

BETTER DAYS

Reconnecting with the Community

Getting back to work

Living his best life

Our response to COVID-19

Open Minds and Summer Housing

Queensland Mental Health Week

BETTERDAYS

ISSUE 2020

Cover

Open Minds client
Michelle Rendell with her
Support Worker Cass Fisher

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this publication or have a
story to share, please contact
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Open Minds acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land and pays respect to the Elders past, present and emerging. Open Minds recognise their custodianship and role in caring for and maintaining country over thousands of years and is committed to reconciliation.



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Message from CEO

Welcome to the latest issue of Better Days. Hasn't the last 12 months been an interesting one? I'm sure none of you would have predicted the year we have had, but here at Open Minds, whilst we also found it challenging, we are very proud of how we have been able to put you, our clients at the forefront of everything we do.

I am so proud of the amazing work that our staff have put in to ensure that the continuity of service continued throughout the global pandemic, how we have supported so many of you to reach your goals, as highlighted throughout our client stories, and how we have managed to pull together a strategic plan for all involved at Open Minds to work towards through to 2022.

Towards the end of 2019, we ran a number of group discussions with you our clients, along with our staff to gain feedback on our purpose and goals. We were very pleased to be able to roll this out at the start of 2020, along with a refresh of our brand identity – set about bringing back the colour.

I am extremely proud of you all for the way we have all adapted to the 'new normal' and how many of you, along with our staff, embraced the advancement of technology into our lives.

We are thrilled to be able to start offering services such as telehealth for psychology and counselling appointments, and bring to life virtual events such as The Melting Pot: COVID-19 and Mental Health and we look forward with anticipation to what the years ahead brings.

Paula Mayson
CEO

Reconnecting with the community



Michelle, a 54-year-old Northside resident who has schizophrenia and experiences paranoia, has led a relatively isolated life trying to manage her condition. Now, through her NDIS plan, Michelle is supported by Open Minds to live her life independently, and she said her world has just opened up.

"I'm just so happy," she said. "I was always frightened to go places and I had to fight with myself to get anywhere. Now my support workers, Cass and Emily, take me out and when I get scared, they reassure me that everything is going to be alright."

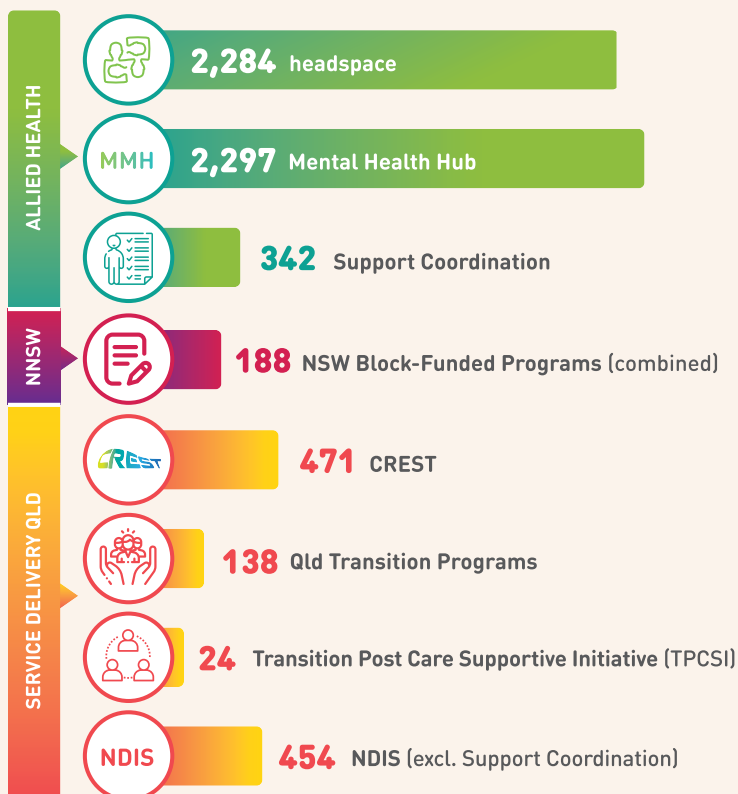
A creative soul, Michelle loves craft, so channeling her strengths, Cass and Emily work with her visiting opshops and discount stores, sourcing materials.

