



Imagining Better
News Summer 2021

ARALUEN

Imagining and achieving better lives



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Living their way

Araluen' Options for Community Living' (OFCL) assisted four men to achieve their goal of moving out of the family home. OFCL Support Coordinators engaged with the group weekly over eight months to prepare then implement the transition to independent, community-based living.

The housemates are now relishing the increased independence they have found in their shared private rental property.

After the men and their families located and secured a suitable property, OFCL supported everyone through the complex task of developing the skills and

knowledge that will enable them to stay there safely and happily.

OFCL staff also identified what types of home-based assistance each person needs then helped put these supports and services in place.



READ MORE
CASE STUDY



VISIT THE GUYS AT
HOME
VIDEO ABOVE

FROM TAM OUR CEO



What a year 2021 has been! A year for resilience and change - no one has felt it more than our frontline staff who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to keep people safe and well-supported.

Amongst all the COVID chaos, there's been a lot going on at Araluen. It's been a hive of activity behind the scenes as we've created the conditions for people to work from home and started [our eight Service Planning projects](#).

Our [front page good news video about four amazing friends moving into their own home](#) represents such a big step forward for people with a disability, especially as this complex feat was achieved during a pandemic. Thankfully, the NDIS is making it possible for many people to have so much more choice in how they live. We celebrate the opportunity to assist Yuni, Luke, Steven and Damian during this significant phase of their lives.

Continuing on this theme, Araluen has become the unanimous choice to provide in-home support for nine people living in supported accommodation seeking better arrangements. We are proud of the quality of support we offer people in and from their homes and of the stellar reputation our Options for Community Living and residential teams have.

The pandemic provided opportunities for us to investigate different service offerings. The requirement for new technologies pushed forward our IT overhaul. We have delivered a new Client Management System (CMS) and several new web-based tools that will make it easier for staff to perform day-to-day functions and benefit from an increased range of flexible, professional development opportunities.

We're looking forward to an exciting new year with more normalcy and increased connection with loved ones and the community.

We hope next year's Participants, Families and Carers Network meetings will build on the success and participation of 2021. We'll kick off with a North East Citizens Advocacy Network presentation on the Royal Commission and talk about Support Coordination (more info to come). Please let us know if there is a topic you'd like to learn more about - we'll do our best to engage an expert to present at a future meeting.

We also look forward to introducing Programs of Support in our Day Services. Changes to the NDIS Price Guide created a need and opportunity for us to refine many existing supports that will now be offered in 12-week blocks so people can work towards more defined goals.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that an abundance of safety precautions, lack of access to usual services, and massive disruption to routine have been tough for many participants and the people close to them. I thank everyone who took part in our Services Review, joined 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 many challenges.

Please use this holiday period to spend time with loved ones and regenerate. The last two years have taken a toll on many people. Now it's time to reach out, make sure everyone is ok and that we're all here to help each other. Please be kind and stay safe.

Tamara Cattach
CEO - Araluen

DAY SUPPORTS SUMMER BREAK



DAY SUPPORTS CLOSE:
THURSDAY 23rd DECEMBER 2021 at 3pm

DAY SUPPORTS RESUME:
THURSDAY 27th JANUARY 2022

ARALUEN ANNUAL REPORT 2021



OUR DIGITAL ANNUAL REPORT IS ONLINE NOW

[CLICK HERE TO READ](#)





OUR HEROES

"I chose Linda as my Wellbeing Superhero because of the support she gave me through COVID. I was able to get through with a smile on my face even though it was difficult at times. I learnt to never give up, hold onto hope, focus on the positives and stay connected to get through the tough times together."

- Leanne, Artist

Lockdowns have taken an emotional toll on many. We held a Superheroes Wellbeing Project so people could focus on what they found positive during the pandemic and realise their own resilience.

Each person sculpted someone in their life who made them feel happy, safe, hopeful, connected, determined, engaged and/or strong.

Leanne's inspiration was DC Practice Leader, Linda Drysdale. Great work, Leanne and Linda.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

2021 required continued adaptability and resolve from Araluen's workforce as they kept providing essential support during the pandemic. Despite the on-going disruption, we modernised several functions that will better support staff and improve their daily workplace experience

- Araluen introduced an **Employee Self Service (ESS)** platform. This is a secure online portal that makes it easy for staff to access their personal information and perform different HR-related functions, anytime, anywhere.
- **Reflective Practice** was introduced at Araluen. This is a people-focused approach to providing feedback that encourages staff to reflect on their workplace experiences, goals and performance with their manager in order to learn in a collaborative way. Reflective Practice assists with continuous improvement as well as taking a more considered approach to improving professional development outcomes.
- Staff have been offered more flexible online and blended learning solutions with the introduction of **NDS Workforce Essentials** and **eLurn**, which are e-learning platforms. This means that people can undertake required professional development with greater convenience and pursue areas of learning that interest them too.

All Chancez Cafes will close for a break. Reopening times and holiday hours will vary. These will be on our website when available.



www.araluen.org/chancez-cafe





OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

- In partnership with Aspen Health, Araluen ran multiple in-reach programs so that participants and families could receive the COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot in a familiar, supported place. This initiative will continue into the new year.
- Araluen has hosted [Dr. Ash Chehata to run online forums*](#) with both our staff and participants about COVID-19 vaccinations, addressing any concerns people might have.
- Araluen has consistently reviewed and implemented COVID-SAFE principles to ensure all participants and staff are kept safe.



***SEE DR ASH'S COVID VACCINE INFO VIDEO
CLICK TO VIEW**



OPERATIONS

- Throughout 2021, Araluen and its staff undertook a complete rebuild of our IT. We have called our new IT "LILY", in recognition of the indigenous meaning of Araluen, our past and that we now turn to IT as a natural part of our world and one that needs to be nurtured and valued. We couldn't have done 2021 without our fast, modern, reliable and secure LILY.
- Communication was also a vital part of our job during 2021 and we are proud of how we kept people informed which may have in-turn helped them stay safe and healthy throughout COVID.
- And we have just received funding from the Federal Governments, "Powering Communities Program" so we can create and implement an environmental sustainability plan for our Diamond Creek site. Thank you to Kate Thwaites, Member for Jagajaga, for her endorsement of our application. We'll get stuck into that work early 2022!



Health & Happiness in 2022

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Araluen acknowledges the traditional owners of the land upon which we work and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging



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www.araluen.org



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[vimeo](#)