



Community Connections  
Australia

Annual Report  
2021-2022

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# Building Choices and Options

for  
people who live with disabilities  
and  
their families

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## OUR VISION

*CCA is recognised as a leading, knowledgeable, innovative and technologically savvy organisation of truly customised services that offer people solutions and real choices to live their life their way.*

## OUR PURPOSE

*To actively promote independence and autonomy.*

## OUR VALUES

*we are:  
autonomous  
flexible  
nimble  
innovative  
collaborative*

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## our organisation

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*Our role is to empower each person to find their voice and to understand and help them to achieve their goals and dreams.*

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Community Connections Australia (CCA) is a not-for-profit and charitable company. We came into existence in 1987 as Residential Care Inc. funded as a pilot program to move people out of institutions and congregate care into community based housing, either sharing with friends or living on their own and with an absolute focus of community integration.

It is now 35 years since Community Connections Australia started delivering services to people living with disabilities and we have seen people grow in confidence, develop a range of friendships and establish themselves as members of their chosen communities.

Over the years the organisation has learnt with them, concentrating on what it has taken to assist people to make choices and how to support these, both the good and the not so good. Above all people began to understand that because they were in control of their lives they could make their own decisions and be autonomous as every other person in the community.

In turn CCA has learnt that it has to concentrate on the importance of flexibility across the organisation so that every person has a service based on their own choices so that they remain in control of their own lives and their own supports.

This means that we need to be a nimble organisation which helps all of our staff to provide the much needed 'human' face of CCA throughout the organisation, rapidly and just as importantly, enabling people to be 'in charge' wherever possible so that supports are provided when and where people want them.

Our firm belief is that CCA collaborates with each person about their services, so that their experience with CCA is unique- rather than a one size fits all approach. This ensures that people themselves determine what they need and want from CCA.

We are also an organisation that embraces innovation through technology and the new opportunities this has created with the people we support to further embed them in their own chosen community.

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*So where are we today?  
A life in the community, coupled with the active  
involvement that such a  
concept implies, continues to be the driver of our  
service delivery.*

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A life in the community is an important goal for the people who seek our service delivery options and therefore one of the most important drivers for CCA - where the notion of disability becomes an ordinary part of 'community' rather than a formal and separating factor.

We believe that people have the right, regardless of the type or degree of their disability, to receive those service delivery options that provide them with the means to experience a full and inclusive life in the home and in the community of their choice and their service delivery arrangements.

We continue to provide individualised supports which are tailored to people's changing needs. We try to show people how to understand and build their own customised services no matter what disability 'labels' they may have. We continue to provide people with a wide range of opportunities to enable their lives in the community. At the time of writing this, a group of people have gone to spend a week holidaying in The Nepean area, staying in hotels and doing all the 'touristy' things that most of us take for granted.

Our premise is that the more people are visible and active within their community, they become known for who they are and become a part of the everyday life of our society - as Bill or Jane - instead of being labelled and perceived as 'different' and apart.



## the people we support

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*Understanding that the needs of each person differ  
we provide customised service solutions  
and choices to enable people to live life their way.*

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Community Connections Australia (CCA) provides individualised support services, tailored to a person's needs and choices across the Sydney Metropolitan area. Services are funded in different ways - NDIS packages, icare or other insurance schemes or on a fee for service basis.

We work with each person to build their own service approach and enable them to have a customised and unique outcome rather than a 'one size fits all' model of support. We support people of all ages who live with all types and degrees of disability including:

- Developmental disabilities including intellectual disability and cerebral palsy;
- Autism spectrum;
- Sensory disabilities including visual and hearing impairments;
- Physical disabilities such as Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Motor Neurone Disease (MND), Strokes, Arthritis, Muscular Dystrophy;
- Accident related disabilities – Spinal Cord injuries; Acquired/ Traumatic Brain injuries; Physical injuries e.g. Amputees;
- Dual Diagnoses - people with both a disability and mental health problems;
- Alzheimer's Disease and/or Early Onset Dementia;
- Complex Care - people who have both a disability and multiple complex health issues e.g. Diabetes, Epilepsy;
- Age related health problems.

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Our range of services vary from full time to drop-in support, as much as twenty four hours a day to as little as two hours a week. These supports are provided to people who:

- Share their home with one or two others;
- Live by themselves;
- Share with their partners in their own home;
- Live with their families;
- Who are in crisis and need urgent support;
- In need of live-in support on a short term basis.

Our supports include:

- Technology Hubs;
- Technology Skills Day;
- Social Club;
- Living Skills Day;
- NDIS funded Support Coordination;
- NDIS funded Specialist Support Coordination;
- NDIS funded Supported Independent Living (SIL);
- Skills training in daily life activities;
- Community participation and integration;
- Companionship and checking on well-being;
- Providing assistance for everyday tasks- cooking, cleaning, personal care;
- Attending medical, dental and other health appointments;
- Help in organising clinical assessments;
- Housekeeping services - menu and meal preparation, shopping;
- Individualised Technology supports - in-home options, monitoring services, mobile phone devices/ services, apps and services, safety and security advice and so on.





