

2020 Annual Report





Proudly delivering specialised services and supports for Queenslanders on the autism spectrum since 1967.

Our Vision

A life of participation, opportunity and choice for people on the autism spectrum.

Our Mission

To support people living with autism through responsive, evidence-informed practice and advocacy.

Our Values

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

Strategic Direction

Our strategy is to deliver quality services and supports for people living with autism through financial sustainability, growth, and supportive infrastructure.

PARTICIPATION ● **OPPORTUNITY** ● **CHOICE**

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Patron

His Excellency the Honourable
Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of
Queensland

Chair

Ian Langdon

Director

Robyn Bunting
Danielle Butcher
Peter Lyons
Karen Hauff
Neil Makepeace
Joanne Peulen
Scott Reid

Chief Executive Officer

Pam Macrossan

Company Secretary

Sudha Manian

Life Members

Ian Anderson
Prof Robert van Barneveld
Paul Burton
Bruce Fay AM
John Lee
Helen McBride
Margaret Outridge

Auditor

BDO Audit Pty Ltd

Solicitor

Paxton-Hall Lawyers

Chairman's Message

In 2020 the organisation's focus, which for so long had been on managing a smooth transition to the NDIS, switched rapidly into the new world of service delivery in a pandemic environment.

The difference of course was that this was not something specific to a particular sector as NDIS had been, but a global event touching everyone everywhere.

The Review of Operations showed a dramatic improvement in the Operating Result from a surplus of \$814,676 to a remarkable \$6,026,884. Income from fee-to-service activities grew 31.8% to \$18.1 million, just behind grant and subsidy-funded supports which increased over this year in part to JobKeeper, and total revenues for the year increased by 40% to \$37.4 million.

As an essential service, our people - which is our clients and their support base including families and carers, and our staff - must come first and we have shown in the most challenging and unexpected of times, they do.

From the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak, Autism Queensland made an operational commitment to continue delivery of our services to our clients. This was backed up by a Board commitment to maintain job security for our staff. I am delighted to report both commitments were met, and still stand.

The thing about disability is that regardless of what is happening day to day, it remains a constant. As such the children, adults and families we support still need us. There is always a job to do, and we have the experts to do it.

As I have often said and written, Autism Queensland remains a person-centred organisation, and while social distancing and lockdowns in 2020, and sometimes in 2021, mean we cannot always be as up close and personal as we like, our clients received and continue to receive the support they need.

We were fortunate in Australia, and Queensland, to have only experienced a taste of what lockdown can mean, but I still congratulate our delivery teams and frontline staff for their agility in responding to a need. As you will read in the pages that follow, Autism Queensland moved swiftly to online and telepractice supports where possible, many of which remain in place now as an alternative method of service delivery.

It has been with great pride I have watched the entire team at Autism Queensland rally to continue to support our clients during this time of great uncertainty. Working from the centres as required, or from home offices, they moved to telepractice for therapy sessions, workshops became webinars, and face-to-face sessions that needed to be continued were delivered within strict safety guidelines to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved. Also deserving of thanks are our clients and their families who were happy to take the journey with us.

In December I had the honour and privilege of again attending the annual Creative Futures Recognition Awards at Government House. Despite a year of on and off restrictions, our patron and the Governor of Queensland, His Excellency Paul de Jersey AC, was able to again host this event one last time before his term as Governor ends in July this year.

On behalf of Autism Queensland, the many award winners and finalists he has hosted at this annual event, and the wider autism community, I extend our sincere thanks to His Excellency for his patronage of the organisation, and the generosity he and Mrs de Jersey have shown in hosting the Awards each year.

In closing I would like to acknowledge our current directors for the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm they bring to the table, along with former director Karen Hauff who resigned in June 2020.

Congratulations again to the Autism Queensland Executive and their teams on another outstanding year. You continue to strive despite the challenges each year presents.

And finally, thank you to many individuals, families, businesses and organisations who make up the extended Autism Queensland community.



Ian Langdon
Chairman

CEO's Reflection

Despite the challenges associated with COVID-19, 2020 was a year of continued growth for Autism Queensland as demand for our services and support throughout the pandemic grew.

I am so proud of what was achieved across the year by everyone at Autism Queensland in ensuring we could continue to operate effectively and efficiently in the face of the unknown. Our school campuses remained open and our services quickly pivoted to online delivery to give continuity to our clients.

It was rewarding to watch as staff collectively embraced the changes required to ensure we continued to support our clients as required.

You will see several references to the agility of our workforce in the overviews provided in this report. This agility was paired with innovation and determination, all of which are outstanding qualities of our first-class workforce.

Demand drives expansion of both staff and facilities, and the Human Resources team again supported significant workforce growth across the year. At the time of writing the organisation currently employs over 400 people in full and part-time positions.

2020 was also the end of Autism Queensland's five-year strategic plan. To prepare for the next plan, an in-depth analysis of all business units was undertaken, with a particular focus on sustainability and expansion of our regional services.

This planning was further informed through visits to the regional centres with Board Chairman Ian Langdon and Chief Operating Officer Frances Scodellaro where we met with regional managers, team leaders and staff. The planned expansions come with considerable challenges, but we are prepared and will continue to push forward in furthering our regional footprint.

In Brisbane, the key facilities developments for the year were the refurbishment at the AQ School Sunnybank Campus and the purchase of property adjoining our site at North Road, Brighton. The latter will house education support and therapy services on Brisbane's northside, including early childhood groups, and allow for further growth of the school campus.

While income from our fee for service activities continues to show steady growth, a focus on fundraising and corporate partnerships saw the

appointment of a dedicated Fundraising Manager for the first time in 10 years. This new role sits alongside the Business Development team which collaborates with key staff across the organisation to identify grant and funding opportunities including, but not exclusive to, NDIS ILC funding and the Queensland Government Community Benefit Gambling Fund.

I particularly acknowledge and thank Ian Langdon for the enormous time and energy he has invested in the future of this organisation. His sound knowledge of economics combined with his passionate interest in opportunities for people on the spectrum due to his family's lived experience, and his depth of knowledge from working on a range of Boards has made him an ideal leader for Autism Queensland over the past three years.

Directors Danielle Butcher, Joanne Peulen, Neil Makepeace and Scott Reid have also provided guidance, expertise, support and cooperation which is very much valued by me and the Executive Leadership Team. We also warmly welcome our new Directors, Josh Mennen, Peter Lyons and Robyn Bunting who joined the Board in March and April.

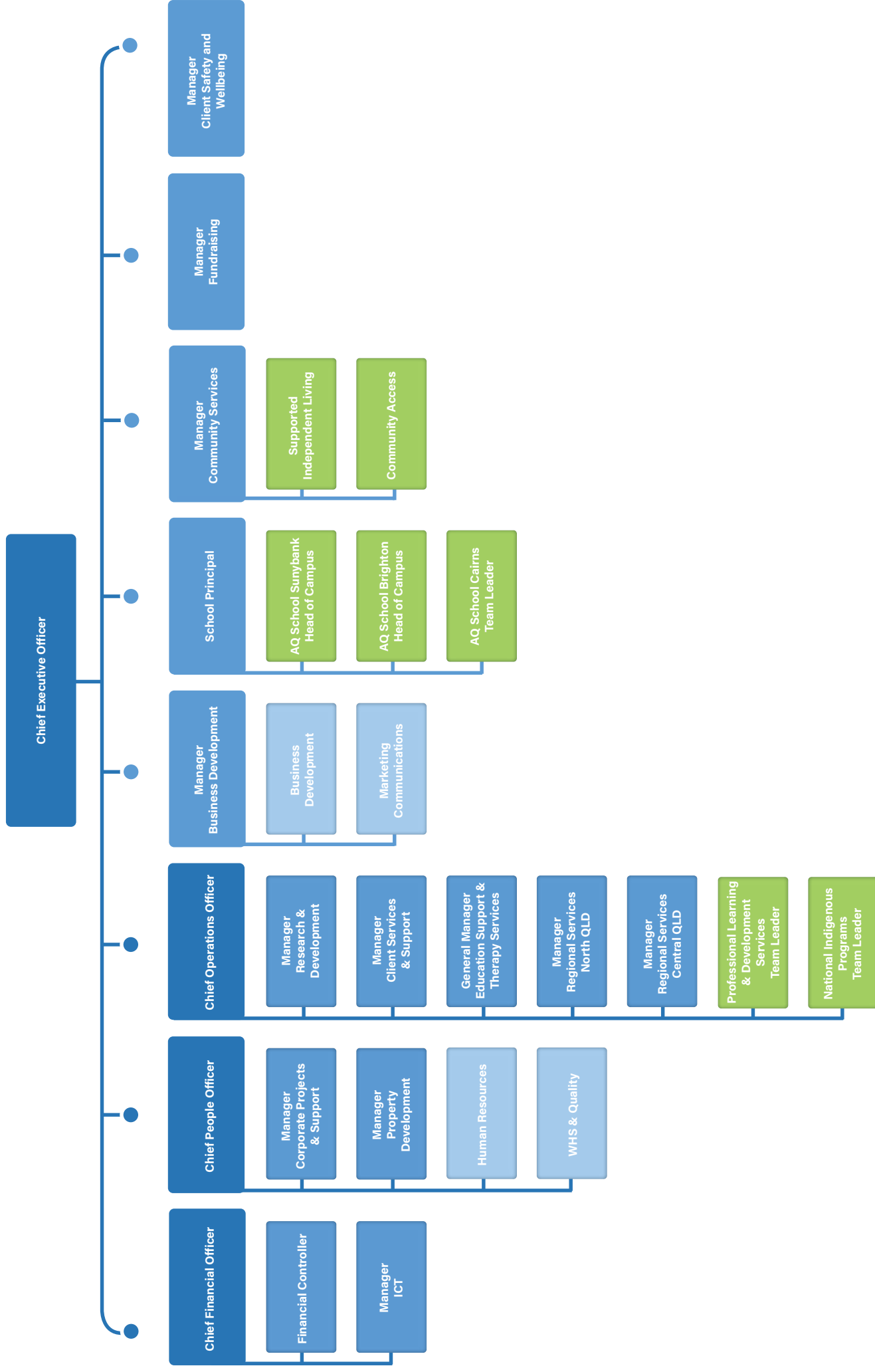
I am indebted to my executive colleagues, Alison Geale, Chief People Officer, Sudha Manian, Chief Financial Officer, and Frances Scodellaro, Chief Operating Officer, the senior leadership team and everyone who is part of this great organisation.

Every year throws up its challenges, and what awaited us in 2020 was something no one would have perceived. But, as they do every day and every year, our frontline staff, backed by all those who work behind the scenes, gave their all to ensure Autism Queensland continued to deliver on its mission and fulfil its vision.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pam Macrossan'.

Pam Macrossan
Chief Executive Officer



Organisation Chart

Services Overview

Autism Queensland is a registered provider of NDIS supports and has been providing specialised services for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families since 1967.

Our highly skilled professionals with expertise in autism deliver services across Queensland from centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns.

Accredited, Independent School

The Autism Queensland School is an accredited, independent school providing specialist education and therapy programs for students with a verification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) aged five years (Prep) to 18 years. The school comprises three Education and Therapy Centres located in Brisbane at Brighton and Sunnybank Hills, and in Cairns at Edmonton. Our team of teachers, teacher aides, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and wellbeing facilitator support our students with a personalised program, effective interdisciplinary team, and collaboration with their families and other school setting to help them develop skills that will enable them to participate to their fullest extent in their home, school and local community.

Allied Health and Diagnostic Assessments

We offer a range of comprehensive specialist and diagnostic assessments to support the process of a diagnosis of ASD in children, adolescents and adults.

