



**Participation
Opportunity
Choice**

2016 ANNUAL
REPORT



**Autism Queensland
is the lead provider
of targeted services
to Queenslanders
with Autism Spectrum
Disorder and
their families**

Our Vision

A life of participation,
opportunity and choice
for people with Autism
Spectrum Disorder

Our Mission

To support people living
with Autism Spectrum
Disorder through responsive,
evidence-informed practice
and advocacy

Our Values

- Excellence
- Innovation
- Equity
- Person-centred
- Consumer-driven

Our Strategic Direction

Deliver quality services and supports for people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder through financial sustainability, growth and supportive infrastructure.

Key Drivers



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Patron

His Excellency
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Queensland

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Chairman's Message

Autism Queensland and the disability sector in Queensland faced many challenges in 2016 with the commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rollout in this state.

As anticipated there were many unknown factors to tackle, and there will, no doubt, be many more ahead.

With the support of the Board and Executive, staff working in those areas where the rollout has occurred have coped admirably and are now sharing their experiences and learnings across the organisation.

From the onset of the NDIS we have been aware that Autism Queensland will face increased competition from larger private companies entering into the market to deliver many of the services we offer.

As such, we continue to work actively to identify all possible strategies to ensure the longevity of Autism Queensland well past the 50 year milestone it celebrates in 2017.

Last March (2016), Autism Queensland commenced discussions with Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) about a possible merger between both organisations. In August, a memorandum of understanding was signed to begin the process of due diligence for this possible amalgamation.

However, as was announced in March 2017, after completing the process it was revealed that legal and regulatory constraints on structuring the merger to achieve the strategic objectives of both organisations was not currently viable.

A joint decision was taken by the respective Boards to not proceed with the proposed merger, with an understanding the two organisations would continue to work alongside each other to provide disability and education services to people on the spectrum.

Autism Queensland continues to develop our capacity to be self-sufficient under the NDIS, and sustainability continues to be the fulcrum underpinning the organisation's ongoing operating success.

I would like to congratulate the Executive and their teams for their contribution to the organisation and its future. They continue to work within the constraints of an increasingly challenging financial environment without sacrificing the quality of the services delivered to our clients.

In 2016 we had the pleasure of welcoming a number of new directors from a range of backgrounds to the Board, including two with a lived experience of autism. I would also like to acknowledge the many years of support provided to Autism Queensland by Roslyn Dick who stepped down from the Board at the end of June.



As Autism Queensland prepares to celebrate its golden anniversary, I, along with all other Board Directors, look forward to watching the continued growth of this organisation unfurl alongside its ongoing expertise in meeting the needs of the autism community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "B. K. Dennien".

Barry Dennien
Chairman

CEO's Reflection

Looking back over these messages from previous annual reports I can safely say that every year is different in this organisation and 2016 was certainly no exception.

January 1 marked the start of the early transition of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) into Queensland, followed by the rollout across the rest of the state from July 1 beginning in the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions. The centre in Mackay would be our first to deliver services under the new scheme.

The Autism Queensland NDIS Readiness Team had worked hard in preparation for this date, meeting perceived challenges in a positive and proactive way, but despite careful planning, the NDIS was still very much an unknown for us and the individuals and families who would be accessing it.

It has been a steep learning curve for all involved and I acknowledge the team in Mackay and supporting staff in Brisbane, for their hard work and diligence to ensure the transition was as seamless as possible for our existing and new clients. They have led the way as the rollout continues across Queensland.

On a national front, Autism Queensland was involved in the formation of the Australian Autism Alliance (AAA), a

diverse group of service providers, academics and interest groups who serve to provide a more unified voice for the autism community. Already we can see the progress that is being made to draw together a surprisingly diverse range of opinions to lobby government and stakeholders on issues important to the ASD community.

Across the course of the year, Autism Queensland made several structural changes, a number of which I will touch on here, but about which you will read more in other pages of this report.

The first of these was the merging of the two School Principal positions into one, with the aim of ensuring a consistency across both campuses. This role is supported by Team Leaders based full-time at each campus who are responsible for day to day operations.

We also began steps to transfer a cohort from our Education Support and Therapy Team to the Brighton centre to enable clients and families living on Brisbane's northside easier access geographically to these services. It also removed the need for team members to regularly travel from Sunnybank Hills to deliver services. Brighton was already home to a school campus and a small team of Autism Advisors, so this was in effect an expansion of our northside services. The change came into effect early in 2017 and has been well received.

September 2016 saw the creation of a separate Manager Regional Services role. Traditionally the regional centres have been overseen from Brisbane, but as the centres, and their client base, grow, it was becoming increasingly obvious the organisation needed someone on the ground with a sole focus of supporting and expanding these regional services. This role is currently based in Mackay.



Autism Queensland ended the year on a particularly sad note when Glenda Watkins, General Manager Community Services & Facilities passed away after a very brief and unexpected illness. She was an integral member of the leadership team for 10 years and is greatly missed by her colleagues, both in this organisation and in the sector.

2017 brings with it, its own set of challenges, most especially the work that still lies ahead with the NDIS rollout. While financial outcomes are essential for Autism Queensland's long term sustainability, it is client outcomes that remain integral to this organisation and I recognise and thank all staff for their dedication in ensuring this is achieved.

Rod Cameron
Chief Executive Officer



Services Overview

Autism Queensland is the state's longest serving and most experienced provider of specialised services and supports for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families. Our team of therapists, educators and psychologists with expertise in ASD are based at our centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns.

Autism Queensland is committed to evidence-informed practice. Our vision is a life of participation, opportunity and choice for people with ASD.

Our services include:

Accredited, Independent School

Autism Queensland runs two Education and Therapy Centres in Brisbane at Brighton and Sunnybank Hills that operate as a single accredited Independent Special School. With the exception on our Prep program which is offered full and part-time, students with ASD from Year 1 – 12 attend the Autism Queensland School part time, generally two or three days a week, alongside attendance at their local school. Our students are grouped according to age, ability and needs with a maximum of six per group. They are supported by a multidisciplinary team including teachers, teacher aides, psychologist, speech pathologists and occupational therapists. The Autism Queensland's School delivers an ASD-specific curriculum linked to the Australian Curriculum.

Adult Services

Autism Queensland provides support for people to live in the community across the Brisbane region. We also offer Community Access Programs tailored to suit individuals' needs and interests including an Adult Recreation Group to enhance social skills and improve social life, and a Computer Club for adolescents and adults to further their interests in computers and establish friendships.

Allied Health Assessments and Therapy Services

Autism Queensland offers formal assessments which support the diagnosis and treatment of ASD. This includes speech-language

and communication, occupational therapy, cognitive and psychological assessments. We also provide ongoing therapy in each of these areas to assist people with ASD.

Autism Advisor Program

Funded by the Department of Social Services, Autism Advisors assess eligibility for the Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) Early Intervention funding package and provide advice and information about early intervention services and other related community and support services for young children with ASD and their families.

Customised Services

We offer a range of services and supports that are individually designed to meet a diverse range of client needs. These services are available for individuals and families, as well as to community organisations, schools and early childhood services. They may involve therapy and support delivered in a client's home, work place or community, as well as training of staff to support the inclusion of the client in these settings.

Early Childhood Intervention

Autism Queensland delivers a range of flexible and individualised family centred services for children under seven years old. Our programs are developed and delivered by a team of therapy and education professionals and focus on key features of ASD, including behaviour, communication and social skills. These services are delivered from our centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns to families living in these and other regions of Queensland.

Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officer Program

This program is a national project hosted by Autism Queensland that aims to raise awareness of ASD and other disabilities in indigenous communities. It is funded by the Department of Social Services as part of the HCWA and Better Start programs.

Group programs and therapy for older children and adolescents

These programs focus on key elements such as behaviour, development and social skills. They are designed to meet the needs of children, adolescents and their families and are delivered across Queensland.

Host Provider Service

A service for individuals living in South East Queensland who are receiving individual funding packages and wish to self-direct this support. The service is part of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Your Life Your Choice (LYLC) Self-Directed Support Initiative.

Professional Learning and Development

Our professional learning facilitators have many years experience working with individuals with ASD. They deliver ASD-specific workshops to professionals and parents across Queensland, develop customised workshops with individualised content, and deliver the HCWA- funded Early Days workshops to parents of young children with ASD in Queensland.

Research and Development

The Research and Business Development team works collaboratively with researchers across Australia to develop and support ASD research programs. It is also responsible for the collation, critical review and dissemination of research evidence to inform current and new services. Autism Queensland is an essential participant in the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autism CRC).

Services Overview (continued)

Respite and Holiday Programs

Autism Queensland runs two centre-based respite programs. Weekend respite is offered at Sunnybank for children aged 5-18 years who have a diagnosis of ASD. Weekday and weekend respite is offered at Greenbank for children and adults with challenging behaviour and complex needs. School Holiday Programs are offered twice a year in the June/July and

December school holiday periods at Sunnybank Hills and Brighton. Therapy and other group programs for children are also available.

School Advisory Visits

Autism Queensland teachers and therapists visit schools throughout Queensland to provide information, advice, support, and individualised strategies to staff, other key professionals and parents.

Studio G & Teen Tech Shed

Studio G is a group-based digital arts program guided by a case management framework that supports young people aged 16-24 years to develop social, job and life skills. Studio G runs twice weekly in Brisbane and Mackay. Teen Tech Shed is an after school, and less formal version, of Studio G for 12-15 year olds and runs twice weekly in Brisbane.



Education & Therapy Services

Autism Advisor Program

The Autism Advisor Program (AAP) is a national program which is part of the Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) package funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS), Australian Government.

Queensland's five Autism Advisors and team leader are based in Autism Queensland's centres in Sunnybank Hills, Brighton, Rockhampton and Cairns.

The role of the Autism Advisor is to provide families who have a child under the age of six years diagnosed with an ASD with information about ASD, available funding, workshops and local support services they may access for their child and family.

The Advisors travel throughout Queensland to promote the HCWA package and other relevant supports, meeting with families, developing networks with local community support services, medical and health professionals and so on. By doing so, the Program increases awareness of ASD and the importance of identifying and linking families with early intervention services in a timely manner.

