professionals – Online Resources Project
	Barwon South West Educational Network
	DHHS Community building Network
	Geelong Deaf Social Club
	Geelong Interpreters Meeting
	Geelong Hearing Awareness Week Network
	South West Community Inclusion Network
	Southern Grampians Community Services Network
Treasurer & Secretary	Warrnambool Neighbourhood House
Direct Service Member	South West Child and Family Services Alliance
Vice President	Combined Health Services Network
Facilitator	Warrnambool Carer Support Group
	Parkinson's Support Group
Co-facilitator	Terang & Mortlake Carer Support Group
	Hamilton Carer Support Group

Acknowledgements

Mpower acknowledges the generosity of individuals, businesses, community groups, trusts, grants and government departments who support our work to assist children and families and strengthen the community.

Federal Government

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Victorian State Government

Mpower acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government

Department of Education and Training

Department of Health and Human Services



Local Government

Warrnambool City Council

Corangamite Shire

Glenelg Shire

Moyne Shire

Southern Grampians Shire

Surf Coast Shire

City of Greater Geelong

Colac Otway Shire

Community program partners

Nestles Rowing Club

Port Fairy Yacht Club

Warrnambool Angling Club

Warrnambool Netball Association

Warrnambool Surf Lifesaving Club

South West Sport

Lifeline

Daktari Surf School

Bunnings

Let's Dance

Key business and community partners

Darrian Office Choice

Enhanced Resources

Gunners Office Equipment

McLaren, Buzolich & O'Keeffe (MBO)

SED Advisory

South West Credit

Star Printing

Tasty Plate

Warrnambool Telephone Co.

Warrnambool Toyota

Trusts, foundations and estates

Lifter Hoist

Donation towards the purchase of lifting hoist

South West Credit

DHHS Disability Services Minor Works & Equipment Funding

84-86 Koroit Street

Donation towards redevelopment of 84-86 Koroit Street

AL Lane Foundation

Blue Illusion

Ern Hartley Foundation

Handbury Foundation

J Slorach

Jones Family Foundation

Midfield Meats

C Murray

P Rauert

V Robson

A McKenzie

M McWhirter

R Lee

RACV

The Gall Family Foundation

The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

The Myer Foundation

Uniting Church Evening Group

Vedmore Foundation

Financial Report

The Year In Review

Mpower has recorded another strong financial result for the 2014-15 financial year. In addition to growth in service funding, the result also reflects the impact of preparation work being undertaken for the impending NDIS. As such the surplus of \$412,807 contains one-off activity that is unlikely to be reflected in the future. The surplus will be invested back into the organisation to enable Mpower to transition to the new NDIS environment and also build assets to enable future service provision.

While the detailed financial statements are contained in this annual report, I take this opportunity to provide further explanation of some significant and important items contained therein:

Income

Total income exceeded \$3.5M for the first time and is up approximately \$250,000 on the previous year. While increased program funding accounted for half of this increase, the sundry other income reflects donations contributed to the Koroit Street Building Fund during the year. When the building works commence, this funding will be put to these works and will be represented as expenditure in future financial years. The variations in funding income by program and department reflects, in large part, the changes in the funding packages as we shift from block to individual packages.

Expenditure

It is pleasing to note that expenditure has been tightly controlled throughout the year, with fixed costs predominantly in line with budget and direct costs of labour in line with program funding requirements. Some notable variances for the financial year included:

- NDIS transition costs accounted for \$31,793 during the year primarily in relation to price and costing work and preliminary work on new systems. This was in line with budget and will grow significantly in the next financial year as new systems are rolled out and changes to our business model are assessed.

- Program costs are down on last year primarily as a result of the work being undertaken by Mpower staff rather than external providers. This is reflected in increased staffing costs.
- The reduction in consultants fees on last year is more a reflection of the costs of the previous year's triennial Quality Audits, tender writing and systems development.

Mpower is well placed to adapt to the NDIS environment where it is critical to understand the costs of providing services so as to be able to price and deliver them in a sustainable manner into the future.

