

OCTOBER

ISSUE NUMBER 4

ABILITY CHOICE CARE



OUR

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From the *Chief Executive Officer*



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Welcome to the Spring Edition (Issue 4) of our Headlines Newsletter!

After braving the winter months, we're now enjoying the warmth and joy that spring brings to us. This season is perfect for exploring our communities and taking advantage of the wonderful amenities around our Activity Centre.

Since our last newsletter, it's been a busy time at Ability Choice Care. We've welcomed new participants into our Supported Independent Living (SIL) homes, our Activity Centre, and through our in-home support services. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Ability Choice Care for their dedication and hard work. Since March, Jane Hemel, our Managing Director, and Marina Liaskos, our Activity Centre Manager, have been working diligently to prepare for our Full-Term Audit. They built our audit preparation from the ground up, ensuring our policies align with the NDIS Practice Standards and these truly reflect the quality of our supports.

We are extremely proud to announce that Ability Choice Care achieved Zero Non-Conformities in the audit. This outstanding result reflects the improvements we've made as an organisation, including:

- Implementing new IT platforms for electronic file storage of all participant records.
- Installing a dedicated Network attached storage (NAS) server for daily backups of all data.
- Providing staff with access to home and shared drives via a NAS drive.
- Developing a robust disaster recovery plan to safeguard all electronic files.
- Launching an online staff compliance register, where employees can upload HR files, with automated reminders for document renewals.
- Offering easy access to policies and procedures via platforms like OneDrive and myQNAPcloud.
- Maintaining a Continuous Quality Improvement register that tracks ongoing organisational enhancements.
- Creating a comprehensive risk management plan that outlines key risks and mitigation strategies for staff and participants.
- Highlighting our executive team's documentation processes.
- Refining our staff induction and onboarding procedures.
- Offering easy-read booklets for participants, available during termly participant gatherings.
- Using SurveyMonkey to gather feedback on the NDIS Practice Standards and Code of Conduct through easy-read dashboards of participant surveys.
- Collecting staff survey feedback and implementing these suggestions.
- Publishing quarterly headlines that will inform all of the positive changes within Ability Choice Care for both participants, staff and our stakeholders.

The auditors provided incredibly positive feedback, noting significant improvements across the organisation. They commended the entire Ability Choice Care team for the marked enhancements in our governance and operations.

As CEO, I want to personally thank each of you for your hard work and commitment. Special thanks to Jane and Marina, whose sector experience and leadership have been invaluable. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed!

M

"Our Music Group has been a great success every Friday afternoon at our Activity Centre. We are excited to announce that Nicolette has been appointed as our Music Group instructor. Her amazing energy and talent shines through, as she skilfully plays a variety of instruments, bringing life to each session."

Nicolette has had the pleasure of working with many of our participants, both in group settings and occasionally one-on-one. Our participants often request different music genres, and I can confidently say the Centre is always alive with energy. One of the most popular moments is when Nicolette leads a drum session to the beat of 'We Will Rock You.' No matter the level of musical experience, it always feels like we're performing in our very own rock concert.

If you follow our social media channels, we invite you to check us out on TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. You'll get a glimpse of the wonderful work Nicolette achieves with our talented participants.

Here's some feedback from them:

- "This song reminds me of my family back home, and now I can sing it with you while you play the piano."
- "This is an oldie but a goodie."
- "Let's not give Marina the microphone!"

No matter your ability or if you're a bit shy, our group brings out the best in everyone who attends. Music can boost your energy, help you focus, recall fond memories, and promote relaxation. More importantly, it fosters social connections.

We strongly encourage you to join us and experience the joy of music. We're excited about our Ability Choice Care song, which will soon become our ACC Anthem for everyone to sing and enjoy.



"This song reminds me of my family back home, and now I can sing it with you while you play the piano."

ARTS AND CRAFTS QUILT PATCHING TAKES OFF

This term, we are thrilled to announce the commencement of our quilt patchwork activity! A special thanks goes to Kate, who has been generously sharing her vast experience and creativity with our arts and crafts group. Kate's talents have brought a new level of inspiration and skill to our projects, and we are incredibly fortunate to have her on board.