In 2016 the Advisors travelled to the Gold Coast, Ipswich, Caboolture, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Toowoomba, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe, Warwick, Woorabinda, the Whitsunday region, Mackay, Gladstone, Biloela, Mt Isa, Atherton Tablelands and Townsville.

Over 2100 families attended initial consultations with the AAP, an increase of approximately 10 percent from 2016.

The AAP also continued to work closely with the Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officers and the team that provides the Early Days Workshops to ensure these programs and the AAP were meeting the needs of newly identified families.

Participation in national teleconferences with the DSS and providers of the AAP in other states provided the opportunity to share information about the programs in each state, clarify any

policy and operational issues impacting on the implementation of the HCWA package, and to receive information about the introduction of the NDIS. Autism Advisors also attended and participated in information sessions, forums and local meetings about NDIS.

A focus for the Advisors during 2016 was the roll out of the NDIS in Townsville, Mt Isa and Mackay and their surrounding areas. Autism Advisors have established relationships with the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Partners in these areas to support families' understanding of, and access to, the referral pathway for families with young children with ASD. The roll out has resulted in an increased number of enquiries about the NDIS from families, paediatricians, and community agencies.



Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Autism Queensland School

Autism Queensland runs two Education and Therapy Centres in Brisbane at Brighton and Sunnybank Hills that operate as a single accredited Independent Special School. The School provides a range of group-based programs for children diagnosed with ASD from Prep to Year 12.

During 2016 the School catered for 120 students (equivalent to 57.6 full-time enrolments), with a teaching, therapy, transport and administrative staff of 45.5 (full-time equivalent) including a Principal and two campus Team Leaders.

The School's goal is for all students to develop skills to participate to their fullest extent in their home, school and local community. Dual enrolment options include one, two or three day placements with students attending the Autism Queensland School part-time, whilst continuing to attend their local school setting.

The School program promotes an inclusive approach that supports

students maintaining and improving their participation in their local "home" school.

Students attending the School are grouped according to age, ability and needs, with a maximum of six students per group. Each group is staffed by a teacher and teacher aide, with additional support provided by Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Psychologists. Our inclusive approach is underpinned by regular collaboration and communication with parents, local school staff, and other related professionals.



2016 highlights for Autism Queensland Schools included:

- **New Principal and Campus Team Leaders**

During 2016 a new organisational school structure consolidated two principal roles into one, based across both campuses. Two campus team leaders work closely with the principal to oversee smooth operations of the school. Reviewed processes during 2016 have begun to provide consistent operations across both campuses which have included a streamlined enrolments process and administration procedures.

- **Refurbished administration building to accommodate the introduction of clinical services to Brisbane's northside**

During 2016, the administration building at the Brighton campus was refurbished to accommodate two dedicated therapy rooms for

the provision of clinical services for individuals and families living on Brisbane's northside. Building works were completed during the June-July school holidays with funds provided by a Cory Charitable Foundation grant.

- **Community Engagement**

Work on the Brighton campus' Sensory Garden project continued throughout 2016 with the support of local members of the community through cash and in-kind support. The Bracken Ridge Lions Club continued their generous support during 2016 through sponsorship at mini train days, the Bracken Ridge Backyard Bonanza and sausage sizzles hosted by Brisbane City Council.

- **Preparations of a fulltime Prep pilot program for 2017**

Expressions of interest were sought from parents and staff for the introduction of full time Prep in 2017

to coincide with the introduction of mandatory Prep in Queensland. Information sessions were well attended with positive feedback received and plans proceeded to pilot a single class at each school campus in the 2017 school year.

- **Ongoing participation in Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) Self Improving Schools program**

2016 was the third year of Autism Queensland's involvement in the program which is facilitated by a consultant through Independent Schools Queensland. An assigned area of focus from 2015 continued for staff mentoring and peer observations across campuses with emphasis on Autism Queensland Methodology and evidence-informed practice. Staff wellbeing and improved teaching and therapy spaces were also flagged as areas for attention for 2017.

Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Early Days National Coordination

Early Days is a series of workshops for parents, grandparents, and families of young children (0-6 years) with ASD or who are going through the assessment and diagnostic process.

The workshop program is funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) as part of the HCWA Package. Early Days workshops are delivered in each state and territory by the local Autism Association and include Foundation Workshops such as “My Autism and Me”, Skills Workshops such as “Transition to School”, and Specialist Workshops for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse families.

The program is coordinated nationally by EDCASP (Early Days Consortium of Autism Specialist Providers). As lead agency of the consortium, Autism Queensland hosts the National Coordinator who ensures consistency of content and delivery, and assists the states and territories to reach their delivery quotas.

A particular focus for the role is to support state workshop providers to explore strategies to increase the participation in the Early Days

workshops by parents and carers from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.

In 2016, 360 workshops were delivered across Australia to 3440 participants. The ‘My Child and Autism’ workshop continues to have the highest participant rate, followed by the ‘Understanding Behaviour’ workshop. There has also been an increase in requests for indigenous specific workshops over the last 12 months.

An Early Days Facilitator National Forum was held in March and provided the opportunity for updates on new and reviewed workshop content and presentations about new Early Days projects and initiatives. Participants also attended an effective facilitator workshop.

Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officer Program

The Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officer Program aims to raise awareness of childhood disability within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to build relationships between these communities, service providers and disability organisations.

The program employs three Indigenous Liaison Officers (EI ILOs) who are based at Autism Queensland and responsible for the program nationally. They provide information and assistance relevant to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and childhood disability that relates to:

- Recognition of developmental red flags
- Pathways for diagnosis
- Information about disability
- Funding options
- Connecting with service providers.

Working in close consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia, the EI ILOs maintain strong relationships with the Early Days program and support services in all of the states and territories including the State and Territory Autism Associations, Carers Australia, service providers, Aboriginal health and medical services, child care and other early childhood services.

The EI ILOs provided individual support to 18 families in 2016 and liaised with 173 stakeholders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and services that work with those communities. They delivered or co-facilitated 29 community and/or Early Days workshops; participated

in 19 conferences and forums as presenters and/or conference booth hosts, attended two cultural capacity building workshops, and participated in a number of community events.

In 2016 the program logo and promotional material were revised to reflect the broadened scope of the service to include all childhood disability. All workshop materials were updated to incorporate current information about NDIS.

A website was launched, www.eiilo.com.au, providing information about the program and available supports, information about relevant funding sources, and links to services and supports and peak disability organisation sites.



Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Early Intervention & Regional Services

Autism Queensland continued to provide services for children with autism under the age of seven years through centres located in Cairns (Edmonton), Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Brighton and Sunnybank.

These services included one, two and three-days per week programs, individual therapy and education programs (on-site and off-site), short, intensive programs such as the 'Fun, Friends & Feelings' social skills program, as well as after school groups such as Social Skills and Lego Therapy.

The focus of each is to work directly with children whilst also providing information and support to parents and others supporting them such as school staff and private therapists.

During 2016 Autism Queensland staff in the early intervention teams worked with over 400 children under the age of seven and their families and/or educational staff.

Preparation for the roll-out of NDIS has been occurring for several years, and in 2016, with the first locations in Queensland transitioning to the scheme, more work was carried out to adapt for this significant change.

It had been recognised for some time that, under the NDIS, Autism Queensland's regional centres would have an important role in providing services for individuals of all ages with ASD, not just those under the age of seven. Therefore, referring to them as 'early intervention centres' was no longer the most appropriate terminology.

From the beginning of 2016, the regional centres became simply Autism Queensland Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton and Gladstone, and the teams in all those locations began to offer services for, and to work with, older children, teenagers and adults.

Mid-year, it was also decided structural changes for the department that had been known as Early Intervention were necessary and the role of Manager Early Intervention & Regional Services was no longer appropriate. Instead, a Manager Regional Services was required, with that person providing targeted regional input to the regional teams and supporting them to develop their services for older clients, as well as oversee each centre's transition to NDIS.

Additionally, two Brisbane-based Team Leaders, one for Sunnybank Hills and one for Brighton, would take charge of the early childhood intervention services previously delivered from those sites, as well as the other services such as individual therapy and short-term intensive group programs for older children and adults.

While some of these changes were planned to take effect in late 2016 and at the beginning of 2017, the Manager Regional Services was appointed and took on responsibility for the regional centres in the last quarter of 2016.

Another change implemented during 2016 was that staff in the regional centres commenced delivery of the Non School Organisations (NSO), Department of Education and Training, School Advisory Service (previously delivered by Brisbane-based staff), thus regionalizing this valuable service and providing local faces at schools in the community.

The first location in Queensland to transition to the NDIS was Townsville. Whilst Autism Queensland does not have a physical location in Townsville, there were enquiries and impacts due to this. However, our first in-depth experience of NDIS was when it rolled out in Mackay on 1 November. *(Please refer to the Mackay report in this section for more detail.)*

BRISBANE & STATEWIDE

In 2016, the Brisbane-based team ran four centre-based group programs. One at Autism Queensland's Brighton centre and three at Sunnybank Hills, including a Toddler Group targeting children aged under 3½ years. This group was staffed at a higher level to recognize the extra individual input required for such young children.

Many other programs and services were delivered by the Brisbane-based team, including 'Fun, Friends and Feelings' programs in each school holidays, and individual programs across Brisbane, Ipswich, the Gold Coast and Roma.

There continued to be high demand for sessions conducted by staff in children's early childhood and/or home settings; however, we also saw a growth in the number of families wishing to bring their child to an Autism Queensland centre for individual sessions.

A psychologist joined the team in February 2016, allowing for additional programs such as Anxiety Groups for Adolescents and for Parents of Younger Children to be offered, as well as individual psychology sessions.

The team member who had participated in the Early Start Denver Model Advanced Training at the end of 2015, became fully certified in 2016. Another participated in the training in July 2016 and also embarked on the path to certification.

A number of university students completed placements within the Brisbane-based team – two Speech Pathologists and two Human Sciences students.

Education & Therapy Services (continued)

GLADSTONE

Through hard work and inspired leadership, the Gladstone team created a vision whereby they became a very proactive team for 2016. Despite many staff changes, the team worked hard, and this was reflected in their capacity to retain a full client schedule.

New community connections were made by all staff across the year including radio interviews and presentations to professionals. This dynamic team have a very positive presence within the community and are constantly asked to be involved in local events and activities and to share their professional knowledge of ASD with others.