Autism Consultant

This service provides on-going and regular support to schools from a consultant with expertise in autism. The consultant can provide direct support for students on the spectrum, coaching and mentoring of staff, assist in the development of Individual Plans, Positive Behaviour Support Plans, curriculum adjustments and more.

Behaviour Support

Our registered behaviour support practitioners develop or review Positive Behaviour Support Plans for people on the spectrum with behaviours of concern. They conduct functional behaviour assessments, provide strategy recommendations

and provide training of staff and carers in how to implement the plan.

Community Support Services

Autism Queensland supports adults on the spectrum aged 18-65 years to live in their own home across South East Queensland. These individuals receive 24-hour support by lifestyle support workers who are skilled in developing individual capacity whilst managing support needs including behaviour support. They also help these people to access events and activities in the community that suit their individual needs and interests.

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 on the spectrum and their families, as well as to community organisations, schools and early childhood services. They may involve therapy and support delivered in a client's home, workplace or community, as well as training of staff to support the inclusion of the individual in these settings, and autism consultant services for schools.

Early Childhood Groups

Autism Queensland delivers a range of flexible and individualised Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services for very young children on the spectrum. These programs are holistic, family-focused and transdisciplinary. Children attend two to three days per week in groups of up to six. They are supported by a team of teachers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and program assistants.

Early Days Workshops

Autism Queensland hosts the national coordinator of the national Early Days Workshop program for parents and other family members of young children (0-6 years) who are on the spectrum or who have concerns about their child. Autism Queensland's professional learning facilitators deliver the Early

Days Workshops in Queensland. Early Days is funded by the Department of Social Services.

Group Therapy

These evidence-informed groups focus on various elements and needs for all ages groups. Groups for young children may focus on behaviour, development, social skills, motor skills, communication, anxiety, while those for young people and adults focus on social skills, life skills and job-readiness and goal setting.

Individual Therapy

Autism Queensland provides individual therapy for people of all ages. These are administered by our qualified allied health professionals and include speech and language pathology, occupational therapy and psychology.

Professional Learning and Parent Education

Our professional learning facilitators have many years' experience working with individuals on the spectrum. They deliver a selection of scheduled workshops to a range of audiences including educators, allied health professionals and parents across Queensland; and develop customised workshops with individualised content for schools, community organisations, employers and others.

School Advisory Service

Autism Queensland's specialist teachers and therapists visit schools throughout Queensland to provide information, advice, support, and individualised strategies to staff, other key professionals and parents. This service is supported by the Queensland Government through the Department of Education Specialist Disability Support in Schools (SDSS) Program.

Support Coordination

Autism Queensland's Support Coordination team can provide people with Coordination of Supports in their NDIS Plan with expert, unbiased help in selecting services to meet their individual needs.

Vacation Care

School holiday care programs are offered twice a year in the June/July and December school holiday periods at Sunnybank Hills and Brighton for students on the spectrum.



Autism Queensland School

AQ School is an accredited, independent school providing specialist education and therapy programs for students with a verification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) aged five years (Prep) to 18 years.

The school comprises three Education and Therapy Centres: two located in Brisbane at Brighton and Sunnybank Hills and a third in Cairns at Edmonton. The team of teachers, teacher aides, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and wellbeing facilitator support the students with personalised programs. An effective interdisciplinary team collaborates with families and other school settings to help students develop skills that will enable them to optimise their engagement and participation in their home, school and local community.

During 2020, the school catered for 170 students (equivalent to 99.6 full-time enrolments), with a teaching, therapy, transport and administrative staff of 82.2 (full time equivalent) including a principal, two Brisbane heads of campus and a senior teacher for Cairns.

Autism Queensland's Education Service Agreement with the Department of Education continued during 2020, under the Non-State Special Needs Organisations Program, for part-time attendance of students verified with ASD at AQ School, with shared enrolment at their base or "home" mainstream school.

This partnership promotes an inclusive program for students specifically designed to:

- Enable students to maintain connection with their peer group and local school curriculum.
- Enable students to practise identified skills for generalisation to a mainstream setting.
- Continue social connection with their local community.
- Provide opportunities for observation, data collection and sharing of expertise among key stakeholders.

Students attending the school are grouped according to age, ability and needs, with a maximum of six students per class. Each class is staffed by a teacher and teacher aide, with additional support provided by speech pathologists, occupational therapists and a wellbeing facilitator. Our inclusive approach is underpinned by regular collaboration

and communication with parents, local school staff, and other related professionals.

2020 highlights included:

▪ **Independent School Improvement Review**

A comprehensive School Improvement Review was conducted in early 2020. An independent team of external school leaders was engaged by the school leadership team to identify what we do well and provide evidence-informed recommendations for school improvement, in preparation for a new three-year strategic plan for the school. The process involved interviews with representatives from our school community at each campus, and included staff, students and parents. This gave the school community a chance to share experiences and invited fresh perspectives from well-informed reviewers to ultimately inform positive changes to our school operations well into the future.

▪ **Primary General Learning Areas Refurbishment**

Phase 2 of a three-stage school refurbishment at the Sunnybank site including new junior primary classrooms with adjoining courtyards, a renovated school gym, kitchenette and storage was undertaken midway through 2020. The new layout has increased the available physical space for staff and students. As for Phase 1, the design and build were informed by evidence of, and in response to, the impact of physical environmental adjustments on learning outcomes for students with significant social communication, emotional regulation and sensory support needs. The State Government provided part of the funding under the Capital Assistance Agreement with the Independent Schools' Block Grant Authority (BGA).

▪ **Innovative School Operations during COVID-19 restrictions**

School staff demonstrated extraordinary resilience and focus to maintain quality education at Autism Queensland during the changes brought about by the pandemic. Student wellbeing and attendance, bus team employment and staff health and wellbeing were significant factors potentially impacting school

operations, and increased hygiene and social distancing practices were introduced at the school for all staff and students.

Learning at Home strategies and recommendations were considered in consultation with Autism Queensland's executive leadership team and daily updates from Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ). Curriculum compliance and online learning platforms were installed to ensure measures were in place to provide optimal support for our students and their families to learn remotely from home during Queensland's extended lockdown response to COVID-19. Data systems were created to track student attendance and teacher judgment of engagement while working from home.

While most Queensland schools were inaccessible due to ministerial directives for online learning at home supported by parents, AQ School was able to remain open for all students in light of their vulnerable status and the additional pressures for families. While personalised online learning was available to families from the start of Term 2, and some parents opted for this, at least half of the student population continued to physically attend classes throughout this time.

▪ **Professional Learning and Informed Practice**

Teachers representing each campus participated in an ISQ funded "Middle Leaders Project", to



AQ Chairman Ian Langdon, Clive Armstrong, Armstrong Builders and Grant Galvin, CEO Master Builders Queensland turn the sod for the school refurbishment project.

develop and articulate a whole school data plan through individual projects. This was in alignment with the school's strategic plan, overseen by the teaching and learning coordinator and coordinated by representatives from ISQ and Queensland Educational Leadership Institute.

Implementation of online learning management systems, Story Park and Moodle, were extended to enable combined learning for all students at home and school during the pandemic. Staff were assigned individual licences and mentors assigned to help less-experienced teachers increase understanding and build confidence in the development and implementation of online lessons and interactive sessions for students and their families.



Education Support and Therapy Services

Autism Queensland's Brisbane-based Education Support and Therapy Services (ESTS) team delivers services and supports for children and adults living in South East Queensland and other areas of the state that fall outside the service catchments of our regional centres.

Our multidisciplinary team of speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, teachers, behaviour support practitioners, mentors and program assistants work in partnership with individuals to empower personal growth and connectedness to their community. Our services are responsive, person-centred and evidence informed.

All staff undertake comprehensive internal and external professional development opportunities across the year along with mandatory compliance training.

Early Childhood Intervention

Our early childhood groups are flexible, individualised and family centred. Developed and delivered for children under six years of age, the groups support each child's individual developmental goals such as behaviour, communication and social skills.

In 2020, the Brisbane-based ECI service supported 48 children enrolled in eight groups, six at Sunnybank Hills and two at Brighton. This service was one that could continue as normal throughout COVID-19 shutdowns, and parents were able to choose from attendance as usual, or remote support through teleservices. Most continued to access the face-to-face option, and those few who did utilise the teleservice option gradually returned to the centre across the year.



Tele/video sessions remain incorporated in the delivery of the early childhood groups for goal setting and review parent sessions, external observations of attending children by professionals. They also allow for greater collaboration between teams based at both Brisbane sites.

Individual Therapy

Demand for individual speech pathology and occupational therapy services remained strong across the year. While the COVID-19 restrictions had the potential to place a strain on resources, this team successfully transitioned 80% of individual therapy supports to telepractice during the peak shutdown periods, and then equally successfully transitioned them back to face-to-face services as community restrictions eased.

This remote service delivery involved the use of a range of online platforms and activities supported by increased email and phone correspondence. The team continues to deliver telehealth services to around 15% of clients who are more comfortable with receiving their supports in this manner.

Members of this team were also involved in the delivery of the Autism CRC Middle Years Behaviour Support Project supporting schools in Cairns and Rockhampton via telepractice and occasional regional visits.

In response to ongoing requests for support by event organisers, shopping centres, businesses and others, the team formalised this support with the development of an inclusive design service. A group of UQ therapy students, under the direction of Autism Queensland's lead OT, worked on a project to develop a framework and process for offering consultation and professional advice to external agencies around inclusive design and supports.

The framework was trialled with several organisations including Queensland Police Service, Arena Media and Browns Plains Plaza.

Groups

The ESTS team continued to deliver a selection of term-based and holiday therapy groups for children, adolescents and adults across the year at a range of venues including both Brisbane centres, The Autism Hub, Department of Education (Teen Tech Shed and some holiday programs), The Edge, State Library of Queensland (Studio G), and The Toombul Shire Hall (The Hangout Northside).

For the school years cohort, groups on offer included: Teen Tech Shed, Secret Agent Society, Lego Club, Happy Hands, Preparation Station, Movie Club, PEERS for Adolescents, Fun, Friends and Feelings, Cool Conversations, Food School, Food Scientists.

Adult groups included: Studio G, The Hangout, Make a Meal of It, B-Me, EmployReady, PEERS Adults and newcomer, Allies and Adventures.

Allies & Adventures is based around the role-playing table game Dungeons and Dragons. It proved a new and popular addition to the suite, with participants inadvertently working on individualised goals through the choose your own adventure campaigns in the game. An intensive, weeklong version was developed for adolescents over the 2020-21 Christmas holiday period.

It is pleasing to report that despite challenges faced when external venues were required to close due to COVID-19 restrictions, the only group that was unable to continue was Studio G on the Gold Coast with delivery put on hold in 2020 to resume in 2021.

Autism Queensland was also part of a working party set up by the Social Skills Institute to develop a new online platform for Secret Agency Society (SAS). As the only provider who continued to offer SAS during the peak of COVID-19 interruptions and subsequently, the feedback provided by our staff delivering the program was integral to the feedback process for delivery of SAS in an online format.

Staff and therapy students also supported the development of three new groups for implementation in 2021; Let's Talk Dating, Safety Made Simple and Bucket Group.

Allied Health & Diagnostic Assessment Services

These comprehensive functional and diagnostic assessment services are an integral part of the diagnostic process. They are provided by a team that works across both Brisbane sites. Demand is such that a waitlist of around three months exists, but the team works hard to keep it within this timeframe. They have also developed some consistent referral bases from local paediatricians and continue to expand these networks within the constraints of the waitlist.