We are also excited to share that we've received not one, but two sewing machines as donations, making the quilting process even more accessible and enjoyable for everyone involved!

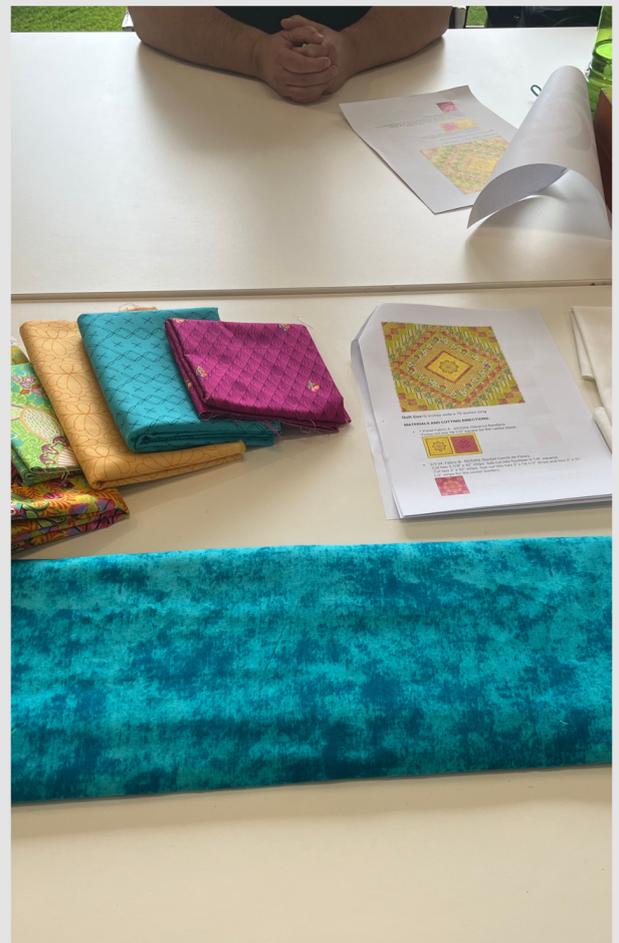
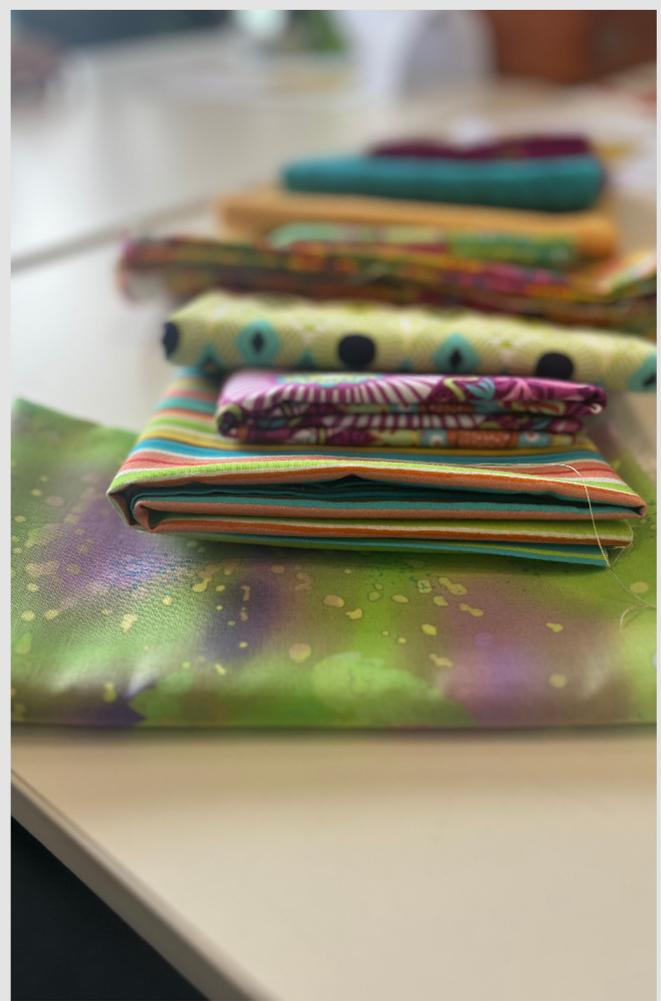
While quilting has experienced fluctuations in popularity over the years, it is far from a lost art. In fact, as Kate mentioned to our Centre Manager, there has been a resurgence of interest in quilting, especially among younger generations. Social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest have played a key role in this revival, providing a space for quilters to share their work, techniques, and inspire others to take up this beautiful and timeless craft.