In November, the team approached Communities for Children and Education Queensland to team up and offer a 'Professional Networking Night'. The idea was warmly received and Communities for Children were able to cover all costs associated with the event, including the team's idea for a 'parent expo' the following day. Both events were very successful, with 72 professionals attending the networking night and 156 families attending the 'parent expo'. Both will be repeated in 2017.

Donations of \$4000 in labour and resources helped establish a safer playground for the centre (topsoil, returfing, and creating better sand pit boundaries). This donation and the associated work was carried out by 'A Landscape Experience' & 'Ernie's Dingo Hire'. Another grant paid for shade sails in the playground.

The team held their first golf day for Autism Queensland's annual Go Blue for Autism campaign and raised \$1800. They also held a social movie night for clients and a cocktail and games afternoon.

Gladstone had a consistent flow of clients through the year with full intervention groups and staff generally working at capacity. Team members also participated fully in the NSO School Advisory Visits delivered in the Gladstone and Biloela areas, however limitations because of the small team size, along with some staffing challenges, meant that some Brisbane-based staff were still required in order for these visits to go ahead.

ROCKHAMPTON

The Rockhampton team delivers services to Central Queensland families from The John Villiers Centre of Excellence in Koongal.

In 2016, four centre-based group programs were delivered, focusing on children in need of intensive intervention, toddlers aged 2-3.5yrs, and pre-prep children. A newly implemented assessment schedule was able to effectively measure the significant progress made by the children in these groups.

Numerous short programs including 'Fun, Friends and Feelings', and 'Social Skills' groups supported school-aged children after school and in school holidays.

The Rockhampton team also delivered NSO School Advisory Visits throughout the region as well as in Emerald and surrounding areas.

The team continued to provide information and advice by phone and in face-to-face meetings. They also supported various community events including Under 8s Day, Disability Action Week and local fairs.

Staff Professional Development included attendance at PODD training, Hanen: More than Words, Early Start Denver Model, and Structured TEACCHing.

A generous grant from The John Villiers Trust enabled an extension to the centre of two purpose-built therapy rooms and additional office space. Recovery from Cyclone Marcia was also completed, with local business replacing a fallen fence.

MACKAY

The Mackay team enjoyed a positive start to 2016 with two fully subscribed three-day centre-based groups, as well as a graduate speech pathologist and occupational therapist joining the team.

2016 also saw two professional staff members being certified as Early Start Denver Model therapists, one of whom was the first therapist to be certified in Queensland.

The team continued their ESDM training with the two new therapists completing the three-day intensive training in Brisbane and commencing individual ESDM therapy sessions with clients. Additionally, three of our professional staff travelled to Sydney for an ESDM booster training day and to observe the ESDM based groups at the KU Centre in Liverpool. These observations inspired the two centre-based group leaders to implement changes to the delivery of the group programs.

Preparations for the NDIS intensified in the second half of the year.



Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Through this time families were supported to complete pre-planning booklets and prepare themselves for this new funding opportunity.

Staff increased their face to face delivery of services in preparation for an anticipated busy November and December. The overall financial benefits of this were readily seen in the profits from the Mackay centre.

On November 1 the NDIS rollout commenced in the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsundays regions, immediately leading to an increase in the number of clients aged 7 and over seeking services from the team.

In some cases, this was the first time these individuals could access funding for programs and therapies that have been much needed and long awaited. Additional therapy and administration staff were recruited to meet this demand, processes and procedures rewritten and opening hours relaxed to cater for client needs.

2016 ended with a very full calendar of centre-based groups, individual clients and NSO School Advisory Visits, and as a result, a complete turnaround in our budget from 2015 to 2016.

CAIRNS

The Far North Queensland Centre of Excellence is based in Edmonton near Cairns and delivers services to the Far North Queensland region, including the Cape, Tablelands and Johnstone regions.

In 2016, the team provided 44 Individual Therapy & Education Support programs throughout the Atherton Tablelands and Innisfail as well as in the Port Douglas, Cairns and Northern Beaches regions. Opportunities were also available to clients in Yarrabah. Two intensive programs were also provided during school holidays to clients from the Torres Strait Islands.

The centre started the year with two centre-based group programs and added a third for Terms 3 and 4. Three 'Fun Friends & Feelings' programs were offered in the school holidays during the year, as well as a LEGO program



in Term 2.

Local delivery of the NSO School Advisory Visits started gradually in Term 2 but soon became very busy and staff visited 41 students during the second half of the year.

All therapists at the Cairns centre have been Medicare registered since 2015, but the uptake for this service has been very slow, possibly due to the fee gap clients are required to pay.

Staff undertook a wide range of professional development training across the year including the SOS Approach to Feeding and HANEN More Than Words programs, the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). In June, three staff undertook the advanced three-day ESDM workshop and two staff members are currently in the process of certification as ESDM practitioners.

The Cairns centre has had a stable core group of staff throughout 2016 consisting of two teachers, four program assistants, a speech/language pathologist and occupational therapist, and two part time administration

assistants. They have, however, faced ongoing challenges with hiring and retaining an additional teacher as well as a psychologist.

Network building and advertising the services continued to be a priority throughout 2016, with staff and the team leader attending different networking meetings, presentations, and manning information stalls at a variety of events including community days and markets, conferences and workshops.

In 2016, the centre was successful in securing the SUEZ grant which allowed us to improve our playground. A special thank you also goes to Piconnes IGA for their ongoing donations, and MAXA Constructions for organizing a charity Golf Day in Cairns which raised \$10,000 for the centre. These donations enabled the purchase of new resources and assessments for therapists to use in their work with our clients, as well as the ADOS which will allow the centre to offer diagnostic services in the near future.

Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Outreach Services and Family Support

Autism Queensland's Outreach Team of speech pathologists, occupational therapists and teachers provide a range of funded and non-funded services primarily to school age children throughout Queensland. During 2016 the service expanded to include the provision of therapy services for adults with autism.

Non Schools Organisation, Department of Education and Training, continued its support of Autism Queensland, providing a financial contribution to support students with ASD in Queensland schools in the State, Independent and Catholic Education sectors through the provision of the School Advisory Visit Service.

During 2016 the team visited 1040 students in 448 schools across Queensland including two visits each to the Maryborough/ Hervey Bay, Chinchilla/Tara/Dalby, Mackay, Townsville, Rockhampton, Cairns, Bundaberg, Gladstone and Emerald regions.

Annual visits were also made to the Gympie, Kingaroy, Mt Isa, Charleville, Roma, St George, Goondiwindi, Longreach and Torres Strait regions.

Many of these regional trips included visits to small and remote towns and to the homes of students participating in the School of Distance Education.

Visits to schools in the South East Queensland region, including Greater Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast, occurred on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

A number of regions experienced a higher than usual demand, particularly Bundaberg, Kingaroy, Townsville and Cairns, and while demand for support often exceeded the team's capacity, Outreach staff liaised closely with schools to prioritise support and provide the best possible assistance.

In the second half of 2016, Autism Queensland piloted a regional service delivery model with staff from the Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns centres delivering the school advisory visits in their regions.

This provided schools and families with a more flexible and responsive service. Brisbane-based staff continued to travel to these regional centres to provide coaching and mentoring throughout the trial.

The Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton centres will continue to deliver school advisory visits in 2017.

An annual evaluation of the service indicated a high level of satisfaction with 92.86% of respondents rating it as effective or highly effective, and no respondents rating the service as ineffective.

The Outreach Team continued to operate a Monday-Friday, telephone and email Information and Help Line in 2016, providing valuable and timely information, support and links for parents and carers, educators, other professionals and members of the wider community.

During 2016 the team responded to 2189 telephone and 835 email requests for information and support, in addition to providing ongoing contact with families and schools regarding school visits and programs.



Education & Therapy Services (continued)

There has been a significant increase in the number of enquiries relating to adults with autism, either from the individual themselves or from family members and other practitioners in the community.

Autism Queensland continued its partnership with Brisbane Catholic Education North, providing an extended consultation and support service to children with ASD attending schools in the region. Support included assessment and recommendations, consultation, individual speech pathology and occupational therapy, as well as small group programs.

Services provided by the team on a fee-for-service basis included therapy and behaviour support programs for children in schools and at home, and therapy support for adults with ASD.

The team also provided individual therapy and mentoring sessions with school-aged and adult clients at our Sunnybank Hills and Brighton sites or in client's homes, schools or other settings.

A new program, 'Cool Conversations' was developed for 8 to 12 year olds to help build conversation skills in a fun and supportive format. This program was very well received by the participants and their families and will continue to be offered in 2017.

The Secret Agent Society (SAS) program to develop social-emotional skills for 8-12 year olds was also offered during 2016.

Outreach Services staff participated in two projects with the Autism CRC during 2016.

'The Early Years Behaviour Support' project uses remote technology to provide more traditional methods of face-to-face support to address the needs of classroom teachers and students in rural and remote regions with ASD and complex needs.

Outreach staff also undertook training in Growth Coaching in preparation for participation in the 'Models of Practice for Teachers to Support Transition through School' project.

This project will focus on the feasibility and sustainability of teaching practices to support students with ASD to make successful transitions within early and middle years classrooms in mainstream schools.

In addition to a comprehensive internal professional development and compliance training schedule, staff participated in a range of external professional development opportunities including Social Thinking, Hanen More Than Words, ASD Assessment and Intervention, Working Memory Conference, ASD Overdiagnosis & Educational Implications, Multimodal Communication and Learning strategies for Children with Significant Challenges, Hanen Talkability, Assistive Technology, and the Functional Assessment and Positive Behaviour Intervention (FABPI) course.



Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Professional Learning and Development Services

Autism Queensland's Professional Learning and Development Services (PLDS) provide a range of learning opportunities for parents and other family members, professionals, and those working with or supporting people with ASD.

Autism Queensland's Professional Learning Facilitators have extensive experience in working with people with ASD and in the facilitation of effective professional development and parent education.

The PLDS team prepare and present customised workshops with individualised content in locations across Queensland.

These workshops are tailored to meet the specific needs of small and large groups and are delivered at schools, childcare centres, disability services, employment agencies and other venues as required.

All workshops are evidence-based and aim to be practical and easy to understand.

In 2016, the team delivered 58 customised workshops to disability organisations, State, Catholic and Independent Sector Schools, Disability Employment Agencies, employers of people with ASD, Government disability and family support providers, Child Care and Outside School Hours Care providers, and other organisations across the state.

