



mpower^{inc.}

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

*'to be a leader in quality aged and disability services enabling people
to have meaningful connections to their communities'*



Front cover: Courtesy of Variety - The Children's Charity. Robert Roney explores the donated specialist play therapy equipment with riders participating in The Variety Cycle.



Background



Mpower has grown from humble beginnings in 1975 as a support group for families of children with a disability. The organisation emerged to meet the needs of families of children with a disability in the Warrnambool region at a time when only institutional models and metropolitan based services were available.

Since that time Mpower has grown from a small voluntary service to an accredited agency that prides itself on innovation and contemporary service.

Vision Statement



“To be a leader in quality aged and disability services enabling people to have meaningful connections to their communities.”

We will at all times focus on our vision and direct all activities towards its achievement. Our vision highlights the vast group of people it serves, and the fundamental belief that every person has a right to services that will enable them to lead a fulfilling life.

Mission



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, the services it provides and other specific community groups. Services are provided by quality staff in a respectful and flexible manner 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 the communities surrounding them.

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

Mpower will 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 to respond to people's needs.

Mpower offers a wide range of services for people from birth to senior years who require assistance with their daily activities.



Values



Quality

- *Provide a range of client driven services based on current research and best practice*
- *Knowledge and information is communicated in a manner that is clearly understood*
- *Use internal and external evaluations to provide continuous improvement of services*

Respect

- *Accept personal responsibility to honour our commitments to each other*
- *Create a safe interaction to encourage each other's perspective to be understood through non-judgemental listening*
- *Demonstrate care consideration and dignity in everything we do*

Empowerment

- *Identify and support individual's strengths and opportunities to build capacity*
- *Advocate for an individual's right to make informed choices*
- *Provide information and share knowledge*

New Learning

- *Embrace new ways of doing things without fear*
- *Seek and share new skills and knowledge to enhance growth*
- *Curiosity drives us to challenge the way we do things*

Patron



Mr Geoff Handbury AO

Mr Geoff Handbury AO

In 2010-11 Mpower welcomed Mr Geoff Handbury AO as Patron of Mpower.

Mpower is delighted to have Mr Handbury as Patron. As Patron he promotes the mission, values, aims and objectives of the organisation. The listing of Mr Handbury, the Hamilton based philanthropist and owner of the ACE radio network, as Patron is a great honor and benefit to our organisation.

Mrs Lindy Watson, from ACE Radio, delivered a message from Mr Handbury at our 2013 Annual General Meeting. She told the meeting that "Mr Handbury is honored to be the Patron of such a wonderful organisation. There was no hesitation when he was asked to be Patron of Mpower as after doing some homework, he was impressed with Mpower's vision and connections in the community.

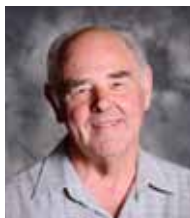
Governance - Committee of Management



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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 Membership

During October 2013 Sue Henry retired as Committee member with Mpower, drawing the curtain on nearly four decades of service. In her 38 years of tenure, Sue held many executive roles including President and Vice President.

In 1975, Sue and 11 others made history as founding members of the South West Support Group for the Handicapped. Now known as Mpower, the group has grown into a multi-service provider for people with disabilities and their carers.

Sue's youthful endeavours with Mpower were guided by a strong sense of social justice and compassion for those in need.

One of Sue's early achievements with the group was helping to get the special needs toy library off the ground. Sue was instrumental from day one, researching catalogues to acquire suitable toys for families and individuals. She also delivered

toys to families and service providers in remote areas in her role as Preschool Field Officer with Warrnambool City Council.

Sue's ability to see the 'big picture' helped Mpower strategically plan for the future, although Sue is a 'no fuss' person who would probably prefer her work to go unheralded.

Mpower proudly recognise her achievement and contribution to the development of their services across south-west Victoria by granting life membership.



Sue Henry

Governance - CEO & President's Report

Mpower has experienced a positive and productive year of service provision to families in the south west – making a difference in the lives of many people. While service provision and making a difference is our reason for existence we are focused on the need to review and develop our governance, internal systems and processes to provide the most efficient services in preparation for major changes to the sector. The key in this preparation was working to the outcomes of a new strategic plan which is focused on establishing ourselves to succeed in the changing human services environment.

Sector change

The 2013-2014 year has witnessed the seeds of the new paradigm in community service provision with the rollout of NDIS-National Disability Insurance Scheme. The scheme was launched in July 2013 in five trial sites across the nation. Mpower is outside of the Victorian trial site in the Barwon region - for which we are grateful as we watch our counterparts forge into uncharted waters of a competitive market place. The NDIS is but one of the major reforms across the community sector. The year has also witnessed 're-commissioning' of mental health services, drug and alcohol services and the prelude to major changes in HACC services and other aged care services. From 2015 a far wider range of consumer-directed care packages will be introduced across the sector.

These transformational changes are underpinned by governments of all persuasions acting on a need to contain spending on health and community services. The harsh reality of the current economic and demographic environment ...means that all Victoria's reforms are premised on improved productivity. 'The result will be a sector of the future that will inevitably look different from today, which works to improve outcomes for vulnerable Victorians.' (Peter Shergold Report 2013).

We are now seeing individualised service provision beginning and service users are



CEO Kerry Nelson and President David Beggs.

provided with choice about what they wish to purchase with funding allocated to them by independent assessors. 'It is suggested that individuals and families in need should be able to have greater control over decisions that affect their capacity to live full lives in the community.' (Peter Shergold Report 2013) The days of agencies being provided 'blocks' of funding to run specific services which people could tap into are coming to a close. Mpower is preparing itself for the new era of 'marketing' our services to consumers to meet their individual needs.

Strategic plan

Throughout the year Mpower has worked to achieving the high level initiatives of the strategic plan adopted early in the reporting year. The plan includes high level goals such as; contemporary governance, transition people and culture, financial sustainability, systems development, grow and develop services, brand and image.

Contemporary governance

Within the contemporary governance initiative we have researched and adopted the Carver governance system to provide a suitable platform for governing a modern, dynamic organisation.

Governance



In line with contemporary governance, the Committee of Management (COM) has deliberated and decided on changes to be made to the new model rules which came into practice from November 2013. These will be adopted at the 2014 AGM.

Strategic planning sessions have been introduced as part of the regular COM meetings focusing on our developing preparedness for the NDIS transition.

A new flatter staff structure has been adopted following a review of the overhead costs and administration roles. The restructure sees the removal of the executive management layer and is a forerunner to lean structures required to provide the competitive unit costings for services.

Mpower's governance is supported in areas of quality and risk with the ongoing relationship with QIP (previously QICSA) who continue to provide independent quality audit services for the organisation. Mpower maintains a fully accredited status with a further audit planned early 2015.

Systems development

The first steps of system changes have taken place over the year with particular emphasis on streamlining finance and data. This work is led by accountant Helen Conheady with management staff defining areas for change. Helen is also focused on understanding the true costs of service for each hour of service and establishing an overhead rate that will allow competitiveness in the NDIS service world.

Mpower has successfully registered with NDIS for 'provision of support' to provide services to a family who moved from the Geelong trial site to Warrnambool region. Achieving the registration was the first step in setting up the systems and processes required to work in the new service system.

Service provision

Mpower's service provision ethos had always been strong and gained a further injection of vigor and enthusiasm as senior staff attended a workshop from internationally renowned trainer, author and consultant to the not for profit sector, Peter Brinkerhoff, on Leading Change and Smart Stewardship. Many of our existing service provision ways were confirmed and we availed ourselves of extra ideas on smart service provision.