We look forward to seeing the creativity that this quilting project will inspire in our community!

So does Quilt work offer numerous benefits,² The answer is both practical and therapeutic, along with opportunities to develop various skills. Here are some examples:

- **Creativity and Self-Expression:** Quilting allows for personal expression through the choice of fabrics, patterns, and colours. It provides a way to showcase one's creativity.
- **Stress Relief and Mindfulness:** The repetitive nature of quilting can be calming and meditative, helping to reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Community and Social Connection:** Quilting is often done in groups or quilting circles, supporting a sense of community. It's a great way to connect with others, share ideas, and build relationships.
- **Sense of Accomplishment:** Completing a quilt, especially large ones or intricate ones, brings a sense of pride and achievement.
- **Cultural Significance:** Quilting has deep historical and cultural roots, and many people are interested in preserving these traditions.

We've officially begun Stage 1 of our quilt project and are working diligently to complete it by the end of next term. Throughout the process, participants are not only developing their creativity but also learning new skills, such as measuring and cutting fabric using inches and yards. Our goal is to proudly display the finished quilt along the beautiful corridors of the Activity Centre, where it will stand as a testament to the hard work and collaboration of everyone involved.



**BY CONNIE CHRISAFIS-
ASSISTANT ACTIVITY CENTRE
MANAGER**

OUR Participant Profiles



1. *What is your name?* **Gheel M**
2. *How old are you?* **43**
3. *What is your favourite colour?* **Yellow**
4. *What hobbies or activities do you enjoy?* **Diamond Art, and all Arts and Crafts.**
5. *Do you have any pets? If yes, what are their names and what type of pets are they?* **Yes, not in Australia. I have a beautiful dog back home in the Philippines named "CHAMPI"**
6. *When did you first start attending the Activity Centre?* **I commenced in the beginning of the year**
7. *What groups or programs do you participate in at the Activity Centre?* **Arts and Crafts, Music Therapy, Karaoke and the Gardening Group.**
8. *What do you enjoy the most about coming to the Activity Centre?* **Seeing my friends and working on my Diamond Art and also other activities that have been developed for us to choose from.**
9. *Is there any extra help or adjustments that you think would make your experience at the Activity Centre better?* **I would love a garden hose for the Activity Centre please**
10. *If you could be the boss of the Activity Centre for one day, what changes would you make? (I would request for more gardening equipment).*

1. *What is your name?* **Ashley Moore**
2. *How old are you?* **32**
3. *What is your favourite colour?* **Blue**
4. *What hobbies or activities do you enjoy?* **Gaming & Coin Collecting**
5. *Do you have any pets? If yes, what are their names and what type of pets are they?* **Not yet, but will be getting a cat soon**
6. *When did you first start attending the Activity Centre?* **Mid May 2024.**
7. *What groups or programs do you participate in at the Activity Centre?* **I come for the Friday Cooking group and also enjoy the gaming room**
8. *What do you enjoy the most about coming to the Activity Centre?* **The Activities are really good, and I get to meet new people.**
9. *Is there any extra help or adjustments that you think would make your experience at the Activity Centre better?* **No, it's perfect, its pretty good. So much better than the last place I use to attend.**
10. *If you could be the boss of the Activity Centre for one day, what changes would you make?* **I wouldn't change a thing.**

Interviewed by Nada- Student

PARTICIPANT GET TOGETHER: A MUSICAL FAREWELL TO TERM 3!

On Friday, 27th September, we hosted our third Participant Get-Together, marking the final day of Term 3. These gatherings provide us with an opportunity to reflect on the term, receive honest feedback, and plan ahead for the next one. Based on the request from our last get-together, this event was made extra special—a Music Day dedicated to our participants. It was a wonderful day filled with learning, songs, and reflections. Thank you to Roslyn G, for being the Participant Representative.,

We kicked things off with a fantastic presentation by Jodie from Services NSW, who shared invaluable insights into the Savings Finder Program. Jodie's session was brimming with useful tips about discounts and concessions, covering everything from bus trips to companion cards, energy savers, and much more!