They also delivered 21 scheduled workshops throughout the year in locations including Brisbane, Caboolture, Townsville, Gladstone, Mackay, Mount Isa and Toowoomba.

Highly subscribed topics included "Understanding Individuals with ASD", "Clues to Behaviour Success", "Understanding ASD & Functional Strategies for Classroom Success", and "Developing Social Problem Solving Skills in Individuals with ASD".

After their attendance at these workshops, many participants then booked customised training for their staff or accessed other Autism Queensland services.

The PLDS team are also responsible

for delivering the Early Days workshops in Queensland and in 2016 they facilitated 72 workshops in regional and metropolitan centres.

Autism Queensland also continued its involvement with Positive Partnerships, a program that provides information and education for parents and carers of school aged children with ASD and a professional development program for teachers and other school staff involved in supporting students with ASD.

Autism Queensland's Professional Learning Facilitators participated in the delivery of a number of these workshops together with facilitators from the education sector and Autism Spectrum Australia (ASPECT).

In 2015, Autism Queensland entered into a partnership with the Department of Education and Training, Early Childhood Australia and C&K to deliver a professional development package, Early Years Connect (EYC).

EYC is designed to support Queensland Early Childhood Education and Care educators working with children with complex additional needs.

This partnership continued in 2016 with the facilitators delivering a total of 85 full-day and six half-day workshops throughout Queensland, as well as two evening workshops specifically for Outside School Hours Care staff. All were co-facilitated by Autism Queensland and C&K presenters.

Autism Queensland continued to participate in the Early Years Project Management and Reference Groups with the development of the full Early Years Connect package including online modules, webinars, resource links, blogs and information sheets being officially launched in 2016. They also presented one of the series of highly popular Early Years Connect webinars that will continue

into 2017.

In late 2015 Autism Queensland was successful in securing funding through the Australian Government's Department of Defence, Family Support Program to deliver workshops to Defence Force families.

In 2016, they presented to parents and carers of children with ASD at the Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane and Lavarack Barracks in Townsville, as well as to the education support staff from the schools these children attended.

The workshops had a particular focus on transitions, and parents and carers were also provided the opportunity for individual telephone follow-up with the facilitator.

Feedback from the workshops was very positive with all parents/carers indicating satisfaction ratings across all criteria in the high to very high range. Pre and post surveys also demonstrated improved knowledge and confidence for all parent/carer participants.

In addition to their training commitments, the facilitators liaised with a range of organisations, peak bodies, agencies and government departments. They continued to raise awareness of the needs of individuals with ASD and to share information about other services available through Autism Queensland.

Education & Therapy Services (continued)

Post-school Services – Studio G

Interest in the Brisbane program of Studio G remained strong in 2016 and Autism Queensland continued its relationship with The Edge as the program venue.

The Edge is an Arts and Technology hub run by the State Library of Queensland where our participants have access to a digital media lab, 3D printing, laser cutting and a sound recording studio.

This facility has proven crucial to our program as most of our participants have a keen interest in technology. Access to this space has encouraged them to attend Studio G and, through their attendance, to re-engage with the world in a creative and positive fashion.

2016 saw Studio G participants engaged in a range of creative programs across the year.

These included The Deep Blue performance at the QUT Creative Industries precinct to mark the opening of a new building on Sunday, August 28.

The performance was seen by hundreds of people over the course of the day and Autism Queensland (and the Studio G program) was well represented with signage and on screen credits.

Studio G participants, supported by their mentors, also created a series of animations for PHD student Cindy Nicollet.

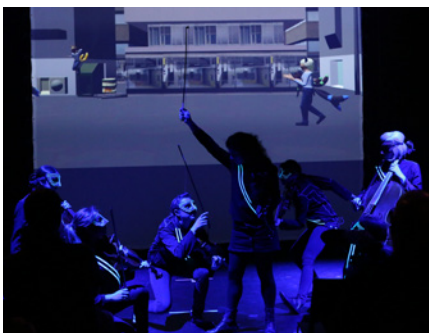
They provided an entertaining visual display of her work involving Acceptance and Commitment Therapy as a means of building resilience and stress management skills for people with ASD.

They were also involved with the development of a goal setting tool for adolescents to use with their NDIS planners. Studio G provided the illustrations for up to 80 flash cards containing imagery that expresses the lived experience of young people on

the spectrum in an engaging and pop culture themed fashion.

All of these projects involved significant skill development for our participants as well as paid work.

Studio G commenced in Mackay in 2016 at the CQ University, Mackay City Campus. As well as providing participants with strong ties to the university and higher education sector, the campus offers a technologically advanced and central location which allows them to engage their digital learning in graphic design and design principles, as well as video, photography, post production and web design.



Accommodation Respite & Community Services

Autism Queensland provides accommodation, respite and social support services to young people and adults with ASD living in the Brisbane area.

In 2016 we supported 20 adults living in seven accommodation houses located throughout Brisbane.

Trained lifestyle support workers provide 24 hour support to these individuals.

We also provided respite services for 81 families at Sunnybank Hills and Greenbank.

This support was made possible through ongoing partnerships with a number of organisations and government departments including the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.

Birrilee at Sunnybank provided respite for 33 families with children aged from five to 18 years with ASD.

Greenbank caters for 48 children and adults with a disability who have complex needs and behaviours of concern.

Autism Queensland also continued to run two regular social groups for adults and adolescents with ASD.

The Adult Recreation Group met every second Friday evening in the Brisbane CBD to have dinner, go to the movies and the markets, listen to bands and attend other events. The group is open to people aged 18 years and over who are independent and continued to be a very positive experience for all those who participated.

The young people who are part of the Computer Club come together each week to enjoy movie and bowling nights along with internet café time. As well as meeting the social needs of its members, the Club provides these adolescents and adults with the opportunity to practise their social, communication and independent living skills as inclusive members of the community.

Recurrent funding secured by Autism Queensland in 2011 continued to enable us to offer school holiday programs at the Brighton and Sunnybank School campuses during the June and Christmas school holidays.

In 2016, students from 62 families participated in the program which featured a range of activities and entertainment that were both centre-based and in the community.

Adult Accommodation Services clients enjoyed a number of holidays this year including time at the beach at Caloundra. They also enjoyed trips to the rugby league and soccer as well as nights out at the local clubs listening to their favourite bands.

Autism Queensland is a registered Host Provider for Your Life Your Choice and provides assistance to families who wish to self-direct funding provided to them by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.

Self-directed support is a funding approach that enables people with disability and their families to have greater choice and control over the disability services they received. It is also a key part of preparing Queensland for the NDIS.

In 2016, staff and management began preparations for our clients to transition to the NDIS. This process will intensify over 2017 with the aim of supporting clients and their families to receive NDIS packages that will adequately support their choices and needs.



Research & Development

Autism Queensland aims to conduct and support research, and promote evidence-informed practice that will enhance the potential of individuals with ASD to achieve valued life outcomes.

Supporting and undertaking research on ASD

Involvement in the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC)

Autism Queensland is an essential participant in the Autism CRC. Dr Jill Ashburner, Manager Research and Development is currently the project leader for the following projects funded through the Autism CRC:

- Overcoming the difficulties of students with ASD in written expression using assistive technology and writing strategy instruction.** Students with ASD frequently have difficulties with handwriting and the conceptual aspects of written composition, which can impact negatively on their academic success. Preliminary results support the effectiveness of a new intervention developed by QUT-based PhD candidate Anne Ozdowska, which

includes video modelling and an app to structure their writing. Almost all participants wrote longer compositions and achieved higher NAPLAN scores for writing.

- Helping students with ASD stay on-task and transition between tasks.** Students with ASD often have difficulty attending to tasks, and transitioning from one task to another. This approach provides explicit cues about 'what to do', 'how long for', 'when the task is finished', and 'what happens next'. All participants in the study demonstrated improvements in on-task behaviour. In 2017, an additional funding grant will allow the existing paper-based, structured teaching, resource to be converted into an online eLearning resource, which will be more engaging for teachers and students.
- The development and evaluation of a goal setting tool for adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum.** This tool aims to assist young people

to develop and prioritise their goals so they can actively engage in the planning processes of organisations such as the National Disability Insurance Agency, disability services providers or schools. This picture-based, card-sort, tool covers a broad range of areas, including independent living and social, community, educational and employment participation. Project Officer Vicki Tomkins has been working with a participant and mentor from the Studio G program to develop the pictures for the cards. The first draft of the tool has been completed and will be evaluated in 2017.

The Research and Development Department is also contributing to other Autism CRC projects including:

- Impact of improved classroom acoustics on the educational outcomes of students with ASD.** Students with ASD are known to have difficulties in processing of



Research & Development (continued)

speech in noisy environments. After much preparation in 2016, sound field amplifications systems (SFAs) are currently being installed in South East Queensland classrooms. The effect of SFAs on classroom attention, processing of instructions, and academic performance will be measured in 2017.

- Early Years Behaviour Support Project.** This study aims to evaluate the use of tele-classroom consultation practices to support teachers to meet the needs of students with ASD aged 5-8 years with challenging behaviours. In 2016, an Autism Queensland multidisciplinary team received positive feedback on the support they provided to a rural primary school. In 2017, they will provide similar consultations to schools with a focus on the needs of Indigenous students.
- Me Calendar project.** Students with ASD often have difficulty communicating between settings (eg, telling their parents what they did at school or telling their teacher what they did on the weekend). The Me Calendar app designed by QUT enables students to upload photographs and videos that are important to them to their personal calendar, so they can share this information. Teachers from the Autism Queensland School provided feedback to the QUT researchers on the different ways they used the app.
- Transition Models of Practice in Primary School and Secondary School.** This project concerns the evaluation of models of practice and related multimedia resource packages to support students with ASD in transitioning into primary school and secondary schools. In 2016, three Autism Queensland teachers received training in coaching skills they will use for in-class and online coaching in metropolitan, regional and remote area schools.
- ASD Educational Needs Analysis.** This project, led by QUT researcher Dr Beth Saggars, involved a nationwide online survey on the educational



needs of students with ASD, that was completed by 248 educators, 179 specialists, 107 students with ASD and 934 parents. Dr Ashburner has commenced further analysis of data pertaining to the sensory processing needs of students with ASD.