The assessment team requires a high level of expertise to accurately assess and analyse. To ensure consistency and quality from one assessment to the next, the team, under the guidance of the Lead Therapist, worked to establish a fidelity process for therapists working within the diagnostic space. This process has resulted in links with the University of Western Australia who has connected with Autism Queensland to facilitate student placements for people studying the Masters in Assessment & Diagnostics.

Behaviour Supports

2020 saw the implementation of a dedicated Behaviour Support Service. This team continues to navigate the NDIS quality and safeguarding processes and procedures while supporting individuals to work through behaviours of concern and identify the least restrictive practices to engage and participate in their communities.

School Advisory Service

The therapists and teachers working in this service visit students on the autism spectrum from Prep to Year 12 in their education settings across Queensland, providing information, advice, support and individualised strategies to support their educational outcomes. This service is funded by the Queensland Government Specialist Disability Support in Schools Program.

As would be expected, COVID-19 had a significant impact on this service from late March through to the end of 2020, particularly as travel to regional areas was reduced significantly. However, in keeping with organisation-wide initiatives for service provision to maintain support and meet schedules provided to schools earlier in the year, the team pivoted to providing consultation services via teleconference and videoconference modes.

At the close of the school year, the team provided a service to 1208 eligible students involving at least one consultation service delivered either face to face, by videoconference or teleconference. The service supported 449 schools over the year, less than the projected 499 due to the impact of school closures and travel restrictions brought about by COVID-19. While many schools were open to the option of video or teleconference consultations, there were still several who preferred to wait for a face-to-face service. Those requests that could not be fulfilled were rescheduled for 2021.

Provision of additional funding also provided the opportunity to explore the barriers to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students on the spectrum. New resources were developed and designed to share information about the service with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They will continue to be used in ongoing service provision.

Autism Consultant

This service is available to schools seeking ongoing and regular support from a consultant with expertise in autism. The service is tailored to the needs of the school and can include direct support for students on the spectrum, coaching and mentoring of staff, assistance with the development of Individual Plans, Positive Behaviour Support Plans, curriculum adjustments and more. In 2020, eight schools based in South East Queensland metropolitan area and two regional schools partnered with AQ. The majority opted to continue the partnership into 2021, several for their fourth and fifth years.

Inverell

Autism Queensland has been operating in Inverell, New South Wales for three years, trading as Autism Australia. The service offers NDIS therapy and training support on a part-time basis to local families.

2020 saw the closure of the Talk to Learn Autism and Social Communication parent and child groups funded through the NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building Program from July 2018.

The program was delivered in Inverell, Armidale, Moree, Tenterfield, and Glen Innes and engaged on a weekly basis with families and service providers from these areas. Over the two years until its conclusion, 163 families participated.

Sessions targeted children aged 0-6 years and 7-12 years, and their parents. They consisted of supported play and coaching with the children and parents, followed by a facilitated group for families providing current knowledge and intervention practices that perhaps were not readily available in some areas. The last term of the program, Term 2, 2020, shifted to online facilitated parent discussion groups. While children were not able to be directly involved, feedback from parents strongly suggested support provided in this format was still beneficial to the family.



Regional Centres

Autism Queensland's regional centres are located in Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns. As with the Brisbane services, multidisciplinary teams comprising occupational therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists, teachers and program assistants deliver a variety of services for children and adults living in these regions.

In 2020, around 900 people received direct supports from these centres, including 68 young children who attended the early childhood groups. Other services and supports accessed included individual therapy, therapy groups for older children, adolescents and adults, education support, diagnostic assessments and behaviour support.

The Cairns centre is also home to a regional campus of the AQ School. In 2020 the campus successfully ran two combined classes, a Prep-Year 1 and Year 2-3 and planned for further expansion in 2021.

Staff from the Mackay and Cairns centres also delivered the Autism Queensland School Advisory Service for schools in their region. The central Queensland service continues to be supported by the Brisbane-based team.

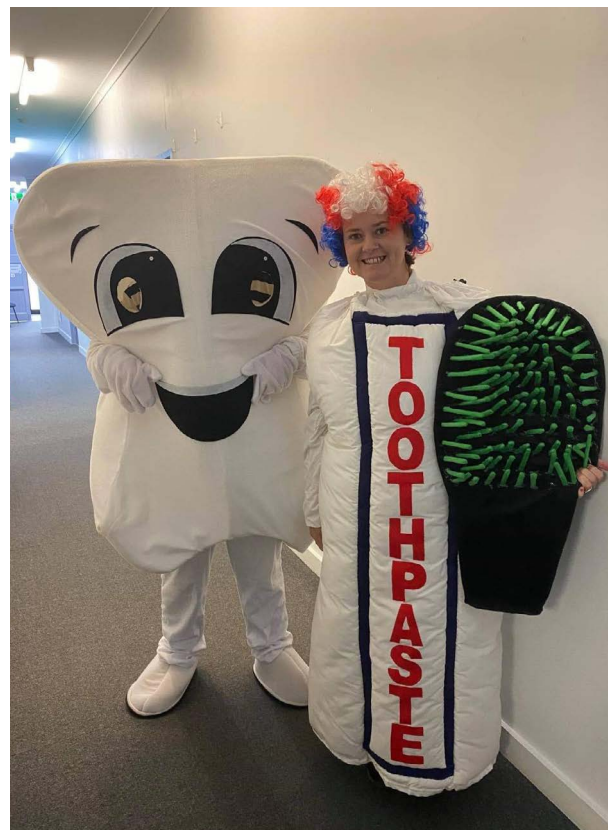
Small therapy groups were offered across the year, with 20 delivered across the centres to around 80 participants. They included LEGO Club, Movie Club, Social Skills and later in the year, a new Gamers Club in Mackay. Teen Tech (adolescents) and Studio G (adults) also ran in Mackay.

For the first time the Autism Consultant Service that supports schools to build their capacity to support students on the spectrum expanded into regional Queensland and was successfully delivered at an independent school in Mackay. Further contracts in 2021 will see the service expand statewide.

While the effects of COVID-19 were less challenging in areas outside of South East Queensland, all regional centres implemented telehealth services at the start of the pandemic, offered phone consultations, and increased online correspondence. Teams in Mackay and Cairns also created resource packs that were sent home for families to use during lockdown phases, and parent coaching and social skills groups offered at both these centres were delivered through online video platforms.

In Term 2 especially, 70% of services, primarily therapy groups and individual therapy, switched to online delivery. Again, the agility of the Autism Queensland workforce to switch quickly to telepractice services was reflected, and our families and clients also showed their willingness to adapt to the new world. Staff also gained increased skills and knowledge in delivering therapy services via telepractice platforms.

As the pandemic shutdown in the regions was short-lived, all ECI, group therapy and assessment services returned to normal face-to-face services as soon as was possible. The exception was individual therapy that, for the most part, remained online so that the recommended hygiene practices such as social distancing in reception areas could be maintained.



Many clients continue to seek supports online and it remains an alternative when clients are unwell or therapists are working from home awaiting COVID test results, rather than having much-needed sessions cancelled.

Despite the fact they experienced fewer disruptions from COVID than the Brisbane-based services, the regional centres continued to follow organisation-wide COVID-safe guidelines and maintained safe working environments for both clients and staff.

Across all services, this resulted in less general illness amongst clients and staff and reinforced client confidence in our procedures to keep them safe and able to continue much-needed supports.

The greatest challenges of 2020 were disruptions to the delivery of assessment services because of shutdowns, and increased demand for therapy services leading to extensive waiting lists.

Therapists reported "Zoom fatigue" from providing therapy all day via remote technology, and the extra workload involved in preparing adequate and

relevant resources to use during online sessions. Despite this, staff maintained their caseloads and managed to deliver every service via online technology, oftentimes coming up with novel and unique ways to maintain client participation and success.

Staff continued to attend professional development, with the bulk delivered online in 2020. Access to internal training (webinars, modules, workshops) greatly supported and helped the regional teams to feel connected at a time where everyone seemed to be struggling professionally and personally with the changes forced on us in a short period of time.

This move to online training also resulted in substantial savings of both lost time due to travel and the cost associated with this travel.

Continued demand for our support by individuals and families living in regional Queensland is resulting in growing waitlists and driving plans for rapid expansion of facilities and service options, supported by growing staff numbers.





Community Services

Autism Queensland provides accommodation and social support services to adults and young people on the autism spectrum across Brisbane and Ipswich.

Increasing the quality of life for participants in 2020 presented challenges due to new and emerging demands imposed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, but our Support Workers were instrumental in responding to social distancing and hygiene requirements to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients. This was adeptly juggled into the support mix as Quality Audit items were completed as well as the implementation of positive behaviour support plans.

Supported Independent Living

We support adults aged 18 to 65 years in locations across South East Queensland to live in their own homes. They receive bespoke services in a 24-hour support period by Lifestyle Support Workers who are skilled in developing individual capacity while managing support needs, including behaviour support.

These people receive assistance to complete all aspects of daily living, enhancing their life of participation by embracing self-determination and the development of independence.

Some of these services include:

- Advocacy
- Personal care
- Health management
- Financial management of personal expenses
- Behaviour support
- Social inclusion
- Community access.

In 2020 Autism Queensland operated 11 residences across Brisbane and Ipswich accommodating up to 22 participants. A house at Wynnum was modified to receive a child safety client who had been looking for a supportive solution that could support the complex needs of their situation. This has proven to be successful and filled a great need, and resulted in the establishment of a foundation model for future collaborative work for children on the spectrum in the child safety system that can to meet the needs of the community if required.

The development of Supported Independent Living (SIL) housing services to meet NDIS requirements showed a systemic gap in filling vacancies across the sector, not just for Autism Queensland.

The emerging Aged Care recommendations are driving adults with a disability out of aged care facilities and into the NDIS framework. There were many people without housing and many vacancies in houses. However, a gap in the system to match participants with vacancies remains. Due to the necessity, the market stepped in and a number of collaborative groups formed. From this a system of sharing vacancy information has emerged, however, it is still in its infancy.

The Community Services Team continues to assist clients in having SIL included in their NDIS plans and assist in connecting people with suitable living arrangements.

Community Access

Autism Queensland provides community access services for individuals aged five to 65 years who wish to independently engage in community, social, economic and recreational activities.



Across the year we supported clients in this service to access and participate in their local community in a variety of safe ways including providing assistance to access employment opportunities such as work experience and supported employment, shopping, day trips, medical appointments, social events, personal fitness programs and other bespoke and virtual activities.

The computer club met each week when permissible, and the adolescents and adults who attended enjoyed movie and bowling nights along with internet café time. The club provides participants the opportunity to practice their social, communication and independent living skills as inclusive members of the community.

High demand for places, funding and staffing challenges created a need for ongoing development of community access services and social groups. A view to develop a comprehensive library of activities aligned to goals and outcomes is planned as this service continues to meet the demands of our clients.

Vacation Care

Recurrent funding secured by Autism Queensland back in 2011 continued to enable the delivery of twice-yearly school holiday programs at the Brighton and Sunnybank School campuses during the 2020 June and Christmas school holidays. Traditionally referred to as Holiday Programs, this service was renamed Vacation Care in 2019 to differentiate from school holiday group therapy programs delivered by other service areas. This program has been able to continue under the NDIS and was again heavily subscribed in both holiday periods delivering over 4000 hours of support during the two holiday programs.

Support Coordination

Across the year clients looked to their Support Coordinators to find suitable alternatives when their existing services did not offer them due to the pandemic. The team worked diligently to accommodate each enquiry and connect services for their clients. This team often advocates for their client's outcomes, driving quality from services. They also respond to people who are looking for their support in NDIS plan reviews and associated activities.