## the chairman's and ceo's report

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It is our pleasure to present the 2022 Annual Report. On behalf of CCA we thank our membership and stakeholders, who have supported our organisation. We thank the Members who are elected to the Board of Directors and who have generously given their time and expertise.

We are pleased to be able to report to you on the progress CCA has made during the past 12 months. Our organisation has continued to achieve excellent results in a challenging operating environment. We have had several highlights over the year for the people we support:

- A long-awaited day trip to the Blue Mountains for a group of people we support who had endured several lockdowns over the last couple of years.
- The success of CCA in securing a Parramatta Community Council grant to enable us to develop a small pre-business unit 'PRINTABLE' to support people who are marginalised with the objective of increasing their involvement in economic participation.
- The quick response of CCA to move our Technology Hubs to an on-line platform and increase the frequency of Hub meetings to ensure that people remained connected during lockdown periods.
- The participation of people we support in Inclusive Research Program in partnership with The University of Sydney.
- The COVID-19 Vaccination Hubs that we were able to run in conjunction with NSW Health for all people we support and our staff.

CCA is improving the services we provide and consequently changes occurred across all levels of the organisation- governance, management, and business operations. In November last year the membership approved a new Constitution and voted to increase the number of Directors to sit on the Board of CCA. The Board have used this opportunity to ensure their collective experience and skills continue to support the strategic direction and have enhanced the diversity of the governing body with the filling of a casual vacancy over the last year.

CCA Management have worked closely together with a focus and commitment on improving services for every person we support. We have worked closely with our Advisory Committee, Focus Group and Housing Group to drive changes across all service areas - from developing easier communication mechanisms, managing COVID-19 outbreaks or implementing new NDIA/icare compliance standards. Technology remains a driver for change, with new business processes being developed to ensure that operations are simplified – for example using online recruitment and staff training tools.

We are pleased to report that we are implementing several new processes to improve our services. We:

- Successfully trialled the delivery of services to several people through technology with the use of CCA's staff intranet.
- Worked closely with people, their families and allied health professionals to be able to custom design real-time reports so that they can have up to the minute, accurate information.
- Made information readily available in simplified formats so that the person and their support team can access relevant outcomes at 'a glance'.



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To enhance the level of services and support options people receive and to continue to focus on individual goals and dreams CCA has continued to work closely with a number of like-minded organisations.

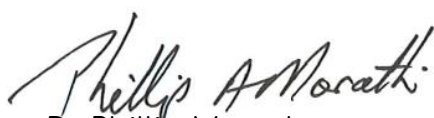
This includes both mainstream community organisations as well as disability service providers. For example, we partnered with several Allied Health professionals to secure better support services for people, collaborated with a tour company for several people to travel throughout NSW, and negotiated with a specialist housing provider so that people can trial living independently in an apartment rather than in a shared household arrangement.

The last two years of ongoing lockdowns has seen people be more determined to enjoy their lives in the way they want. CCA's role was to work with each person to ensure they have a life of their choosing which looked different from what they had planned two years ago. For many people being able to reconnect with their community has seen our staff work with them to:

- See their football team play in Mudgee;
- Visit family who live overseas;
- Return to their local library;
- Join a tour group; or
- Re-join the local choir.

CCA's purpose and values will continue to shape and develop the organisation as it grows. The commitment of the Directors and staff will ensure that we continue to build choices and options for people who live with disabilities. Our focus remains on ensuring that every person is receiving their service that is designed around their dreams and wishes.

We have appreciated the hard work of our fellow Directors and all staff who have demonstrated both collaboration and innovation over the last year. Most importantly, we thank the people we support, as it is their voice that continues to shape and define our organisation.



Dr Phillip Morath  
Chairman



Melissa Way  
CEO



## our ongoing focus

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CCA recognises the importance of the findings of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and are holding off on making any significant changes to our future directions until they release their recommendations.

We remain steadfast in our belief that people should be in control of their lives. This includes the planning and design of their own supports, having a voice in the shaping of future services and most importantly, leading the lives that they want.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2022-23

Plan and Achieve Sustainable Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broaden our reach of existing services</li><li>• Strengthen our networks and partnerships</li><li>• Identify and secure new opportunities for growth</li></ul>
Continuously Improve Our Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively engage with every person we support</li><li>• Improve service quality through a positive culture of support</li><li>• Increase the independence of every person that CCA supports through innovation and technology</li></ul>
Build our Staff's Capability and Strengthen our Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guide and nurture a purpose and values driven culture</li><li>• Build and strengthen leadership capability and impact</li><li>• Highly skilled and engaged workforce</li></ul>
Ensure a Contemporary, Well Run, and Sustainable Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved efficiency through simplification, automation, and technology</li><li>• Design and build our future organisation</li><li>• Sound financial risk management</li><li>• Ensure the core principles of CCA apply across all domains of the organisation</li></ul>

*Our belief remains that people thrive in their own communities and that technology remains the vehicle to unlock this potential.*

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