Ongoing research projects

- My Sensory Experiences.** A tool developed by the Autism Queensland research team that utilises photographic representations of sensory experiences in everyday contexts (e.g., classrooms, supermarkets), combined with open-ended questions to assist young people to describe their sensory experiences. The tool includes child/adolescent and adult versions, and a family observation form. In 2015-16, adolescents with ASD, parents and occupational therapists provided feedback, which led to refinement of the tool. In 2017, a larger sample of individuals with ASD aged 7-35 and their family members will provide further feedback on the latest version.

Supporting local researchers

The Research and Development Team has continued to support research that promises to enhance the outcomes of individuals with ASD by advertising projects to potential participants. People with ASD or their families interested in participating in research should consult the Autism Queensland website for details.

Sharing research findings through publications:

Dr Ashburner and our research officer, Natasha Bobir co-wrote an article on the Autism Queensland Studio G program: *Evaluation of an innovative interest-based post-school transition program for young people with ASD* (under review). Dr Ashburner also co-authored several publications on (a) bullying of students with ASD, (b) piloting autism interventions in mainstream classrooms, and (c) the use of structured teaching in mainstream classrooms. These papers are also currently under review. She also contributed a piece on sensory processing to the Aspect Practice newsletter, *In Focus*. Two chapters were contributed to the book *Occupation Centred Practice with Children, 2nd Edition*, edited by Sylvia Rodger and Anne Kennedy-Behr. One on "Occupational Goal Setting with Children and Families" by our Senior Occupational Therapist (OT), Judy Jones, and another on "Occupation Centred Intervention in The School Setting" co-authored by Dr Ashburner. Another article currently under review on "Holding the Cards; Enabling Families through an ASD Goal Setting Tool" was written by Judy and edited by Natasha. Judy also responded to national and international enquiries regarding the Family-centred Goal Setting Tool, including two requests for partnerships to translate tools for use in other cultures.

Research & Development (continued)

Sharing research findings through conference and workshop presentations:

In April 2016, Dr Ashburner presented on *"The impact of sensory issues on behaviour and evidence-informed strategies that can help"* at the Griffith University Autism Centre of Excellence seminar on 'Autism and Behaviour'. She also presented at the Aspect Autism in Education Conference on the Studio G program: *"Developing a post-school transition program for young adults on the spectrum: What are the keys to success?"* In December 2016, she travelled to Perth to present a paper on 'Bullying: What worries students on the spectrum and their parents' at the Australasian Society for Autism Research Conference.

Supporting undergraduate and post-graduate education

Autism Queensland continues to support the education of undergraduate and post-graduate students. In 2016, Senior Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Karly Green presented a lecture regarding speech language therapy for children with ASD at the University of Queensland. Acting Senior SLP Natalie Jones worked with University of Queensland students on an Aided Language Stimulation Board resource and education pack. A University of Queensland SLP student attended Autism Queensland for a one day a week placement over the second half of year. Dr Ashburner Jill is currently co-supervising PhD students at QUT and the University of Queensland.

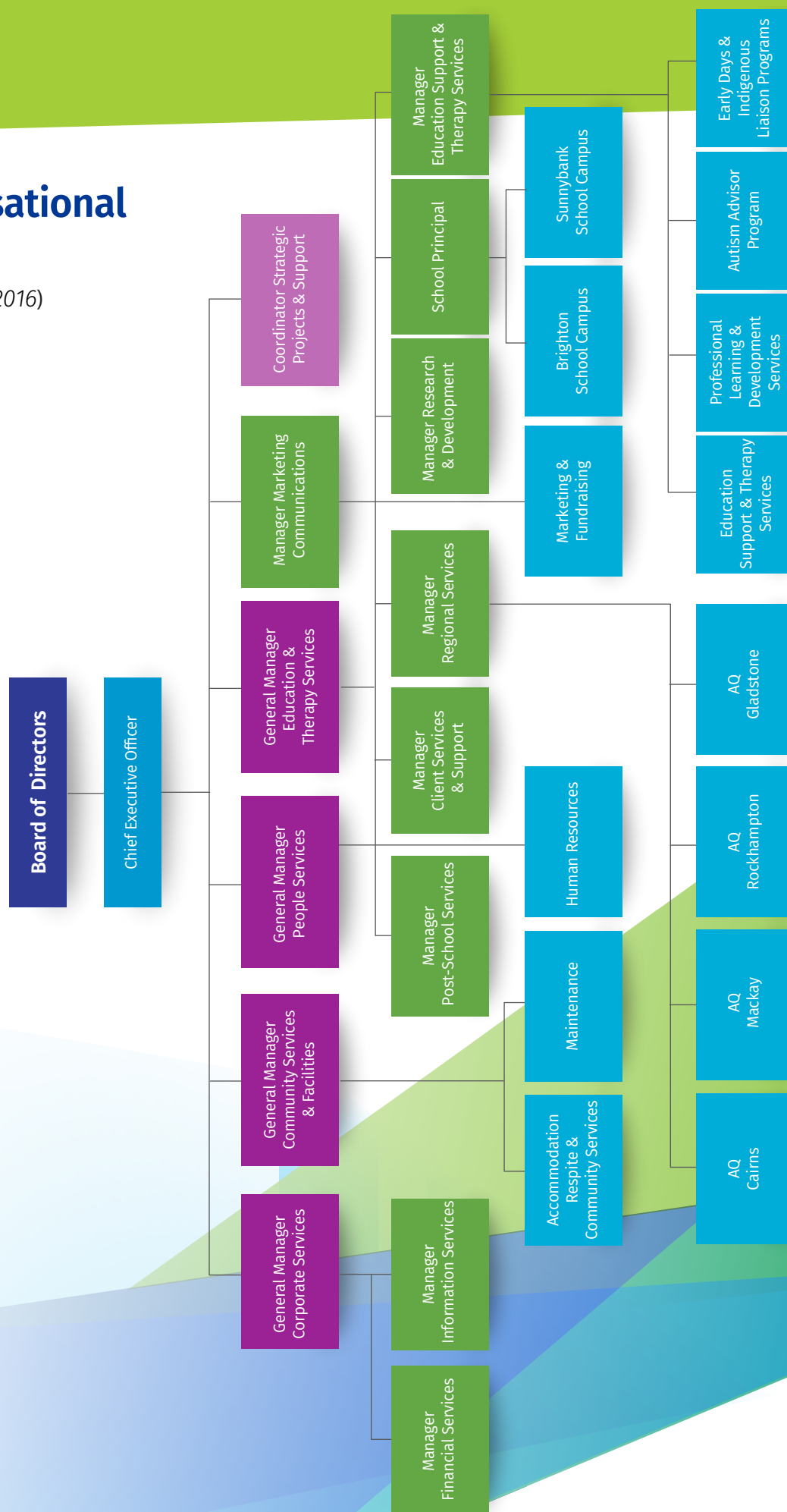
Promotion of evidence-informed, high quality practice at Autism Queensland

- Our Senior OT and Senior SLP have also contributed to high quality evidence informed practice at Autism Queensland by:
 - Contributing to implementation of the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM):
 - Senior SLP attended three-day intensive training, achieved accreditation, and provided clinical services to clients using the ESDM approach
 - Senior SLP provided mentoring for SLP staff using the ESDM approach and mentoring of staff going through ESDM certification.
 - Contributing to formal discussion regarding service delivery models for provision of therapy services within the Autism Queensland School.
 - Providing guidance regarding assessment and intervention options for clients outside of Autism Queensland's traditional scope.
 - Preparing and delivering formal presentations and information sessions to Autism Queensland staff through internal Professional Development days and therapy mentoring meetings.
 - Co-authoring and reviewing information papers for clients.
 - Actively seeking opportunities for professional development to ensure continuing quality of service delivery.
 - Hosting and/or participating in a variety of networking opportunities, including interagency meetings with education, health and disability providers.
 - Developing ideas for potential services to adolescent/young adult clients and producing a document outlining the scope of services able to be provided by therapists.
 - Preparing for the introduction of the NDIS by attending NDIS readiness, costing and pricing workshops.
- Our Senior OT and Senior SP have supported Autism Queensland therapy staff to provide high quality evidence-informed services in the following ways:
 - Regular professional supervision was provided to all therapy staff (up to 20 speech pathologists and 15 occupational therapists) with the frequency of contact depending on the level of support required. More intensive supervision was provided to newly graduated therapists and therapists working in new areas.
 - Work shadowing of therapy staff in South East Queensland.
 - All regional centres were visited to provide support, work shadowing and feedback to staff.
 - Professional development was provided to all Program Assistants across Early Intervention services.
 - Liaison with Team Leaders as required to support therapists, especially around workload management issues and ensuring quality of service delivery.
 - Organisation of joint mentoring meetings on topics including using picture/symbol based communication, toileting, selective mutism, complex case management, Aided Language Stimulation Boards, Companion Card eligibility, Lego-Based Therapy, anxiety, and the Early Start Denver Model. Attendance at mentoring sessions has significantly increased with up to 26 professional staff attending either face-to-face or via Skype™.

Organisational Chart

(September 2016)

Autism Queensland Limited



Community Support

Autism Queensland's involvement with the autism community is extensive and incorporates fundraising activities, awareness campaigns, advisory roles and involvement in community activities. Each year our teams participate in community forums, attend special events and partner in special projects. We also engage our registered clients, supporters and other stakeholders and interested parties through our social media pages, e-newsletters and the Autism Queensland website.

Go Blue for Autism

This annual campaign continues to remain a popular annual activity each April for the wider autism community. Primarily a social media campaign driven by a dedicated Facebook page and supporting website, Go Blue launches from April 2, World Autism Awareness Day. Across the month, schools, child care centres, businesses, city councils, government departments, individuals and others with a connection to autism, hold their events at which they sell Go Blue merchandise and collect donations for Autism Queensland, and do their bit to create greater awareness of autism. Queensland Rail also again provided Autism Queensland with access to Roma Street and Central Railway Stations to promote the campaign and collect donations and sell merchandise to patrons.

In 2016, 125 events registered for the campaign, 5000 plus-people followed the Go Blue Facebook page, and \$30,000 was raised for Autism Queensland's services for Queenslanders with autism.

