

BETTER DAYS

AUTUMN 2023



Reflecting on the Lismore floods, one year later

In early 2022, Australians watched on in horror as extreme weather in Lismore caused two history-making floods that devastated the town and its surrounding communities.

Amid the destruction that left thousands of people displaced, Open Minds' northern New South Wales (NSW) team worked steadfastly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients in the region.

In August 2022, Open Minds expanded critical mental health services to meet

community need when appointed as the lead agency for the Lismore Head to Health Hub and increased opening hours. Open Minds has also recently recruited four staff specifically to assist with flood recovery activity such as connecting people in temporary accommodation pods to services and community.

The team, led by Rik Barker, General Manager of Integrated Mental Health Services NSW, persevered through extremely challenging circumstances,

including the loss of the Open Minds office and physical work equipment.

As Rik reflected on the past year, he expressed his deep pride and gratitude for his team and their clients and all they have achieved together.

"It has been a privilege and honour to support our community through this time, and we are committed to providing accessible mental health support in the region," said Rik.

Chief Operating Officer Message

Welcome to this edition of Better Days. It has been a refreshing change of pace to start 2023 without disruptions caused by extreme weather events or COVID-19, allowing us to focus our attention to important areas of operations and quality practice.

To deliver on our purpose to enable independent and positive futures for people living with mental illness and psychosocial disabilities, we are committed to continually identifying ways to improve our service quality and the experience for all people who use our services.

We recently had a mid-term assessment against the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards standards. I'm pleased to report that a successful result was obtained, and our positive culture of teamwork and communication was highlighted. I'm extremely proud to work alongside this dedicated team and I'm certain more exciting highlights will be achieved this year as our focus remains on delivering on our purpose.

In February I had the opportunity to meet with the NDIS Review panel with other providers and people with lived experience, to share ideas on how we can improve the NDIS

for people with psychosocial disabilities. Open Minds is engaged in this process to influence outcomes for psychosocial disability and mental health and invite others to learn more and have their say: <https://www.ndisreview.gov.au/have-your-say>.

After extensive consideration, we will be closing our Open Minds Morayfield Mental Health Hub on 30 June 2023. Unfortunately, the costs of running the services together with leasing the space have proved too high to be financially sustainable, despite the efforts of our amazing team's unwavering commitment to maintain much-needed services for the Morayfield community. From 11 April 2023, we will no longer take any new client referrals. We are extremely proud of the contribution our team has made to the local community's mental health during the past five years.

Thank you for your support.

Kate Johnson
Chief Operating Officer

Perseverance and plans to pay it forward

Emily* is a young woman who recently completed her high school education, despite many challenges such as depression and domestic violence.

With support from her school and the Open Minds' Woolloongabba team, Emily has entered tertiary education with a view to pay it forward so that others can share the same hope and perseverance for a brighter future.

Emily came to Open Minds for support in 2020 experiencing early youth trauma and depression. She had limited self-care and daily living skills, and the impact of domestic violence was disrupting her schooling. Emily's support team played a huge role in keeping her motivated during this time and treated Emily with trauma-informed care. In collaboration with Emily's school, they enabled remote learning opportunities when Emily decided to reenrol in year 12.

Emily said paying it forward means dedicating her studies to youth work or exercise physiology.

"I want to help kids and teenagers who, like me, are facing challenges with their mental health or home life," said Emily. "My goal is to help them navigate challenges so that they can have a better life when they finish school. I can show them there is still hope."

*Names have been changed to protect the privacy of our client.



Moreton Bay PrideFest

On Saturday 10 June 2023, Pine Rivers Park, Strathpine will come alive with rainbow flags, glitter, and an amazing line up of entertainment to celebrate the Moreton Bay LGBTIQAP+ community during Pride Month.

headspace is the official charity partner of the 2023 event, with \$5 from every PrideFest ticket sold helping to support the LGBTIQAP+ programs delivered by our centres at Redcliffe and Strathpine.

You can purchase your PrideFest tickets at www.moretonbaypridefest.com.au.

