

Annual Report

2020



 **amicus**
one person at a time



**One
person
at a
time**

Amicus Annual Report 2020

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President's report

Paul Somerville



It has been both a successful and busy year in the area of corporate governance with the Committee of Management working with the leadership team and staff to progress the implementation of our strategic plan and work through the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the latter half of the financial year.

The leadership team provided regular briefings to the Committee of Management through COVID-19 to ensure that we were well briefed on the risks, safety measures, restrictions and impacts for our participants, their families and our staff. It has been a difficult time for all and is a year that none of us will forget anytime soon, but I am pleased to note that due to the implementation of required measures our participants and staff have remained COVID-free.

In the 2020-2021 financial year Amicus Group Inc will transition from an incorporated body in Victoria to a company limited by guarantee named Amicus Community Services. This transition will enable us to work with the many NDIS participants requesting support coordination and behaviour support services who live in border towns like Moama.

It will not affect the way we provide services and Amicus will remain a not for profit, charitable organisation that is a quality assured and registered NDIS provider. As a growing organisation this structure also provides for a more rigorous review of our governance and financial performance. It has been a large body of work and we are presently on track to move to transition from 1 January 2021.

Last year our Committee of Management welcomed new members Matthew Florence and Belinda Smith, both bringing strong skills to compliment the work of the Committee. We also farewelled Graeme Parker and Kate Lawrence and we thank them for their contributions to Amicus.

In addition to monthly Committee of Management meetings we have a number of sub-committees that meet on a regular schedule to progress the more detailed governance and strategic work for approval.

Finance Sub-Committee

The Finance Sub-Committee is chaired by Greg Noonan. It has been a challenging year with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however the Finance Sub-Committee has focused on strong financial management to guide operations during this time. For the year ended 30 June 2020, Amicus reported a surplus of \$1.859m (\$1.183m for the year ended 30 June 2019).

The positive result reflects the continued land sales from the Cecil Street re-development project, Market Gardens Estate and financial assistance measures. This surplus provides the organisation with funds to invest so that we can continue to grow and provide better services in the communities that we operate.

Governance Sub-Committee

The Governance Sub-Committee is chaired by Heather Paterson and has undertaken the groundwork on the transition of Amicus to the company limited by guarantee structure including the development of a new Amicus Constitution.

A board assessment tool was undertaken to support the future skills development of our Committee of Management, as well as an updated Committee of Management induction program being introduced.

The induction not only provides the Committee with the governance tools they require but gives the Business Unit Managers the opportunity to meet new Committee members and discuss what services their teams provide in the community. The new induction has worked well and the feedback from the Committee of Management has been positive.



Audit and Risk Sub-Committee

The Audit and Risk Sub-Committee, Chaired by Mike Kiernan, had a busy year of both formal meetings and working groups with focus on key risk categories: strategic, operational, financial, information and technology, people, regulatory, legal, governance, external disaster and emergency management.

This work culminated in a revised risk management plan which supports the complexities of the services we provide and the growth of the organisation and is reviewed on a quarterly basis. With the Committee's oversight of both internal and external audits, detailed dashboards were developed and reviewed regularly to ensure compliance.

Cecil Street Redevelopment Sub-Committee

For some years now, following our move from the Cecil Street site, our dream was to redevelop the land and with the sale of those subdivision blocks retain a block to build two SDA (Specialist Disability Accommodation) units.

It has been a long journey, but one we can finally say is coming to a wonderful conclusion with all lots now sold and we have architect designs approved and a planning permit on the way for the building of the two SDA units. These new homes will address a shortage in the market of quality housing specifically designed for the needs of people with a significant disability.

A builder has been selected and the units are expected to be completed by June 2021. It has been a long project but a highly successful one and with the successful sales this has enabled us to re-invest in the building of the units.

Despite the challenges of this year, Amicus is flourishing and as Chair I am very proud, not just of the financial growth that we have achieved but of the continued impact we have on people lives.

Amicus supports more than 400 people to lead better lives and we do this by working with them, one person at a time. The model of support is fundamental to the Amicus approach and a critical success factor in helping people lead the best lives they can.

Over the last year we have routinely provided more than 20,000 hours of support per month. This is remarkably more than double the level of support we were providing only four years ago.

None of this is however possible without the commitment, innovation, and great work that our staff do every day.

On behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank all staff including our direct support staff, our indirect staff who support our service delivery and our leadership team. Special thanks to Ann-Maree Davis our Chief Executive Officer for your work in building a diverse and effective support organisation that Bendigo and the communities where we operate can be proud of.

CEO report

Ann-Maree Davis



It gives me great pleasure to share my report for the 2019-20 financial year, and what a year it has been! We have tackled everything from Code Red days and bush fires to a global pandemic and many challenges in between. Thankfully, we have much to celebrate, particularly as we reflect on the achievements of participants working towards their good life, and as an organization contributing to our community and sector.

Our services

We experienced steady growth across our operations, particularly in NDIS service delivery as demand for our *One Person At A Time* services continued. The largest increase was in Supported Independent Living (SIL), and in response to the COVID-19, we supported three participants with significant supports to transition out of acute hospital settings and into alternate accommodation.

This was an emergency response and I thank all involved for their efforts in responding so quickly, and their commitment to ensuring the delivery of a high-quality rapid response within the context of a pandemic.

On the move

After six years at 100 Queen Street, we had outgrown the facility and it was time to seek new office space. In August, head office and NDIS Service Delivery moved to 18 Myers Street, a workspace that provides a much better physical environment for our team.

We also created a new child safe office space for our Targeted Care Packages Team, now located at 53 Myers Street. Our Support Coordination and Behaviour Support Team continue to operate from 90 Queen Street. The leadership team are working with our Committee of Management to explore future office accommodation needs, with a future goal to have all teams working from one site.

COVID-19 work-from-home requirements saw many of our team move into their home offices, but as an essential service, Amicus continued with a small group remaining at 18 Myers Street during the first wave and both 18 and 53 Myers Street during the second wave.

The way we work

For some time, we have been searching for a new integrated system with participant information, rostering, payroll, billing and statement functionality, that also support participants and families to access the information they need to have more choice and control regarding their supports. The right system would also support staff with key information to deliver high quality personalised services.

In early 2020, the decision was made to transition to Lumary; before we knew about the pandemic! As you can appreciate, this is a significant piece of work under usual operating conditions, but COVID-19 certainly added extra challenges.

At the time of writing this report, the first stage of implementation is complete, and we look to the next round of enhancements that will support us to work in a more effective and efficient manner, enhancing service delivery to our participants.

Our pandemic response

In January, COVID-19 started to travel around the globe. Before we knew it, a worldwide pandemic was declared, Australia was in lockdown fighting the unknown. From March, our Emergency Management Plan and Pandemic Committee was implemented.

The committee consisted of leadership staff representing all programs and corporate services, working tirelessly throughout the Victorian State of Emergency and then State of Disaster ensuring our participants, their families and our staff were informed and safe.

Farewell to Shayne

The past year saw the sudden and unplanned departure of Shayne Scott our NDIS Operations Manager. Whilst he gave us quite a scare at the time, he is now enjoying life on the farm. I take a moment to acknowledge Shayne's significant contributions over almost seven years, a time of great organisational change and growth.

Shayne was a huge contributor to developing of our *One Person At A Time* approach, moving from Cecil Street to our CBD location, and active community participation. He was instrumental in establishing our accommodation services, now known as SIL, our transition to NDIS and the trial and expansion of Self-Directed Teams.

Many participants, families and staff developed very strong relationships with Shayne over the years, testament to the passion and commitment he brought to his role.

Welcoming new people to Team Amicus

With growth comes the inevitable need to grow our workforce in direct support and business support roles. 2019-20 saw a number of new positions introduced, and in the past 12 months we have appointed an Executive Assistant to the CEO, an Accountant and Training and Development Manager. These appointments support the wider organisation to continue to provide timely internal and external support. We have more new roles to commence in 2020-21.

Looking to the future

Guided by feedback from participants, families and staff, the leadership team commenced visioning the 'Amicus of the future' and the introduction of key projects and new positions in 2020-21. These include:

Separation of Children's and Adult Services to further strengthen our Child Safe credentials - this will see the creation of a Children's Services team led by Children's Services Manager Sophia Wight. All children and youth we provide direct support will transition to this team regardless of how they are funded.

Single point of entry to streamline access to all of our services - NDIS Service Delivery, Support Coordination, Behaviour Support Services and Targeted Care Packages, improving the experience of our existing and new participants. We have created a Pathways Team for on-boarding functions, and will undertake capacity building and community engagement.

Redesign of the Quality portfolio - strengthening risk and strategic management and developing centralised complaints processes and response. We will be implementing risk management software as part of this work.