Creative Futures Recognition Awards

On Friday, December 2, finalists in the 2016 Creative Futures Recognition Awards (pictured below) gathered at Government House in Brisbane as guests of His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland and Mrs Kaye de Jersey. His Excellency, as patron of Autism Queensland, hosted morning tea with Mrs de Jersey and presented awards to the winners. The Awards are presented annually and recognise the contributions of people living with autism, as well as the parents, carers, schools and businesses who support them.

Autism Animation

In August 2016, the animation "Ky's Story: Living with Autism" was launched. Autism Queensland provided advice for the scripting of this free resource developed and designed by a team including Sentis, Hotel Lima and the Griffith University Film School and supported by The Gold Coast Hospital Foundation and the Gold Coast University Hospital. Presented and narrated by actor Hugo Weaving, "Ky's Story" explores the key characteristics of autism as experienced by his 16-year-old nephew Ky. Since the launch, the animation has had nearly 500,000 views on Facebook and YouTube alone. It is available on Autism Queensland's Youtube channel as a free resource to organisations working with autism.



Community Support (continued)



Sensory Friendly events

As awareness of autism continues to grow, so too do the number of organisations dedicating resources to delivering sensory friendly events. Autism Queensland continued to provide advice and promotional support for these events held by the Queensland Museum and Sciencentre, The Workshops Rail Museum, Museum of Tropical Queensland, the Queensland Performing Arts Centre and the Queensland Ballet. These opportunities have long term benefits for the families who access our services, and the wider community of people living with ASD.

Major supporters in 2016

In 2016 Autism Queensland was again fortunate to be the beneficiary of many donations received for annual appeals and through workplace giving, community events and other fundraising activities. The organisation also benefitted from volunteer support, most especially in the form of team-building working bees at our centres and assistance at events.

Autism Queensland sincerely thanks all our donors, sponsors and volunteers for their generosity, commitment and belief in this organisation.

The following were major supporters in 2016:

- A Landscape Experience, Gladstone
- Aurizon Community Giving Fund
- A & B Jennings
- Ashmore SS
- Australian Government – Department of Social Services
- Autism Hub & Reading Centre
- Ayva Yoeub & Alexis Turner
- BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance – Daunia Mine Site
- Bracken Ridge Lions Club
- Brisbane City Council
- C McCaul
- C & M Calvert
- Candy Cane Lane Christmas Lights Display
- City 4051 Crossfit
- Combined Coastal Car Club
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- CQ University
- Commonwealth Bank
- Cooktown Crusaders
- Cory Charitable Foundation
- Ernie's Dingo Hire, Gladstone
- Espresso 351
- Estate of Pauline Jenny Campbell-Shaw
- Footprint Books
- GG-SWF Foundation
- G.J. Bird
- Gladstone Job Skills
- GlobalX Legal Solutions
- Greenbank RSL
- Index Group
- J.J. Richards & Sons Pty Ltd
- Lighthouse Baptist Church
- Lone Star Tavern
- Malanda Pharmacy
- Master Engraving
- Maxa Constructions
- Merlo Coffee
- Non School Organisations, Department of Education and Training
- Piccones Supa IGA
- R Mead
- Runaway Bay Lions Club Inc
- Savills
- SignManager
- Titan Garages & Sheds
- The Hart Family Perpetual Trust
- Uncle Bobs Bakery
- Queensland Government Queensland Rail
- Sentis
- Suez Community Grants
- Suncorp Group Brighter Futures Community Giving Program
- Sunnybank Community and Sports Club
- The Edge, State Library of Queensland
- The John Villiers Trust
- The Honda Foundation
- UPS
- Workcover Queensland

Directors' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2016

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the company for the year ended 31 December 2016.

Directors

The following persons were directors of the company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

- Barry Dennien
- Roslyn Dick (Resigned 30 June 2016)
- Michael Glover (Appointed to casual vacancy 22 March 2016, elected at AGM 30 May 2016)
- Wendy McTainsh (Appointed to casual vacancy 22 March 2016, elected at AGM 30 May 2016)
- Christopher Miers (Appointed to casual vacancy 22 March 2016, elected at AGM 30 May 2016, resigned 28 November 2016)
- Amanda Pafumi (Resigned 17 April 2016)
- Dr. Venerina Pennisi (Elected at AGM 30 May 2016)
- Joanne Stephens (Elected at AGM 30 May 2016)
- Paul Stokes

Review of Operations

The operating result for 2016 was a surplus of \$926,557 (2015: \$7,169).

Government subsidies continued to provide the major operational income for Autism Queensland Limited. Income from fee for service activities has shown steady growth. Fundraising activities for the year include a significant bequest of \$100,180 whereas 2015 included registration fees of \$1,155,880 for the 2015 Asia Pacific Autism Conference hosted by Autism Queensland Limited in Brisbane.

The first geographical area transitioning under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with a direct impact on Autism Queensland was the Mackay region which commenced on 1 November 2016 and is scheduled to be fully transitioned by 30 June 2017. There was limited impact on the operations for 2016 but our exposure will continue to grow as further regions are transitioned leading up to 30 June 2019 when it is scheduled that Queensland will be fully transitioned.

Objectives

VISION

The vision of Autism Queensland Limited is for a life of participation, opportunity and choice for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

MISSION

Our mission is to support people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder through responsive, evidence-informed practice and advocacy.

VALUES

The underpinning values of Autism Queensland Limited are excellence, innovation and equity achieved through person-centred and consumer-driven activities.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Our strategy is to deliver quality services and support for people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder through financial sustainability, growth and supportive infrastructure.

Directors' Report (continued)

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goals:	• Quality
	• Sustainability
	• Growth
	• Infrastructure
Strategies:	• Consumer focus
	• Quality focus
	• Economies of scale
	• Cost Focus
	• Partnership and collaboration
	• Organisation development
	• IT infrastructure
	• Leverage applications

Principal Activities

- Autism specific education through an accredited independent school, comprising two Education and Therapy centres, for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) delivered by an expert team of teachers, therapists and psychologists
- Early childhood intervention and programs for older children and adolescents delivered through our centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns
- Autism Queensland's allied health and education professionals deliver a range of services and supports, including individual therapy and assessments, for people of all ages and individually designed to meet a diverse range of client needs
- Education support services delivered by multi-disciplinary teams with expertise in the education of children with ASD across State, Catholic and Independent schools in Queensland
- Holiday, after school and community access programs
- Autism Queensland Limited hosts the Autism Advisor Program for parents of children under the age of 7 recently diagnosed with ASD in Queensland
- Autism Queensland Limited hosts the National Co-ordinator of the Early Days Workshops program for parents of children under the age of 7 newly diagnosed with ASD or undergoing assessment. We also deliver the Early Days workshops in Queensland
- Autism Queensland Limited hosts the Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Program that aims to raise awareness of childhood disability within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and build relationships between these communities, service providers and disability organisations
- Accommodation for adults with ASD and complex needs by way of full support 24/7, 52 weeks a year
- Respite for children and adults with ASD
- Studio G facilitated group program for 16-24 year olds delivered in Brisbane and Mackay
- Autism Queensland Limited is registered as a Host Provider to assist families to administer Queensland Government funding received
- Non-accredited Training - Professional Learning and Development Services
- Autism Queensland Limited is registered with the National Disability Insurance Scheme to provide services to people with ASD
- Autism Queensland Limited maintains a Research and Development team, and is an Essential Participant in the Autism CRC.

Directors' Report (continued)

Performance measures

Autism Queensland Limited receives significant State and Federal Government funding in addition to other sources.

Autism Queensland Limited has a range of Service Agreements with the State and Federal Governments which require reporting against milestones at an operational and financial level.

Information on directors in office as at 31 December 2016

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Barry Dennien	Non-Executive Chair	MBA (Dist), Cert Bus Man (AIM), Cert Mech Engin, Trade Cert Fit & Turn
Experience and expertise:	Barry has an extensive association with the water resources industry in Queensland and is the Managing Director of businesses in the tourism and accommodation sector. In addition, Barry and his family have for more than 20 years opened their home as foster carers to less fortunate children.	
Special responsibilities:	Ex officio member Audit and Risk Committee Ex officio member People and Safety Committee	

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Michael Glover	Non-Executive Director	BComm, MBA, GICD, FAIM, MIIAA
Experience and expertise:	Michael is a senior finance executive with over 25 years' experience across commercial and government sectors. Michael also has extensive experience in not-for-profit boards and board subcommittees, including the management of an Audit and Risk Committee. Michael has strong corporate and governance skills.	
Special responsibilities:	Member Audit and Risk Committee Company Secretary (alternate)	

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Wendy McTainsh	Non-Executive Director	BSc, MSc, GAICD
Experience and expertise:	Wendy has strong audit and risk governance skills and is experienced in board membership having been the Chair of the Association for Childhood Language Disorders prior to coming to Autism Queensland, as well as the Chair of the Risk Committee of the Maleny Credit Union Board.	
Special responsibilities:	Member Audit and Risk Committee	

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Dr Venerina Pennisi	Non-Executive Director	BDSc, ADA, AICD
Experience and expertise:	Venerina (Vera) is a dentist in private practice in Brisbane who has worked in public and private practice in regional and remote settings. She has experience in School Boards and a not-for-profit disability employment services Board. Vera is passionate about, and well placed with her lived experience, advocating for people living with ASD.	
Special responsibilities:	Chair People and Safety Committee	

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Joanne Stephens	Non-Executive Director	DipHeaSci(Amb), BN, GCertSpEd(ASD), MAVe, GCertAcPrac, PhD Candidate
Experience and expertise:	Joanne (Jo) is an academic in the School of Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Health, QUT. She has education and nursing qualifications and is a PhD candidate researching "The challenges of meeting the needs of children with ASD during out of hospital interactions with paramedics". Her research has arisen from her experience as a clinician in the field as well as lived experience with ASD.	
Special responsibilities:	Nil	

Directors' Report (continued)

Information on directors in office as at 31 December 2016 (continued)

Name:	Title:	Qualifications:
Paul Stokes	Non-Executive Director	BPhty, BHMS, GAICD, FAIM
Experience and expertise:	Paul is an Associate Professor and qualified physiotherapist with extensive leadership experience in the Australian Health, Disability and Employment industries spanning more than 20 years. Paul is the Managing Director of the Artius Group of companies which specializes in assisting people with disability to find and maintain sustainable employment.	
Special responsibilities:	Chair Audit and Risk Committee	

	Full Board		Audit & Risk Committee		People & Safety Committee	
	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held
Barry Dennien	9	10	5	5	1	2
Roslyn Dick	5	5	-	-	-	-
Michael Glover	5	9	3	3	-	-
Wendy McTainsh	9	9	3	3	-	-
Christopher Miers	4	8	-	-	-	2
Amanda Pafumi	1	2	-	-	-	-
Dr Venerina Pennisi	6	6	-	-	2	2
Joanne Stephens	5	6	-	-	-	-
Paul Stokes	10	10	5	5	-	-

Held: represents the number of meetings held during the time the director held office or was a member of the relevant committee.

