

Take Life Back

Annual Report 21 | 22



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we work today and pay our respects to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. We also acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the communities we work with.

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Snapshot

COMMERCIAL SERVICES



Hours of Personal Support:
534,962 hours



Supports Coordination:
238 clients



Plan Management:
141 clients



Occupational Therapy:
7,679 hours



Community Nursing:
2,489 hours

MEMBERS



Members: **1,926** members



Systemic advocacy
campaigns: **4**



Peer Support Facebook
group: **2,671** members

SPINAL LIFE AUSTRALIA BACK2WORK



53 referrals
Industries including retail,
building and law

HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE

BRISBANE:



Physiotherapy: **319** hours



Exercise Physiology: **628** hours



Fitness Hub: **50** members

CAIRNS:



Physiotherapy: **1,872** hours



Exercise Physiology: **916** hours



Hydrotherapy pool: **1,316** hours



Accommodation:
1,437 nights stayed

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT



Step 1,2,3 Training:
66 sessions



Extended competencies
training: **49** days



Training provided to external
organisations: **95** days

CEO's message

Looking back over the past year, I am extremely proud of our achievements, as we continue to work towards our mission of supporting people to live accessible, equitable and empowered lives.

From the opening of the Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane to the continued growth of our services, to advocacy campaigns aimed at improving access and inclusion for all, it has certainly been a busy year.

We have recorded another strong financial result, despite the persisting impacts of the pandemic, which is a testament to the leadership of the Board and Executive Management team, along with the commitment and dedication of each and every team member.

One of our key focus areas has been increasing support for our frontline employees, including offering more training

and benefits for Personal Support Workers, who play such an important part in the daily lives of our customers.

Throughout the year, our six critical success factors have directed all our activities, so we can continue to grow while maintaining financial stability, and ensure we are best supporting people living with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities.

These critical success factors are:

1. Understand and respond to individual customer's needs
2. Be an employer of choice with a fully engaged workforce
3. Have a strong and compelling brand
4. Have the expertise to deliver on our specialist role
5. Maintain strong relationships with key partners, funders and suppliers
6. Drive improved quality and efficiency focused on customer value

I truly believe what sets Spinal Life Australia apart as a service provider is our dedication to advocating for long-lasting change for people with a disability on a local, state and national level.

In 2021-22, this has included our Disability Doesn't Discriminate campaign to end age discrimination for people aged over 65 who are unable to access the NDIS, along with ongoing work towards improvements in tourism, facilitating disability awareness workshops for businesses, the continued development of our Accessible Australia app, and more.

As always, our advocacy work is informed by invaluable feedback from our members on issues that are most important to them, and we will continue to listen to their insights as we plan for the future.

Thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to another exciting year ahead.



Mark Townend

CEO



Chair's message

Reflecting on the past financial year, we have seen many positive changes across Spinal Life, despite the challenges of COVID and the deteriorating economic situation worldwide. The pandemic has clearly affected our workforce, making attracting and retaining casual staff particularly difficult.

The Board has responded by driving and supporting a range of initiatives to improve staff conditions and staff retention, particularly for our Personal Support Workers. This will continue to be a focus of our efforts over the coming months.

Despite the challenges, we have expanded services and continued to advocate strongly for increased access and inclusion for all Australians with a disability.

Throughout the year, the Board has continued to listen and pay attention to what our members are telling us, and to understand what the priority issues are for all of our members.

As a result, we were delighted to be able to open our second Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane in January, providing a one-stop-shop approach with a range of health and wellbeing support services all available in the one location.

Our new Brisbane location joins our flagship Healthy Living Centre in Cairns. Both have been specifically designed for people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities, offering a fully accessible fitness hub with Exercise Physiologists and Physiotherapy services, as well as Community Nursing, Occupational Therapists, and in Brisbane, an Assistive Technology Mentor and a Dietician amongst other services.

Earlier this year, I also travelled to Far North Queensland to meet more of our members. I was delighted to be able to share more about Spinal Life's activities and plans for the future and hear about some of the specific issues that are important to people living in and around Cairns, Townsville and all points between.