A very significant strategic highlight was the purchase of a large residential property in the immediate vicinity of the Mpower offices. This will allow much needed expansion for our existing service provision which is taking place in cramped or rental space. This was closely followed by the outstanding generosity of our patron Mr Geoff Handbury as he provided a donation of \$100,000 to 'kick start' a fundraising program to redevelop the building to meet Mpower's service needs. Further donations have been received from local trusts (see pg 33) who have been very supportive of our redevelopment plans which they see as enabling better service provision to the Warrnambool and district communities.

The new property being situated diagonally adjacent to our existing premises allows the best use of resources such as the vehicle fleet and administrative services which can be maintained at the existing site.

The successful partnership with Gateways to provide the Asperger's Spectrum Disorder Case Consultancy program came to an end in June with the finalisation of short term funding. The three year project gave excellent results for families and service providers looking for extra support and resources in dealing with Asperger's.

The provision of an Mpower suite of therapy services has been successful and continues to grow in demand. Our occupational therapists and speech pathologists are providing highly sought after services for families accessing 'Helping Children with Autism' funding while also providing service to Early Childhood Intervention Service families.



Approval and registration as TAC-attendant care providers has provided a new line of service for Mpower disability staff.

Leadership and culture

Mpower values leadership and growth in staff abilities as vital to the success and culture of the organisation. Leadership skills are seen as imperative to being flexible and sustainable as we move into the new mode of competitive service provision.

Throughout the year staff training with a focus on values and culture under the broad heading of 'Building Readiness for Change – NDIS' has been presented by Garry Trotter, our long standing organisational psychologist consultant. Garry also introduced scenario planning around NDIS. This required staff to think about what Mpower would look like in five years if we have successfully moved to being NDIS providers. The scenario requires staff to then consider what we would be doing, thinking, saying and feeling under these circumstances. This was very powerful for staff and helped to set the groundwork for future activities to ready the organisation for change.

In line with Mpower's and the CEO's strong belief in leadership, the CEO seized the opportunity to undertake the Australian Institute of Company Directors course in Warrnambool in August 2013. The course brought an opportunity to review and upgrade areas of governance in parallel with our move to the Carver model of governance.

Partnerships

Mpower has continued to develop and nurture new and existing partnerships across the community sector to enhance our service provision opportunities. Strong relationships with Brophy Youth and Family Services, Warrnambool City Council, Lyndoch Living, Southern Way, Bethany, Western District Employment Access, Westvic, 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 holiday and after school respite programs in Hamilton and Portland respectively made possible by Mpower funds.

An ongoing relationship with Deakin University sees trainee doctors visit our Early Childhood Intervention Services as part of the paediatric unit in their course.

The partnership with the 'Connect U' transport scheme has also been part of a partnership with Deakin University evaluating and reporting on the two year pilot "ConnectU" transport scheme, which Mpower has been involved with since its inception.

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. The year has seen the settling in of three new Committee of Management members who have each brought the benefit of new and different ways of appreciating the roles and responsibilities that come with their positions as directors of a not for profit community organisation.

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 is confidently approaching the future with changes as an opportunity for growth and diversity that will provide more choice and control for people who have in the past been marginalised. Mpower's highly skilled staff will provide the basis for embracing the opportunity offered by these coming changes.

CEO - Kerry Nelson

President - David Beggs

Mpower Services ~ Meaningful Connections



Mpower offers a wide range of services for people from birth to senior years requiring assistance with their daily activities.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION & SUPPORT

Mpower provides a range of programs and supports in the community for families of children, young people and adults with disabilities. The programs enable participants to take part in both Mpower activities based in the community and other community activities of choice including:- school holiday programs, weekend getaways and Active Oceans.

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

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:

A special needs holiday facility in Dunkeld is available for rent to people with special needs and their families/carers

Community Transport:

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

Family Services:

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

- Family counselling
- Support and advice with parenting
- Managing children's behaviour
- Group work
- Mediation
- Case management for families with higher needs

Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS):

ECIS aims to improve the lives of young children with a disability or developmental delay and their families through the provision of specialist support. A range of services include specialised therapy interventions, family support, co-ordination and support to early childhood education and care settings to promote access and meaningful participation of children with a disability.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

For registered individuals/families

Carer Support Team
L - R; Jason Gilmour, Robyn Carroll and
Yvette Wilkinson



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.

THERAPY SERVICES

Mpower provides therapy services to children 0-7 years with specific developmental delays or disabilities

- Speech therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Developmental assessments

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Mpower provides a range of supports for carers:

- of any age of older people who are frail aged (65+)
- of people of any age who have dementia
- Over the age of 65 caring for a person with a disability

- Parents of a child 0-18 with a disability

Other supports include:

- Carer/parent support groups
- Carer activities
- Respite aids and equipment
- Workshops and information forums
- Individual parent support

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)
- Better Start

are available for:

- children 0-6 years with an assessed developmental delay
- people of any age with an assessed disability

Mpower is proud of what we do and look forward to providing an even broader range of services in the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Staff Structure



Our Staff

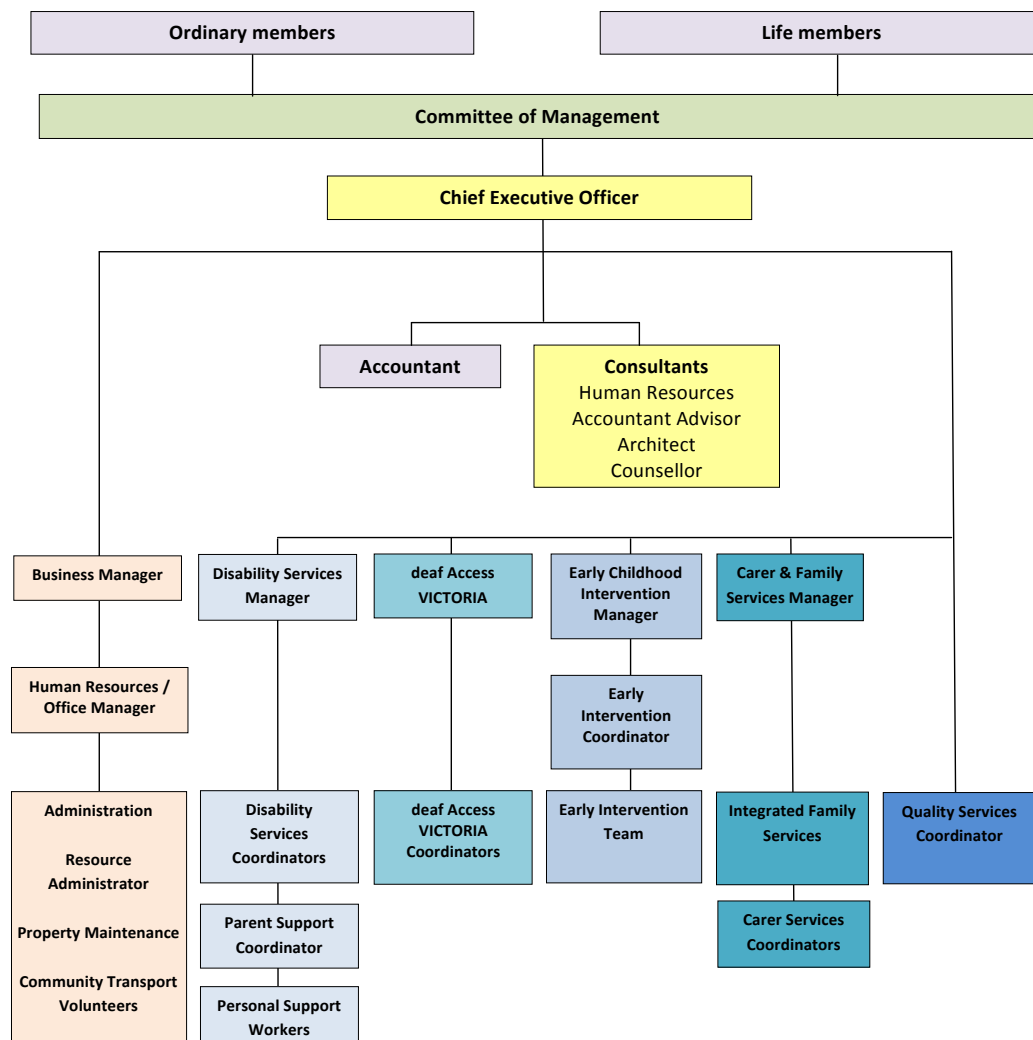
Mark Barling
Margaret Brough*
Amiee Bennett
Lindy Boyle
Luke Campbell
Robyn Carroll
Heather Clue
Rachel Condon
Helen Conheady
Jillian Crighton
Betty Dwyer
Herlinda Eykels
Brianna Giles*
Jason Gilmour
Jennifer Gleeson
Mark Gravalin
Eileen Green
Lynda Haddow
Debbie Harman