Contributions on winding up

In the event of the company being wound up, ordinary members are required to contribute a maximum of \$1 each.

The total amount that members of the company are liable to contribute if the company is wound up is \$67 based on 67 current members.

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required by the Professional Accounting Bodies is set out on the following page.

On behalf of the directors,



Barry Dennien

Chairman – Director
Brisbane, 27 April 2017



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Brisbane QLD 4000
GPO Box 457 Brisbane QLD 4001
Australia

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY M CUTRI TO THE DIRECTORS OF AUTISM QUEENSLAND LIMITED

As lead auditor of Autism Queensland Limited for the year ended 31 December 2016, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

1. No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)* in relation to the audit; and
2. No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Cutri', is written above the printed name.

M Cutri
Director

BDO Audit Pty Ltd

Brisbane, 27 April 2017

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2016

	Notes	2016 \$	2015 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	3,320,992	2,766,665
Trade and other receivables	5	166,567	105,374
Other assets and prepayments		167,287	121,849
Total Current Assets		3,654,846	2,993,888
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	6	9,704,161	9,935,961
Financial assets	7	10	10
Total Non-Current Assets		9,704,171	9,935,971
Total Assets		13,359,017	12,929,859
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	8	1,707,194	1,819,116
Financial liabilities	9	146,799	442,726
Provisions	10	1,376,344	1,338,809
Total Current Liabilities		3,230,337	3,600,651
Non-Current Liabilities			
Financial liabilities	9	337,307	486,394
Provisions	10	223,922	201,920
Total Non-Current Liabilities		561,229	688,314
Total Liabilities		3,791,566	4,288,965
Net Assets		9,567,451	8,640,894
Equity			
Revaluation Reserves		4,001,995	4,001,995
Accumulated funds		5,565,456	4,638,899
Total Equity	11	9,567,451	8,640,894

The Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	Notes	2016 \$	2015 \$
Income			
Government subsidies		14,661,692	13,668,514
Revenue from rendering of services		3,437,576	2,503,201
Fundraising activities		321,923	1,334,108
Interest income		41,123	44,919
Dividends		-	1,022
Sundry income		53,402	81,185
Total Income		18,515,716	17,632,949
Expenditure			
Employee expenses		14,528,837	13,788,252
Facilities expenses		1,965,264	1,836,128
Marketing expenses		109,132	858,098
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		561,888	528,098
Interest expenses		41,803	68,921
Other expenses		382,235	546,283
Total Expenditure		17,589,159	17,625,780
Net Surplus for the year before income tax	2	926,557	7,169
Tax Expense	1(c)	-	-
Net Surplus for the year		926,557	7,169
Other Comprehensive Income			
<i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss</i>			
Net gain on revaluation of financial assets, net of tax		-	3,345
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	3,345
Total comprehensive income for the year		926,557	10,514

The Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	Revaluation Reserves \$	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 31 December 2014	3,998,650	4,631,730	8,630,380
Net Surplus for the year	-	7,169	7,169
Other comprehensive income for the year	3,345	-	3,345
Balance at 31 December 2015	4,001,995	4,638,899	8,640,894
Net Surplus for the year	-	926,557	926,557
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2016	4,001,995	5,565,456	9,567,451

The Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	Notes	2016 \$	2015 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts in the course of operations		19,742,641	19,101,130
Payments to suppliers and employees		(18,411,883)	(18,310,751)
Interest received		41,123	44,919
Dividends received		-	1,022
Interest paid		(32,062)	(45,436)
Net cash provided by operating activities		1,339,819	790,884
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(330,088)	(220,650)
Net cash used in investing activities		(330,088)	(220,650)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance lease payments		(211,034)	(197,149)
Repayments of borrowings		(244,370)	(81,123)
Net cash used in financing activities		(455,404)	(278,272)
Net increase in cash held		554,327	291,962
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		2,766,665	2,474,703
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	4	3,320,992	2,766,665

The Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

1. Summary of significant accounting policies

Reporting entity

Autism Queensland Limited ("the Company") is a not-for-profit organisation, incorporated as a Public Company limited by guarantee and domiciled in Australia. The address of its registered office and its principal place of business is 437 Hellawell Road, Sunnybank Hills Qld 4109.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. The Company is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing these financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, except for:

- certain classes of property, plant and equipment which are measured at fair value; and
- revenue is recognised on an accruals basis except for donations, third party fundraising and bequests which are accounted for on a cash basis.

Accounting Standards issued not yet effective

Australian Accounting Standards which have been issued or amended and which are applicable to the Company but not yet effective have not been adopted at the reporting date. The Company has not yet assessed the impact of these new or amended Accounting Standards.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Management evaluate these based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the company.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

In particular, information about significant areas of estimation uncertainty and critical judgements in applying accounting policies that have the most significant effect on the amount recognised in the financial statements are described in the following notes:

- Note 6 - Property, Plant & Equipment
- Note 10 - Provisions - Long Service Leave Provision.

Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and the settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business.

The Company has recorded Net Surpluses in the last three years and reported strong positive cash flows from operating activities. In addition, as at 31 December 2016 the Company had a net current asset surplus of \$424,509 (2015: deficit \$606,763). The Company is reliant on the ongoing support of the Queensland State Government and the Commonwealth Government of Australia in the form of funding. The Company also has approximately \$1 million in available undrawn funds with Westpac Banking Corporation at 31 December 2016 and a Net Surplus has been budgeted for in the 2017 financial year. The Directors believe these factors will provide sufficient cash flow to fund the ongoing working capital needs of the Company for a period of at least 12 months from the date of this financial report.

Accordingly, the Directors believe that the preparation of the financial statements on a going concern basis is appropriate.

Significant accounting policies

The following is a summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the Company in the preparation of the financial statements. The accounting policies have been applied consistently to all periods presented in the financial statements, except where otherwise indicated.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

1. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

(a) Revenue recognition

Revenue is recognised on an accruals basis except for donations, third party fundraising and bequests which are accounted for on a cash basis.

Revenue from rendering of services

Revenue from rendering of services is measured at the fair value of the consideration received and is recognised in the accounting period in which the service is rendered.

Subsidies received

Income from non-reciprocal subsidies and grants is recognised when the Company obtains control of the grant or the right to receive the grant; it is probable that the economic benefits comprising the grant will flow to the Company; and the grant amount can be measured reliably. Income from such grants is therefore recognised on receipt as the revenue criteria are met when the grants are received.

Donations, fundraising and bequests

Donations, third party fundraising proceeds and bequests are recognised when received.

Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues, using the effective interest rate method.

(b) Goods and Services Tax

Revenues, expenses and fixed assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as a current asset or liability in the Statement of Financial Position.

Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the Statement of Cash Flows on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financial activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows.

(c) Income Tax

The Company is a registered charitable institution exempt from income tax under section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(d) Financial instruments

Initial recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. For financial assets, this is equivalent to the trade date i.e. the date that the Company commits itself to either purchase or sell the asset.

Financial instruments are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs except where the instrument is classified "at fair value through profit or loss" in which case transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss immediately.

Classification and subsequent measurement

Financial instruments are subsequently measured at either fair value, amortised cost using the effective interest rate method or cost.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

1. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

(e) Fair value

When an asset or liability is measured at fair value for recognition or disclosure purposes, the fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. It assumes that the transaction will take place either: in the principal market; or in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market.

Fair value is measured using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming they act in their economic best interest. For non-financial assets, the fair value measurement is based on its highest and best use. Valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances, and for which sufficient data are available to measure fair value, are used, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

(f) Impairment of assets

The Company assesses at each reporting date whether there is an indication that an asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, or when annual impairment testing for an asset is required, an estimate is made of the asset's recoverable amount. An asset's recoverable amount is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use and is determined for an individual asset, unless the asset does not generate cash inflows that are largely independent of those from other assets or groups of assets and the asset's value in use cannot be estimated to be close to its fair value. In such cases the asset is tested for impairment as part of the cash-generating unit to which it belongs. When the carrying amount of an asset or cash-generating unit exceeds its recoverable amount, the asset or cash-generating unit is considered impaired and is written down to its recoverable amount.

In common with many not-for-profit entities, in assessing value in use, where the future economic benefits of an asset are not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate net cash inflows and where the Company would, if deprived of the asset, replace its remaining future economic benefits, value in use is determined as the depreciated replacement cost of the asset. In instances when this treatment is inappropriate, value in use is determined by discounting the estimated future cash flows to their present value using a discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset.

Impairment losses are recognised in those expense categories consistent with the function of the impaired asset unless the asset is carried at revalued amounts (in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease).

An assessment is also made at each reporting date as to whether there is any indication that previously recognised impairment losses may no longer exist or may have decreased. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount is estimated. A previously recognised impairment loss is reversed only if there has been a change in the estimates used to determine the asset's recoverable amount since the last impairment loss was recognised. If that is the case, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to its recoverable amount. That increased recoverable amount cannot exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined, net of depreciation, had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in prior years. Such reversal is recognised in profit or loss unless the asset is carried at revalued amounts, in which case the reversal is treated as a revaluation increase. After such a reversal, the depreciation charge is adjusted in future periods to allocate the asset's revised carrying amount, less any residual value, on a systematic basis over its remaining useful life.