Balance Sheet Position

Mpower has maintained its strong financial position with Net Assets of more than \$3.5M and over \$2.5M in cash reserves at the end of the year. All funds not required for day-to-day operations are invested into term deposits with the South West Credit Union and set aside for employee entitlements and future building development. The committee has been consistent with application of its policy that these funds are not to be used to meet day-to-day operational needs and budgets are set accordingly.

Acknowledgements

Finally I record my thanks to the accounting and administration team at Mpower led by Helen, Dianne and Donna. They have embraced the challenges of the changing landscape with enthusiasm and co-operation and have always been diligent and reliable in producing accurate information to aid our decisions.

I also acknowledge and thank Kerry and the finance and audit committee who are at all times professional and co-operative in the way they work to oversee the finances of the organisation. Mpower's governance practices are led from the top and ensure disciplined financial management arrangements are practiced at all times.

We now look forward to meeting the important challenge of transitioning our organisation to be ready for the NDIS in 2017. Much of this work will be completed in the coming year and Mpower members can be confident that this work will be done thoroughly, carefully and with members best interests at the forefront of our approach.



Robert Lane

B.Bus (Acc), MBA, CPA

Mpower External Accounting Adviser

Financial Statements



COMMITTEE'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

Your committee members submit the financial report of the Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

Committee Members

The name of each member of the committee during the year and if different, at the date of the report;

David Beggs
Neil Ballard
Phillip Annett (resigned January 2015)
Vern Robson
Adam Kempton
David Beard
Helen Bayne
Brad O'Connor

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were to provide support and counselling services for Aged and Disability Impacted persons.

Significant Changes

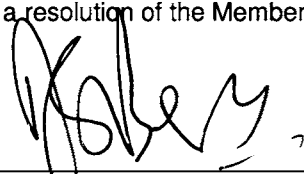
No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit of the association after providing for income tax amounted to \$412,807.96.

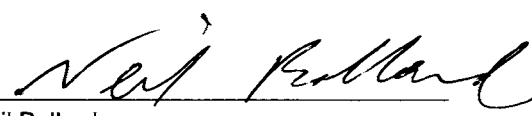
Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee.

President:



David Beggs

Vice President:



Neil Ballard

Dated this 27th day of October 2015

MPOWER

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
INCOME		
Non Department Funding	-	55,628.54
OTHER INCOME		
DHS	1,605,108.43	1,380,133.25
DFACS	-	159,564.85
DEECD	687,654.28	712,921.88
Dept Of Health	474,182.97	455,601.06
NDIS	12,900.08	376.00
DSS - HCWA	149,029.05	-
Sundry Other Income	636,036.60	548,988.13
	<u>3,564,911.41</u>	<u>3,257,585.17</u>
	<u>3,564,911.41</u>	<u>3,313,213.71</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
EXPENDITURE		
Accountancy	14,122.21	11,200.00
Advertising & Promotion	4,026.35	4,698.83
Audit & Legal Fees	17,000.70	15,700.70
Bank Charges	1,679.57	1,645.41
Catering	5,856.08	7,323.66
Cleaning	13,939.77	12,746.64
Consultants Fees	39,331.84	49,132.99
Depreciation	116,632.00	129,224.00
Insurance	4,660.98	10,230.15
Maintenance and Repairs	45,448.28	34,682.95
Motor Vehicle Operating Costs	57,560.23	60,460.17
NDIS Transition Costs	31,793.90	-
Postage	6,278.50	7,343.42
Printing & Stationery	13,805.35	14,054.54
Program Costs	321,479.87	356,096.79
Staff Costs		
Employee Provisions	39,086.41	42,672.49
Wages	2,087,961.06	1,915,374.15
Staff Training	45,055.55	45,554.74
Superannuation	184,630.41	169,160.38
Workcover	37,334.83	44,834.04
Leave Loading	-	872.71
	<u>2,394,068.26</u>	<u>2,218,468.51</u>
Security	736.00	1,434.00
Subscriptions	9,533.18	8,070.18
Sundry Expenses	10,483.40	1,677.97
Telephone	23,603.31	18,121.17
Utilities	<u>20,063.67</u>	<u>21,316.78</u>
	<u>3,152,103.45</u>	<u>2,983,628.86</u>
Profit for the year	412,807.96	329,584.85
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	<u>3,091,468.37</u>	<u>2,761,883.52</u>
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	<u><u>3,504,276.33</u></u>	<u><u>3,091,468.37</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	963,659.70	598,409.73
Trade and other receivables	3	103,297.48	31,046.46
Financial assets	4	1,453,627.36	1,384,168.27
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>2,520,584.54</u>	<u>2,013,624.46</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,625,856.85	1,592,317.83
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,625,856.85</u>	<u>1,592,317.83</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>4,146,441.39</u>	<u>3,605,942.29</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	6	353,293.00	264,688.27
Provisions	7	229,132.71	194,391.14
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>582,425.71</u>	<u>459,079.41</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	7	59,739.35	55,394.51
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>59,739.35</u>	<u>55,394.51</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>642,165.06</u>	<u>514,473.92</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>3,504,276.33</u>	<u>3,091,468.37</u>
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	8	3,504,276.33	3,091,468.37
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>3,504,276.33</u>	<u>3,091,468.37</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Receipts from customers	3,492,660.39
Payments to suppliers and employees	<u>(2,953,187.17)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>539,473.22</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	32,727.27
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(137,491.43)
Payments for investments	<u>(69,459.09)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(174,223.25)</u>
Net increase in cash held	365,249.97
Cash at beginning of financial year	<u>598,409.73</u>
Cash at end of financial year	<u><u>963,659.70</u></u>