Implementation of a Competency Framework - to ensure our staff are skilled and provided with the best opportunities to grow and develop.

Creation of an Incident Reporting and Incident Investigation Officer - to streamline our processes.

Within the Adult Services Team we have developed the roles of Behaviour Support Coach to assist in our implementation of Behaviour Support Plans and a SIL Manager to oversee all of our supports in SILs and STA at Melissa Court.

Partnerships

Every year our circle of community partnerships grows and in 2020-21 we will introduce a Community Inclusion and Capacity Building Officer creating opportunities for our participants to increase their active participation and valued roles.

There are a couple of partnerships over the past 12 months that we would like to specially acknowledge, supporting Amicus to work towards our Vision and Mission. Haven; Home, Safe have been an invaluable support to us in progressing the Cecil Street redevelopment and construction project, and MASARG who have been so supportive as we have established and grown the service delivered at Melissa Court.

Whilst COVID-19 has affected each of us differently, and 2020 has been a long haul for all, I would like to thank Team Amicus who have risen to the challenge, taking on an enormous and at times daunting and unknown role and at the same time continuing with their daily responsibilities. I also thank our Committee of Management who have been strong in their governance and a great support during COVID-19 uncertainty.

Finally, my biggest thanks is to each and every one of our valued participants, their families and supporters. Thank you for your continued loyalty and support of Amicus and your belief in our vision, mission and values. We look forward to working with you in 2020-21 to get your good life.

Treasurer's report

Year ended 30 June 2020

Summary of financial performance

The COVID-19 pandemic presented some challenges, however Amicus focused on delivering essential services.

Despite the challenges for the year, we are pleased to report that Amicus recorded a surplus of \$1.86m for the year ended 30 June 2020 (\$1.18m surplus for the year ended 30 June 2019).

The Statement of Financial Position reports total assets of \$7.70m (\$4.68m in 2018-19) and Net Assets of \$4.47m (\$2.62m in 2018-19).

This year saw the introduction of a new accounting standard related to leases - AASB16 Leases, the impact of this standard has been accounted for in our financial reports.

Due to the nature of Amicus, some financial assistance measures were available to combat the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as PAYG relief and COVID-19 loading on some NDIS unit cost rates.

Part of the surplus is attributable to land sales from the Market Gardens Estate.

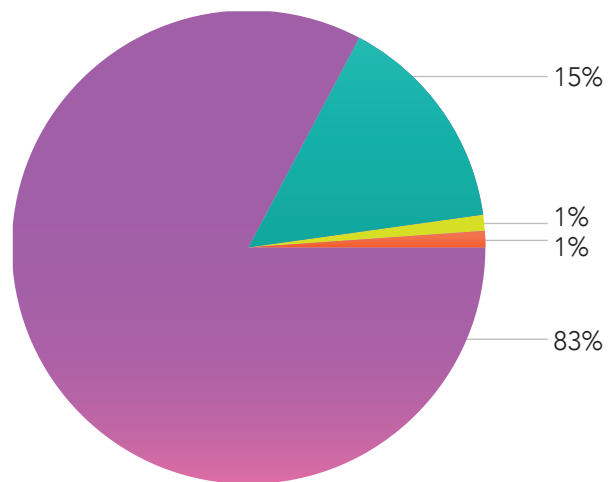
Where our funds came from

The total income for Amicus for 2019-20 was \$14.85m (compared to \$12.40m for 2018-19). This represents 20% growth in income.

Most participants supported by Amicus are funded by the NDIS. Other significant income sources are from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Commonwealth Home Support Program for HACC services for participants over the age of 65.

The NDIA supported the sector by providing an advance payment. For Amicus, this cash in advance was \$904k.

Service Income % by funding source



- DHHS
- Commonwealth Home Support
- Fee for Service
- NDIS

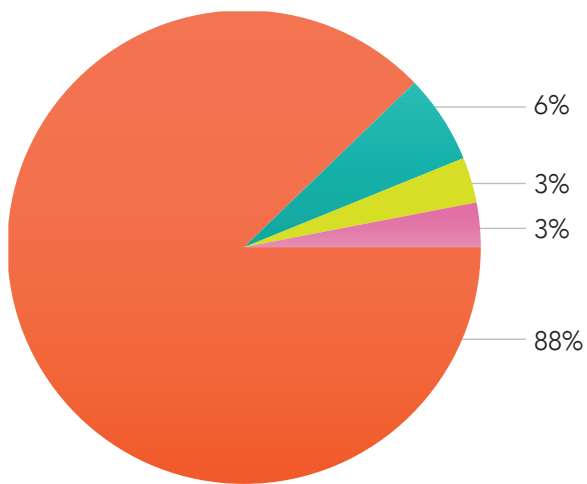
How our funds were used

Expenditure for 2019-20 was \$12.99m (compared to \$11.22m in 2018-19). Employee costs accounted for 88% of expenditure.