(g) Comparative Figures

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
2. Operating Surplus		
The operating surplus for the year has been arrived at after charging the following items:		
Operating lease expense – property rentals	56,405	128,748
Operating lease expense – equipment rentals	52,206	91,000
Bad and doubtful debts expense	16,548	11,102
Interest paid on loans	32,062	45,436
Interest paid on finance leases	9,741	23,485
3. Auditor's remuneration		
Audit services	33,000	31,000
4. Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	5,800	4,800
Cash at bank	460,551	410,239
Cash on deposit	2,854,641	2,351,626
	3,320,992	2,766,665
Cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position comprise cash at banks and on hand and short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less, which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.		
For the purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash at banks and on hand and investment in money market instruments, net of outstanding bank overdrafts. Cash at the end of the year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet above.		
5. Trade and other receivables		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade accounts receivable	174,067	112,874
Provision for doubtful debts	(7,500)	(7,500)
	166,567	105,374

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
6. Property, plant and equipment		
Land at fair value	4,135,035	4,135,035
<i>Buildings</i>		
Buildings at fair value	4,259,465	4,259,465
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(367,055)	(184,785)
	3,892,410	4,074,680
Property improvements at cost	71,662	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(403)	-
	71,259	-
Leasehold improvements at cost	1,180,449	1,180,449
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(97,812)	(55,892)
	1,082,637	1,124,557
Total written down value of buildings	5,046,306	5,199,237
Motor vehicles at cost	924,237	890,242
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(882,341)	(713,888)
Total written down value of motor vehicles	41,896	176,354
Furniture and equipment at cost	2,322,709	2,212,702
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(2,028,928)	(1,941,936)
Total written down value of furniture and equipment	293,781	270,766
Work in progress at cost	187,143	154,569
Total Property, plant and equipment	9,704,161	9,935,961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

6. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the financial year are set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Motor Vehicles	Furniture and Equipment	Work in progress	Total
Balance at 31 December 2015	4,135,035	5,199,237	176,354	270,766	154,569	9,935,961
Additions	-	71,662	33,997	37,377	187,052	330,088
Depreciation	-	(224,593)	(168,455)	(168,840)	-	(561,888)
Transfers	-	-	-	154,478	(154,478)	-
Balance at 31 December 2016	4,135,035	5,046,306	41,896	293,781	187,143	9,704,161

Freehold land and buildings are measured on a fair value basis. At each reporting date, the carrying value of each asset in these classes is reviewed to ensure that it does not differ materially from the asset's value at that date. Where necessary, the asset is revalued to reflect its fair value. Any surplus on revaluation is credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve. All other items of property, plant and equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

The valuation basis of land, buildings and property improvements is fair value being the amounts for which the assets could be exchanged between willing parties in an arm's length transaction, based on current prices in an active market for similar properties in the same location and condition. The company has assessed the carrying value at balance date to still be appropriate.

Assets held by the Company under leases which transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are classified as finance leases. On initial recognition, the leased asset is measured at an amount equal to the lower of its fair value and the present value of the minimum lease payments. Subsequent to initial recognition, the asset is accounted for in accordance with the accounting policy applicable to that asset.

Assets held under other leases are classified as operating leases and are not recognised in the Company's Statement of Financial Position.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the company commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The assets are depreciated at the following rates:

- Buildings 40 years
- Motor vehicles 4 years
- Furniture and equipment 3-10 years
- Leasehold improvements Shorter of the lease term or useful life

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
--	------------	------------

7. Financial assets

Non-Current

Investment in subsidiary companies	10	10
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Autism Queensland Limited controls 100% of the share capital of AQCOM Pty Ltd and Autism Australia Pty Ltd, which are incorporated in Australia. These companies did not trade during the year and have not been consolidated into the Autism Queensland Limited accounts due to the immaterial nature of their transactions.

8. Trade and other payables

Current

Trade creditors	188,256	-
Other creditors and accruals	1,040,756	1,179,724
Subsidies in advance and unexpended funds	478,182	639,392
	1,707,194	1,819,116

9. Financial liabilities

Current

Bank Loans	104,427	237,369
Finance leases	42,372	205,357
	146,799	442,726

Non-Current

Bank Loans	337,307	448,735
Finance leases	-	37,659
	337,307	486,394

The bank loans are secured by Bill of Mortgages over the company's freehold property located at:

- 1st Mortgage 121 Jackson Road, Sunnybank Hills
- 1st Mortgage 331 Jackson Road, Sunnybank Hills
- 1st Mortgage 136 North Road, Brighton
- 2nd Mortgage 437 Hellawell Road, Sunnybank Hills

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
10. Provisions		
<i>Current</i>		
Employee entitlements	1,376,344	1,338,809
<i>Non-Current</i>		
Employee entitlements	223,922	201,920
<p>Liabilities for employee benefits for salaries, wages and annual leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the year end are recognised, and are measured, as the amount unpaid at the reporting date in respect of employees' services up to that date calculated at their nominal amounts based on remuneration salary and wage rates that the Company expects to pay, including related on-costs.</p> <p>A liability for long service leave is recognised, and is measured, as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. Consideration is given to expected future salary and wage levels and related on-costs, experience of employee departures, periods of service and employment policies. Expected future payments are discounted using nation corporate bond rates, as at the reporting date, with terms to maturity that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows. The unwinding of the discount is treated as long service leave expense.</p>		
11. Total equity		
Reconciliation of movement in total equity		
<i>Revaluation Reserves</i>		
<i>Asset Revaluation Reserve</i>		
Brought forward at beginning of year	4,001,995	4,010,440
Revaluation (decrements)/increments	-	(8,445)
Carried forward at end of the year	4,001,995	4,001,995
<i>Available-for-sale Revaluation Reserve</i>		
Brought forward at beginning of year	-	(11,790)
Revaluation (decrements) / increments	-	11,790
Carried forward at end of the year	-	-
Total Revaluation Reserves	4,001,995	4,001,995
<i>Accumulated Funds</i>		
Brought forward at beginning of year	4,638,899	4,631,730
Surplus for year	926,557	7,169
Carried forward at end of the year	5,565,456	4,638,899
Total Equity	9,567,451	8,640,894

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
12. Key management personnel disclosures		
Key management personnel comprise directors and other persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the company.		
The Company's key management personnel comprise the directors listed on page 1 of the Directors' Report and a team of five executive managers, comprising the Chief Executive Officer and four General Managers.		
All directors perform their duties in a voluntary capacity, and as such, no remuneration was payable nor was any paid to them.		
Other key management personnel compensation comprises:		
Total key management personnel compensation	835,928	915,701
13. Contingent liabilities		
In accordance with various funding agreements, the State and Commonwealth Governments may continue to have interests in particular land, buildings and equipment held by the Company for which they have made capital grants to assist in their acquisition. If the facilities are not used solely for the purpose set out in the various agreements for a minimum period, repayment of some of the grants may be required. There are no plans to cease using the facilities for their designated purposes. The directors do not foresee any time or circumstances which may result in the repayment of any capital grants.		
Contingent liabilities may exist to restore presently leased land and/or premises to their original condition. The directors are of the opinion that no provision is currently required.		
14. Commitments		
<i>Operating lease commitments</i>		
The Company has entered into operating leases on certain properties and equipment with varying lease terms. The Company has the option, under some of its leases, to lease the assets for additional terms.		
Future minimum rentals payable under non-cancellable operating leases as at 31 December are:		
Within one year	56,291	65,704
After one year but not more than five years	50,565	9,320
	106,856	75,024
Payments made under operating leases are recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Lease incentives received are recognised as an integral part of the total lease expense, over the term of the lease.		

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
14. Commitments (continued)		
Finance lease commitments		
The Company has finance leases for various motor vehicles and furniture and equipment. The Company's obligations under finance leases are secured by the lessor's title to the leased assets. Future minimum lease payments under finance leases are:		
Within one year	42,947	215,020
After one year but not more than five years	-	38,228
	42,947	253,248

Minimum lease payments made under finance leases are allocated between the finance expense and the principal component of the lease liability. The finance expense is allocated to each period during the lease term so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability.

15. Related party transactions

There were no transactions with key management personnel other than as disclosed in Note 12.

No related party has entered into a material contact with the Company since the end of the previous financial year and there were no material contracts involving Directors' interests subsisting at year end. Directors may have family members or relatives that access the services that Autism Queensland Limited provides. Such transactions are conducted at arm's length.

16. Financial risk management

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk arises from the use of interest bearing financial instruments. It is the risk that future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in interest rates. At reporting date, the Company has access to the following undrawn borrowing facilities that charge interest at a floating rate:

Expiring within one year (bank overdraft and bill facility)	1,000,000	1,000,000
Expiring beyond one year (bank loans)	11,962	11,371
	1,011,962	1,011,371

17. Subsequent events

The Directors are not aware of any material events occurring in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report that would require further disclosures in these financial statements.

18. Economic dependence

The Company is dependent on the continued receipt of government grants for a significant proportion of the revenue used to operate its business. The Australia wide roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) scheduled for completion by 30 June 2019 will result in a significant decrease in the level of government grants received for disability services. This grant income will be replaced by revenue from fee for service activities provided under the NDIS arrangements. At the date of this report, the Company has no reason to believe the income from grants or substituted revenue under NDIS will not continue.

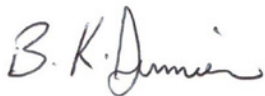
Directors' Declaration

For the year ended 31 December 2016

The Directors declare that in the Directors opinion:

1. The financial statements, comprising the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, and accompanying notes, are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and:
 - a. Comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 (ACNC Regulation 2013); and
 - b. Give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 31 December 2016 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. There are reasonable grounds to believe that the entity will be able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the ACNC Regulation 2013 on behalf of the directors by:



Barry Dennien

Chairman – Director
Brisbane, 27 April 2017



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 Brisbane QLD 4000
 GPO Box 457 Brisbane QLD 4001
 Australia

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of Autism Queensland Limited

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Autism Queensland Limited, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2016, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial report, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the accompanying financial report of Autism Queensland Limited, is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the needs of members, including:

- (i) Giving a true and fair view of Autism Queensland Limited's financial position as at 31 December 2016 and of its financial performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

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 Autism Queensland Limited in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)* and 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.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information in the directors' report for the year ended 31 December 2016 but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.



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If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the directors for the Financial Report

The directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the ACNC Act and the needs of members, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing Autism Queensland Limited's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate Autism Queensland Limited or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for overseeing Autism Queensland Limited's financial reporting process.

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.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website (<http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>) at:

http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_files/ar3.pdf.

This description forms part of our auditor's report.

BDO Audit Pty Ltd

M Cutri
Director

Brisbane, 27 April 2017



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