"I love doing crafts," she said. "We went to an event where there were lots of tables and each one had a different craft you could try on it. I picked crocheting. I love it."

Cass one of Michelle's Open Minds support workers said, "We have noticed the more Michelle concentrates on her craft, the less the voices annoy her in her head. It has just been incredible."

Michelle, never one to stay idle, said she is now looking forward to achieving her future goal – learning to sew.

Number of Clients Supported FY20: 6,198



Getting back to work while living with a mental illness

Amanda, from Townsville, has recently completed a Certificate III in Business Administration and is on track to achieve her goal of re-entering the workforce.

Having bipolar, schizophrenia and anxiety made holding down a job challenging for Amanda. With the support of Open Minds, Amanda set herself goals to learn new skills, eventually re-enter the workforce, and to make lasting friendships.

Amanda has already achieved one of these goals, having completed a Certificate III in Business Administration, which she opted to study online. Amanda has also started a work experience placement with atWork Australia.

Open Minds has been supporting Amanda for two-and-a-half years now and her Support Worker, also named Amanda, has been helping her through the recovery journey.

Amanda's incredible recovery process has allowed her to make a new friend, Renee.

"She's lovely, she's real," Amanda said. "We first met at an Open Minds barbeque and now we're hanging out at least once a week."

She talked herself out of meeting Renee for the first time but her mother and her Support Worker, Amanda, encouraged it, and she's glad she did.

For more information about our services visit openminds.org.au/services



Amanda pictured with her Open Minds Support Worker, Amanda (left) and Job Coach, Rebecca (right)



Amanda pictured with Clinton from Amanda's place of work



Bill praises “lifesaving” supports

Bill, 48 from Ipswich, had a great job as a groundsman before his mental health deteriorated and he found himself homeless, without a job, and living in the bush.

Not long after Bill was connected with Open Minds for support, he was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease (MND) a debilitating neurological disease. MND has no cure and no treatment. Open Minds assisted Bill to access a range of supports, like housing, to enable him to get back on his feet.

With significant need for support while Bill’s health deteriorated,

Open Minds also supported Bill through a lengthy process of applying for NDIS funding, presenting Bill with a significant package.

Bill said: “The support I received from everyone at Open Minds meant the world, as I have no one else in my life to help me. Open Minds saved my life, you really did. If I did not have your help to get [NDIS] funding or to get me into my home, I would not be here today.”

To find out more about our services, visit openminds.org.au/services



Aged Care is no place for young people

Jo-Anne, a Support Coordination client of Open Minds has been supported to transition out of Residential Aged Care, with thanks to a strong stakeholder team working together for Jo-Anne's goal.

This team consisted of Disability Housing Australia (Tenancy Matching), Multicap, Lifestyle Solutions, Home Care Australia, Green Light Human Capital, Open Minds, Disability Housing Solutions SDA provider and The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Aged Care Advisory Team.