Staff numbers were 122FTE at the end of the year, compared to 129FTE in 2018-19. FTE was slightly down due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff leave balances have been accumulating as there has been a reduction in staff requesting to take leave during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In January 2020, we established a dedicated office for Children’s Services.

Expenditure % by major category



- Administration
- Employment Expenses
- Property, Facilities and Vehicles
- Client Expenditure

Future financial outlook

In 2020/21 we are implementing a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) client database and rostering system, which will streamline our pathways process, and provide technology that can be used remotely by our support staff.

Stage 2 of the Cecil Street development project will commence with the construction of two units on a lot in the Market Gardens Estate.

Amicus is planning to move from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee. This change in structure will provide further opportunities for Amicus operations.

This year’s success would not have been possible without the contributions made by many people. We thank all of our participants and the entire Amicus team. Together we are continuing to build foundations for the future of Amicus.



Greg Noonan
Treasurer

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AMICUS GROUP INCORPORATED

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Amicus Group Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respect, the financial position of the Association as at 30 June 2020 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the *Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC)*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and *Australian Charities and Not-for profit Commission (ACNC)*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC)* and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

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Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

RSD Audit



P.P. Delahunty

Partner

Bendigo 28 October 2020

Committee of Management

2019-20



Paul Somerville
President



Greg Noonan
Treasurer



Mike Kiernan



Joe Ciancio



Heather Paterson



Matthew Florence



Belinda Smith



Kate Lawrence
Retired January 2020

Senior Leadership Group

Executive Leadership Group 2019-20



Ann-Maree Davis
CEO



Cathy Gaskell
*Corporate Services
Manager*



Sophia Wight
*Targeted Care
Packages Manager*



Susan Perkins
*NDIS Support
Coordination Manager*

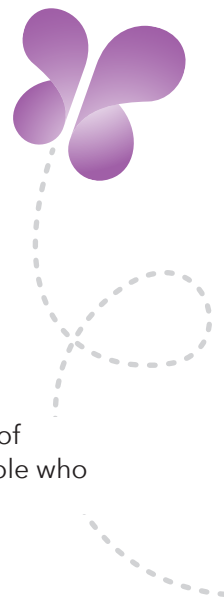
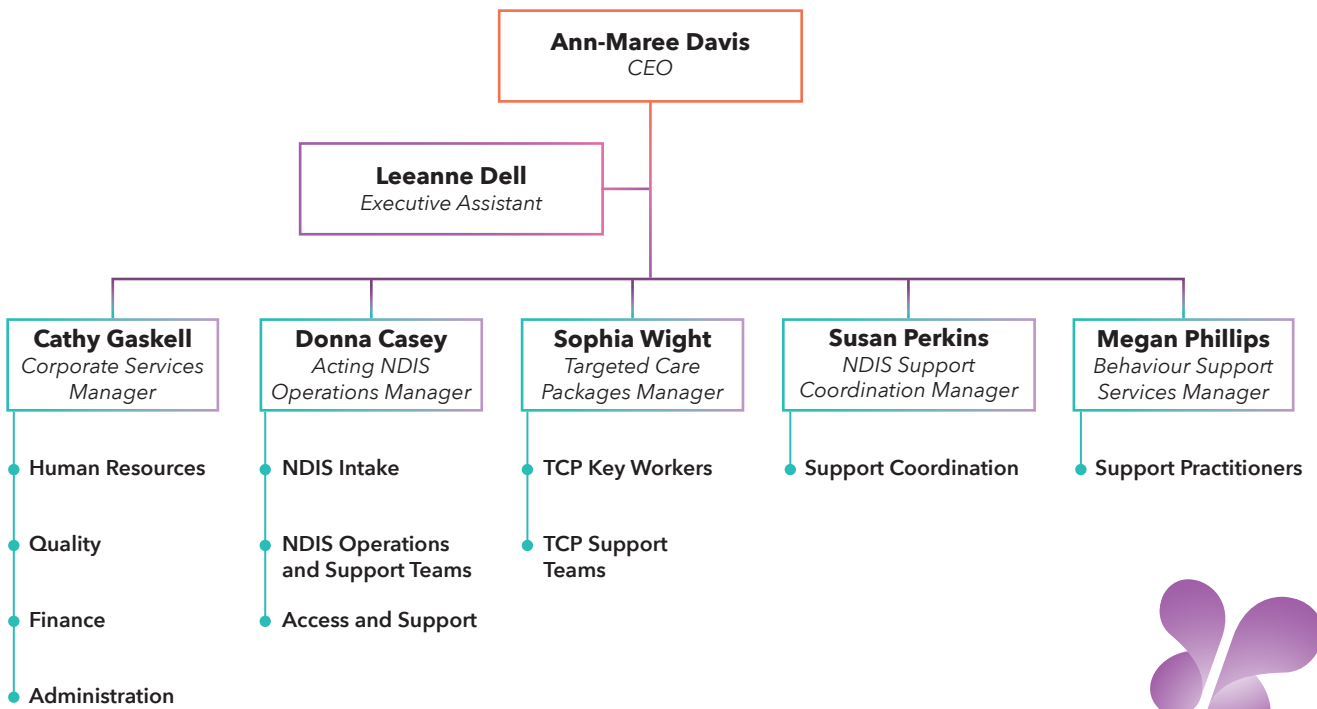