Artwork by one of our residents.

Special Projects

Autism EmployABLE

This pilot project was funded by the NDIS ILC Mainstream Capacity Building program mid-2019 to engage with businesses to build awareness of the positive attributes of employees on the autism spectrum and to develop their capacity to successfully employ them.

Although funding was only for 12 months, the project ran longer due to challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and in May 2021, further funding through the ILC Economic and Community Participation Program was secured to expand the program in the 12 months to June 2022.

Autism EmployABLE had the opportunity to explore all aspects of employment through an autism lens including finding a job that matched a person's skills and interests, and searching for and creating bespoke employment opportunities and support needed to maintain work.

Many of the participants were highly educated and skilled but required extensive support with aspects of social communication around applying for work, interviews and starting work, and thriving in the workplace.

As well as placing people in employment, the project also supported participants with employment-related goal setting, pre-employment preparation, work experience and job trials.

Relationships were established with state government departments and private businesses, ranging from large organisations to sole traders keen to learn more about the program and the benefits of employing individuals on the spectrum.

At the end of 2020, Autism EmployABLE had assisted 22 adults into employment in south east Queensland.

The program team had contacted more than 2500 businesses, established relationships with around 40 companies, including delivering information sessions about employing people on the spectrum, and secured a further 150 expressions of interest from employers keen to work with the program in the post-COVID environment.



EmployABLE participant George Vidas (left) on his first day as Grounds and Maintenance Officer at Autism Queensland.

The success of Autism EmployABLE over this brief period highlighted the potential for multiple job opportunities across a range of different industries that will support a diverse range of individuals on the spectrum to reach their employment goals. The EmployABLE team was able to demonstrate the success that can be achieved by individuals on the spectrum when afforded tailored employment support and the right work environment to thrive.

Autism and Mental Health Services Project

In June 2020 Autism Queensland was successful in securing Australian Government Funding through the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program for a three-year project designed to provide adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum with access to high-quality mental health services.

The Autism and Mental Health Services Project develops and delivers autism-specific training for mainstream mental health practitioners and general practitioners to assist them to support these people on the spectrum who also have mental health conditions.

The training is informed by content from surveys and interviews conducted with people on the autism spectrum who also have a mental health condition, their family members and carers; as well as with general practitioners and mental health practitioners.

The project will seek guidance in the creation of training materials from adolescents and adults on the spectrum, including from a consultant with lived experience of autism and mental health difficulties.

Indigenous Programs

Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officer Program*

The Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officer (EI ILO) program worked alongside families and carers, service providers, and communities across Australia to assist children aged 0-7 years to transition from the Helping Children with Autism and Better Start funded packages to the NDIS and other informal supports.

In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant threat to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Consequently, communities were closed under national biosecurity rules and the Indigenous Liaison Officers (ILOs) commenced service delivery via digital virtual platforms and increased telephone and email support.

From July the program moved into transition mode as referral networks were expanded and strengthened to ensure families received continuity of supports once the program reached closure, when funding by the Australian Government Department of Social Services ended in March 2021.

Between January and June 2020, ILOs delivered eight face-to-face workshops and 14 webinars via digital platforms to 271 participants in predominantly non-metropolitan areas across Australia. Most attendances at workshops were by service providers working for a range of community-controlled, indigenous, and non-indigenous organisations who were engaging with children with disability and developmental concerns.

From July through to the closure of the program, the ILOs delivered a further 219 workshops to 588 participants across Australia. The majority, 68% of participants, lived in Queensland, with a further 19% in the Northern Territory and 10% from remote locations in South Australia. These figures may be attributed to the high number of families in Queensland still transitioning from HCWA-funded packages to the NDIS.

In the Northern Territory, the focus for participants was to learn more about autism so they could better understand the concept of disability, diagnosis and then build capacity to access support services such as the NDIS.

**The EI ILO program commenced in 2012 and in the years that followed up to closure the ILOs regularly brought together their knowledge and experience of the work they conducted in communities, and through gap analysis, steadily expanded and refined the suite of services offered to First Nations peoples.*

Steppin' Up, Steppin' Out

The Steppin' Up, Steppin' Out (SUSO) project was funded by the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program from June 2018 to May 2020. It was delivered to people on the autism spectrum, their families and carers, and communities across remote Northern Territory and Queensland.

The aim of the project was to build the confidence of young people on the autism spectrum aged up to 25 years, their families, and communities to determine pathways of support and set goals for participation in ordinary community life.

This was facilitated through a series of culturally respectful Yarn Ups and built connections between families, mainstream support networks, and community groups.

Workshops for the local community provided enhanced understanding about autism and determined strategies that could be applied to support inclusion in community activities and mainstream services for persons on the spectrum.

SUSO ILOs also facilitated engagement with, and access to, community activities and service providers by linking individuals and family groups through consultation and coaching on an as-needed basis. Tools such as The Family Goal Setting Tool (FGST) and Adolescent and Adult Goal Setting Tool (AAGST) supported conversations about goal setting and decision-making.

Through community engagement and consultation with elders, Autism Champions were identified. They provided a local source of information and an ongoing link with SUSO ILOs and other key service providers. In addition to coaching and support from ILOs, Champions were provided with additional training and information about autism and referral pathways.

The SUSO project delivered services to 2,898 participants who attended 216 workshops in remote communities from June 2018 to June 2020 within the framework of the co-designed engagement model.

Yarning Autism

The Yarning Autism (YA) project was also funded by the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Package, from July 2018 to June 2020. It was delivered to people on the autism spectrum, their families and carers, and communities across the north and north-west regions of New South Wales reaching from Moree to Bourke.

As part of the project, ILOs consulted with communities to gather information about their needs and this gap analysis formed the basis of content development for YA. All participants were interested to know more about autism and other information such as accessing services, understanding diagnostic processes and pathways of support to name a few.

The Community Yarn Up workshop was developed to support increased knowledge of autism, raise awareness about support pathways and facilitate discussions that were relevant and important for participants. The workshop laid the foundation for participants to begin thinking about ways that mainstream community activities can be more accessible and inclusive.

Over the life of the project, sectors represented at the workshops included early learning, education, employment, government, health, housing, justice, NDIS, NGOs and Family and Youth Services. These services engaged with the YA Indigenous Liaison team on multiple occasions by phone, email and face-to-face service meetings to enhance their knowledge of disability and to strengthen their understanding of the complex pathways of supports.

The primary outcome of YA was to support people on the spectrum to participate in, and benefit from, the same community activities as others in their community. The key evaluation question for the program was to understand the range of information that is relevant for people with autism, their families, and carers to make decisions to shape and plan an ordinary life.

Differentiating between naughty behaviours and autism as a disability was a priority for stakeholders. Through the provision of key information and consistent messaging on a community-wide basis, the project stakeholders created a groundswell to raise awareness and increase understanding about autism in order to potentially increase inclusion of persons on the spectrum and their families in community activities and events.



Artwork by SUSO participants.



Client Services & Support

As with every other part of Autism Queensland, Australia and the world, the most noteworthy feature of 2020 for the Client Services & Support (CSS) team was COVID-19.

At very short notice, the team moved to working exclusively from home in late March and speedily became familiar with and quite expert at conducting meetings on videoconference platforms such as Zoom and Teams.

Throughout this time, the calls, emails, Service Request Forms and occasional queries via Facebook continued to be received. Not surprisingly, many of the contacts were initially related to changes or challenges experienced as a direct or indirect result of the pandemic, such as children needing to be home-schooled but receiving very little support from their schools; coping with services being delivered via telepractice; accessing specialist appointments when face-to-face appointments were not available; and understanding changes implemented by the NDIS in response to COVID-19.

At the same time, many of the usual questions and needs that existed before the pandemic continued around diagnosis (children and adults), understanding and navigating the NDIS, and schooling issues.

The number of contacts received each month in 2020 fluctuated between 550 to 750.

The CSS team also continued to prepare Service Agreements for most Autism Queensland services. As expected, the number of these grew, increasing from 80 per month in 2019 to 100 per month in 2020, as the NDIS fully rolled out and more people gained access to it. Fluctuations at certain times saw as many as 200 needed over very short periods during key times such as before school holidays or when new therapy dates/groups were announced.

The release of three Consultation Papers in December by the NDIS on topics of importance to Autism Queensland and its clients also required significant input from this service in preparation for the February 2021 submission close.

Autism Advisor Program (AAP)

While funding for this program was due to cease on 30 June 2020, a nine-month extension due to COVID-19 was granted. As a number of the advisors, including the team leader, had already resigned from the team because of the impending closure, new staff were recruited and the Manager Client Services & Support oversaw the program.

As the early intervention funding which the advisors had traditionally organised for families had ceased at the end of 2019, their role had been to continue to provide information and support to the parents of newly diagnosed children; and to ensure new and existing families registered with the AAP were well-informed about the NDIS and wherever possible could commence the process of accessing it. This work continued with the extension of the program.

Like all services, the advisors were also impacted by COVID-19 and worked from home between March and August. This meant face-to-face consultations were replaced by telephone consultations.

Across the year the advisors had contact with around 180 families each month. Many of these contacts were initiated by the advisors to families who were still using Helping Children with Autism funding and who needed to apply to transition the NDIS. It was both revealing and concerning to hear from a number of these families about how confused they were about the NDIS and how to apply for it, as well as the miscommunication many had had with NDIS Partners.

The extension of the AAP was very important and much appreciated, but it only delayed the inevitable conclusion of this program. The Queensland AAP closed on 31 March 2021, after providing support to the families of close to 16,000 young children since it commenced in October 2008.



Research & Development

Autism Queensland conducts and supports research, and promotes evidence-informed practice that will enhance the potential of individuals on the spectrum to achieve valued life outcomes.

Current Research Projects

▪ ***Development and evaluation of the Autism EmployABLE program***

The Manager Research and Development (R & D) was involved in the development of the initial NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant application for this project and has overseen the development of the program.

Using a qualitative methodology, 15 clients, six family members and five employers were interviewed regarding their perspectives of the program in terms of helpfulness, aspects that could be improved, and the impact of finding employment on the clients' wellbeing. Overall, the evaluation provided compelling support for an autism-specific employment program.

Participants valued the high level of understanding of autism, the individualised and person-centred approach, the support of clients to better understand themselves, and the way the program fostered client independence. Perceived outcomes of the program included achievement of good person-to-job fit, enhanced client confidence and independence, superior outcomes compared to generic disability employment services, and increased employer awareness of the benefits of hiring autistic people.

By the end of 2020, 22 of 28 Autism EmployABLE participants had found employment through the program, with 87% having sustained employment. The participants who were yet to find work had made significant progress in their work-related goals, either through work experience, volunteering or acquisition of additional qualifications.

▪ ***Ongoing development of the Adolescent Adult Goal Setting Tool (AAGST)***

The AAGST was revised in 2020 when the planning sheet used to outline a plan to meet identified goals was amended to make it easier to track the client's progress in achieving their goals.

The AAGST was also trialled in an Indigenous community in collaboration with the Yalu Corporation Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island, Northern Territory. A report summarising the outcomes of the trial and recommendations of the participants is being prepared.

▪ ***Online AAGST***

Following requests from therapists for an online version of the AAGST, a prototype of a therapist-assisted telehealth version that aims to support therapists to assist clients to identify and prioritise their goals during videoconferencing sessions is under development.

An evaluation of the online version was approved by the University of Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee and involves gathering feedback through focus groups and semi-structured interviews with six therapists (speech pathologists and occupational therapists), their clients and family members.