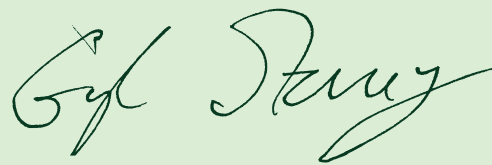
I would like to thank all our Board members, who volunteer their time because they are passionate about our shared success. They have a wealth of experience and knowledge, which we rely on to keep the organisation healthy and able to operate effectively. We work hard to identify the skills that the Board needs, and this means we are well-positioned to continue to provide services relevant to our

members and remain financially viable, while being resilient to future challenges.

I make special mention of the Research Committee, which is developing an exciting program with Griffith University to look for solid, practical results across a range of areas. We will shortly be asking our members to tell us what the priorities should be, and who wants to be involved in the research.

We must thank our CEO and the Executive Management team and all our staff, who have continued to demonstrate their commitment to delivering high-quality services to support our customers to live the life they choose.

We must also thank our network of volunteers. They are the backbone of the organisation and without them we would not be as effective and well-regarded as we are.



Gyl Stacey

Board Chair



SECTION 1

Reporting against our Strategic Roadmap

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 1

Understanding and responding to customer's individual needs

We understand our customers are all individuals with their own goals, and in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for them, we must tailor and evolve our services to meet their needs.

The invaluable addition of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane was a significant highlight of this past financial year, as a key piece of infrastructure that will benefit customers for years to come.

This one-stop-rehabilitation and fitness hub is a state-of-art facility that is designed to ensure our customers have easy access to key supports in the one convenient location. The Centre includes a fully accessible fitness hub with specialised HUR equipment, a team of allied health professionals, an onsite driving clinic and an assistive technology and home automation room where clients can work with our newly-appointed Assistive Technology Mentor and Occupational Therapists to find the right products for them.

Located in Woolloongabba, only minutes away from the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, we opened the doors in January 2022 with the Centre going from strength to strength as the word spread. At the end of the financial year, our fitness hub had more than 50 members, with over 600 hours delivered by the Exercise Physiology team.

The Centre was designed to cater for people with a diverse range of physical disabilities, providing the broader disability community with a hub to access all their therapies and supports in one convenient location. Due to the breadth of our client needs we also partnered with key service providers including a Dietician and expanded our existing Community Nursing service to keep up with demand.

The latter has grown exponentially with the team of Registered Nurses delivering more than 2,400 hours over the past year, which includes telehealth, to provide much-needed support in regional areas.

In addition to the growth of our clinical services, we have proactively expanded our team of Access and Inclusion Consultants. These team members, all of whom have spinal cord damage, provide solutions-focused advice to bridge the gap between people with a disability and businesses ensuring positive outcomes for the entire community. Most notably, we have been working with Seqwater by assessing their recreation areas to recommend accessibility improvements.

We will continue to review the services we offer, to ensure we are delivering the highest level of support to our customers, throughout each stage of their lives.



Welcome To The Hub

Bryn Bradford, from Teneriffe, has been a regular at the Healthy Living Centre (HLC) Brisbane since February, just a month after it opened. Exercise plays a central role in the life of the 30-year-old Communications Manager, who was injured in a fall at the age of 21, and diagnosed with incomplete fractures at the C5 and T6 levels.

“Since leaving the SIU in 2014 I’ve had consistent goals, recommended by my doctors, around improving my strength and ability,” he says. “These goals demand fitness and strength work, and are aligned with my goals for independence when it comes to pushing, transfer and weight management. Over the years I’ve gone to gyms or worked on my fitness myself, but the HLC has provided a great opportunity to use resistance training and specialist equipment, and to get one-on-one help.”

Bryn initially met with Spinal Life Exercise Physiologist, Ernest Starowicz, to design an exercise programme.

Because Bryn's injury comes with a high amount of extension tone, part of that programme involves regular use of an FES (Functional Electrical Stimulation) bike. “The cycle uses electrical stimulation to move Bryn’s legs,” explains Ernest.