Megan Phillips
*Behaviour Support
Services Manager*



Donna Casey
*Acting NDIS
Operations Manager*

Organisational chart



Amicus service badges

Amicus service badges are a way of acknowledging staff who have achieved milestone years of continuous service to Amicus. We thank them for their valued contribution to the lives of people who choose our support and their commitment to the Vision, Mission and Values of Amicus.



Priscilla Sovereign-Smith
Luke Bransgrove
Caitlyn Williamson

Ashley Duncan
Patricia Sambrooks

Amicus Manifesto

We are vibrant and purposeful innovators,
we remove boundaries and celebrate
each person's capabilities.

Individuality is your right;
no two people in the world are the same.
We respect that each is unique and
have different wants, desires and needs.

We are passionate about people,
the individual, the human.

We listen, adapt and support others
with flexibility and individuality.
Together we pursue your uniqueness,
and take nothing for granted.

We are fun, we celebrate and we lead.
We are here, we are available -
whenever you need us

Everyone deserves a good life -
a chance to follow their passion;
to find their own way.

We champion normality, independence
and community connectivity.

We work only with One Person At A Time.

We are Amicus.



Vision, Purpose and Values

Our Vision:

A community that welcomes everyone for who they are and what they bring.

Our Purpose:

Supporting people with a disability or disadvantaged of all ages to live their good life.

Our Values:



Self Directed

Each person decides for themselves

We believe that all people have the right to decide about the things that happen in their lives. We give information, support and opportunities for people to direct their own lives and the services they want from Amicus.



Individuality

Each person is an individual

We welcome and respect that people are individuals and have their own cultural background. At Amicus this means people we support, their families, people who work here, volunteers and everyone in the community.



Active Participation

Each person should be in the community and be part of it

We believe that all people have the right to be part of the community they choose. We recognise the unique skills and interests of a person and their ability to contribute to the community. This means we support people to be involved in the community, feel part of the community and to add to the community in their own way.



Capacity Building

Each person has the opportunity to grow and learn new skills

We have an important role to make sure that everyone has the skills they need. At Amicus this means the individuals, their families, people who work here, volunteers, people in the community and our partners. We give everyone the chance to keep learning.

Behaviour Support



With a clearly defined need for Behaviour Support Services, in 2019 Amicus took the step to form the Behaviour Support Business Unit. In the course of the first 12 months the team has experienced considerable growth and demands for this specialised service is high.

With a team of three and further recruitment underway, there are plans for future growth in the area of allied health, including psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists.

We currently provide services to some 33 individuals, with a waitlist of people also seeking our services. Amicus is fortunate enough to have a team of psychologists who also provide individual therapy sessions.

The Behaviour Support Team assists participants and their support networks to understand the function of their behaviour and why they behave the way they do.

The team works closely with them to identify potential changes to their environment, what skills they might need to develop and what things their support team can do differently in order for them to meet their needs in a more functional way.