▪ ***Optimising Telehealth to future proof the delivery of autism-related services***

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Autism Queensland staff used telepractice services to connect with clients. This project, developed by Associate Professor David Trembath from Griffith University in association with Autism Queensland, aims to determine what worked well, what did not work so

well, and the best way forward. The outcomes will include the development of a telepractice portal for Autism Queensland staff, mapping pathways to more effective use of telepractice as part of existing and new services, and upskilling staff in the use of telepractice approaches. The project is funded by an Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowship and will run over 18 months, starting in January 2021.

▪ **Autism CRC project: Synthesis of evidence for autism early intervention approaches**

The over-arching goal of this project, commissioned by the NDIS, was to inform NDIA clinical and policy decisions regarding interventions that are most appropriate for children on the spectrum.

The report aimed to:

- Provide an overview of non-pharmacological interventions developed for children on the spectrum, and the training pathways in Australia for clinical practitioners who provide these interventions.
- Review the scientific evidence for the therapeutic (and other) effects of interventions for children on the spectrum, through a meta-review of the evidence underpinning non-pharmacological interventions used for children on the spectrum.

▪ **Middle Years Behaviour Support project**

This project aimed to develop guidelines for a teleconsultation approach to support the learning needs of students on the autism spectrum in the middle years of schooling in rural, remote, Indigenous, and isolated education communities.

Autism Queensland provided two multidisciplinary teams who worked collaboratively with schools in the Rockhampton and Cairns regions through face-to-face and online meetings. They consulted on programs for particular students with high-intensity needs, and whole of school strategies to support students on the spectrum.

Two research paper resulting are: (1) Parent reports on the need to change schools because the schools were not a good fit for their child; and (2) Parent preferences as regard types of school placement (eg mainstream regular classroom, special education class in a mainstream school, special school or autism-specific school).

Contributions to advocacy on behalf of people on the spectrum and their families

The R & D team was involved in the preparation of the following submissions:

- Senate Select Committee on Autism: Responses to Terms of Reference.
- Submission to Royal Commission on Support of Inclusive Education
- Australian Autism Alliance draft statement on the proposed introduction of mandatory NDIA independent assessments.

Contributions to grant applications

The team also contributed evidence-based information to support the following ILC applications for further funding.

A Mainstream Capacity Building Program grant was submitted in May 2020 called: *"Focus on families: Supporting families to support their young children on the autism spectrum"*

An Economic Participation grant was submitted in December 2020 called *"Autism EmployABLE 2 (AE2) - The next step in creating successful employment opportunities for adults on the autism spectrum"*. This grant was for 12-months additional funding to increase the scale and scope of Autism EmployABLE, by engaging in more businesses across a wider geographical area.

Although the Focus on Families grant was not successful, recently we were excited to learn about the success of the AE2 grant application.

Supporting evidence-based practices at Autism Queensland

▪ **Literature searches**

During 2020, R & D staff responded to 87 requests from staff for literature on specific topics to ensure Autism Queensland's practices are based on current evidence.

▪ **Professional Practice Team**

The R & D team organises the Autism Queensland Professional Practice Team Meetings. In 2020, the team revised the aims to include:

- Ensuring the ongoing development and maintenance of high quality, responsive, evidence-informed practices at Autism Queensland.
- Ensuring Autism Queensland's practices are continuously updated and improved in response to changing contexts.
- Achieving leadership in the autism field by ensuring that our practices are innovative and cutting-edge.
- Promoting collaboration within and across all Autism Queensland services to ensure high-quality practice throughout the organisation.
- Promoting and expecting the use of high-quality, responsive, evidence-informed practices by Autism Queensland's staff.

The Core Professional Practice Team comprises the Manager R&D Research officer, Lead Occupational Therapist (OT), Lead Speech Pathologist (SP), Lead Teacher, Lead Psychologist and Lead Behaviour Specialist. Their role is to review new interventions, models of practice, outcome measures, professional supervision policy and procedure, student supervision policies and procedures, and professional development opportunities for staff. Operational managers including the AQ School Principal, Manager Educational and Therapy Support Services, Regional Managers and the Chief Operations Officer also provide feedback to the team on the feasibility of professional practices, professional development and supervision needs of their staff, and new programs/practices for review.

▪ **Contributions of the lead professionals and professional practice supervisors**

In 2020 we added a Lead Teacher position to the Lead Professionals Team to support the many teachers who work in non-traditional teacher roles in ESTS and the regional centres. These roles can include visiting schools to advise on individual students, work as Autism consultants in schools and lead group programs). Teachers in AQ School have a dedicated supervision structure as part of the school framework. Each of the lead professionals supervise professional practise supervisors who also provide supervision.

Across the year their contributions included:

- Providing regular professional supervision to professional staff at all centres with the frequency of contact depending on the level of support required and provide discipline-specific consultation to the programs.
- Work-shadowing the professional staff to provide on-the-job advice.

Our Lead OT also:

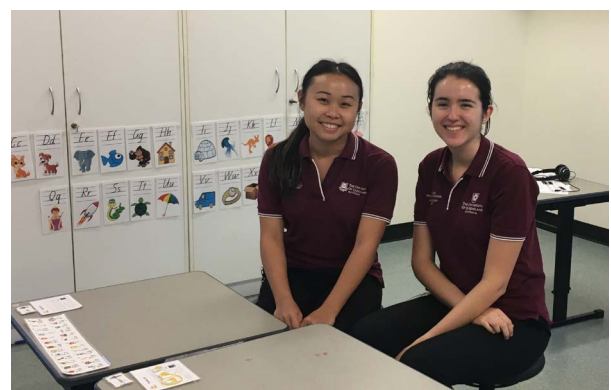
- Supervised students working in Autism Queensland's adolescent and adult programs.
- Provided a lecture at UQ for final year students on '*Client-centred practice and NDIS*'.
- Facilitated a professional development day for OTs on written expression and sensory processing.

Our Lead SP also:

- Provided professional development to Central Queensland staff on goal setting and measuring outcomes.
- Organised student placements at Sunnybank Hills and Brighton.
- Had discussions with Clinical Educators around challenges of supporting tertiary students placed at Autism Queensland.

Our Lead Psychologist:

- Is working towards her Master's in Child Play Therapy which will enable her to provide more support to her staff in this area.





Professional Learning & Parent Education

The Professional Learning and Development (PLDS) team provides a range of learning opportunities for educators, allied health professionals, parents, family members and others working with or supporting people on the autism spectrum.

Our learning facilitators have extensive experience in working with people on the spectrum and in the delivery of effective professional development and parent education that is based on evidence-informed knowledge that is practical and easy to understand.

Workshops

In 2020, the multi-disciplinary PLDS team of four, comprising teachers, a speech and language pathologist and an occupational therapist, delivered more than 70 workshops to 774 participants.

Professional learning and parent education at Autism Queensland has traditionally been offered in a face-to-face format, but the move to online delivery in a webinar format from the beginning of April as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic proved to be a most successful one.

Expanded time slots including evening options, greatly improved access for participants living in regional and rural Queensland and interstate and meant parents could join in from home and professionals who could attend from their desk. Many embraced the opportunity to access their learning online.

The team also benefited as there were reduced costs and time commitments generally associated with travel required for the delivery of face-to-face workshops.

Regular workshop topics such as *Understanding Individuals on the Autism Spectrum*, *Clues to Behaviour Success*, *Positive Behaviour Support*, *Understanding and Supporting Girls on the Autism Spectrum* remained some of the more popular topics in the suite. New topics added in 2020 included *Autism and Executive Functioning*, *Autism and Executive Functioning Skills in Adolescence and Young Adulthood*, *Autism and Handwriting*, *Practical*

Strategies to Help My Child at Home, *Helping Children on the Autism Spectrum to Build Friendships*, and *Play for Children with Complex Needs*.

The team continued to support professionals working in the education sector to access training about evidence-informed strategies to include students on the autism spectrum at school. Topics were designed to support teachers and teacher aides working in the early years, primary school, and secondary school age groups. These workshops included a focus on providing a universal design framework to supporting students, and the team used research from the Autism CRC as a base for the included content.

A new suite of workshops specifically designed for therapists was successfully trialled. Autism Theories and Therapies included five workshops ranging from autism and underpinning theories, to topics related to the provision of telepractice service delivery, sensory processing, supporting functional communication, and self-regulation. A similar suite of workshops that is specifically catered to teachers is under development.

Customised Services

This team was once again busy in the January pupil-free-day period, with one member conducting a series of workshops across Emerald, and another two co-delivering a session titled 'Practical Strategies for Teacher Aides Working in Special School Environments.' The latter had over 100 participants from three metropolitan special schools in attendance and received high praise for the practical information that was delivered.

There was a slight, but predictable downturn in requests for customised workshops during the initial period of the pandemic, but once organisations became familiar with the team's capacity to provide

these online, demand returned, as did requests for face-to-face delivery in Terms 3 and 4. The team also provided a set of four, half-day workshops for the HELP employment group. Training requests for schools and early childhood settings also picked up again in the second half of the year.

In 2020 the team was involved in the delivery of supports to several early childhood service providers as part of the Australian Government-funded Inclusion Support Program that provides support to eligible mainstream Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs. Travel to remote communities including Croydon and Yam Island were a feature of the team's involvement in this space.

Feedback

Participant feedback for the workshops remained very positive despite the challenges of the year.

Comments related to the use of Zoom for the delivery of the webinars explain why they remain a popular option going forward and included: *'Very easy to share and listen'; 'It was easy and fun; 'Worked really well'; 'Good mix of listening, sharing, chat function'; 'Great, easy to use, and also can accommodate the needs for peer interaction'; 'Thoroughly enjoying and benefiting from AQ's use of Zoom technology for workshop delivery'*

Feedback on content, learning opportunities and interaction in the sessions included:

'I felt I could better put myself in the ASD person's 'shoes,' gained a clearer understanding of what they go through.'

'Clear links with evidence base, tangible strategies for use immediately.'

'Thank you for the most informative and engaging workshop. It was great to come away with some teaching strategies that can be implemented into the classroom straight away.'

'I loved the interactive aspect and it allowed everyone to share their experiences.'