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The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Preparation

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Property, Plant and Equipment

Classes of property, plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

Assets are carried at cost less any accumulated depreciation and any impairment losses. Costs include purchase price, other directly attributable costs and the initial estimate of the costs of dismantling and restoring the asset, where applicable.

Land and buildings

Land and buildings are measured using the cost model.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets including capitalised leased assets, is depreciated on a straight line basis over the asset's useful life commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed Asset Class	Depreciation Rate
Buildings	2.5%
Plant & equipment	10-100%
Furniture & fittings	10-33%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

Accounts Receivable and Other Receivables

Accounts receivable are recognised initially at the transaction price (i.e. cost) and are subsequently measured at cost less provision for impairment. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

At the end of each reporting period, the carrying amount of accounts receivable and other receivables are reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that the amounts are not recoverable. If so, an impairment loss is recognised immediately in income and expenditure statement.

Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Accounts payable and other payables represent the liabilities at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the association that remain unpaid.

Accounts payable are recognised at their transaction price. Accounts payable are obligations on the basis of normal credit terms.

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may not satisfy vesting requirements. Those cash outflows are discounted using market yields on national government bonds with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cash flows.

Superannuation

Mpower contributed employer superannuation on behalf of permanent employees receiving greater than \$450 per month. Mpower is not legally obligated to contribute greater than 9.5% superannuation guarantee levy.

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand, demand deposits and short term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the association and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Sale of goods

Revenue is recognised on transfer of goods to the customer as this is deemed to be the point in time when risks and rewards are transferred and there is no longer any ownership or effective control over the goods.

Rendering of services

Revenue in relation to rendering of services is recognised depending on whether the outcome of the services can be estimated reliably. If the outcome can be estimated reliably then the stage of completion of the services is used to determine the appropriate level of revenue to be recognised in the period. If the outcome cannot be reliably estimated then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

If the outcome cannot be reliably estimated then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