COVID-19 has required us to be innovative and provide a more flexible way to deliver our supports and although challenging - particularly through the lockdowns - we have continued to provide these much needed services to our participants.

The first year of the Behaviour Support Team has been a whirlwind but extremely rewarding for the entire team and they have truly made a difference in the lives of our participants.

Thank you to the Behaviour Support Team for your ongoing patience and dedicated work to Amicus, and for the amazing role you have played in building our team.



Megan Phillips
*Behaviour Support
Services Manager*

Joe is setting goals

Pictured here is Joe with his Behaviour Support Practitioner Georgie and his strategies on the wall. Joe is about to commence sessions to develop skills to manage his emotions.

Joe is keen to develop skills so that he can achieve his NDIS goals, especially meeting new people, building relationships and engaging in the community more.





Targeted Care Packages

Targeted Care Packages provide individualised and flexible supports that better meet the needs of children in out-of-home care. Through these packages Amicus has been able to transition young people from residential settings into their own homes within their community.

Amicus also works with families to assist with the care of children which will enable them to stay in their current living situation with parents, kinship carers and foster placements. Amicus also works very closely with schools to get the best educational outcomes possible for children and young people.

The 2019-20 year has been an exceptional one with the development of COVID-19 in the second half of the financial year. Although some of our supports were limited at times due to lockdowns and isolation periods, we were able to be there when needed to continue to provide services in the Greater Bendigo Region, Central Highlands, Shire of Campaspe and Central Goldfields Shires.

In January 2020, Amicus made the decision to move the Targeted Care Packages Team to 53 Myers Street to enable the creation of a separate child safe environment for the team to provide the highest standard of service.

The office has been set up with specific areas for children and young people to feel comfortable and safe when meeting with carers and professionals.

The children and young people we support have seen many personal achievements from getting their first job, attending school, sitting their L plates and being part of the L to P program to get their driving hours up. They have also had support to engage in their local communities through sporting, cultural and art activities.

We have a dedicated support team and would like to thank the community support workers, key workers and the administration team for their support over the last twelve months. You have truly made a difference to children and young people's lives.



Sophia Wight
*Targeted Care
Packages Manager*

Oscar

Oscar has been engaged with Amicus since December 2018. He is 15 years old and lives with Type 1 diabetes.

Oscar requires routine and structure for his health needs which has enabled him to develop strong relationships and connections with his support workers. Thanks to education on healthy eating habits and behaviours, the change in Oscar has been remarkable.

Oscar is now on track with his health and wellbeing milestones, and is growing taller and developing accordingly for his age. His diet and exercise have dramatically improved and he can now confidently ride his bike for 10 kilometres.

Oscar now knows what foods he can eat and when he can eat them. Recent blood tests show that Oscar is in the perfect healthy range regarding his Diabetes management.

Oscar is involved with the BFLO School and is progressing well with his education. He is well supported and learning social skills and enjoys the company of his peers.

At home he walks and feeds the dogs, helps prepare meals which has helped him learn about his carbohydrate intake - a critical diabetic management skill. Oscar's support workers help him with social behaviour, perception, and cues when out in the community; encouraging and supporting him to connect with others.

Oscar has been encouraged to develop his interests and hobbies. He has explored a variety of new things including learning about trains, trams and cars, riding a bike, kicking a football, typing letters on an old typewriter, caring for dogs, learning to kayak, and mindful colouring - hours and hours of mindful colouring.

He is encouraged to develop his own sense of identity, choosing what he wants to wear and how he wants his hair cut. Oscar has grown in confidence and can now express his emotions and how he is feeling.

Oscar will continue to be supported by Amicus, learning new social skills, making connections in the community, engaging in school, managing his health, as well as making friends.



Leigh

Leigh, an 11 year old boy had lived in a number of different placements but 18 months ago moved back home with this mum. He has told us many times that he loves being home with his Mum and that it's his forever home.

Leigh enjoys art and play therapy, where he likes directing roles and scenarios of play, and with his mum joining many of the sessions it has them engaging well in just having some fun. In doing this, Leigh has made considerable progress and is now able to express how he is feeling and what is happening for him.

Starting at Kalianna School this year with a gradual increase in school hours he has been able to remain at school on a full time basis. Leigh loves school and he is engaged with all aspects of learning and the teachers commend him on his eagerness to learn in the classroom. The school has worked with Leigh, guiding and supporting him in learning appropriate social behaviour and connection with peers.