Trent Harman
Daniel Hayes
Wesley Isles
Sandra Joyce
Rachel Kenny
Fiona Gurney
Louise Jellie
Wendy Jones
Amanda Kearney
Olivia Kelly*
Jessica Lambert
Rachel Malady
Claire Manson
Patrina McConnell
Lisa Macdonald*
Dianne McFadden
Tracy McKendry*
Cheryl McKinnon
Patricia McLean

Jenny McMahon
Tonia McMahon*
Nicole Neild
Kerry Nelson
Donna Newell
Ashley Nice
Emma O'Brien
Paul O'Rourke
Leah Patterson
Frances Pearson
Julie Pech
Mikaira Petera*
Rachel Peters
James Reid
Irma Rentsch
Wayne Rogers
Isaac Rothman
Melissa Rush
Penny Ryan

David Skinner
Erica Smith*
Peta Smith
Kirsty Sutcliffe
Maria Svent
Tracey Tanner
Jahzeel Tromp
Jessica Tucker*
Wayne Tucker
Clare Vaughan*
Joy Vicary
Shona Waller
Lil Ward
Yvette Wilkinson
Michael Wright
Emma Young

* Represents Staff members not active at 30/6/14.



Our Workforce



In 2013-14 Mpower maintained a qualified and experienced workforce of 64 staff, including 32 casual staff. Staff are supported through a structure designed to ensure that the organisation's strategic objectives and program requirements are met.

A review of all Mpower administration and management roles conducted by SED Consulting during the year has led to a flatter organisation structure and an increased focus on leadership development across the organisation. The management team is representative of all program areas and has responsibility for implementing

the agency's Operational Plan and addressing accreditation requirements.

Mpower encourages all employees to access ongoing training and development to increase the efficiency, productivity and professionalism of the organisation. Individual training plans have been identified through staff appraisals undertaken by all staff. Appraisals have also had a focus on the objectives of the Operational Plan 2014-15.

With a strong workforce at Mpower we are able to ensure that we continue to provide high quality services to families across the region.

Welcome to Our New Staff

In 2013-14 we welcomed new staff to the team including Mark Gravolin (Deaf Access), Jason Gilmour (Carer Support), and Disability Support Workers Aimiee Bennett, Jess Lambert, Michael Wright, Irma Rentsch, Trent Harman and Wesley Isles.

Farewell

New opportunities elsewhere have led valued staff to leave during the year. The contributions of Marg Brough (20 years), Emma Young, Koby Petera, Brianna Giles, Tracey McKendry, Olivia Kelly and Sharon Luke have led to many positive outcomes for families across the south west of Victoria.

Marg Brough retired earlier this year from Mpower after 20 highly valued years of service. *"Mpower is uniquely placed to continue providing extremely effective support programs for parents. With adequate resources, it can continue to raise the bar by offering parents a wider range of timely, relevant support services."* Parent Support Co-ordinator, Marg Brough.

Occupational therapist, Emma Young moved back to her home town near Geelong after four rewarding years with Mpower's Early Intervention program. *"The staff are a lovely group of people. Everyone is very friendly and passionate about what they do. The Early Intervention team is very knowledgeable and so dedicated to what they do. I feel lucky to have worked with such a great bunch."*

What really sustained Emma's interest in the role was the ability to work directly with children and their families.

"I really enjoy working with families to help them and their children reach their goals. I feel my role has real purpose and meaning."



Emma Young and Xavier

Our Workforce



Valuing the 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
- Basil Garner
- Rosalie Murnane
- David McDonough
- Avis Patten
- Gail Rutter
- Chris Carroll
- Zoe Evans

Community Transport driver Roy Clarke has made a positive difference to his community through his five years of service to the community transport program.

Mpower would like to acknowledge the contribution of the late Mr Colin Armstrong. Colin was a dedicated and highly valued volunteer at Mpower for more than ten years.



Roy Clarke assists Community Transport recipient

Contractors

Mpower engages external contractors to ensure compliance and service delivery improvement. Mpower would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following contractors - Paul Gough (fleet coordination, Warrnambool Toyota), Gavan Cooper (HR Consultancy), Gary Trotter (leadership development, SED Advisory),

Robert Lane (contract accountant, SED Advisory). Wendy Hastrich (architect).

Preferred contractors identified by Community South West have also been engaged throughout the year.



Student placements

In line with Mpower's value of being 'a learning organisation', Mpower supports student placements and develops partnerships with local learning organisations. Each year Mpower offers placements to students undertaking a range of courses. These placements, ranging from one week to three months depending on their course, provide students with an opportunity to work directly with families and to better understand the working environment of a community service organisation.

Mpower continues to work closely with Deakin University to provide practicum placements for third year medical students. These placements are

designed to show students a different and less acute side of child health, as opposed to seeing children only in hospital settings.

The students undertaking placements at Mpower this year have demonstrated enthusiasm for learning and have contributed positively to the Mpower team.

Years of service



Less than 1 year	12%
1-4 years	50%
5-9 years	20%
10-14 years	12%
Over 15 years	6%

Staff distribution



Program area	Full time	Part time	Casual	Total
Administration	5	4	1	10
Deaf Access		2		2
Early Intervention	2	10	1	13
Disability Services	3	1	26	30
Carers	2	1		3
Parent Support		1		1
Family Services	2	1		3
Respite Network		1		1
ASDCCP		1		1
Grand Total	14	22	28	64



Quality - Improvement



Accreditation and Service Improvement

In March 2013, Mpower was reaccredited with the Quality Improvement Council (QIC). Accreditation takes place every three years with a mid-cycle review taking place after 18 months. Consequently there has been no accreditation review for 2013-2014.

After comparing cost and benefits, a decision has been made to utilise QIC as a single accreditation body to provide a full suite of accreditation across the organisation. Previously Health and Disability Auditing Australia (HDDA) undertook accreditation for disability services. Utilising a single accreditation body will reduce costs and streamline our accreditation requirements.

The commitment to quality is reflected in Mpower's vision, mission and service delivery, and through a comprehensive quality work plan. Mpower's 'Quality Work Plan 2013-2014' incorporates quality improvement actions identified by Mpower staff, working groups, consumer feedback and accreditation bodies.