We were thrilled to have 16 participants join us to review the term, offering valuable feedback and suggestions for Term 4. These meetings not only foster a sense of community but also help us gather qualitative data that contributes to our continuous improvement efforts—it's the heart of how we get better every term.

As we reflected on Term 3, we celebrated some of the exciting activities our participants enjoyed:

- Arts and Crafts: Quilt cover project
- Cooking: New individual workstations for improved independence
- Karaoke: Our famous Crazy Monday and Friday sessions, held twice weekly
- Music Sessions: Every Friday afternoon
- Gardening: Harvesting herbs and vegetables from our garden beds
- Social Outings: Including picnics and the upcoming Sailability event in Manly (October)

Term 4, we have some exciting events planned, including:

- The One-Year Anniversary of the Activity Centre
- A festive Christmas Party
- New Boxercise Classes
- Coffee Club meetups and picnics

We were also delighted to welcome Saleha and the team from Ability Alliance Care, who, along with their participants, joined us for our Music Day! Their feedback was wonderful—they were impressed with the music, the delicious food, and, most importantly, the fun-filled day. We wrapped up the event with a lunch of mouth-watering chicken and lamb souvlaki with salad wraps.

As we look forward to Term 4, which starts on Monday, 14th October 2024, we bid farewell to our participants for a well-deserved break. In the meantime, we are excited to welcome our younger crowd for the School Holiday Program—get ready for a few busy and exciting weeks ahead!



Hon. Bill Shorten Joins NDIS Forum: Participants Heard for Positive Change



On Wednesday, 25th September, Ability Choice Care participated in a significant event at Fairfield Youth Centre, attended by Participant Representative Anna W., Community Engagement Officer Amanda, and our CEO Mahmoud. The event was organized by Dai Le, Independent Member of Parliament for Fowler in the House of Representatives. We were privileged to meet and hear from the Hon. Bill Shorten, Minister for the NDIS and Government Services, and a member of the Australian Labor Party.

This event provided a valuable platform for participants to voice their concerns regarding the support they receive. Representatives from Services Australia and the NDIS were also present, listening not only to participants but also to service providers who face challenges daily.

We were grateful to have the opportunity to use this platform as both a learning experience and a chance to provide feedback. Both MP Dai Le and the Hon.

Bill Shorten were transparent about the challenges many Australians face, particularly the vulnerabilities within the NDIS. Mr Shorten was highly engaged and took the time to listen to one of our participants' concerns. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Dai Le for this opportunity, and we look forward to the positive changes that will be implemented across the NDIS in the years to come. Platforms like this enable us to collaborate and voice the changes we hope to see in the near future.

Anna was especially thrilled to share her lived experience and requested that it be included in our latest Headlines. She feels incredibly fortunate to have been part of this forum, where she met NDIS representatives and others, and had the chance to hear concerns from both her own perspective and those of others in similar situations.

Anna was proud to have her voice heard, representing not only herself but also everyone at Ability Choice Care.

Amanda Sakal – Community Engagement Officer

ABILITY CHOICE CARE



Join us at Westpoint Blacktown Shopping Centre, Level 4, for comprehensive support for people living with disabilities. We offer assistance with:

- Community Access & In-Home Support.
- Transport Services - Wheelchair access.
- Life Skills Development.
- STA, MTA and Respite.
- SIL Accommodation.

Join our state-of-the-art Activity Centre with individualised programs, including:

- Cooking Groups.
- Arts and Crafts.
- Music Sessions.
- Karaoke and Disco Nights.
- Gaming Room.
- Multi-Interactive Screen.
- Brain Training Program.
- Garden Group.
- Social Calendar.

SCAN ME



MEET GHEEL

and how she's achieving her goals



At Ability Choice Care, we take immense pride in supporting our participants to achieve their personal goals, as outlined in their NDIS plans. These plans are tailored to each individual, ensuring that their unique needs and aspirations are met with guidance and support. We are truly grateful for the opportunities the NDIS provides for our participants, helping them pursue their dreams.