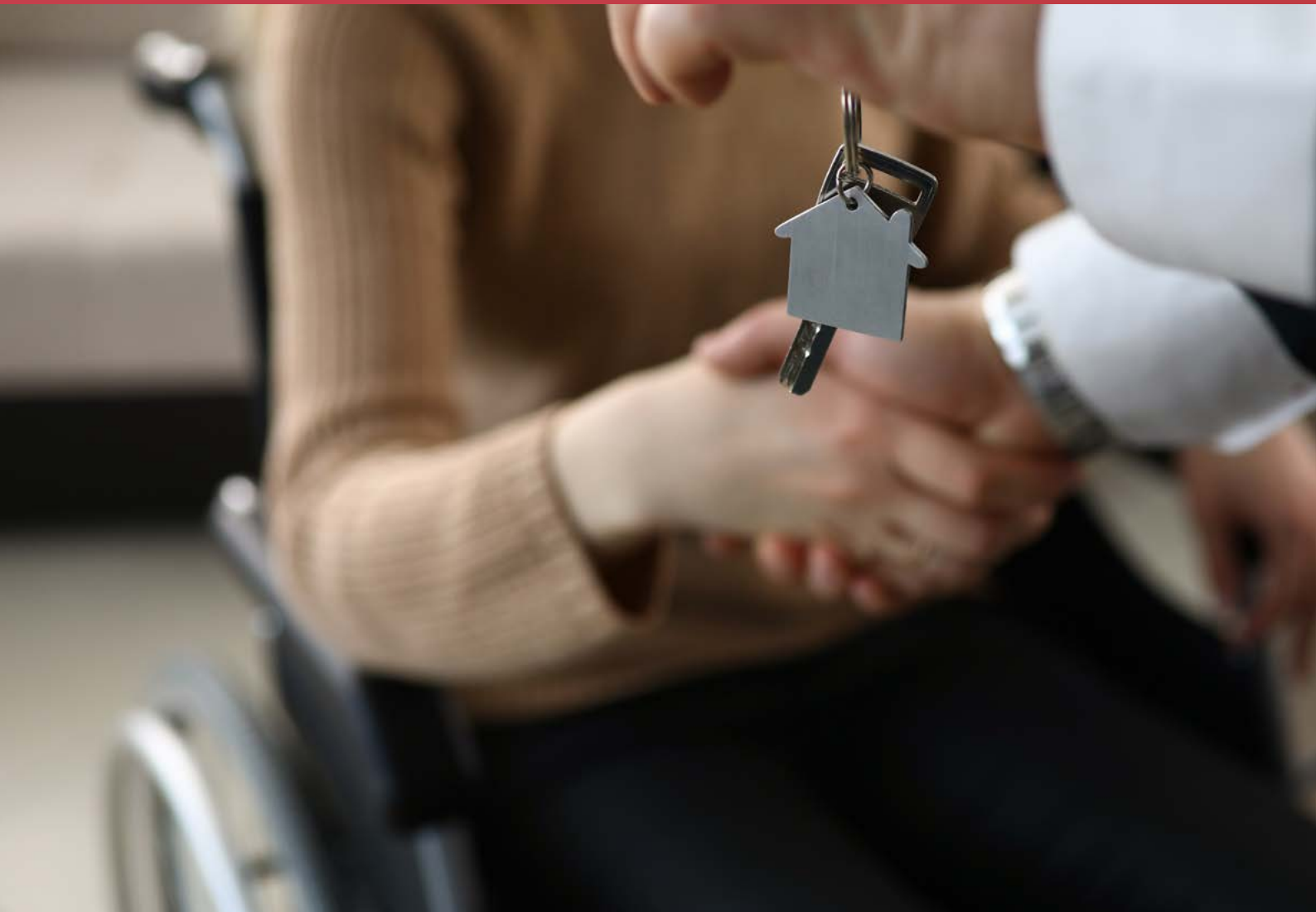
Jo-Anne had been placed within residential aged care at the age of 42, due to an acquired brain injury that impacted her functional capacity and resulted in significant impact on her speech and mobility. Jo-Anne required ongoing 24/7 care and at the time, this was the only option available to her family.

Jo-Anne was excited to move from the aged care home, she wanted to choose what she could eat, cook her favourite zucchini slice, gain back some of her independence, go out into the community on her own terms and have

her family over to visit.

This has been life changing for Jo-Anne and her family as it has enabled her to reengage within her community and to start to redevelop her community connections and relationships.

For more information on our Support Coordination service please visit openminds.org.au/services/support-coordination





Anna's brighter life with Supported Independent Living in Bundaberg

When Anna*, age 22, used to live with her family, money was scarce, and the family didn't know how to best support someone living with an intellectual disability.

Since Anna was put in touch with Open Minds around a year ago, she now lives in a Supported Independent Living (SIL) home in Bundaberg where she has everything, she needs to live her best life.

Her NDIS package allows for her to access not only SIL, but also important equipment to improve her quality of life including an electric adjustable bed, and a wheelchair, to suit her declining mobility.