Leigh is developing a strong sense of self living with his mother and is seeing his siblings regularly. He understands who his family members are and the trusted adults in his life.

He is really happy engaging with Amicus support workers and enjoys the difference in skills they bring. He has been encouraged to explore different interests and hobbies and has participated in scouts, dance, swimming lessons, Auskick, cricket blast and aerial silks. Over the last 18 months Leigh has developed a passion for the skate park, and with the help of his support staff has been able to learn the skate park etiquette and this has given the opportunity to further develop his social skills.

Leigh is learning to get his own breakfast and he is taking pride in doing his hair and with what he is wearing. He is supported to keep his room tidy, to do chores around the home and to look after his personal belongings.

Leigh looks forward to seeing the support workers and doing different activities with each of them, which has helped him to make huge progress over the last 18 months. Leigh and his mum appreciate the support from Amicus and the staff's commitment to both of them.



NDIS Support Coordination

In the 2019-20 financial year the Amicus Support Coordination Team, have supported 131 people of all ages to achieve their goals.

We have continued to work with participants, families and other stakeholders to assist with navigating the sometimes complex supports system and continue to strive to ensure achievement of goals.

Although face-to face contact has been limited during the course of 2020 due to COVID-19, the team has maintained strong supports with our participants with regular check-ins via telephone or other digital platforms.

Additionally during the period of lockdowns and restrictions, several participants entered medium term accommodation to ensure their care continued in a safe and controlled environment.

Amicus Support Coordination enables people to utilise their NDIS plan to live the life they choose. Many of our participants have worked toward NDIS goals in life areas including education, health, life skills, employment, housing and overall wellbeing.

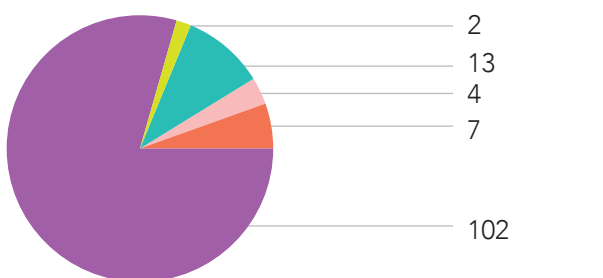
Amicus has continued to provide Specialist Support Coordination for four participants who require a higher level of support to address barriers and reduce risks associated with their lives these may include but are not limited to:

- Entering or at risk of entering the criminal justice system
- Entering or at risk of entering child protection
- Homelessness
- Multiple service involved in the person's life i.e. disability, mental health and housing services

We would like to thank Jessica Parker, Robin Gray, Tamara Davis (the newest Support Coordination team member) and Chris Butler for their commitment, tenacity and professionalism that has been evident over the past 12 months.

Support Coordination work across many Local Government Areas (LGAs), the following are the statistics for each area

Participants by location



These numbers include Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD):

- 10** Non-English speaking backgrounds
- 2** Deaf, uses AUSLAN or text



Susan Perkins
NDIS Support
Coordination Manager

Housing Options

Adults

2 Nursing homes	25 Participants living in group homes
3 Young people living in nursing homes	23 Participants living with family or carers
11 Supported residential settings	26 Participants living independently in the community

Children and Young People

32 children/young people living with their families	6 children/young people in out of home care or kinships care settings
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A Support Coordination success story

Pierina has been accessing the NDIS and Support Coordination with Amicus since the start of the roll out in the Loddon Region some years ago. Her plan has been significantly underfunded for many years and her access to assistive technology has been challenging, and even declined on several occasions.

Unfortunately in the last plan period the planner rejected Pierina's request to stay living in her own home with her husband, due to her husband having some periods of ill health and her new plan was funded to reflect nursing home care. This was heartbreaking news for Pierina and her family so Amicus Support Coordination staff assisted her and requested an immediate review.

This request was submitted in the hope that the decision would be overturned and enable Pierina to continue to live in her own home with supports as she has always requested.

This review was deemed by the NDIA to be reasonable and necessary and the decision was made to change the plan to ensure that Pierina could continue to live in her own home with support.

Pierina had also been waiting on an approval for an electric wheelchair, hoist and home modifications to widen doors and in addition to build a veranda to enable outdoor access in a wheelchair for some two years, and we were delighted to be advised that these requests had also been approved.