One participant who exemplifies this is Gheel. From the moment she joined Ability Choice Care, Gheel expressed her desire to live independently, with support when needed. Today, she resides in our beautiful Supported Independent Living (SIL) home at The Ponds.

Gheel is an incredibly talented and creative individual, with a passion for arts and crafts. She often brings in her home creations and loves sharing ideas for our craft room projects. Some of her favorite activities include:

- Diamond art
- Origami
- Colour by numbers
- Making notepads
- Crafting paper flowers

Gheel's artistic talent is evident in every piece she creates. Recently, she's been working on a stunning underwater turtle scene using diamond art—a project that has taken her over two weeks, as she meticulously organizes each diamond piece with precision and care.

In addition to her love for art, Gheel has a deep passion for music. She attends our Activity Centre twice a week, where she's highly respected by her peers. Gheel often assists others in the craft room, especially when projects are particularly challenging or new. She also enjoys expanding her piano skills, often playing her favorite ballads on Friday afternoons.

Gheel frequently reminisces about her family back in the Philippines, and she loves sharing stories about them with others. Her warmth, creativity, and kindness make her a cherished member of our community.

Gheel also works two days a week with Scope Australia, a job she enjoys because it keeps her active and allows her to engage with others who face similar challenges. She takes great pride in her work and is careful with her finances, always making sure to save for a rainy day.

At home, Gheel enjoys staying active by going for walks around her local community. She frequently uses the outdoor gym at the nearby park to keep fit.

Her favourite day of the week is Thursday, her free day, when she explores the community with her support. Whether it's catching the latest movie, visiting local arts and crafts shops, or connecting with the Philippine community to enjoy the familiar foods she grew up with, Gheel makes the most of her time. When asked if she feels she's achieving her goals, Gheel proudly responds, "Yes, of course!"



Blen Kebede – Rostering Coordinator

MEETING YOUR NDIS GOALS AT TAFE



For those of you who follow us on social media or receive our quarterly newsletter, you may have seen Genevieve featured in many of our posts and articles.

Genevieve has been a dedicated participant at the Activity Centre, attending three days a week since we opened in December 2023. As one of our many valued members, she continually inspires us with her determination and passion for self-improvement. Always eager to learn and try new things, Genevieve surprises and amazes us every day.

With guidance from her Support Coordinator and her dedicated team, Genevieve recently began pursuing a Certificate III in Community Pharmacy at Blacktown TAFE. Every Wednesday morning, she attends online classes supported by a TAFE Coordinator who ensures her needs are met. In the coming term, she will extend her learning to include two face-to-face days per week.

Genevieve's ultimate goal is to work in a pharmacy, and she hopes to secure a part-time position once she completes her certification.

Genevieve has worked diligently to tailor her NDIS plan to align with her goals. Beyond her dedication to her own growth, Genevieve is also a strong advocate for others. She serves on the board of Sydney Advocacy Services (SAS), where she promotes positive change in the community.

While we'll miss her presence during our Wednesday morning cooking sessions, we are incredibly proud of her achievements and excited for what's ahead.

Genevieve, you will never walk alone on your journey – Ability Choice Care will always be by your side. We are all so proud of your choices, determination, and the inspiring example you set for everyone here.

GENEVIEVE FINDS HER TAFE COURSE

FOLLOW OUR

Social Media

CHANNELS AT ABILITY CHOICE CARE

ABILITY CHOICE CARE

Facebook



371 UP FROM 327
FOLLOW AND LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

ABILITY CHOICE CARE



Instagram

229 UP FROM 200
FOLLOW AND LIKE US ON INSTAGRAM

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2,792 UP FROM 2,194
FOLLOW AND LIKE US ON LINKED

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124 UP FROM 43
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CONTACT US ON 1300 100 011 OR 8806 4646



VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

"Visit Our Website to Explore Comprehensive Information on Ability Choice Aged Care Services, Our Unique Approach, and How We Can Support You."



VISIT OUR ACTIVITY CENTRE

"Discover our amazing, purpose-built Activity Centre, located right in the heart of Westpoint Shopping Centre."