Supported Independent Living Opportunities



Living independently and looking after yourself from day to day can be a huge confidence booster! Open Minds Supported Independent Living (SIL) service enables people to discover ways to manage living in their own home, as independently as possible.

Everyone's needs are a little different, but SIL support typically offers help with daily tasks such as shopping, meal preparation, personal care and travel assistance.

We currently have a SIL vacancy in a four-bedroom low-set house at Wynnum. It's a large home with two living areas five minutes from the train station, sharing with two others it would be well suited to someone who enjoys living near the water. If this sounds like it could be your next home, please contact our team for more information.

Scan the QR code to explore all Open Minds current SIL vacancies on our website.



Teresa's art career blooms



Teresa is elated to have achieved a life-long goal of exhibiting and selling her art works at the iconic annual Recovered Futures Art Exhibition and more recently her first solo art exhibition, Beauty in Everything, at the Old School House Gallery, Cleveland.

Teresa was diagnosed with schizophrenia when she was 15 years old and has received support from Open Minds for several years. Seeing art created by other artists with mental illness at the Recovered Futures exhibition was a powerful moment for Teresa, made even more special as her two-pastel works on paper were both purchased prior to the exhibition opening to the public.

"When I entered the exhibition opening, I saw two red dots on my art works, which meant they were sold. It was such an incredible feeling!" said Teresa.

Teresa has been building her career as an artist with the support of her family and support workers Gina, Lesley, Sally, Ashleigh and Jess. They are all very proud to see her career and confidence blossom and look forward to her continued success.

Supported employment presents new opportunities

Open Minds is bringing more people one step closer to increased independence by offering supported employment through its partnership with Multicap and its social enterprises and commercial relationships.

The Open Minds team facilitated a tour for interested clients to visit Makeables, a production and distribution operations business in Tingalpa. The tour was hosted by Multicap's Pathways Operations Manager, Bec Lowther, and gave clients an insight into the possibility of earning an income and gaining transferable skills alongside Makeables 145 supported employees.

Open Minds is thrilled that following the tour, some tour participants have since taken the opportunity to fulfil their life goals in gaining employment. If you or someone you know would like to know more about Multicap's employment pathways and social enterprises, please speak to a member of the Open Minds team today.



Our Core Services

NDIS Services



Daily Living



Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)



Supported Independent Living



Support Coordination and Specialist Support Coordination

Non NDIS Services



Coastal Supports



Community Living Support



Concierge Housing Supports



Lismore Head to Health Hub



headspace
(Indooroopilly, Redcliffe & Strathpine)



Housing and Support Initiative (HASI)



Youth Bloom



Community Re Entry Services Team (CREST)



DIRECT SUPPORT WORKERS CONFERENCE



Seamus Evans

Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM

Don Elgin

Dr Jeffrey Chan

13-14 JUNE 2023

LEARN. LEAD. DELIVER.

Direct Support Workers Conference

As leaders in high needs disability support and mental health services, Open Minds together with Multicap are proud to host Queensland's only Direct Support Workers (DSW) Conference in June 2023.

The theme 'Learn Lead Deliver' is set to deliver an inspiring program, valuable networking opportunities, educational workshops, and insightful discussions. The DSW Conference seeks to empower support workers to provide best-practice, contemporary support to the people they support, therefore improving outcomes for people of all abilities in the communities they serve.

Tickets are currently on sale. For more information about the DSW Conference, visit www.dsw.org.au.

QMHW Awards

The Queensland Mental Health Week Achievement Awards (QMHW) are a flagship event for the Queensland Mental Health Week and are the only Awards for achievement in mental health in Queensland.

Open Minds is extremely proud of its 27-year legacy of hosting the Awards and the important opportunity they provide to recognise and celebrate individuals and organisations dedicated to mental health across Queensland.

Please visit openminds.org.au/achievement-awards for future updates and information about the process for nominating.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Nominations will open – May 2023

Finalists announced – September 2023

Awards Ceremony – 13 October 2023

QUEENSLAND MENTAL HEALTH WEEK
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2023