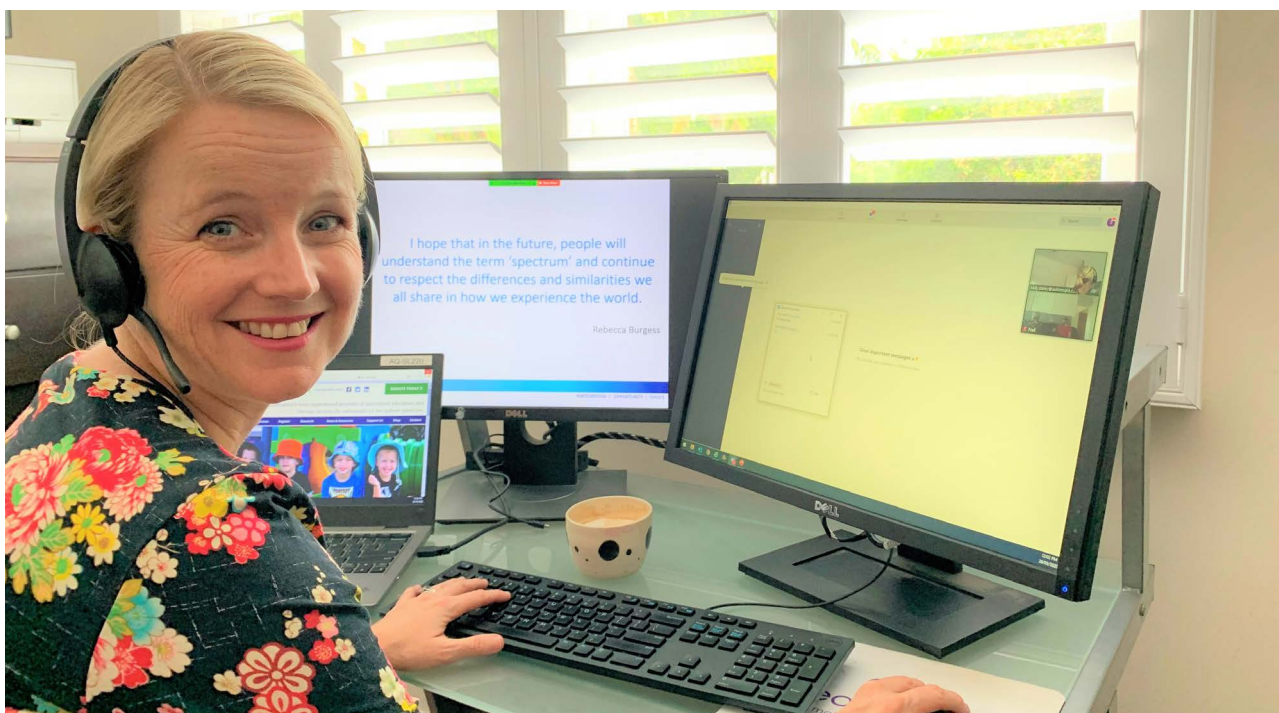
'Listening to other people's experiences and sharing strategies with other participants were the most useful aspects of the workshop.'

The knowledge of the team and the facilitation of the workshops were also praised:

'Very knowledgeable presenter. I want more!';

'A great, interactive, inclusive presenter with wonderful knowledge sharing';

'A wonderful presenter – calm and welcoming'; 'The presenter was able to personalise comments of all participants, and meet our individual needs.'



Early Days Workshops

These free workshops, funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, are for children aged 0-6 years who are, or may be, on the autism spectrum. Across the year the team delivered 100 workshops to 529 participants.

As with all other services, the Early Days workshops were quickly modified for online delivery when travel and social restrictions were imposed due to the pandemic. The team worked hard to personally reach out to our families when the changes took place and provided one on one consultations until the webinars were scheduled. Again, parents embraced the new mode of delivery, especially those living in regional areas. In the second half of the year our non-metro participants made up 46% of our overall attendees, and many families indicated the online format provided them with a much greater opportunity to attend.

'We've been able to balance that in with our work commitments a lot easier, so it definitely increased our ability to attend some of the sessions.'

Wonderful feedback about our facilitators and the support and information parents gained from these workshops again highlights the importance of these workshops for these families.

'This workshop has been amazing. I have taken so much away from it and have a better understanding now going in to my NDIS planning meeting.'

Thank you for all the information and knowledge I need going forward. It has been an amazing help and looking forward to more workshops in the future.'

'I found this Incredibly helpful, it was an eye opener for understanding how my son processes information.'

'Brilliant presentation. Very knowledgeable presenter, practical, easy to follow & ... answered our specific questions.'

'Excellent content, very helpful. Some very interesting ideas from other parents too. Great to hear others' experiences and ideas.'

Autism Queensland is also responsible for the coordination of Early Days workshops nationally. It is the role of the co-ordinator to develop and review workshop content, provide support and training to state-based facilitators and work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Rural and Remote communities and people to promote awareness of autism and supports.

In 2020 the National Coordinator delivered 62 workshops for 366 participants (face-to-face, webinar or telephone). Some of these workshops were specifically tailored to families from Indigenous and CaLD backgrounds or rural areas, and others were delivered to broader community groups and agencies. The Coordinator continues to provide tailored workshops to individuals and small groups who would not otherwise have capacity to engage in mainstream scheduled workshop delivery.



Early Days National Coordinator (right) with families.

Community & Supporters

Despite the focus on the pandemic in 2020, the generosity of our supporters shone through. Grant funds still allocated vital monies toward capital works and equipment, and philanthropic individuals, businesses and trusts maintained their benevolence.

The wider autism community includes our staff, our clients and their families; both immediate and extended; our followers on social media and those who subscribe to our updates; the teachers, therapists, early childhood specialists, support workers, parents and others who attend our workshops; and the schools, community organisations, NIDS partners, government agencies and other service providers with whom we work and partner; and many others.

The year commenced as usual with volunteers from Credit Union Australian donating their valuable time and energy to work in the grounds at the Sunnybank Hills centre. Sadly though, this was to be the only time this would be possible during the year.

We were also again fortunate to be the beneficiary of donations received through annual appeals, workplace giving, bequests and general donations from private donors. These funds are directed to new infrastructure and resources to enable effective delivery of our vital services.

Generally, the annual Go Blue for Autism campaign, which runs for April and is linked to the UN-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day on April 2,

is a major fundraiser for the organisation. However, with the COVID-19 outbreak, most activities were cancelled. It was pleasing though that the Brisbane City Council could still turn the lights blue on Brisbane's bridges, City Hall and other key buildings for autism awareness.

Despite the ups and downs of the year, December 3, the International Day for People with Disability, dawned bright and COVID free in Brisbane, and Autism Queensland Patron and Queensland Governor, His Excellency Paul de Jersey AC and Mrs Kaye de Jersey again hosted the Creative Futures Recognition Awards at Government House. His Excellency presented awards to winners and special commendation recipients for Individual Achievement, Parent/Carer, Professional Achievement, School/Community, and Patronage. A special category for Peer Support was also added.

The following page contains a list of major supporters. This list does not take into account the many, many people who provide us with smaller donations and acts of kindness. As such we take this opportunity to acknowledge everyone who contributed financially or in kind to Autism Queensland in 2020. Thank you!



Centre left to right: Ian Langdon, AQ Chairman, His Excellency Paul DeJersey AC, Pam Macrossan CEO with 2020 Creative Futures Recognition Awards winners.

Major Supporters in 2020

- 0 Anthea Polsen Art
- 0 Australian Government Education Department
- 0 Autism Hub and Reading Centre, Queensland Government
- 0 B Firth
- 0 Banana Life
- 0 GJ Bird
- 0 Bracken Ridge Lions Club
- 0 Brisbane City Council
- 0 Brighton IGA
- 0 Bunnings Warehouse
- 0 Cairns Regional Council
- 0 Chemist Warehouse
- 0 Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC)
- 0 Credit Union Australia
- 0 Crusaders SMC
- 0 Department of Education, Queensland Government
- 0 Department of Social Services, Australian Government
- 0 Estate of Barrie Richmond Noble
- 0 Estate of Joseph Camilleri
- 0 Extraction Artisan Coffee
- 0 Martin Edge
- 0 GG-SWF Foundation
- 0 Gladstone Regional Council
- 0 A&S Gormley
- 0 Harper Bernays Charitable Trust
- 0 Heritage Bank Charity Golf Day
- 0 Hutchinson Builders
- 0 Independent Schools Queensland Block Grant Authority
- 0 JJ Richards/Invitro Technologies
- 0 Jurisdictional Guardian Council of Queensland
- 0 A&B Jennings
- 0 Lions Club of Brisbane Hellenic Inc
- 0 Local Matters Grill'd
- 0 C McCaul
- 0 Master Builders Queensland
- 0 Master Engraving
- 0 McDonald's Bracken Ridge
- 0 National Disability Insurance Agency
- 0 Nicholas & Alexandra Amarandos Charitable Trust
- 0 Specialist Disability Support in Schools (SDSS) Program, Department of Education
- 0 Paypal Giving Fund
- 0 Piccones Supa IGA
- 0 Paul Willmann
- 0 Queensland Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- 0 QAGOMA Store
- 0 P Sampson
- 0 Southsiders 4x4
- 0 The Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (Brisbane River)
- 0 The John Villiers Trust
- 0 The Cory Charitable Foundation
- 0 The Edge, State Library of Queensland
- 0 The Hart Family Perpetual Trust
- 0 The William Angliss Charitable Foundation



Autism Queensland CEO Pam Macrossan with Brisbane artist Martin Edge as he signs bags featuring his artwork.

Directors' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2020

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on Autism Queensland Limited for the year ended 31 December 2020.

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:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 0 Danielle Butcher | 0 Josh Mennen (Appointed to casual vacancy 26 Mar 2021) |
| 0 Ian Langdon | 0 Peter Lyons (Appointed to casual vacancy 26 Mar 2021) |
| 0 Joanne Peulen | 0 Robyn Bunting (Appointed to casual vacancy 4 April 2021) |
| 0 Karen Hauff (Resigned 22 June 2020) | |
| 0 Neil Makepeace | |
| 0 Scott Reid (Appointed to casual vacancy 15 April 2020, elected at AGM 25 May 2020) | |

Review of operations

The operating result for 2020 was a surplus of \$6,026,884 (2019: surplus of \$814,676).

With the NDIS operational across all areas for the entire reporting year, income from fee-for-service activities continued to show steady growth, for the first time surpassing that for grant and subsidy funded supports. Note, the Government subsidies line item includes eligible wage subsidies under the Federal Government COVID-19 assistance package (April - September 2020).

The operating result of Autism Queensland Limited continues to be influenced by the recognition of grant revenue under the current accounting standard. As explained in Note 1 (a) to the financial statements, grants not having sufficiently specific performance obligations under enforceable grant agreements must be recognised when the cash has been received, even though it may be the intention of Autism Queensland Limited (and grantor) that those funds be applied over multiple reporting periods. Accounting revenue not being fully utilised in the period it has been recorded can result in fluctuating surpluses and deficits from year to year.

Objectives

Vision

A life of participation, opportunity and choice for people on the autism spectrum.

Mission

To support people living with autism 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 supports for people living with autism through financial sustainability, growth, and supportive infrastructure.

Goals and strategies

Goals

- 0 Quality
- 0 Sustainability
- 0 Growth
- 0 Infrastructure

Strategies

- 0 Consumer focus
- 0 Quality focus
- 0 Economies of scale
- 0 Cost focus
- 0 Partnership and collaboration
- 0 Organisation development
- 0 IT infrastructure
- 0 Leverage applications

Principal activities

- 0 Autism-specific education through an accredited independent school, comprising three Education and Therapy centres in Brisbane and Cairns, for students (aged 5 years – 18 years) with a verification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) delivered by an expert team of teachers, therapists and wellbeing facilitators.
- 0 Autism Queensland Limited is registered with the National Disability Insurance Scheme to provide supports to people on the autism spectrum.
- 0 EarlyAQtion childhood groups and individual therapy services delivered at our centres in Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns.
- 0 Autism Queensland's allied health and education professionals deliver a range of services and supports, including individual therapy, group therapy and allied health and diagnostic assessments for people of all ages through our centres, in the home and other community settings.
- 0 Behaviour support services delivered by registered behaviour support practitioners from our centres in Brisbane, Mackay, Gladstone and Cairns.
- 0 Education support services delivered by multi-disciplinary teams with expertise in the education of children on the autism spectrum across State, Catholic and Independent schools in Queensland.
- 0 Individually designed services and supports to suit a diverse range of needs and available for individuals on the spectrum, their families, community organisations, schools, early childhood services and others seeking specialist support. May involve therapy and support delivered in the home, workplace or community, as well as training of staff to support the inclusion of the person on the spectrum in these settings.
- 0 Vacation care, after school groups and community access in Brisbane.
- 0 Autism Queensland Limited hosts the National Co-ordinator of the Early Days program for parents and other family members of young children (0 – 6 years) who are on the autism spectrum. They are also for parents who feel their child may be on the spectrum but have not received a formal diagnosis. We also deliver the Early Days workshops in Queensland.
- 0 Autism Queensland Limited delivers the Autism EmployABLE project in South East Queensland to help businesses understand autism and develop their capacity to employ people on the spectrum.
- 0 Accommodation for adults on the autism spectrum aged 18 – 65 years to live in their own home across South East Queensland, with 24-hour support provided by lifestyle support workers.
- 0 Non-accredited training - Professional Learning and Development Services.
- 0 Autism Queensland Limited is committed to evidence-informed practice. We are an Essential Participant in the Autism CRC and work collaboratively with researchers across Australia. Research and development at Autism Queensland Limited is led by Dr Jill Ashburner.