Her Open Minds Support Worker, Georgina, is delighted with the progress that Anna has made.

Georgina said, "Anna now has all the equipment she needs, such as a shower chair, wheelchair, remote controlled bed, and more.

She even took up wheelchair basketball which she just loves, it keeps her fit and helps her to make friends."

Anna's other hobbies include listening to music, going dancing, bowling, and a variety of activities out in the community. One of Anna's goals is healthy eating, which includes seeing a dietitian and a GP to help her plan her meals.

Anna said, "I am very happy living with Open Minds, I have a lot of fun and laughs with my support workers."

For more information on Open Minds SIL offering visit openminds.org.au/SIL

**Name has been changed to protect the identity of our client*

Living his best life thanks to the support of Open Minds and the NDIS

Nathan, through the help of his Open Minds Transition Support Worker, Grahame, has been able to live his best life thanks to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

"Since transitioning onto the NDIS, I have been able to look into short-term (respite) accommodation when I need a break from home," said Nathan.

Nathan's hobbies, which he is now able to undertake thanks to his Support Workers, include going to the cinema, attending Latin dancing classes once or twice a week, bush walking, ten-pin bowling, and aims to go to more sporting events and music concerts.

He knows there are more community group activities that he would like to consider, especially ones that help him achieve his goals to get back into volunteer work, and then hopefully paid work in future, along with eventually moving out of home.

Grahame, Open Minds Transition Support Worker, commented, "I haven't seen Nathan this happy and smile so much in the four years that he has been with us. It is wonderful to see how the NDIS has changed his life and brought such an element of fulfilment to Nathan's life."

For more information on our services visit openminds.org.au/services



Our response to COVID-19

This year, the whole world has felt a whole new stress, brought on by the global pandemic – COVID-19.

From March 2020, Open Minds began to look at how we continue to support our clients and staff throughout the pandemic. With daily meetings of the Business Continuity Team, Open Minds developed measures that ensured that all our clients were fully supported with telehealth options, increased communication and check-ins for clients and their families to ensure they had enough support, food and medication, and understood the government's directives, and implemented work from home provisions for our corporate staff.

One initiative that Open Minds ran was the Living Well Through COVID-19 on social media. Over 12 weeks, we provided followers of Open Minds Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Open Minds Mental Health Hub Facebook page with hints, tips and fun articles on ways to 'Live well throughout COVID-19'.

With articles showcasing armchair travel ideas, tips on minding your minds, how to channel that hobby to keep you busy and ways to stay connected, whilst physically distanced - we provided some necessary information and entertainment to help our community get through COVID-19 together.



CALENDAR: NEW WAYS NOVEMBER 2020



TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 Get outside and observe the changes in nature around you	4 Sign up to join a new course, activity or online community	5 Change your normal routine today and notice how you feel	6 Give yourself a boost. Try a new way of being physically active	7 Be creative. Cook, draw, write, paint, make or inspire
10 When you feel you can't do something, add the word "yet"	11 Be curious. Learn about a new topic or an inspiring idea	12 Overcome a frustration by trying out a new approach	13 Choose a different route and see what you notice on the way	14 Find a new way to help or support a cause you care about
15 Go outside and do something playful - walk, run, explore, relax	16 Look at life through someone else's eyes and see their perspective	17 Try a new way to practice self-care and be kind to yourself	18 Connect with someone from a different generation	19 Broaden your perspective: read a different paper, magazine or site
20 Make a meal using a recipe or ingredient you've not tried before	21 Learn a new skill from a friend or share one of yours with them	22 Find a new way to tell someone you appreciate them	23 Set aside a regular time to pursue an activity you love	24 Share with a friend something helpful you learned recently
25 Use one of your strengths in a new or creative way	26 Tune in to a different radio station or TV channel	27 Enjoy new music today. Play, sing, dance or listen	28 Join a friend doing their hobby and find out why they love it	29 Discover your artistic side. Design your own Christmas cards!
30 Look for reasons to be hopeful, even in difficult times				

"You never know what you can do until you try" ~ C. S. Lewis



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/new-ways-november

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind

A helping hand at a time of crisis



Whilst Open Minds was working behind the scenes to ensure that we had enough protective equipment, including hand sanitiser to keep all our clients, their families and our staff safe, one local business in Northern NSW was also focussing on keeping their local community, including Open Minds, safe.

