

from
Araluen's
CEO

Araluen Participants, Families & Carers Network Meeting 29 August 2022

focus topic: **Service Update & Finances**



Introduction and information from Tamara Cattach

- Video transcript -

Hi Everyone,

Thanks so much for coming tonight. Please note we will be recording.

Before we begin this meeting is being held on the lands of the Wurundjeri people and I wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners.

I would also like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today.

Just like last month, there will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions – in fact the majority of the time for this session will be devoted to Q&A. Feel free to drop your questions in the chat box at any time and we will go to these first when we start the Q&A portion of the meeting. In the meantime if you could mute yourselves whilst not talking that would be great.

At last month's meeting the outcome of our service review as well as some of the challenges facing Araluen and what we were doing to work through them was shared.

To recap what was discussed last month; Araluen is incurring significant losses as a direct result of changes to the NDIS funding model. This is what prompted the service review as well as planning out what the future will look like for us, as those losses are not sustainable in the long term.

While the review and subsequent planning process did find some areas where we can increase revenue, the reality is these small gains will not be enough to continue subsidising Day Services, which are drastically underfunded by the NDIS.

What this means is we have had to look at our options for what the future of Day Services looks like for Araluen. Some of the options include:

- Investigating how we can work with other organisations on Day Services, to ensure people have access to the supports they need
- Making changes in line with our 'reimagining day services' project. These include:
 - Trialling participants meeting at venues instead of coming to the Araluen centre,
 - Participants being picked up from homes instead of coming into the centre
 - The ability for participants to book into various recreational and skill-based programs that may be run at different sites from the ones they usually attend
- Of course - not changing the way we do things is an option too. Unfortunately failing to take action and make change now could have even worse consequences down the track, which is what we are trying to avoid.

A R A L U E N

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continued

We have also commenced work on our 3 year strategic plan, where we are working through how we should tackle these issues and ensure the financial stability of the organisation into the future. In addition, we are committed to reviewing our corporate structure and reducing overhead costs in that area. In addition, the board is meeting more frequently to discuss these plans as we all realise this is an issue that requires careful consideration.

In addition to exploring every avenue and option available to us, we have also been engaged in advocacy within the community, with regular meetings with community leaders (such as our Federal MP, Kate Thwaites).

Myself and Helen Ryan also met with the Victorian Minister for Disability (Hon Colin Brookes) and Vicki Ward (state MP for Eltham). We showed Vicki and Colin around our Diamond Creek site and had the opportunity to have a frank and open discussion with them about the issues facing Araluen. Overall the conversation was very positive and we felt heard.

At last month's meeting, a lot of questions were asked about the detail behind the NDIS funding issue for day services. When reflecting after the meeting I didn't feel as though that question was answered in enough detail. As a result Dan – our Chief Operating Officer - is here tonight to give a detailed explainer on the underfunding problem and exactly how it's impacting us.

We also discussed the possibility of community advocacy. We have prepared some letter templates and speaking notes to help you when contacting Bill Shorten or Kate Thwaites's office. The letter templates have spaces marked where you can add extra detail to personalise the letter. I will send these out along with the recording and Q&A summary after the session ([or download here](#)). Of course, you are not obligated to use the templates. Please feel free to communicate with your local member in whichever way you see fit.

I will hand over to Dan now to talk finances and funding, then the call will be opened up for questions.

Want to know more about what's happening at Araluen?



Where next?

We've provided a written summary of questions asked by people who participated in the meeting.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)



Who can I ask?

You can contact Tamara or join in our monthly meetings. Your questions and feedback are always appreciated. Your service manager will also be happy to assist with any questions relating to day-to-day issues.



Tamara Cattach
Chief Executive, Araluen
E: tamarac@araluen.org



Ph: [1300 020 625](tel:1300020625)
E: admin@araluen.org
www.araluen.org