Revenue from training services is generally recognised once the training has been delivered.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of GST. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as part of receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
2 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Operating cash and equivalents	<u>963,659.70</u>	<u>598,409.73</u>
Reconciliation of cash		
Cash and Cash equivalents reported in the cash flow statement are reconciled to the equivalent items in the balance sheet as follows:		
Operating cash and equivalents	<u>963,659.70</u>	<u>598,409.73</u>
3 Trade and Other Receivables		
Current		
Prepayments	3,706.15	4,596.97
Trade and other receivables	<u>99,591.33</u>	<u>26,449.49</u>
	<u>103,297.48</u>	<u>31,046.46</u>
The association does not hold any financial assets whose terms have been renegotiated, but which would otherwise be past due or impaired.		
4 Financial Assets		
Current		
Cash held for investments	1,303,193.83	1,241,727.82
Cash held in provision	<u>150,433.53</u>	<u>142,440.45</u>
	<u>1,453,627.36</u>	<u>1,384,168.27</u>
5 Property, Plant and Equipment		
Land and Buildings		
Land at Market Value	503,000.00	503,000.00
Buildings at Market Value	1,155,740.58	1,155,740.58
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(302,535.00)</u>	<u>(273,627.00)</u>
	<u>1,356,205.58</u>	<u>1,385,113.58</u>
Work In Progress	<u>53,660.76</u>	<u>16,402.50</u>
Total Land and Buildings	<u>1,409,866.34</u>	<u>1,401,516.08</u>
Plant & Equipment - at Cost	638,713.52	600,110.09
Less Prov'n for Depreciation	<u>(422,723.01)</u>	<u>(409,308.34)</u>
	<u>215,990.51</u>	<u>190,801.75</u>
Total Plant and Equipment	<u>215,990.51</u>	<u>190,801.75</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	<u>1,625,856.85</u>	<u>1,592,317.83</u>

MPOWER

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
6 Trade and Other Payables		
Current		
Trade Creditors	137,863.11	85,704.21
Other Creditors Australian Taxation Office	84,347.89	74,750.06
Income in advance	131,082.00	104,234.00
	<u>353,293.00</u>	<u>264,688.27</u>
7 Provisions		
Current		
Provision for Holiday Pay	112,268.37	87,430.60
Provision for Sick Pay	69,204.64	67,930.80
Prov'n for Long Service Leave	47,659.70	39,029.74
	<u>229,132.71</u>	<u>194,391.14</u>
Non-Current		
Prov'n Long Service Leave	<u>59,739.35</u>	<u>55,394.51</u>
8 Retained Earnings		
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	3,091,468.37	2,761,883.52
Net profit attributable to the association	412,807.96	329,584.85
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	<u>3,504,276.33</u>	<u>3,091,468.37</u>

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

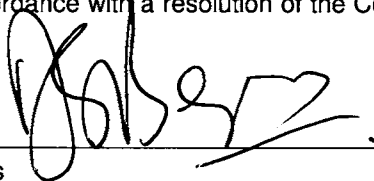
In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 3 to 13:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

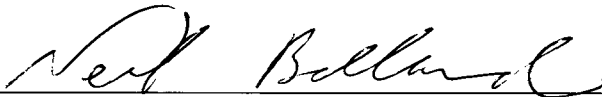
President:

David Beggs



Vice President:

Neil Ballard



Dated this 20th day of October 2015

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MPOWER

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Mpower (the association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015, and the income and expenditure statement and cash flow statement, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory information and the statement by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial statements position and performance of the association.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Mpower is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act Victoria 2012 and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditors consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MPOWER

Auditors' Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Mpower gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Mpower as of 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act Victoria 2012.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act Victoria 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Name of Firm: McLaren Buzolich O'Keeffe Pty Ltd
Certified Practising Accountants

Name of Director:



Director

Address: 67 - 69 Kepler Street, Warrnambool, Victoria 3280

Dated this 5th day of November 2015

Other Disclosures

The Carers Recognition Act 2012 promotes and values the role of people in care relationships and formally recognises the contribution that carers and people in care relationships make to the social and economic fabric of the Victorian community. Mpower has taken all practicable measures to comply with its obligations under the Act.

Mpower has promoted the principles of the Act to people in care relationships who receive our services and to the wider community by:

- distributing printed material about the Act at community events or service points
- providing links to state government resource materials on our website
- providing digital and/or printed information about the Act to our partner organisations.

Mpower has taken all practicable measures to ensure our staff have an awareness and understanding of the care relationship principles set out in the Act by:

- developing and implementing a staff awareness strategy about the principles in the Act and what they mean for staff
- induction and training programs offered by the organisation include discussion of the Act and the statement of principles therein.

Mpower has taken all practicable measures to consider the carer relationships principles set out in the Act when setting policies and providing services by:

- reviewing our employment policies such as flexible working arrangements and leave provisions to ensure that these comply with the statement of principles in the Act
- developing a satisfaction survey for distribution at assessment and review meetings between workers, carers and those receiving care.



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