While they're known for delicious Rum and Gin, Husk Distillery pivoted away from the spirits to make one of the most high demand products in the world at the height of the pandemic - hand sanitiser!

Husk Distillery in North Tumbulghum, heeded the need, adapting their large Forsyth column (normally used for Gin production) and began producing top quality hand and surface liquid sanitiser.

Working around the clock, to combat at what had become an Australian-wide shortage, whilst managing the community requests, they donated Open Minds a batch to ensure our staff and clients were kept safe.

Thank you to our new friends at Husk Distillery.

Online psychology support available now

Open Minds have partnered with Doctors on Demand to provide private, safe, and secure virtual sessions with qualified psychologists and counsellors.

The ongoing global pandemic has impacted all our lives, not only in the way we live, but on the mental health of an increasing number of Australians. Open Minds looked to diversify the way we provided our psychology services throughout this period, so that more of the community can receive the assistance they need, in the comfort and privacy of their own home.

The benefits of good mental health are many and far reaching. Good mental health is a goal worth seeking.

Through our online mental health services, our Open Minds clinicians are just a click away to help Australians through their mental health journey, and we are pleased to be offering these services through Doctors on Demand.

“The ease of being able to book an appointment and speak to a mental health practitioner, all from the comfort of your home at this time is reassuring,” said Open Minds CEO, Paula Mayson.

To find out more or to book your Doctors on Demand session, please visit doctorsondemand.com.au/openminds

Open Minds is a provider of tailored supports to those with mental illness, intellectual and physical disabilities.

Our services are diverse and the below information can be used as a guide. In most cases, contacting our enquiries team is the most efficient way to find out more **1300 673 664**.

NDIS Services

Daily Support

Support to develop skills to achieve a persons goals, support independence and navigate choices.

- Support to navigate life choices
- Leisure and Social Activities
- Personal care (hygiene and grooming support)
- Assistance with Shopping
- Support to access the community
- Assistance with cooking and meal prep
- Access Centrelink, Public Trust and other services

Home and Housing Support

Support to live as independently as possible in your own home, or access to stable accommodation.

- 24/7 Supported Independent Living (SIL)
- Access to Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)
- In-home care – overall wellbeing, health and hygiene
- Transition from Mental Health Units, secure facilities
- Temporary to Stable Housing Transition

Support Coordination & Specialist Support Coordination

NDIS funded support to provide options on the best type of services available to you.

Specialist Support Coordination is when additional high or complex support needs are required.

- Plan meetings and preparing plan reviews
- Support to set up your NDIS Portal
- Explain Service Agreements
- Research and recommend providers
- Support to contact service providers
- Preparing for plan review

Behaviour Support Needs

Evidence based approaches to improve quality of life and promote recovery using least restrictive approaches.

- Functional Behaviour Analysis
- Specialist Behaviour Support
- Assessment and planning to reduce and eliminate Restrictive Practices
- Positive Behaviour Support Plans
- Improved relationships
- Children's Groups and Parent Workshops