Considerable progress has been made towards achieving the required outcomes. Service improvements implemented as a result of the Quality Work Plan include:

- Moving towards an online newsletter
- Developing a streamlined process for the development of policy and procedures
- Updating information packages, brochures, forms and templates
- Including risk management and narratives into staff meetings
- Introducing a new client documentation system in the Early Intervention program
- Redesigning the central filing system
- Incorporating the Victorian Early Years Framework into client notes.
- Redesigning the Committee of Management induction manual
- Increasing marketing across the region.

Carver Model of Policy Governance adopted

During the year Mpower's Committee of Management adopted the Carver Model of Policy Governance which is designed to empower committees of management to fulfil their obligation of accountability for the organisations they govern. It is applicable to the governing body of all organisations and enables the Committee of Management to focus on the larger issues, to

delegate with clarity, to control management's job without meddling, to rigorously evaluate the accomplishment of the organisation and to truly lead the organisation. Mpower management has been working with consultant Miriam O'Brien to implement the governance model including redevelopment of the agency's policies and procedures.

Addressing complex financial change

In June 2014 the National Disability Insurance Agency released a methodology to achieve an 'efficient price' for key disability supports. An efficient price is a benchmark within which providers of support should be able to operate, when supporting people with disability.

"Building efficiencies and establishing a clear unit cost for Mpower programs is a key to the organisation's sustainability" (Mpower CEO Kerry Nelson)

A key improvement activity for 2013-14 has been establishing the true cost, margin and price of a 'unit' for Mpower services. The Mpower accountant has worked closely with all Mpower managers to gain full details of program functioning and real unit costs. Through this



process we have been able to gain a clearer picture of our systems and processes and provide objective observations about the efficiencies of the organisation.

Another significant key issue in addressing sustainability and unit cost is the long term outcomes of the Equal Remuneration Order which will result in significant pay rises for Mpower's staff over the next six years.

Compliance and risk management

A structured approach to risk management is a key feature of a quality organisation. The QIC identified in its 2013 report that Mpower leadership and staff have a 'high level' of risk awareness. Risk management is supported through the continued updating of the myCaRMS (compliance

and risk management software) system.

To ensure risks continue to be addressed this topic has been introduced as a standard agenda item at all staff meetings.

Occupational Health and Safety

The OH&S Committee meets monthly to ensure a coordinated approach to addressing OH&S and to ensure that staff are able to come to work every day, and stay healthy, safe and fit while in the workplace.

In 2013/2014 there has been an increased focus on staff consultation on OH&S matters which affect employees, including identifying hazards, assessing risks, and making decisions about measures to control risks. Increased consultation has been achieved through direct face to face consultation with employees during workplace inspections, distribution of OH&S minutes and reports, inclusion of risk as a standard agenda item at staff / management meetings and seeking staff feedback.

Initiatives undertaken by the committee throughout the year include regular incident report

reviews, biannual workplace hazard inspections, development of an OH&S Workplan, conducting two workplace fire drills and OH&S training for staff including fire safety, first aid and manual handling. An essential safety measures report prepared by Warrnambool City Council has also been implemented.

The human resource manager has taken on the role of the agency Return to Work Officer and has been supporting a staff member with their transition back to the workplace.

A workplace assessment and subsequent funding by Job Access has led to office modifications to assist staff in the workplace. Modifications made include installation of a carport for wet weather transfers and replacement of carpet in the administration area to aid wheelchair access.

Responding to Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups

The CALD Working Group has met quarterly through the year with the aim of implementing the Mpower Cultural Diversity Action Plan 2011–13. The action plan has been developed to support best practice and establish a framework that will improve our understanding of and engagement with culturally diverse communities. It will also help us design and deliver appropriate services for people from diverse cultures within the community.

Outcomes from the plan include implementing Indigenous education programs in the Active Oceans program, cultural awareness training, developing a CALD statement on employment advertising, developing terms of reference for the CALD Working Group, and reviewing and communicating the Mpower CALD policy.

Quality - Innovation & Growth



The following provides a snapshot of just some of the areas of growth and innovation demonstrated by Mpower over the year.

Building readiness for change

While not located in the Barwon trial site for the NDIS, Mpower has become an NDIS approved provider due to a family in receipt of NDIS funding moving into the south west and requesting services from the agency. Mpower is approved for the 'provision of support' which includes the following:

- Specialised assessment of skills, abilities and needs
- Assistance in coordinating or managing life stages, transitions and supports
- Assistance with travel / transport arrangements
- Development of daily living and life skills
- Physical wellbeing activities
- Assistance with daily personal activities
- Assistance with daily life tasks in a group or shared living arrangement
- Early intervention supports for early childhood
- Participation in community, social and civic activities
- Therapeutic support
- Behavioural support
- Assistance to integrate into school or educational programs
- Other innovative supports

In preparation for the change Mpower has focused strongly on professional development and quality planning.

All Mpower office based staff attended a training day presented by Gary Trotter on preparedness for the NDIS. Staff were required to think about what Mpower would look like in five years' time under a NDIS, what we would be doing, thinking, saying and feeling under these changing circumstances. As an outcome staff gained a sense of what the future may look like and how we may get there. This important training has set the groundwork for future activities to ready the organisation for change.

Mpower's CEO, accountant and business manager also attended a full day's training with Tim Flowers on unit costing. This training provided key information on the operations of the financial systems that are required to survive in an NDIS world.



New multi-purpose facility

With the very generous support of local trusts and our patron, Mr Geoff Handbury, Mpower has purchased a property at 84-86 Koroit Street to be used as a disability services respite and therapy facility. The property will free up space in the

existing offices to allow expansion of vital areas such as the conference / staff meeting room. The purchase of the property is a big investment for our agency which will support us in meeting current and future needs.

Approved Worksafe provider

During the year Mpower received approval to be a Worksafe support service provider. Worksafe Victoria, through its authorised agents, purchases approved occupational rehabilitation services related to compensable, work-related injuries and

administers a system of approval for organisations and individuals to deliver approved occupational rehabilitation services in Victoria.

Family Services - Totally Awesome Parents (TAP)

The Totally Awesome Parents (TAP) program continues to be well attended and has received ongoing support through the South West Child and Family Services Alliance. The group has been established to support parents with an intellectual disability to provide the best possible care for their children. The TAP participants continue to meet fortnightly and have arranged training on 'how to respond to bullying', fire safety, child health and wellbeing, safety, raising teens and supervision around the home. Visits to Aquazone have also taken place.

Attendance at the program has increased with the introduction of transport to and from the group and the contribution of volunteer Zoe Evans who has dedicated her time in supporting the group.

*"It was very good and I got all the help I needed and I know I can call and get help if I need it later. Now I know I am a good mum to my daughter."
(program participant)*

Supporting parents through the early years

*"Research indicates where we build strong rapport with families in the first few months the engagement and outcomes will improve for them."
(Early Intervention Team Leader, Julie Pech)*

In 2014 new intake groups were introduced to the 30 new families beginning Early Intervention services. All families accessing early intervention at Mpower now have a key worker (formerly family service coordinator) allocated when they are entering this new phase of their life. The key workers have been able to keep in touch and build a relationship that is based on trust, respect, commitment and shared responsibility. The role is to listen to the ideas of parents and support the decisions they make for their child.

Topics discussed with families include managing behaviour, respite options, speech therapy, occupational therapy and looking after yourself.

The new approach has led to an increased use of reflective practice, storytelling and motivational interviewing by key workers.