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.

Directors

Ian Langdon

MBA, BCom, DipEd, FCPA,
FAICD

Title:

Non-Executive Chair

Experience and Expertise:

Ian has extensive Board and Chair experience with past roles at Dairy Farmers, Rabobank, Delta Electricity, Pivot Fertilisers and the Peanut Company of Australia, and is currently Board Chair of Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. He has held a number of academic positions including Associate Professor and Dean of Business at Griffith University (Gold Coast); and has lived experience as the grandfather of a teenager with autism.

Special Responsibilities:

Ex officio member Audit and Risk Committee
Ex officio member People and Safety Committee

Danielle Butcher

GCert, BA, BAppSc(Biology)

Title:

Non-Executive Director

Experience and Expertise:

Danielle has over 20 years' experience leading successful teams, programs and specialised projects. She has a strong understanding of the not-for-profit sector, government, policy, governance, asset and facilities management, education and awareness, indigenous issues, disabilities, tenancy issues, hardship and concession programs, customer management, complaints management and standards. Danielle has direct experience in disability and the NDIS through her role as a carer for her son with ASD and as the founder and director of an NDIS intermediaries business.

Special Responsibilities:

Chair People and Safety Committee

Joanne Peulen

BA(Hons), MAppFinInv,
AdvDipFinServ, GAICD,
JP(Qual)

Title:

Non-Executive Director

Experience and Expertise:

Joanne has extensive experience in senior management roles in the energy industry and is an independent consultant specializing in strategic financial and business risk management. She brings to Autism Queensland her own personal experience of living with disability and a firm belief in the link between culture, performance and resilience.

Special Responsibilities:

Chair Audit and Risk Committee

Neil Makepeace

BSc(Hons), MSc, GAICD

Title:

Non-Executive Director

Experience and Expertise:

Neil is an experienced leader and director with 30 years' experience solving complex problems in Queensland, around Australia and worldwide. He has a strong track record in governance, executive leadership, management consulting, strategic planning, systems development and operations. His passions include driving business growth and creating public value. Neil is a recognised leader in the field of open data.

Special Responsibilities:

Member Audit and Risk Committee

Scott Reid

BEd

Title:

Non-Executive Director

Experience and Expertise:

Scott is the director of Smart & Connected networks, RIoT Solutions. Scott has over 27 years' experience in the ICT industry in Queensland, including 17 years in senior management at Cisco Systems. He has held management roles with national and international companies such as Dell Computer Systems and Volante and previously owned and operated a large local ICT firm, Silicon Data. Scott is dedicated to ensuring the ICT industry's participation in social responsibility and continues to be a strong advocate for the industry. His personal areas of expertise include Healthcare and Education, and he has been a thought leader for the concept of Smart Connected Communities and Intelligent Urbanisation.

Directors' meetings

The number of Directors' meetings (including meetings of committees of Directors) and the number of meetings attended by each of the Directors during the year are:

	Full Board		Audit & Risk Committee		People & Safety Committee	
	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held
Danielle Butcher	10	10	-	-	2	2
Ian Langdon	10	10	3	4	1	2
Joanne Peulen	10	10	4	4	-	-
Karen Hauff	5	5	-	-	2	2
Neil Makepeace	10	10	4	4	-	-
Scott Reid	9	10	-	-	-	-

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 \$25 based on 25 current members.

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under s.60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 is set out on the following page.

On behalf of the directors,



Ian Langdon

Chairman - Director
Brisbane, 27 April 2021



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Brisbane QLD 4000
GPO Box 457 Brisbane QLD 4001
Australia

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

As lead auditor of Autism Queensland Limited for the year ended 31 December 2020, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

1. No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of Division 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
2. No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Michael Cutri
Director

BDO Audit Pty Ltd
Brisbane
17 May 2021

BDO Audit Pty Ltd ABN 33 134 022 870 is a member of a national association of independent entities which are all members of BDO Australia Ltd ABN 77 050 110 275, an Australian company limited by guarantee. BDO Audit Pty Ltd and BDO Australia Ltd are members of BDO International Ltd, a UK company limited by guarantee, and form part of the international BDO network of independent member firms. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	11,603,914	4,986,191
Trade and other receivables	5	451,062	1,103,029
Other assets and prepayments		638,751	429,413
Assets classified as held for sale		-	480,584
Total Current Assets		12,693,727	6,518,633
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	6	18,820,198	17,127,820
Intangible assets	7	251,193	412,300
Financial assets	8	21,357	21,357
Total Non-Current Assets		19,092,748	17,561,477
Total Assets		31,786,475	24,080,110
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	9	3,793,019	3,725,522
Financial and lease liabilities	10	491,923	384,985
Provisions	11	2,546,447	2,019,967
Total Current Liabilities		6,831,389	6,130,474
Non-Current Liabilities			
Financial and lease liabilities	10	2,327,332	1,370,066
Provisions	11	387,266	365,966
Total Non Current Liabilities		2,714,598	1,736,032
Total Liabilities		9,545,987	7,866,506
Net Assets		22,240,488	16,213,604
Equity			
Revaluation reserves		9,148,484	9,148,484
Accumulated funds		13,092,004	7,065,120
Total Equity	12	22,240,488	16,213,604

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

Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Income			
Government subsidies		18,626,928	11,959,293
Revenue from rendering of services		18,185,224	13,796,772
Fundraising activities		196,894	211,310
Capital grants		372,724	656,360
Interest income		8,280	16,249
Sundry income		33,897	64,987
Total Income		37,423,947	26,704,971
Expenditure			
Employee expenses		26,962,141	22,115,088
Facilities expenses		2,258,652	2,112,179
Marketing expenses		94,265	97,692
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		813,050	631,956
Interest expenses		81,976	73,029
Other expenses		1,186,979	858,351
Total Expenditure		31,397,063	25,888,295
Net Surplus for the year	2	6,026,884	816,676
Other Comprehensive Income			
Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss			
Net gain on revaluation of land and buildings		-	-
Other Comprehensive Income for the year		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		6,026,884	816,676

The Statement of 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 2020

	Revaluation Reserves \$	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 31 December 2018	9,148,484	6,248,444	15,396,928
Net Surplus for the year	-	816,676	816,676
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2019	9,148,484	7,065,120	16,213,604
Net Surplus for the year	-	6,026,884	6,026,884
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2020	9,148,484	13,092,004	22,240,488

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 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts in the course of operations		38,242,230	27,483,939
Payments to suppliers and employees		(30,270,028)	(26,208,910)
Interest received		8,280	16,249
Interest paid		(81,417)	(68,960)
Net cash provided by operating activities		7,899,065	1,222,318
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from disposal of property, plant and equipment		-	462,758
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(2,291,892)	(1,585,865)
Purchase of intangible assets		(38,713)	(2,168)
Net cash used in investing activities		(2,330,605)	(1,125,275)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Lease payments		(118,226)	(96,502)
Proceeds from bank loans		1,515,586	367,045
Repayments of bank loans		(348,097)	(228,311)
Net cash (used in) / provided by financing activities		1,049,263	42,232
Net increase in cash held		6,617,723	139,275
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		4,986,191	4,846,916
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	4	11,603,914	4,986,191

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 2020

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 non-reciprocal subsidies and grants; donations; third party fundraising; and bequests which are accounted for on a cash basis.

Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the basis that the Company is a going concern, which contemplates the continuity of normal business activity, realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the normal course of business. Should the Company not be able to continue as a going concern, it may be required to realise its assets and discharge its liabilities other than in the ordinary course of business, and at amounts that differ from those stated in the financial statements and that the financial report does not include any adjustments relating to the recoverability and classification of recorded asset amounts or liabilities that might be necessary should the Company not continue as a going concern.

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.

General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Entities

AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Entities* replaces the current Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDR) framework applicable to Tier 2 entities and is mandatorily applicable to annual reporting periods beginning 1 July 2021. AASB 1060 does not change the recognition and measurement requirements contained in other standards but does change the disclosures required by Tier 2 entities. It has been determined by management that the adoption of the new standard will not have any material impact on the financial statements.

Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current

AASB 2020-1 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current* and AASB 2020-6 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current – Deferral of Effective Date* amend AASB 101 by clarifying the presentation of liabilities as current or non-current in the statement of financial position and not the amount or timing of recognition of any asset, liability, income or expenses, or the information disclosed about those items, and defer the implementation date to reporting periods beginning on 1 January 2023. It has been determined by management that the adoption of the new accounting policy will not have any material impact on the financial statements.

New and Amended Accounting Policies Adopted by the Company Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Definition of Material

AASB 2018-7 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Definition of Material* amends AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements* and AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*, and makes consequential amendments to several other pronouncements and publications. The amendments make the definition of material in AASB 101 easier to understand and are not intended to alter the underlying concept of materiality in Australian Accounting Standards. The concept of 'obscuring' material information with immaterial information has been included as part of the new definition. The threshold for materiality influencing users has been changed from 'could influence' to 'could reasonably be expected to influence'. The definition of material in AASB 101 has been replaced by a reference to the definition of material in AASB 101. In addition, the Standard also amends other Australian Accounting Standards and the Conceptual Framework that contain a definition of 'material' or refer to the term 'material' to ensure consistency. The effects of AASB 2018-7 have been assessed and no material adjustments have been made.

1. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

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 7 - Property, plant and equipment
- Note 12 - Provisions - long service leave provision.

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.

(a) Revenue recognition

The company recognises revenue as follows:

Revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the Company is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. The Company recognises revenue in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised.

Grants

Grants arise from non-exchange transactions where the company does not directly give approximately equal value to the grantor. Where the grant agreement is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations for the company to transfer goods or services to a third-party on the grantor's behalf, the transaction is accounted for under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers. In this case, revenue is initially deferred (as a contract liability) and recognised as or when the performance obligations are satisfied. Otherwise, the grant is accounted for under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities, whereby revenue is recognised upon receipt of the grant funding, except from special purpose capital grants received to construct non-financial assets to be controlled by the company. The company has a number of grant arrangements with Federal and State government that relate to funding of activity-based services. Most of these arrangements have been identified as having sufficiently specific performance obligations under enforceable grant agreements.

Donations, fundraising and bequests

Donations, third party fundraising 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.

1. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

(d) Financial instruments

Recognition, initial measurement and derecognition

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Financial assets are derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire, or when the financial asset and all substantial risks and rewards are transferred. A financial liability is derecognised when it is extinguished, discharged, cancelled or expires.

Classification and subsequent measurement of financial assets

Financial assets are classified as subsequently measured at amortised cost, fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) or fair value through profit or loss (FVPL) on the basis of both:

- The Company's business model for managing the financial asset;
- The contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset.

A financial asset is classified as subsequently measured at amortised cost if the asset meets the following conditions (and is not designated as FVPL):

- It is held within a business model whose objective is to hold the financial asset and collect its contractual cash flows;
- The contractual terms of the financial asset give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding.

The Company's cash and cash equivalents, trade and most other receivables fall into this classification of financial asset.