Services outside of NDIS



Services	Location	Referral
Coastal Supports A psychosocial recovery based, case management program for those with mental illness who are ineligible for the NDIS.	Sunshine Coast and Gympie	Self referral
Community Living Support (CLS) Supports people with complex mental health needs to increase their independence and integrate with their community.	Northern NSW	Mental Health referral
Housing and Support Initiative (HASI) Supports people who have unstable housing and severe and chronic mental health needs to secure and maintain tenancy and improve wellbeing.	Northern NSW	Mental Health referral
Transition & Post Care Support Initiative Supporting young people transitioning to independence. For those who have been under guardianship of child safety or have a disability or mental health support needs that make living on your own hard.	Logan and Gold Coast	Self referral, Dept Child Services referral
Community Re Entry Services Team (CREST) Support for transition out of prison to community life and have a successful parole.	Townsville	Self referral & QCS referral in custody QCS referral, post-release
headspace Supporting young people aged 12 to 25 going through a tough time. headspace Centres help young people get free or low-cost supports, in the areas of mental health, physical and sexual health, educational and vocational counselling and alcohol and other drug supports.	Redcliffe Taringa and Strathpine	Self referral and GP referral
Mental Health Hub Morayfield Confidential counselling and psychological services for people of all ages, including children. Medicare and healthcare card rebates available.	Morayfield	Self referral and GP referral
Concierge Housing Supports Accommodation for individuals and families who are transitioning into sustainable housing.	Redcliffe	Department of Housing referral

Supported Independent Living

Supported Independent Living (SIL) is an NDIS Funded support which enables the participant to receive 24/7 support, either with a group of like minded house mates or in their own home.

Open Minds is proud to support over 60 residents within our SIL service and we look forward to the future growth of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), where purpose built homes are developed with specific categories for needs in mind, such as Improved Liveability, Fully Accessible, Robust and High Physical Support.

To find out more visit openminds.org.au/SIL

Have you seen our new Supported Independent Living video? This video was created to give an insight into the kind of supports offered so that you can live as independently as possible. Click on image to view the video.





Open Minds and Summer Housing – providing a supported oasis for people who want what all of us want, freedom to be independent

Open Minds are proud to be offering its first of many concierge models of housing for people with a disability, situated in a state-of-the-art building in Bowen Hills.

The need for Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) is increasing, and Open Minds understands the need for automation and accessible homes, which is why we were excited to partner with Summer Housing as the SIL concierge provider for their new Bowen Hills location.

The concierge model ensures that the residents can continue to have choice and control over who they receive support from, but also know that support from Open Minds is just a touch of a button away, should the need arise.

The concierge model, whilst not only providing 24/7 support for residents, also delivers a cost-effective NDIS solution by sharing

the cost of this support, which means they can stretch their funds wider for other means.

Each of the 10 apartments are fitted out to suit the resident, and offer a large bedroom, additional multipurpose space for guest or home office, open plan kitchen with accessible appliances and living areas, perfect for that indoor/outdoor lifestyle perfectly suited to Queensland's subtropical lifestyle.

Open Minds SIL Manager, Chole said, "The partnership between Open Minds and Summer Housing answers the need that many having been calling for. It provides greater independence for clients but enables them to have 24/7 support at their fingertips".

Meet one of our Specialist Support Coordinators

Olivia is a Specialist Support Coordinator with Open Minds—assisting clients to find the best support for their unique needs.

As a Specialist Support Coordinator, many people that Olivia works with have been in a secure mental health setting for many years and, in some cases, most of their lives.

Olivia's role is life changing for the people she works with, as it often involves her helping to transition them out of these secure mental health settings and by ensuring they have the necessary supports in place so their transition back into the community is successful so they can live a full and happy life.

"One of my clients had been living in a secure mental health setting for 12 years and transitioning this person out into the community was totally life-changing for both them and their family," Olivia said.

"It's pretty life-changing for their families, too. One mother of a client I support said to me that she is 'getting her son back'. It really gives them hope."

Olivia's role involves supporting people to get good value out of their NDIS plans, understand service agreements, and confirm bookings with service providers and importantly assisting participants to achieve their goals.

She uses her knowledge and over a decade of experience within the mental health sector to recommend the most suitable providers for each person's needs.

"I couldn't imagine working in any other industry. The people I have met over the years continue to inspire and encourage me to delve further into the sector," Olivia said.



Open Minds and headspace

Open Minds proudly operates three headspace locations in Queensland; headspace Taringa, headspace Redcliffe and newly opened Strathpine.

Find a centre near you and make an appointment if you are a young person going through a tough time.

Alternatively, headspace Decks (<https://headspace.org.au/decks/>) is an interactive and innovative way for young people to learn, engage,

develop skills and set goals around mental health.