*"Thank you so much for all your help over the last four years. My child's improvement wouldn't have been possible without it. We really appreciate it."
(early intervention parent)*

Strategic Plan 2014- 2016

"You are entering a brave new world that's full of competition and your strength is in who you are, draw on who you are. You are of the community. It is your strength that you are connected to other organisations within the south west." (Disability Services Commissioner, Laurie Harkin at, Mpower AGM - October, 2013)

The NDIS represents the most significant development in the delivery of disability services in Australian history. With support from Michael Goldsworthy, Principal Consultant at Australian Strategic Services, the Mpower Strategic Plan

2014 – 2016 has been developed and adopted. A key focus of the plan will involve maintaining the agency's focus on a values based culture supporting high standards while preparing for the NDIS. The Plan also covers exemplary leadership, preparing for change, building sustainability, marketing, systems improvement and innovation.

Another significant key issue in addressing sustainability and unit cost is the long term outcomes of the Equal Remuneration Order which will result in significant pay rises for Mpower's staff over the next six years.

ConnectU

The Victorian Government has identified transport disadvantage as a 'key factor contributing to social exclusion for a variety of different groups in Victoria', with access to transport 'consistently rated by rural and regional communities as one of the most significant barriers to accessing services, employment and social networks'. (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2011). Groups identified as being more likely to experience transport disadvantage include people over the age of 60 and people with a disability.

In 2013-2014 Mpower has continued to support Connect U, which provides members of the community with access to a central hub

for transport services and transport assistance information. Eligible users of the service include Home and Community Care (HACC) clients, those individuals who are unable to access public transport and those who are having difficulty finding a means of getting to their destination. Volunteer drivers provide door to door transport for eligible clients to attend medical appointments, shopping or social outings.

Mpower provides support to the program through use of a vehicle, attendance at bi-monthly meetings and sharing community transport coordination software.

Isaac's eMpowerful Moment

How rewarding it is when a child does something for the first time. This photo captures Isaac holding a texta and drawing intentionally for the first time at the early Intervention programs. He then gave the texta to an adult and gestured for them to draw. This milestone was a powerful moment for his parents and the staff at Mpower.

Tracey and Isaac drawing





Junior Hurricanes football team

Creating new opportunities in sport

Active Oceans has extended its target group by introducing more adults with disabilities to coastal recreation and sporting opportunities. As part of the Eat Well Be Active program, Mpower has been able to link adults into surfing and swimming. Mpower has also worked closely with Rural Access and South West Sport to create new opportunities for people with a disability to compete in triathlon, surfing and football.

In March 70 people including eight wheelchair users participated in a community surf event in Warrnambool with special guest from the USA, Christiaan 'Otter' Bailey, the only paralysed professional big wave surfer in the world. The event was a partnership between Warrnambool City Council, Warrnambool Surf Life Saving Club, Active Oceans, Port Fairy Surf Life Saving Club and South West Sport.

Ten people with a disability, including three wheelchair users, competed in the inaugural All Abilities Triathlon as part of the Warrnambool Tri Club Sufferfest 2014 event in March. The participants received plenty of support and encouragement from onlookers as they swam or waded, biked or triked and ran or walked a course with a modified format based on their individual support needs.

In 2012 the Hampden Hurricanes football team was established to provide a sustainable football program for people with disabilities aged 14 years and over living in the south west. This year the program has been extended to include a Junior Hurricanes football team. Ten players have attended each of the training sessions alongside the senior team. The positive outcomes and feedback achieved by the Junior Hurricanes means that the program will continue and develop further in 2015.

Empowerment



Community development and inclusion

"Mpower is committed to building more inclusive communities. The agency believes that people with a disability should be able to live and participate in the life of the south west community, with the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities as all other citizens."
(Mpower Community Inclusion Policy Statement)

Working with the community to assist it to become more accessible and welcoming for people with a disability is a key focus of all Mpower programs. All staff at Mpower work to ensure people have real and meaningful connections to their community.

Service provision in the community

The South West of Victoria is fortunate to have many attractions, activities and events. Mpower programs are proactive in identifying opportunities to link with community facilities, activities and natural attractions.

During 2013-2014 the respite programs have attended many of the attractions offered in the region including the Twelve Apostles, Fun 4 Kids, The Great Chase, Warrnambool Show, Mt Gambier Christmas Parade, Karingal Car Trial, Carols by Candlelight and the Premier Speedway. A trip to Melbourne Zoo courtesy of funding from Herbert Allen Bequest was also a highlight of the year.

"It gives my child the chance to experience things that he would not get to experience in his everyday life." (parent)

Active Oceans continues to work closely with local sporting clubs in the delivery of aquatic sport and recreation. The following program partners have generously provided their time, skills, facilities and support to Active Oceans programs:

- Nestles Rowing Club
- Warrnambool Surf Club
- Inspiring Opportunities
- Port Fairy Yacht Club
- Warrnambool Angling Club

Community education

Mpower works with communities, health services, employment services, support group and schools to raise awareness and understanding about disability. Topics presented to the community have included:

- Assistive and Augmentative Technologies
- Access to services
- Post school options
- Support groups
- Respite options
- Speech and language
- Understanding sensory processing



Byron, Dylan, Luke and Michael at Melbourne Zoo



Autism Spectrum Disorder Case Consultant Practitioner (ASDCCP)

Community education is a key role of the Autism Spectrum Disorder Case Consultant Practitioner program which has concluded this year after two years of increasing the knowledge and skills of those who work with people with autism. An important part of this program has been to empower workers and professionals so they can continue to skill themselves in their understanding of autism. This is achieved by running training in workplaces, establishing 'Communities of Practice', networking and providing information through a regular newsletter.

A highlight of the year was 115 staff attending training with positive behaviour support specialist Adam Ryan on developing individual ASD profiles.

*"I have made links to other service providers with expertise working with clients on the spectrum and access to a fantastic range of reading materials".
(program participant)*

Deaf Access – Building communities

Mpower's Deaf Access program works closely with the community to build the community's capacity to include people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Highlights from 2013/2014 include promoting inclusion at Men's Sheds and the Geelong Hearing Expo.

The Geelong Men's Shed with support from Mpower's Deaf Access program is now accessible to six deaf members through a range of extra supports including written and visual instruction. Deaf Access supports the Men's Shed through regular communication with coordinators and participants and funding for interpreters and classes. The initiative grew from feedback of male members of the deaf community in Geelong who said they were interested in learning new skills and making things. The Men's Shed also gives families of deaf people some respite and is breaking down barriers with the wider community.

The Deaf Access program was heavily involved in the preparation and presentation of a Deaf Expo in Geelong. The expo, held in August 2013 attracted more than 300 participants and included displays, expert speakers, free hearing screenings, a children's signing choir, technology and assistive devices.

We were delighted to welcome Mark Gravalin back to the position of deaf access Co-ordinator, the role he held prior to Erica commencing.

Mark settled into his role easily due to his prior experience and will remain in the role until Erica returns in 2015.



Zara the Hearing Dog with Erica Smith and Mark Gravalin

Empowerment



The Disability Services Commissioner joins Mpower for its AGM

In October 2013 Mpower was fortunate to have the Disability Services Commissioner Laurie Harkin at its AGM. The role of the Disability Services Commissioner was established under the Disability Act 2006 to bring major reforms aimed at improving services for people with a disability in Victoria and to work with people with a disability and disability services to resolve complaints. His message for the community at the Mpower AGM was to treat people with a disability with respect and encourage them to speak out about their concerns.

*Disability Services Commissioner
Laurie Harkin*



Advocacy

Advocacy plays a critical role in ensuring that the rights and interests of people with a disability are respected and realised. Mpower continues to support families with individual advocacy as well as systemic advocacy.

