

Chair's Report

It is an honour to represent Community Bridging Services (CBS) Inc. as Chair and to share with you all of the highlights, activities and journey from our last year.

Since CBS began in 1996 (Happy 20th Birthday!!) our work has grown to encompass many community services. We are privileged to work with so many individuals with a disability and their families/carers, providing support in the short or long term to find and maintain open employment based on their strengths and interests under our Jobnet Program. We partner with people living with a disability to provide for culturally productive and meaningful recreation and skill development through our Day Options, Recreation and Art programs. Over the years it has been noted by the Board the number of valuable programs across regional and country South Australia for school leavers and others with a disability, looking to the future. By partnering with like-minded organisations, our reach into the community has ensured those living with a disability can achieve their life goals.

At 30 June 2016, we were working with more people than ever before as demand for our services has continued to grow. This increase from one reporting year to the next does not include a large number of clients who accessed services during the last 12 months, but who no longer need our support.

Our income to provide services to this growing number of people and communities is predominantly Federal Government funded, and as a Board we continually look to diversify this income stream through different sectors and program offerings. Next year we hope to roll out a number of these initiatives as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) also becomes more relevant to clients.

This strong growth in client numbers has come about as our ever hard working staff looked to increase awareness of CBS in the sector. Referrals in particular have played a large part in this growth which is a testament to staff providing a great service that clients want to 'share'.

We are a fiscally responsible organisation which is evidenced by our annual report and our conservative return to reserves. We have been able to maintain tight expense management controls across the organisation and continue to display the benefits of our experience in managing our service delivery within budget constraints.

We have been able to balance the demands of quality service delivery, with ongoing financial investment into improving our organisation through program design and innovation. During the year we have also invested in ensuring we have the organisational culture and values we promise to our clients, staff, families and partners. Our strategic investment such as readying ourselves for the introduction of the NDIS has been critical in the future safe proofing of our organisation so that the clients and relationships of people we support will be there for the long haul. Further future proofing includes investing in our young leaders through the Young Gurus Program.

Our Board members are committed and this is proven in our internal review of governance, looking to refresh our Constitution as well as a skill matrix and performance review, to ensure CBS is a leader in good governance within the not-for-profit sector. This year we said goodbye to a long serving Board Member Steve Dunning, who was a great contributor, and also welcomed back Bronwyn Schoen, a previous Board Member and Chair of CBS. A wonderful thing to see we are able to retain our strong relationships at a Board level.

CBS's positioning within the communities we work is critical to our success. The Not-For-Profit sector, as a whole, and CBS could not provide the amazing benefits to society without a purpose. Such benefits include shared values and understanding which enable groups like us to trust each other, work together and encourage social cooperation. These networks create value, and one of the key roles Not-For-Profits can play is creating and leveraging this value to the benefits of those we support. Our Charter of Client Commitment signed by CBS Inc, enshrines this value.

I believe CBS is a 'For Purpose' enterprise. We are focussed on ensuring we deliver the benefits and value that our purpose creates. The rate of change our working environment is experiencing will necessitate this focus to be successful with our respective purpose and goals. As Chair, I am privileged to meet staff and visit offices and see first-hand the positive difference our services make in people's lives as well as attend our many functions from business breakfasts to the very special Amelia Rix Award. This award reminds me every year how important our role is and the difference we make in positively contributing to the futures of people with a disability.

Thank you to everyone who is part of this fantastic organisation for your contribution and what we have achieved together.


Alison Perrott

They're all a great bunch down there. They make you feel welcome.