

LIGHTHOUSE NEWS

Autumn 2023



Eggcellent Easter Picnic

On Sunday April 16 we came together as a Lighthouse Disability community for our Easter Picnic at the Greenwith Community Centre.

Clients, families and staff from across Lighthouse Disability's services were in attendance, as well as members of our Board who took the opportunity to connect with each other and most of all, have fun.

With a delicious sausage sizzle generously donated by the Tea Tree Gully Lions Club, coffee provided from the Mrs. Sippy Coffee Van and groovy music by the talented B Boppa Loo Loo's, this was an event not to be missed.

It also provided the opportunity for our Park Terrace office based staff to meet some of the clients we support.

Debra Battams, who usually works in our rostering team, was a key part of the event operations team and enjoyed being able to put faces to the names of our clients.

"It was rewarding seeing so many smiles on our clients' faces and having so much fun" Debra says.

This year's picnic was the first for a number of attendees, including our incoming Chief Executive Officer Andrew Ellis.

"What a fantastic way to come together as a community. It's great seeing so many clients, families and staff all under the same roof connecting and celebrating the new year," Andrew says.

"I would like to thank the staff, volunteers and our supporters who helped bring together our Easter Picnic. I look forward to holding many more events just like this in the future."

For more photos see page 7

A portrait of Andrew Ellis, a middle-aged man with short grey hair, wearing a dark suit and a light blue shirt. He is smiling slightly. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a building with large windows and the word 'ABILITY' in large blue letters.

Andrew's Welcome

Hello and welcome to our first newsletter for 2023.

Let me introduce myself, my name is Andrew Ellis and I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity of becoming Lighthouse Disability's Chief Executive Officer.

On Wednesday April 12, I celebrated 100 days in the role and have spent that time getting to know our people and services. You can learn more about me and my background on the next page in our '5 minutes with' section.

As we re-institute our regular communication with you, we wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the exciting things happening at Lighthouse Disability.

Over the last few months, we have welcomed a number of new members to our team including Service Leads, Managers of Service Delivery and office based staff at Park Terrace. It's great to see so many of these positions have been hired from within and this is a testament to the great people we already have in the organisation.

In the coming months we will be supporting these staff through leadership and development training to become the best leaders they can be.

At the same time, we unfortunately had to say a goodbye to some departing team members, including Ray Johnson who has chosen to retire. Many of you would have met Ray through his role as a Manager of Service Delivery and we wish him well in his retirement.

As an NDIS provider we receive a lot of questions and to help our community gain a greater understanding of our services and role, we have written two articles which we have included in this newsletter:

- What is the role of a Supported Independent Living (SIL) provider?
- Answering your plan management questions

We are planning on creating a range of these articles in the future, so if there's an area that you'd like more information on please let us know.

Happy reading.

Andrew Ellis
Chief Executive Officer

Out and about in Autumn

We pride ourselves on delivering person-centred active support to all our clients. Check out what we've been up to below.



Nothing beats a beautiful day and a BBQ with your housemates. It was a perfect blend of food, laughs and sunshine, which made for an amazing afternoon.



We love wandering around the aisles, discovering new ingredients and planning meals for the week ahead. Plus, there's something satisfying about stocking up on all the essentials.



Easter might be over, but that doesn't mean that you can't still eat chocolate. Who else is still getting through their easter chocolate stash?



Getting in touch with nature. Visiting Belair National Park is always a joy - there's so many different trails and animals to meet.



Choo-choo, we're on our way! There's something so magical about riding the Cockle Train from Goolwa to Victor Harbor - the sights, the sounds, the adventure.



We took advantage of some beautiful weather with a lovely walk through the park. It was great to be able to soak up some sunshine and fresh air.

5 minutes with Andrew

As we re-institute our regular client newsletter, we've sat down with CEO Andrew Ellis to see what's been happening in his first few months at Lighthouse Disability.

What are your first impressions here at Lighthouse Disability?

I think Lighthouse Disability is something of a well-kept secret. Not as many people know about us as should, and we have a really committed team of support workers and office staff providing support to our clients.

I've been impressed with the number of long-term staff – especially Community Support Workers who are at the heart of what we do – and have supported our long-term clients for so long.

So what does the role of being CEO entail?

Some people have said to me that as CEO, it's my job to run the business, but a more accurate description is that it is my role to *lead the people who run the business*.

Now with about 250 staff and over 200 clients, unfortunately it is impossible for me to know and regularly meet with everyone. It's important that we build the processes so that issues can be addressed more quickly at a local level, and that's been a key part of us putting the Service Lead roles into the houses and in backing them up with the Managers of Service Delivery. Day to day, I work closely with our key staff leading both our SIL and plan management services, as well as those responsible for client quality & safeguarding, people & culture, marketing and finance.

