



Araluen Annual Report 2021

CEO Report from Tamara Cattach









The hot topic for most of the year remained COVID-19. The virus caused endless disruptions in our everyday lives and created severe health and well-being risks, many businesses were lost to it, jobs were lost, and many suffered financial loss. Araluen was not spared from this reality. Our most significant concerns included the health and safety of our workforce and the people we support, financial pressure associated with the need to prevent and respond to an outbreak, and hurdles with the vaccine rollout.

Although COVID-19 placed pressures and restrictions on most of our services, I am proud to say that we kept our heads held high and moved forward with our vision clearly in mind. The pandemic provided wonderful opportunities to investigate different service offerings and new technologies. The adaptations necessary to deliver services and operate safely have brought many positive and long-lasting changes that represent steps towards achieving Araluen's future vision.

We concluded the research and community consultation phase of our Services Review. With the knowledge gained from this far-reaching process, we have begun Phase 1 of service redevelopment. Eight projects are now underway. The projects focus on supports we provide already and some new concept projects. These are detailed on the table to the right.

Lack of access to usual services, safety precautions and massive disruption to usual routine has been tough for many participants and the people close to them this year.

Our Services Review: first 8 projects

expand	1.  Expand Accommodation Supports	Use our expertise and experience in this area to develop a plan to make accommodation supports available to more people in more areas.
	2.  Expand Support Coordination	Develop a growth plan to expand and diversify our Support Coordination to more people in more areas.
reimagine	3.  Reimagine Day Services	Rethink how to best provide modern centre-based services to existing participants. We envisage that Day Services will become smaller and offer more personal, goal-focused support over time.
	4.  Strengthen outcomes at Chancez	Streamline Chancez Cafes and develop a new operating model that produces better outcomes for participants.
pilot	5.  Pilot 4Me	We will integrate some existing supports so people can choose flexible support they want without needing to attend Day Services. This package of supports will be known as 4Me.
	6.  Pilot Online Supports	Build on what we learnt during COVID-19. Pilot a menu of virtual supports to understand how to present quality content to a broad audience and gauge on-going demand.
cease	7.  Pilot Therapy Assist	Develop a pilot to explore what possibilities may exist to work with allied health partners to enhance the delivery and benefits of various therapies to participants.
	8.  Absorb Skills Development	We will bill Skill Development under a different NDIS funding line item. Skill Development will still be available to you as part of our regular supports.

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"Portrait of Tam" by Kylie Gentle 2020



I thank the participants, families and carers who took part in our Services Review, joined in our online meetings, or found the time and generosity to commend the efforts of our staff and the organisation. This support is particularly meaningful when our community is facing so many unique challenges.

The resilience, passion and patience of our staff have been incredible this year. They have remained committed to Araluen's values as they sought to protect the health and well-being of our participants and assist their families each and every day.

Our dedicated Community Living teams supported residents in their homes for much of the year. Staff went over and above to ensure people were safe, comfortable, engaged and as connected to loved ones as possible. A huge thank you to the people involved in the care and management of all our residents - you should be proud.

Araluen continued to provide essential supports to people who needed them on-site, in their homes and in the community where possible. Our staff have been amazingly responsive to people's requests for service and shown outstanding dedication and motivation to ensure safety and engagement.

Providing essential support is hard work in a world of uncertainty and risk. Our frontline teams carried that weight throughout the year. I am most thankful for their enduring spirit.

Our Support Coordinators have continued operating throughout the pandemic, mostly from their own homes. This has been of massive benefit to many people as the need to alter support meant many plan reviews and requests were required to ensure people had the NDIS funding they needed to live as well as possible during COVID-19.

Behind the scenes, work continued to support our services with the ongoing administration needs and requests. Much of our administration staff worked from home. This was a relatively seamless process thanks to the enormous amount of work put into our IT Strategy. Working from home arrangements have been in place for some time, and the team has been able to continue 'business as usual' during a time that is anything but.

A huge thanks to our Board for providing excellent governance during a difficult time and support to ensure that the organisation responded to unfolding scenarios from a safety, financial and humanistic perspective.

My thanks and recognition go out to our Executive Team of senior managers whose dedication, skill, and leadership have been outstanding throughout this pandemic and in planning Araluen's future.

We will continue to innovate and transform as we seek new solutions to our greatest social and environmental challenges and maximise our mission's impact.

Tamara Cattach