After initial recognition, these financial assets are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Discounting is omitted where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

All income and expenses relating to financial assets that are recognised in profit or loss are presented within finance costs, finance income or other financial items, except for impairment of trade receivables which is presented within other expenses.

Impairment of financial assets

AASB 9's impairment requirements use more forward-looking information to recognise expected credit losses. Instruments within the scope of the new requirements included trade receivables and loan commitments that are not measured at fair value through profit or loss.

The Company considers a broader range of information when assessing credit risk and measuring expected credit losses, including past events, current conditions, reasonable and supportable forecasts that affect the expected collectability of the future cash flows of the instrument.

Measurement of the expected credit losses is determined by a probability-weighted estimate of credit losses over the expected life of the financial instrument. The Company used the simplified approach applicable under AASB 9 which does not require tracking of changes in credit risk in every reporting period, but instead requires the recognition of lifetime expected credit loss at all times.

Classification and subsequent measurement of financial liabilities

The Company's financial liabilities include borrowings, trade and other payables. Financial liabilities are classified as subsequently measured at amortised cost. After initial recognition, financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

(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) Leases

The accounting policy for leases is described in note 6.

1. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

(g) Impairment of non-financial assets

At the end of each reporting period, the Company assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. For non-cash generating specialised assets measured using the cost basis, the recoverable amount is determined using current replacement cost in AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another Standard (eg in accordance with the revaluation model in AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment). Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other Standard.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the Company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

(h) Comparative figures

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

2. Operating surplus

The operating surplus for the year has been arrived at after charging the following items:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Bad and doubtful debts expense	389,685	127,000
Interest paid on loans	44,096	33,788
Interest paid on leases	37,880	39,241

3. Auditor's remuneration

Audit Services	36,500	40,300
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4. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash on hand	9,428	8,689
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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

Current	975,247	1,237,529
Trade accounts receivable	(524,185)	(134,500)
Provision for doubtful debts	451,062	1,103,029

6. Property, plant and equipment

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Land at fair value	9,170,922	8,160,000
Buildings		
Buildings at fair value	6,329,010	6,123,287
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(573,797)	(271,029)
	<u>5,755,213</u>	<u>5,852,258</u>
Property improvements at cost	1,620,562	1,497,502
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(60,473)	(21,107)
	<u>1,560,089</u>	<u>1,476,395</u>
Leasehold improvements at cost	1,273,365	1,273,365
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(278,939)	(227,674)
	<u>994,426</u>	<u>1,045,691</u>
Total written down value of buildings	8,309,728	8,374,344
Motor vehicles at cost	1,117,758	1,057,986
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(989,394)	(934,350)
Total written down value of motor vehicles	128,364	123,636
Furniture and equipment at cost	2,874,958	2,653,739
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(2,383,158)	(2,218,648)
Total written down value of furniture and equipment	491,800	435,091
Work in progress at cost	719,385	34,749
Total property, plant and equipment	18,820,199	17,127,820

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 & Equipment	Work in progress	Total
Balance at 1 January 2020	8,160,000	8,374,344	123,636	435,091	34,749	17,127,820
Additions	1,010,922	284,819	59,772	222,162	714,217	2,291,892
Disposals	-	-	-	(669)	-	(669)
Transfers	-	29,581	-	-	(29,581)	-
Right of Use valuation increase	-	14,384	-	-	-	14,384
Depreciation	-	(393,400)	(55,044)	(164,784)	-	(613,228)
Balance at 31 December 2020	9,170,922	8,309,728	128,364	491,800	719,385	18,820,199

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.

6. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

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. Valuations were last carried out by Herron Todd White as at 31 December 2018. The Company has assessed the carrying value at balance date to still be appropriate.

Estimation of useful lives of assets

The company determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation charges for its property, plant and equipment assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

Leases

The Company leases various offices, equipment and vehicles. Rental contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 6 months to 3 years, but may include extension options as described below.

Contracts may contain both lease and non-lease components. The Company allocates the consideration in the contract to the lease and non-lease components based on their relative stand-alone prices. However, for leases of real estate for which the Company is a lessee, it has elected not to separate lease and non-lease components and instead accounts for these as a single lease component.

Lease terms are negotiated on an individual basis and contain a wide variety of different terms and conditions. The lease agreements do not impose any covenants other than security interests in the leased assets that are held by the lessor. Leased assets may not be used as security for borrowing purposes.

Leases are recognised as a right-of-use asset and a corresponding liability at the date at which the leased asset is available for use by the Company.

Assets and liabilities arising from a lease are initially measured on a present value basis. Lease liabilities include the present value of the following lease payments:

- Fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), less any lease incentives receivable
- Variable lease payments that are based on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date.
- Amounts expected to be payable by the Company under residual value guarantees
- The exercise of a purchase option if the Company is reasonably certain to exercise that option, and
- Payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the Company exercising that option.

Lease payments to be made under reasonably certain extension options are also included in the measurement of the liability.

In calculating the present value of lease payments, the Company uses its incremental borrowing rate at the lease commencement date because the interest rate implicit in the lease is not readily determinable. After the commencement date, the amount of lease liabilities is increased to reflect the accretion of interest and reduced for the lease payments made. In addition, the carrying amount of lease liabilities is remeasured if there is a modification, a change in the lease term, a change in the lease payments (e.g. changes to future payments resulting from a change in an index or rate used to determine the lease payments) or a change in the assessment of an option to purchase the underlying asset.

The Company applies the short-term lease recognition exemption to its short-term leases of property and equipment. It also applies the lease of low-value assets recognition exemption to leases of office equipment that are considered to be low-value. Lease payments on short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as expenses on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

The Company recognises right-of-use assets at the later of commencement date of the lease or date of transition. Right-of-use assets are measured at cost, less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses, adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liabilities recognised, initial direct costs incurred, and lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received. Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of the lease term and the estimated useful lives of the assets. Right-of-use assets are included in the same line item as that within which the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

6. Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Leases (continued)

The balance sheet shows the following amounts relating to leases:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Right-of-use assets		
Buildings	526,460	623,202
Motor vehicles	54,025	89,911
	<u>580,485</u>	<u>713,113</u>
Lease liabilities		
Current	184,936	176,319
Non-current	454,609	566,509
	<u>639,545</u>	<u>742,828</u>

Additions to the right-of-use assets during 2020 were \$nil.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income shows the following amounts relating to leases:

Depreciation charge of right-of-use assets

Buildings	111,126	80,586
Motor vehicles	27,267	33,357
	<u>138,393</u>	<u>113,943</u>
Interest expenses	37,880	39,241
Expense relating to short-term leases (included in facilities expenses)	31,991	27,300
Expense relating to leases of low-value assets (included in facilities expenses)	37,476	34,557

The total cash outflow for leases in 2020 was \$220,071.

Critical estimate/judgement on estimated useful life of assets

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

7. Intangible assets

Software

Gross carrying amount

Balance at 1 January	631,234	629,066
Additions	38,713	2,168
Balance at 31 December	<u>669,947</u>	<u>631,234</u>

7. Intangible assets (continued)

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Accumulated amortisation		
Balance at 1 January	218,934	92,687
Amortisation	199,820	126,247
Balance at 31 December	<u>418,754</u>	<u>218,934</u>
Carrying amount at 31 December	<u>251,193</u>	<u>412,300</u>

Computer software is measured as the costs incurred to acquire and install the specific software less accumulated amortisation and impairment losses. Software is amortised over its useful life of 3 to 5 years.

8. Financial assets**Non-current**

Security deposit	21,347	21,347
Investment in subsidiary companies	10	10
	<u>21,357</u>	<u>21,357</u>

The security deposit is a term deposit that provides security for a bank guarantee issued by Westpac Banking Corporation to The Trust Company in respect of Autism Queensland Limited's obligations under the lease of 55-67 Bellrick Street, Acacia Ridge. No withdrawal from the term deposit is permitted until the earlier of 31 January 2022, being the expiry date of the guarantee, or payment of the guaranteed amount.

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.

9. Trade and other payables**Current**

Trade creditors	291,650	252,560
Other creditors and accruals	1,500,174	1,099,199
Subsidies in advance and unexpended funds	2,001,195	2,373,763
	<u>3,793,019</u>	<u>3,725,522</u>

10. Financial and lease liabilities**Current**

Bank loans	306,987	208,666
Lease liabilities	184,936	176,319
	<u>491,923</u>	<u>384,985</u>

Non-Current

Bank loans	1,872,724	803,557
Lease liabilities	454,609	566,509
	<u>2,327,333</u>	<u>1,370,066</u>

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

- 1st Mortgage 331 Jackson Road, Sunnybank Hills
- 1st Mortgage 136 North Road, Brighton
- 1st Mortgage – 136A North Road, Brighton
- 1st Mortgage – 20 Commodore Street, Sunnybank Hills
- 2nd Mortgage 437 Hellawell Road, Sunnybank Hills

	2020 \$	2019 \$
11. Provisions		
Current		
Employee entitlements	2,546,447	2,019,967
Non-Current		
Employee entitlements	387,266	365,966

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.

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 national 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.

12. Total equity

Revaluation reserves

Asset revaluation reserve

Bought forward at beginning of year	9,148,484	9,148,484
Revaluation increments	-	-
Carried forward at end of year	9,148,484	9,148,484

Accumulated funds

Bought forward at beginning of year	7,065,120	6,248,444
Surplus for the year	6,026,884	816,676
Carried forward at end of year	13,092,004	7,065,120

Total equity	22,240,488	16,213,604
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13. 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 and a team of four (2019 – four) executive managers, comprising the Chief Executive Officer and three executives.

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	753,955	608,920
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14. 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.

A legal action has been lodged against the Company which is being addressed by the Company's solicitors and insurers. Due to COVID19 there has been minimal progression with the claim and as at the date of this report the financial impact, if any, is unable to be determined.

15. Commitments

Capital commitments

Capital commitments relate to property improvements where funds have been committed but the work has not been completed.

Property, plant and equipment	1,121,732	-
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16. Related party transactions

There were no transactions with key management personnel other than as disclosed in Note 13.

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.

17. 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)	40,224	7,291
	<u>1,040,224</u>	<u>1,007,291</u>

18. Subsequent events

On 1 January 2021 the legislation on portable long service leave scheme passed by the Queensland Government became effective for community services workers. Management is currently in the process of assessing the applicability of the scheme to its employees and the impact to the provisions recognised in the financial statements.

Other than the information disclosed above, 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.

19. Economic dependence

The Company is dependent on the continued receipt of government subsidies for a significant proportion of the revenue used to operate its business. At the date of this report, the Company has no reason to believe the income from grants will not continue.

Directors' Declaration

For the year ended 31 December 2020

The Directors declare that in the Directors' opinion:

1. The financial statements, comprising the Statement of Financial Position, Statement of 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:
 - b. Comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 (ACNC Regulation 2013); and
 - c. Give a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 31 December 2020 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. There are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors by:



Ian Langdon

Chairman – Director
Brisbane, 17 May 2021



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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 (the registered entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2020, 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' (responsible entities') 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, including:

- (i) Giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 31 December 2020 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards 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 the registered entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of 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 (including Independence Standards) (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

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information obtained at the date of this auditor's report is information included in the Autism Queensland Limited's annual report, 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 on the other information obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, 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 responsible entities for the Financial Report

The responsible entities of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, responsible entities are responsible for assessing the registered entity'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 responsible entities either intends to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the registered entity'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_responsibilities/ar4.pdf

This description forms part of our auditor's report.

BDO Audit Pty Ltd

Michael Cutri
Director

Brisbane
17 May 2021

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