Where did you work previously and why come to Lighthouse Disability?

I started out my career as a mechanical engineer and progressed through management roles to lead quality and also sales/marketing/strategy in that setting. Being made redundant through the global financial crisis led me to a career change and having spent a number of years in not-for-profit board roles, I managed to transition to not-for-profit management.

This is now my third CEO role in disability services. Back in 2017, I oversaw the MS Society SA/NT becoming NDIS registered, as well as leading their disability employment services business, Multiple Solutions. For the past couple of years, I was at Enhanced Lifestyles overseeing their NDIS work with in-home and community support, SIL and support coordination. In between these positions, I was a business consultant with CBB, and worked with 15 different organisations across Australia to start or grow their NDIS services.

How do you see the NDIS evolving at the moment, and what can we expect to see next?

It is certainly true that the NDIS is constantly evolving. We've seen many changes over the past few years including changed regulations last year for mealtime management, dysphagia and emergency management.

There is a NDIS Review led by Minister Bill Shorten going on at the moment and we can expect to see announcements out of that in the second half of the year.

The Disability Royal Commission is also well progressed now and will produce its final report about October 2023.

Each of these are expected to introduce further change into the future, which we will need to consider and address as needed.

What changes are planned at Lighthouse and when can we expect to see more?

One of the most important changes we are making at the moment is the introduction of Service Lead roles. This might feel 'back to the future' as we reintroduce this role across the SIL houses. About half of these roles have been recruited now and we are working through recruitment of the others. I'm particularly excited that we've managed to fill so many roles with existing staff, and are now working towards having all Service Leads in houses in the next few months.

Our NDIS accreditation audit is later this year and we've just had a specialist external consultant review areas we need to improve before then, so we are now putting a range of actions in place to support that.

We will further communicate with clients and families about this in coming months, but I am aiming through this review process that we can better clarify some of the key responsibilities, and what is included/excluded from Lighthouse Disability's role.

We're also looking at improving our software to ensure we are as efficient and consistent as we can be with the important business processes that support the way we provide supports and services to clients.



Welcome to our new Service Leads

We've been busy over the last few weeks inducting our first group of Service Leads and are proud that this group is made up of mostly existing Lighthouse Disability staff.

Performing admin duties as well as supporting clients, Service Leads play a key role in ensuring Community Support Workers are well equipped to deliver the best service to their clients, through coaching, guidance and mentoring.

Service Leads understand the different challenges that people living with disability may face, and the opportunities available to them so they can provide the appropriate services and staff to meet these needs. Service Leads report to a Manager Service Delivery (MSD).

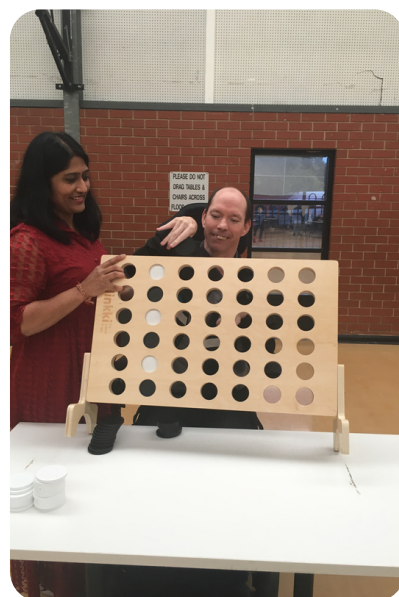
We haven't finalised the roll out of these new positions yet, so if your service hasn't been introduced to a Service Lead don't worry – you don't have long to wait. We are planning to finalise the full roll out of Service Leads in the coming months.


In the meantime, please join me in welcoming and congratulating the following people into their new role:

- Jeanette Mberi
- Kuldeep Kaur
- Matthew Wilshire
- Ravi Verma
- Sumeet Sharma
- Ganga Ram Ghimire
- Karin Samoura

Lea Smart
General Manager, Client Services

Easter Picnic





What is the role of a Supported Independent Living provider?

The world of the NDIS is constantly changing and it's important to keep up with the latest developments. There are a lot of different types of NDIS funded support and it can be hard to keep track of what each provider does.

As a NDIS participant you may be entitled to receive support from a Supported Independent Living (also known as SIL) provider.

SIL providers are responsible for ensuring you have access to the supports and services you need to live independently. There are however, several areas of support that a SIL provider does not do.

What does a SIL provider do?

SIL providers offer a range of support services, including:

- **Assistance with daily living activities:** This includes help with personal care, housekeeping, meal preparation, laundry, and shopping.
- **Assistance with health and well-being:** SIL providers will help in the management of your health conditions, coordination of medical appointments, and general well-being.