Mpower's CEO Kerry Nelson has continued membership of the Victorian National Disability Services (NDS) State Committee. This 12 member committee represents a wide range of stakeholders and

service providers and is a subcommittee of the national committee. As a peak body the NDS positions itself as an advocate for its members in discussions with government on policy/legislation and funding matters. The membership of the Mpower CEO on this committee has allowed Mpower to represent the experiences of regional and remote service providers. It has also assisted in keeping Mpower abreast of developments in relation to the move towards the NDIS.

Positive media

Positive media provides an opportunity to advocate for change and challenge people's perception of disability. Mpower and its service users have been fortunate to receive positive media throughout the year.



Respect



Individual and Family Centred Practice A Strength Based Approach

"Mpower is committed to empowering families and individuals to effectively participate in planning that will impact on their lives." (Mpower Family / Person Centred Planning Policy)

Increasingly Mpower is being engaged by funding bodies and families to coordinate a range of individual support packages. In 2013/2014 Mpower provided coordination of 150 individual packages of support including four 'high support needs' packages, where there are complex medical or behavioural issues or families with more than one child with a disability.

"Without people like yourselves, providing compassion, support and energy to all in need we would not be as happy and confident as we are." (parent)

A person-centred or family-centred approach is used across all programs at Mpower. Staff work with families and individuals to develop a support

plan that covers numerous aspects of a person's life including recreation, health and emotional wellbeing. The support plan outlines the steps, timeframes and actions required to achieve the individual's goals. A family centred approach recognises that each family is unique, that the family is the constant in the person's life and that they are the experts on the person's abilities and needs.

A strength-based approach operates on the assumption that people have strengths and resources for their own empowerment. This approach recognises the barriers to people's empowerment and addresses these barriers using strategies that enable the people we work with to control the process of change.

"I have become stronger and more confident in my parenting and acknowledging when I need help." (parent)

Kahlia's community

Tania and David Hardy's journey has been extremely challenging, but since linking with Mpower 2 years ago they have gained extra support for their 17 year old daughter Kahlia. The Hardy family access respite and school holiday programs with Mpower, which means Kahlia is now going out and doing things in the community which she eagerly looks forward to.

"The people there know so much about autism. Having a daughter with such complex behaviours is hard work and we struggle a lot. Mpower has been so encouraging".

According to Tania, communication is the biggest challenge. *"They help Kahlia express what she wants and doesn't want, and reinforce the communication techniques taught by her school."*



Respect



Information provision

Having knowledge and information about what is available in the community is important for families to make choices. Mpower aims to keep everyone using our services informed about what other services are available as well as what we offer.

Throughout the year Mpower has provided information to more than 800 families through its monthly newsletter and website. A number of information forums and guest speakers have also been held across different programs including the Carer Support programs and Parent Support Program.

Information has also been provided directly to many support groups across the region including the Stroke and Heart Support Group, Parkinson's Support Group, Autism Support Group, Carer Support Groups, Down Syndrome Support Group, Diabetes Support Group and Regional Parent and Carer Support Groups.

"It was good to have someone that could help me with information I needed and was unsure how to obtain." (parent)

Increased respite opportunities provided

Caring can take a lot of time, energy and patience. Respite can reduce the stress of caring and assist carers to look after their own health and well-being as well as giving the person being cared for the opportunity to participate in enjoyable activities. Respite is provided in Early Intervention programs, Disability Services and Carer Support.

Mpower has provided more than 15,000 hours of respite this year across its range of programs. Activities such as Active Oceans, Youth Group, High Flyers, carers trips, weekend getaways and school holiday programs all give parents and carers a valuable opportunity to take a break and know that the person they are caring for is engaged in activities of interest.

Celebrating Carers Week 2013

More than 2.6 million Australians help to provide support to a family member or friend. It's important to remember that caring can happen to anyone at any time. Carers Week provides a valuable opportunity to highlight the valuable role of carers each year.

During Carers Week 2013 Mpower was involved

in a range of activities to celebrate, recognise and raise awareness of the difficult and challenging role carers face on a daily basis.

A river cruise on the Hopkins River and a performance of Kelly Auty's 'Wild Woman' show gave carers a break from their caring role.

Maria and Maddy having chocolate fun



Luke and Dylan busy sizzling sausages at Woolworths, East Warrnambool

Carer trips

Carer Support programs have arranged bus trips for carers to visit attractions in regional areas including Timboon Distillery, Logans Beach Day Spa, Werribee Mansion, Ballarat to see 'Chicago' and Port Fairy Film Society. More than 40 carers regularly attend support group meetings in Hamilton, Terang and Warrnambool.

"Wonderful trip, good show, accommodation, eats, company, driver and supervisors. Thanks for looking after my husband so I could enjoy this trip." (carer)

A mums' getaway in September saw sixteen mothers of children with a disability enjoying an overnight stay at Port Fairy with spa treatments, dining and silk scarf making. This gave these carers a chance to have a break from their usual caring role have some fun and rejuvenate.

"It is a great opportunity to be with other like mothers. To be able to share funny, hard, sad and happy moments about your children." (parent)



Carers at Narrapumelap Homestead

Emilee is out and about

Heather and Ray Mulready are full time carers of their granddaughter Emilee following the tragic death of her parents. *"We have support from other agencies, which includes assistance with daily living needs, respite and financial assistance. We really like the type of care provided by Mpower," said Ray. "They do the stuff that we can't physically do, like social and recreational outings. It gives us a rest and allows us to spend time with the other kids."*

"All the different supports we've accessed have helped Emilee become more independent. She can now do more things for herself. She gets out into the community more and spends time with her school friends after hours," Ray added.



Collaboration and Partnerships



Mpower's mission includes working in collaboration with other service providers and the community. This is done to aid referral, create opportunities for families, share the costs of learning, promotion and training. As part of the Western District area of the DHS Western Division, Mpower has sought to develop

relationships with agencies in the northern area of the Western District.

The establishment of strategic partnerships will become increasingly important when it comes to applying for new funding. Partnership provides the level of geographic reach required for new funding submissions.

There are a number of key partnerships and networks that have been established and supported during the year, including:

- Active Oceans / sporting club partnerships
- Active Oceans Steering Group
- ASDCCP Steering Group
- ASD Regional Reference Group
- Barwon SW ASD Reference Group
- Barwon SW Educational Network
- Community South West
- ConnectU Steering Group
- Deaf Access Statewide
- Deaf Children Australia Network
- DHS Community Building Network
- Early Years Network
- Geelong Deaf Social Club
- Geelong Educational Network
- Geelong Interpreters meeting
- Geelong NDIS Deaf Service Providers
- Geelong Hearing Awareness Week Network
- Glenelg Disability Health Promotion Network
- Great South Coast Early Years Network
- Mpower / Connect U - Community Transport partnership
- Mpower / Gateways - Autism Case Consultant Practitioner partnership
- React Regional
- South West Community Inclusion Network
- South West Disability Network
- South West Respite Network
- Southern Grampians Community Services Network
- South West Integrated Family Services Team (joined by Bethany and Centacare in 2013/2014)
- Southern Grampians Community Services Committee
- The Edge, Deaf Social Group
- VLine Inclusion Network
- Warrnambool CALD Network
- Warrnambool Community Services Committee
- Warrnambool Early Education Network
- Wimmera ECIS Network



New Learning



"The new operating environment will bring significant challenges and potentially great opportunities for organisations that understand and adapt to the change." (Mpower CEO, Kerry Nelson)

Mpower prides itself on new learning which encourages personal development and innovation. As a learning organisation Mpower has invested more than 2% of its 2013/2014 budget on the ongoing learning and education of staff.

There has also been a continued focus on developing positive leadership across the organisation. The skills and quality of leaders within Mpower, at all levels across the organisation, are critical to our success in providing quality services that are positive, supportive, flexible and responsive to individual needs. Developing positive leadership will be essential as we move towards a changing work environment.