You can also be of any age to access our Open Minds Mental Health Hub at Morayfield (both face2face and telehealth) if you are in need of support, or you can access our free online peer support forum through the SANE Forums found via openminds.saneforums.org/.



Overview of our staff and Open Minds strategic future

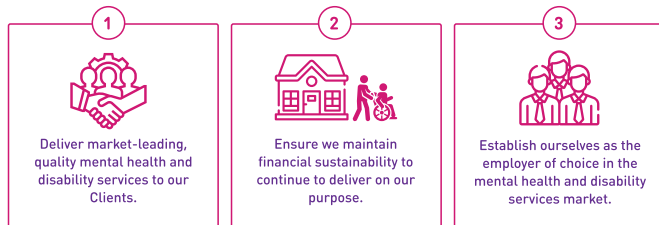
Open Minds is fortunate to be led by an experienced Executive Leadership Team (ELT). In consultation with the business, they have developed a Strategic Plan to ensure the sustainability of our future and growth of our services to support even more members of the community.

Together with leaders from around the business; our Corporate Strategic Plan was presented to the business in February 2020.

The strategic plan presents the Open Minds purpose, values and direction through to the end of June 2022.

For our clients and stakeholders, it provides an important overview of Open Minds plans, priorities and initiatives. For our people, it provides a guide of where we are heading and the activities we will undertake to achieve a sustainable future that delivers on the needs of our clients.

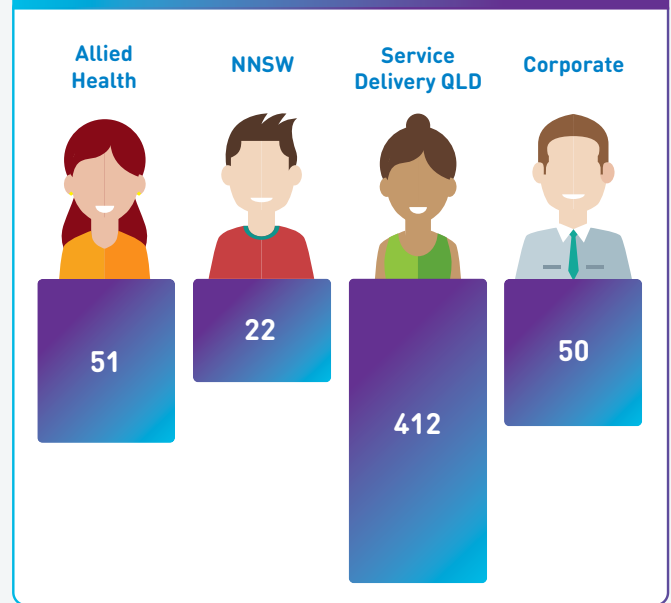
OUR STRATEGIC GOALS



OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



Employees: 535 Staff



Our Executive Leadership Team



Paula Mayson
Chief Executive Officer



Stuart Dempster
Chief Financial Officer



Chris Shannon
General Manager Improvement & Growth



Damien Lefranke
General Manager, Service Delivery – QLD



Mariaan Conradie
General Manager, People, Quality and Safety



Simon Moore
Company Secretary



Jamie Thompson
Regional Manager, Service Delivery – Allied Health



Rik Barker
Regional Manager, Service Delivery – Northern New South Wales

Queensland Mental Health Week Achievement Awards

October is a pretty big deal for us at Open Minds. Not only is it **Mental Health Week, World Mental Health Day, World Homeless Day, Carers Week and National Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Week**, but it's also **the time we host The Queensland Mental Health Week Achievement Awards.**

This year, due to the ongoing pandemic, we made the very hard decision to postpone the Queensland Mental Health Achievement Awards until 2021.

Due to the pressure placed on the Mental Health sector this year, we worked with the Queensland Mental Health Commission to acknowledge those who work tirelessly to improve mental health outcomes, reduce stigma, support and empower those living with mental illness through a video featuring the Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic, thanking the Mental Health Sector Workers.

"Thank you to all in our industry for all that you do. We thank you for being a pillar of support every day, but especially through fires, floods and the global pandemic, we tip our hats to you."