What can a SIL provider do?

Depending on your funding, a SIL provider might also be able to provide you with additional support services. This includes:

- **Delivering community participation support:** While they can support you in connecting with your community, NDIS SIL providers are not responsible for providing community participation support completely. As a provider of community participation, Lighthouse Disability is registered to provide this support, but it will need to come out of a different part of your NDIS funding.
- **Providing accommodation:** There are some instances where a SIL provider might also own the property where you live; however, in most instances you will be renting your property from a community housing or Specialist Disability Accommodation (also known as SDA) provider. You will sign a tenancy agreement with your housing provider, which is different to the service agreement you will sign with your SIL provider. Most of Lighthouse Disability's SIL houses are owned by others, but we do own a small number.

- **Providing transportation:** SIL providers may not always provide transportation services, however they are able to help participants plan and coordinate transport services with external providers. Lighthouse Disability is however a provider of transportation services and can support SIL clients with transport if they have funding in their NDIS plan.

What a SIL provider does NOT do?

While SIL providers offer a range of supports and services, there are certain things that they are not responsible for. This includes:

- **Providing clinical care:** SIL providers aren't qualified to provide clinical care services. While they may offer some supports related to a person's health needs and assistance with medication management, they can't administer all types of medication, provide medical treatment or perform medical procedures.
- **Connecting you with other providers:** SIL providers may assist you with the navigation of NDIS or other government systems, however they will not generally help you connect with other providers. This role within the NDIS is funded and provided by a Support Coordinator who works with you/your family or guardian. They have the skills, experience and qualifications to provide you with independent support to connect you with NDIS providers for other supports and services you need.
- **Advocate on someone's behalf:** SIL providers are in the unique position of supporting people 24/7 and may be able to assist others advocate on someone's behalf. The NDIS does not traditionally

but there are other independent advocacy organisations that do, including:

- Citizen Advocacy South Australia
- Disability Advocacy & Complaints Service of SA
- Disability Rights Advocacy Service Inc
- Independent Advocacy SA
- Brain Injury SA
- Disability Advocacy Service – Uniting Communities

- **Taking over household tasks:** SIL providers will help you learn new skills towards managing household tasks, but they are not responsible for taking over all your household tasks.

In conclusion, NDIS Supported Independent Living providers are responsible for ensuring that you have access to the support services you need to live independently.

There are a number of optional extras that a SIL provider might be able to support you with, however this is up to you to choose and negotiate with your provider.

It's important to have a clear understanding of what your SIL provider can and can't do, in order to ensure that your needs are met accordingly.



Answering your Plan Management questions

To help our clients and NDIS participants alike, we decided to take the most commonly asked questions about plan management and answer them here.

What is NDIS Plan Management?

NDIS Plan Management is a service available for people whose NDIS plans are 'plan-managed'.

A Plan Manager is responsible for the financial management of your NDIS plan. Their role includes:

- Receiving and paying invoices from providers that you use.
- Managing NDIS claims and reimbursements on your behalf.
- Monitoring your budget and spend against your plan duration, notifying you if you are using too much or too little.
- Providing statements so you can see your funding usage.
- Promptly answering any questions you may have about your plan or invoices.

How do I pay my plan manager?

The National Disability Insurance Agency (the organisation that runs the NDIS) provides funding within your NDIS plan to pay for a Plan Manager so you're not out of pocket. Plan Managers are paid a monthly fee for the

duration of your plan, and this comes out of the 'Improved Life Choices' part of your Capacity Building budget. Any set-up fees are also covered by your funding.

How do I become plan-managed?

There are three ways to manage your NDIS funding:

1. **Plan-managed:** a Plan Manager pays your providers on your behalf, tracks your spend, and completes any financial reporting required by the NDIA.
2. **Agency-managed:** the NDIS pays your providers on your behalf.
3. **Self-managed:** you receive your NDIS plan funds, which you use to pay providers yourself.

If you are agency-managed or self-managed but want to be plan-managed, it's easy to change over. Simply call the NDIS on 1800 800 110 or your Local Area Coordinator, whose contact details will be on your NDIS plan. Let them know you want to change how your funds are managed.

There is no major eligibility criteria that you need to meet in order to become plan-managed, but you may be asked to explain your reasons for making the request.

This can be as simple as wanting more assistance with managing your funding (if you are self-managed), or wanting access to a broader range of services, such as providers who are not NDIA-registered (if you are agency-managed).

What are the benefits of plan management?

Our team of Plan Managers love what they do because plan management can drastically improve a participant's NDIS journey – it's so rewarding to play a role in this!