Pagan can now be heard

Pagan's mum Julie talks about Pagan's success..... "As a mum of a non-verbal autistic child it is extremely difficult not only for myself but for my child involved. Pagan has always had such a big personality and early on I could see her frustrations when she could not tell me or others what she wanted. She would cry and sometimes purely because of her frustration become a bit violent, so when we started doing PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) cards, I thought well what do we have to lose.

It wasn't very straight forward at first and took quite few tantrums from Pagan but after a few sessions she realised fast if she wanted something this was going to be her voice. To see the changes in Pagan was amazing to me and I finally could see my child's voice even though I couldn't hear her voice. As the mum of a child that can't talk its beautiful to see an interaction. I know with all nonverbal autistic kids PECS cards don't come as fast, but for Pagan it has been a fantastic transition and to realise in a world of her own silence, Pagan can now be heard.

I'm so proud of how far Pagan has come and look forward to her future development in her communications."



Service Delivery



In 2013-2014 Mpower's 64 staff provided a wide range of services to more than 800 families across the Barwon and Western District regions of Victoria.

Services provided include in-home respite, centre-based respite, school holiday programs, community-based respite, youth groups, support groups, parent /carer support, Deaf Access, toy library, community transport, early childhood intervention services, family services, case management, speech therapy and occupational therapy.

Increasingly families are requesting more services within the areas where they live. Meeting these needs means more of our staff are providing services regionally including in smaller townships such as Digby, Merino, Coleraine, Branhholme, Condah, Simpson and Lismore.

*"More than 40% of families supported by Mpower live outside of the Warrnambool area".
(Mpower CEO Kerry Nelson)*

This regional approach is particularly supportive of regional communities where there may be fewer resources and services to cater for the needs of clients and families. Meeting the preferred choice of families who may struggle to travel to Warrnambool is in line with our Strategic Plan and vision.



Mpower's office based staff at team building event.



Service Delivery



The following statistics provide a snapshot of the service provision provided across the region in 2013/2014. This year we have:

- Distributed more than 10,000 newsletters to 800 south west families and organisations
- Coordinated more than 150 individual support packages
- Provided more than 40% of services and program into regional areas.
- Distributed an autism newsletter to over 300 families and services providers, detailing resources, training, websites etc
- Provided 14,784 hours of respite to more than 250 families of people with a disability
- Provided 223 aged carers with carer support services including the provision of support, equipment and respite
- Supported 105 families through early childhood intervention services including assessment, case management, therapy services, play programs and transition to school support
- Supported 57 families through Helping Children with Autism and Better Start
- Supported 32 families with their transition from kindergarten to school
- Sturgeon View Holiday House leased for 365 days
- Provided intensive family support to 61 vulnerable families to address complex issues including family violence, mental health, non attendance at school and underdeveloped parenting skills

Service Delivery



- **Provided 32 community members with 163 community transport trips totalling 6,575 kilometres. Volunteers have provided over 300 hours volunteer support for this much needed service**
- **Provided more than 60 families with 425 hours of respite coordination (information, resources, referral and assessment). An additional 161 hours has been spent on service system resourcing (identifying service gaps, partnership development)**
- **Received and responded to 27 referrals for Autism consultancy**
- **Provided community education to more than 500 service providers**
- **Loaned toys and resources to more than 53 families and organisations, benefitting more than 200 children**
- **Provided support to 11 carer/parent support groups across the region, including the Warrnambool Autism Support Group, Hamilton Disability Support Group, Portland Autism Support Group, Mums Morning Coffee Group, 'Our Special Kids are Awesome', Downs Syndrome Support Group, Dyspraxia Support Group, 'Walk and Talk', Warrnambool Carer Support Group, Hamilton Carer Support Group and Terang Carer Support Group**

Family ties

Office administrator Mark Barling was inspired to apply for a job at Mpower as it provided an opportunity to capitalise on his skills and learn more about the disability services sector to assist his daughter become more independent. Mark's daughter Georgia, 17, was born with Spina Bifida and suffered from severe epilepsy as an infant. Georgia first accessed Mpower services as an infant. Currently she participates in Youth Group and School Holiday Programs.



Georgia and Mark Barling



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
Department of Social Services
National Disability Insurance Agency

Victorian Government

Mpower acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Department of Health
Department of 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

Coastcare
Nestles Rowing Club
Port Fairy Yacht Club
South West Scouts Association
South West TAFE
Warrnambool Angling Club
Warrnambool Netball Association
Warrnambool Surf Lifesaving Club
Portland YMCA

Key business and community partners

Darrian Office Choice
Enhanced Resources
Gunnars 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 Donations

Multi purpose facility

Donation towards establishment of multi purpose facility
Geoff & Helen Handbury Foundation
The Vedmore Foundation
Landscaping, design and development of garden.
Isobel & David Jones Family Foundation

Melbourne Zoo trip

Mpower Youth Group day trip to the Melbourne Zoo.
Herbert Allen Bequest

Youth Group

Donation towards equipment
Kings College House Captains Charity

Early Intervention

Specialist Play Therapy Equipment
Variety - the Children's Charity

Security Lighting at 71 Koroit Street

Upgrade the external lighting on the Mpower building to improve the safety aspect for staff and clients.
Community Safety Fund

Deaf & Hearing Loss Expo

Geelong Deaf and Hearing Loss Expo occurring in Hearing Awareness Week 2014
Deaf Children Australia

General purposes

Camperdown & District Carers Group
Lorraine Sharrock
Silver Fox Coffee Store & Eatery
The William Angliss Charitable Fund
Vern Robson

Financial Report



The year in review

The Committee of Management of Mpower is pleased to present their financial report to members for the year ended 30 June 2014. The organisation has again performed well in the management of its costs relative to its funding and other income. The strong financial result continues to build on an already sound financial position.

The committee is acutely aware of the need to continue to provide high quality services to clients whilst also maintaining a financially sustainable platform so as to enable the transition to the new funding and business models required under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. While this officially takes effect in our region in 2016, we are already investing considerable resources into this process.

The 2013/14 surplus of \$329,584 is comparable to last year's result of \$337,520. The result is due to maintaining moderate growth in funding and the much appreciated support received from philanthropic organisations, in particular our patron Geoff Handbury AO on behalf of the Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation. This has been accompanied by sound management in controlling the growth in our costs. The surplus will be invested into the organisation over coming years, in particular renovations to the recent property purchase at 84-86 Koroit Street.

To support the detailed financial statements contained in this annual report, further explanation of some of the significant and important items is provided in the following:

Income

Total income exceeded \$3.3M or 3% up on last year which was up 14% on the prior year. For clarification, some re-classification of funding has occurred this year between government departments and has created some variances at each account line, though not at an aggregated level. Also, non-department funding now separately reflects the individual packages and other small grants. While sundry income appears high, it contains funding received for renovation of 84-86 Koroit Street and \$100,000 in program income carried forward from the prior year to the 2013/14 year. Sundry income also contains interest received on money invested and set aside for future building development. It also includes funds received and held for specific small programs.

Expenditure

Actual expenditure to budget is monitored monthly by the committee and each program manager. Expenditure was up 3.4% which was broadly in line with growth in income. Major variances for the financial year included:

- Additional consultancy and legal costs associated with 84-86 Koroit Street building and also some legal advice regarding the Mpower Charter as well as costs of preparation for the NDIS.
- Staff costs, while up by 5.6%, was made up of Workcover premium increases and increased weekend loadings for casual wages in some programs. The remainder was due to annual Consumer Price Index increments for existing staff.