You can view the video by clicking on the image.

The Melting Pot: COVID-19 and Mental Health

On Tuesday 13th October, **The Melting Pot: COVID-19 & Mental Health** was held with in-person and virtual panel members, and was live streamed for viewers around the country with thanks to the advance in technology, which had played a big part in our lives throughout the ongoing pandemic.

Throughout the event, our industry leaders discussed the impacts and changes made throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the industry challenges and what the 'new normal' looks like going forward.

You can view the recording of the event by clicking on the image below:



THE MELTING POT:
COVID-19 and Mental Health

Join industry leaders in a panel discussion around observations, insights and innovation.

LIVE STREAMED EVENT
TUE 13 OCTOBER
3.30-4.30PM

Panel members (from left to right):

- Lucy Broughton, National Mental Health Commission
- Samantha Taylor, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- Dr Gerry Naughtin, NDIA
- Ivan Frkovic, QLD Mental Health Commission
- Ian Montague, National Disability Services
- Paula Mayson, Open Minds



Looking back at the 2019 Queensland Mental Health Achievement Awards

Each year, we are honoured to host the Awards. It's a highlight in the Mental Health Week calendar and is seen as one of Queensland's best celebrations of the sometimes-overlooked shining stars in the mental health industry, those who work tirelessly to help others along their recovery journeys.

The Awards keep getting bigger and better every year which means we are making progress on our quest to reduce stigma and raise awareness state-wide of mental illness.

Congratulations to the 2019 Award winners

- **Jeff Cheverton Individual Award** – sponsored by QLD Alliance for Mental Health - James Hill
- **Jude Bugeja - Peer Experience Award** – sponsored by RANZCP - Kerry Geraghty
- **Early Years Award – sponsored by QLD Health** - Curlew Cove Children and Family Place (CFP)



- **Not-For-Profit Organisation Award** - SME (1-100 Staff) - ReachOut Australia
- **Not-For-Profit Organisation Award** - Large (101+ Staff) - yourtown - Kids Helpline
- **Workplace Award** - SME (1-200 Staff) – sponsored by Office of Industrial Relations - Open Arms Veteran's & Families Counselling - Townsville - Peer Support
- **Workplace Award** - Large (201+ Staff) – sponsored by WorkCover - Energy Queensland
- **LGBTI+ Award** – sponsored by QuAC - PRIDE Art Therapy Program
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award** – sponsored By RFQ - Stepping Black Indigenous Corporation Australia
- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Award** – sponsored by QMHC

The Awards will be back in 2021 and bigger than ever!

If you work in the mental health industry or know someone who does, nominate now by visiting openminds.org.au/achievement-awards.

A new look to bring back the colour

You may have noticed that this year's Better Days looks a little different to last year's. Towards the end of 2019, Open Minds refreshed our purpose and values in consultation with a group of our clients and employees. At the beginning of 2020 we decided to refresh our brand look and feel to incorporate more colour. We hope you like our refresh as much as we do. Here are some examples.



Join our team

Are you passionate about supporting people to be the best version of themselves? Are you patient, considerate and understanding? Do you love a challenge? Why not work in the rewarding industry of disability and mental health!

Open Minds provides a range of employee benefits including salary sacrifice and packaging options, an employee assistance program, flexible working arrangements, and ongoing learning to continue to develop your skills.

We welcome expressions of interest in the following areas:

- **Support Workers**
- **Residential Support**
- **Various corporate and administrative roles**
- **Psychologists and counsellors**

If you want to join an organisation that works towards enabling an independent and positive future for people living with mental illness and disabilities, then Open Minds could be the employer for you.

To express interest or apply for a role, visit openminds.org.au or email us on recruitment@openminds.org.au.

Open Minds is a registered NDIS provider. Our team works to enhance mental health and wellbeing by delivering tailored supports to people living with mental health, disability or acquired brain injury.

HEAD OFFICE

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Mental Health • Disability • Specialised Supports



Some Teams
ROCK.
Join ours!