Things are certainly looking up for Pierina. She now has not only the equipment and care to support her to continue to live in her own home but with the new veranda it has enabled her to gain outdoor access and to simply sit outside and enjoy the day!

Pierina and her husband Phillip are constantly grateful for the support they receive from Amicus Support Coordination and Pierina now has greater independence in all areas of her life.



NDIS Service Delivery



After being confronted with our first code red day in almost 10 years, closely followed by the bush fires and then a worldwide pandemic - what a year 2020 has been!

We moved forward initially with some trepidation as we had never worked through a pandemic, but the dedicated staffing group rose to the challenges we faced and continued with their commitment to providing the very best support to our most vulnerable community members.

They kept in regular contact with all participants and carers to ensure their Essential Activity Plans were current, which enabled us to be on the front foot of service requirements in these challenging times. The resilience of the NDIS Service Delivery team has been nothing short of remarkable.

Training and development of our staff is always at the forefront of our plans but during lockdown times, staff were given the opportunity to up-skill and re-skill.

With a strong focus on the continued development of our 'small teams' framework which compliments the overarching self directed organisational framework, the rewards of seeing small teams thrive with peer supports, regular meetings and opportunities to share their experiences has been worth the years of trials and development.

Demand for our services continued for our unique *One Person At A Time* philosophy and as well there is a growing demand in the area of Supported Independent Living (SIL). With growth comes employment opportunities and Amicus has certainly experienced this with many more support workers being recruited.

Our Access and Support team had an increased demand for their services due to the pandemic, with most people requiring support to access both the NDIS and other mainstream services.

We want to thank the entire Service Delivery Team for their ongoing support during an unforgettable year. To the families and participants we support thank you for your patience and understanding this year whilst we responded to the many government directives to keep you and our staff safe.

We look forward to a wonderful 2020-21 where we will all dream big and support our participants to live their good life.



Donna Casey
Acting NDIS
Operations Manager

Rodger

Rodger has made significant progress with working towards his independence in 2020. Due to COVID-19 the opportunity arose for Rodger to relocate to Melissa Court (our Respite House) in Castlemaine.

He has taken the change in his stride and made the decision to dedicate his time at Melissa Court as a learning curve towards his independence. He has taken control of his own personal care and chores around the house with minimal support.

Having celebrated his 21st Birthday at Melissa Court this year, Rodger was delighted to receive a special birthday cake and celebrate his day!

Rodger has a passion for remote control cars and has built quite a collection and thoroughly enjoys pulling them apart, changing parts and rebuilding them again. He has come in leaps and bounds in development of his fine motor skills.

To top off a wonderful year for Rodger, he recently received the great news that he is moving into a shared home later on in the year. He is over the moon and is counting down the days until he moves in. He regularly visits his new home of a Sunday to have a roast dinner with his new house mates.

Rodger is forever grateful to all the Amicus staff that have worked alongside him over many years and is eagerly awaiting this new chapter in his life.



Terry

Terry is pleased to say his life is getting back on track after a rough start to the year. After a fall late last year and an extended stay in hospital, Terry also had to deal with the loss of his beloved mother.

We first met Terry when asked to provide him with support to move back into his home which required a bathroom renovation.

Terry admitted that his first few weeks out of hospital were hesitant as he wasn't sure what would happen but 'the new blokes who supported me did a darn good job', Terry told us. He is delighted with his new bathroom and couldn't speak highly enough of the great job that has been done!

Terry said 'the Amicus boys looked after me really well when I had to move out of home while the renovations were being completed'.

Once finding his feet, Terry has self-directed a lot of his supports by speaking up about who he wants on his team of support.



Terry is known as the 'Prince of Newbridge' as he has had a long standing connection with the local cricket and footy club where Terry was the waterboy for the footy club for many years. He speaks to the President of the Cricket Club regularly to keep abreast of the latest news.

In the course of the year between coming out of hospital and then COVID-19, it has been a challenge for him to get out and about but he has recently managed to get back to his local, the Newbridge Hotel, to have a few beers with the boys and his Dad. He speaks on the phone with his Dad most days which he enjoys a lot.

With the recent easing of restrictions it has enabled Terry to get back to his many friends around Bendigo, including the staff at his local bank. He hopes to get back to work at Peppergreen Farm at some time in the near future as well as get back to watch the mighty Bulldogs play in Melbourne in 2021. Terry told us he was barracking for Richmond in the AFL grand final, so we're sure he was happy with the result.



Office Hours

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 5:00pm

Amicus

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