Balance sheet position

Mpower has maintained its strong financial position reporting net assets of more than \$3.09M and over \$2M in cash reserves at the end of the year. Surplus funds are invested into term deposits with South West Credit and set aside for employee entitlements and future building development. The committee has a clear policy that these funds are not to be used to meet day-to-day operational needs and budgets are set accordingly.

The asset values are regularly reviewed, in particular the land and buildings, and are deemed to be consistent with conservative external valuations received.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the committee of management, I record my thanks to the financial administration team at Mpower led by accountant Helen Conheady. They undertake their work with great care, diligence and reliability with a cheerful and pleasant demeanour. I also acknowledge and thank Kerry Nelson 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.

We look forward to the challenge of transitioning our organisation to deal with the significant changes now confronting the sector as we lead up to July 2016. Members can be confident that this work will be done with great diligence, care and empathy for all involved.

Robert Lane
B.Bus (Acc), MBA, CPA
Mpower External Accounting Adviser

Financial Statements



COMMITTEE'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

Your committee members submit the financial report of the Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2014.

Committee Members

The names of committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

David Beggs	President
Neil Ballard	Vice President
Phillip Annett	Committee Member
Vern Robson	Committee Member
Adam Kempton	Committee Member
David Beard	Committee Member
Helen Bayne	Committee Member
Brad O'Connor	Committee Member
Sue Henry (retired)	
Gail Horne (retired)	

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

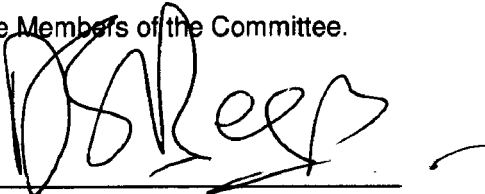
No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit from ordinary activities amounted to \$329,585.


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

President:



David Beggs

Vice President:



Neil Ballard

Dated this 16 day of September 2014

MPOWER (NON REPORTING) INC.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
INCOME		
Non Department Funding	55,629	25,730
OTHER INCOME		
DHS	1,380,133	1,807,724
DFACS	159,565	140,234
DEECD	712,922	670,979
Dept Of Health	455,601	-
NDIS	376	-
Sundry Other Income	548,988	574,027
	3,257,585	3,192,964
	3,313,214	3,218,694
EXPENDITURE		
Accountancy	11,200	19,465
Advertising & Promotion	4,699	10,927
Audit & Legal Fees	15,701	9,706
Bank Charges	1,645	1,668
Catering	7,324	6,092
Cleaning	12,747	13,076
Consultants Fees	49,133	29,310
Depreciation	129,224	128,358
Insurance	10,230	7,308
Maintenance and Repairs	34,683	62,890
Motor Vehicle Operating Costs	60,460	65,729
Postage	7,343	7,769
Printing & Stationery	14,055	17,654
Program Costs	356,097	350,919
Staff Costs		
Employee Provisions	42,672	50,230
Wages	1,915,374	1,795,015
Staff Training	45,555	60,037
Superannuation	169,160	155,566
Uniforms	-	105
Workcover	44,834	27,771
Leave Loading	873	11,979
	2,218,468	2,100,703
Security	1,434	672
Subscriptions	8,070	8,237
Sundry Expenses	1,678	-
Telephone	18,121	20,210
Utilities	21,317	20,481
	2,983,629	2,881,174
Profit for the year	329,585	337,520
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	2,761,883	2,424,364
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	3,091,468	2,761,884

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER (NON REPORTING) INC.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	598,410	753,241
Trade and other receivables	3	31,046	50,828
Financial assets	4	1,384,168	1,329,152
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		2,013,624	2,133,221
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,592,318	1,071,338
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		1,592,318	1,071,338
TOTAL ASSETS		3,605,942	3,204,559
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	6	264,688	235,562
Provisions	7	194,391	151,773
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		459,079	387,335
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	7	55,395	55,340
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		55,395	55,340
TOTAL LIABILITIES		514,474	442,675
NET ASSETS		3,091,468	2,761,884
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	8	3,091,468	2,761,884
TOTAL EQUITY		3,091,468	2,761,884

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MPOWER (NON REPORTING) INC.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Receipts from customers	3,250,581
Payments to suppliers and employees	(2,673,978)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>576,603</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	(24,000)
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(652,418)
Payments for investments	(55,016)
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(731,434)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Proceeds from financial liabilities	-
Net cash used in financing activities	<u>-</u>
Net decrease in cash held	(154,831)
Cash at beginning of financial year	753,241
Cash at end of financial year	<u><u>598,410</u></u>

2

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



MPOWER (NON REPORTING) INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

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 statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement criteria, and the disclosure requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 101	<i>Presentation of Financial Statements</i>
AASB 107	<i>Statement of Cashflows</i>
AASB 108	<i>Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors</i>
AASB 1031	<i>Materiality</i>
AASB 1048	<i>Interpretation and Application Standards</i>

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.

Asset 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.

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 (NON REPORTING) INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

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 (Non Reporting) Inc. contributed employer superannuation on behalf of permanent employees receiving greater than \$450 per month. Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. is not legally obligated to contribute greater than 9.25% 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 include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

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 entity 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 depends on whether the outcome of the services can be measured reliably. If this is the case 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 measured then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

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 (NON REPORTING) INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
2 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Operating cash and equivalents	598,410	753,241
Reconciliation of cash		
Cash and Cash equivalents reported in the statement of cash flows are reconciled to the equivalent items in the statement of financial position as follows:		
Operating cash and equivalents	598,410	753,241
3 Trade and Other Receivables		
Current		
Prepayments	4,597	-
Trade and other receivables	26,449	50,828
	31,046	50,828
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	1,241,728	1,192,190
Cash held in provision	142,440	136,962
	1,384,168	1,329,152
5 Property, Plant and Equipment		
Land and Buildings		
Land at Market Value	503,000	254,000
Buildings at Market Value	1,155,741	804,939
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(273,627)	(234,451)
	1,385,114	824,488
Work In Progress	16,402	-
Total Land and Buildings	1,401,516	824,488
Plant & Equipment - at Cost	600,110	596,305
Less Prov'n for Depreciation	(409,308)	(349,455)
	190,802	246,850
Total Plant and Equipment	190,802	246,850
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	1,592,318	1,071,338
6 Trade and Other Payables		
Current		
Trade Creditors	85,704	63,354
Other Creditors Australian Taxation Office	74,750	64,911
Income in advance	104,234	107,297
	264,688	235,562
7 Provisions		
Current		
Provision for Holiday Pay	87,431	70,982
Provision for Sick Pay	67,930	55,089
Prov'n for Long Service Leave	39,030	25,702
	194,391	151,773
Non-Current		
Prov'n Long Service Leave	55,395	55,340
8 Retained Earnings		
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	2,761,883	2,424,364
Net profit attributable to the association	329,585	337,520
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	3,091,468	2,761,884

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 statements :

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. as at 30 June 2014 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 16 day of September 2014



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MPOWER (NON REPORTING) INC.

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. (the association), which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2014, 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 position and performance of the association.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. 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 VIC 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.


Auditors' Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Mpower (Non Reporting) Inc. as of 30 June 2014 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 VIC 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 VIC 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: 
Michael O'Keeffe

Address: 67 - 69 Kepler Street, Warrnambool VIC 3280

Dated this 22 day of August 2014

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.



Notes





Mpower Inc
71 Koroit Street,
Warrnambool 3280

Phone: 03 5561 8111
Fax: 03 5561 8100
Email: admin@mpower.org.au
Web: www.mpower.org.au

Reg No: A0010905X