While working with participants, we see a few clear benefits:

- We're immersed in the NDIS, so we can help you understand your plan and entitlements if you are unsure about something, helping you to get the most out of your plan.
- We handle the daily administration, such as paying invoices, tracking your spending, and notifying you of anything important. Compared with self-management, plan-management involves far less work for you.
- Plan-managed participants have a lot more freedom than agency-managed participants. They can choose from a broader range of providers, including unregistered providers, whereas agency-managed participants can only use registered providers.

How is a Plan Manager different to a Support Coordinator?

A Support Coordinator is responsible for arranging your supports based on your NDIS funding, goals, and your individual circumstances. They work with you to select service providers, manage the referral process, and check in with you to make sure you're happy with your supports.

They also complete end-of-plan reporting on your behalf.

When you compare the duties we outlined in the first question above, it's clear that a Plan Manager and a Support Coordinator perform very different roles. So, having a Plan Manager and a Support Coordinator on board can make you absolutely unstoppable in the pursuit of your goals.

How do I change plan managers?

Good news: changing plan managers is nowhere near as complicated as it seems. If you're not happy with your current plan manager, you can change to a new one at any time. Here's what you need to do:

1. Find a new plan manager that you want to try. Make initial contact with them and check that they can take you on. Let them know that you'll be transferring from another plan manager.
2. Write an email to your current plan manager to let them know you're switching to a new provider. Request that they confirm the date that they will release your account; this is typically between 15 and 30 days from when you cancel.
3. Contact the new plan manager and give them the green light to start managing your plan when your old plan manager stops.

It's as easy as that! Plus, your Support Coordinator or Psychosocial Recovery Coach (if you have one) can help you complete this process.

There are no costs associated with changing NDIS plan managers as your plan covers set-up fees.

Get the most out of your plan with Lighthouse Disability's team of experienced Plan Managers.



Share your feedback

Lighthouse Disability is committed to providing high quality disability support services. This is done through the delivery of person-centered services for people with disability.

To achieve this, Lighthouse Disability reviews its services and strives for continuous improvement in all that it does. A key part of our continuous improvement is receiving feedback about people's experiences with the support services we provide.

How do I share my feedback?

All clients, families, advocates and staff are encouraged to provide suggestions on how we are able to improve the quality of our services. Feedback can be provided by:

- **Email:** admin@lighthousedisability.org.au
- **Writing to:** Lighthouse Disability, PO Box 722, Salisbury SA 5108
- **Calling:** 08 8256 9800
- **Visiting:** Lighthouse Disability, 101 Park Terrace, Salisbury SA 5108
- **Online:** www.lighthousedisability.org.au/contact-us/share-your-feedback

What will happen to my feedback?

- We aim to acknowledge your feedback within three working days.
- We will aim to address all feedback within a 21 working day time frame.
- We will always use your feedback to continually improve our services.

You can provide your feedback directly to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) which is an independent Commonwealth agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. You can provide feedback to the NDIS Commission by:

- **Calling:** 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged.
- **Online:** <https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>
- Through the **National Relay Service** and ask for 1800 035 544.

Advocacy Organisations

If you would like more information about independent advocates that can help you share your feedback, see the below list:



Citizen Advocacy South Australia

20 Myers Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8410 6644
Mobile: 0408 811 845
Email: office.citizenadvocacy@gmail.com
Website: www.citizenadvocacysa.com.au



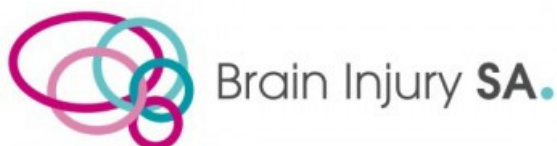
Independent Advocacy SA

99 Frome Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8232 6200
Freecall: 1800 999 884
Email: indepadv@internode.on.net
Website: www.independentadvocacysa.org.au



Disability Advocacy & Complaints Service of SA

33 Franklin Street,
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: (08) 7122 6030
Fax: (08) 8332 5112
Email: admin@dacssa.org.au
Website: www.dacssa.org.au



Brain Injury SA

70 Light Square
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: 1300 733 049
Email: info@binsa.org
Website: www.braininjurysa.org.au



Disability Rights Advocacy Service Inc

Shop 4/80 Henley Beach Road
MILE END SA 5031
Tel: (08) 8351 9500
Fax: (08) 8152 0396
Email: admin@dras.com.au
Website: www.dras.com.au



Disability Advocacy Service – Uniting Communities

43 Franklin Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8202 5960
Country Callers: 1300 886 220
Email: das@unitingcommunities.org
Website: www.unitingcommunities.org

Lighthouse Disability would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians on whose ancestral lands we provide our accommodation and support services. We acknowledge the deep feeling of attachment and relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have with their Country.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may engage with our services.



**LIGHTHOUSE
DISABILITY**

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