“It helps to manage the tone of his legs, and to ‘fatigue’ them so that he doesn’t get too much spasticity at night. It’s quite an advanced piece of equipment and because it’s all digital, if you’ve got access to this sort of cycle anywhere in the world all you need is your ID and password, and you’re good to go.”

It’s also about more than “just” working out: it’s a place where people can get the whole allied health experience.

“As well as Exercise Physiologists and Physiotherapists we’ve also got Occupational Therapists, Registered Nurses, the Back2Work team and the Assistive Technology room,” says Ernest. “Having such a multidisciplinary clinic was a big drawcard for me to join Spinal Life. It means that we can help people with whatever they need, from start to finish.”

The final words must go to Bryn: “Fitting training in can be a challenge around my full-time work hours, so the unstaffed hours at the HLC is the biggest benefit to me,” he says. “Whereas other specialist services are always at the mercy of staffed hours, at the HLC accessibility is at the forefront of everything.

It’s definitely a service that goes above and beyond regular gyms.”








Be an employer of choice with a fully engaged workforce

The disability services industry has undergone many operational challenges during COVID with numerous lockdowns and mandates which required us to review our internal recruitment processes and employee retention strategies, as well as our approach to remuneration for our personal support workforce.

In early 2022, we commenced an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) process to allow for more flexibility, tailoring our own employment terms and conditions. This process is undertaken with both employer and employee representatives. This has enabled our Personal Support Workers to contribute to and provide feedback on their terms and conditions of employment and their working conditions. We aim to provide clarity to our team members from initial recruitment through their career with Spinal Life Australia about the benefits and advantages of growing their career as a Personal Support Worker.

By separating from the current Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award, we can set our own terms while ensuring:

-  flexibility for both customer and support worker
-  pay is at market level and competitive
-  stability and security with more options for permanent roles
-  employment terms are easily understood and clear
-  conditions are tailor-made to Spinal Life and the services we provide.

While the EBA process is ongoing, there have been some key positive changes to report in the interim including offering

permanent part-time opportunities to our predominately casual personal support workforce.

With frequent lockdowns and isolation periods we also adapted our recruitment processes to include virtual group interviews and one-on-one interviews via the Microsoft Teams platform. Additionally, we increased the regularity of our orientation and assessments for new Personal Support Workers to join the Spinal Life team.

During 2021-22 we also launched Thrive, which is Spinal Life's place for communication, reward and recognition, and celebrations. This online platform contains useful links and provides our team with exclusive access to discounts from hundreds of retailers across Australia. Furthermore, this has become a key channel to communicate with our workforce about the EBA, allowing us to share updates and hear feedback.

Spinal Life partnered with Culture AMP in 2022 to launch our annual engagement survey as well as other survey offerings such as onboarding, exit surveys and leadership 360-degree feedback loops which will be launched in the coming year. Staff engagement has increased from 50% engagement to a 65% engagement year on year. Although this is a great improvement in the right direction, there are still some key areas to focus on moving forward.

The survey has provided insight in key areas such as communication, role clarity for office-based positions and development opportunities around client management for Personal Support Workers. We received excellent feedback regarding training and development, newly introduced terms and conditions, direct communication, reward and recognition and workplace flexibility.



CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 3

Have a strong and compelling brand

Throughout the past financial year, we made a significant investment in our brand with the *Take Life Back* campaign, a multi-tiered marketing campaign to drive awareness of Spinal Life Australia and our mission to support accessible, equitable and empowered lives.

At the heart of the campaign was empowerment and encouraging people with spinal cord damage to not let their disability hold them back from living the life they choose. To illustrate this sentiment, we were able to draw upon the experiences of our own team, and how they chose to 'take life back' following their traumatic spinal cord injury; along with how they exhibit this in their everyday lives with the support of Spinal Life.

This brand awareness campaign included advertising on major TV and radio networks, underpinned by an extensive digital campaign. Coverage extended from Far North Queensland, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and the greater Brisbane region. With more than 2,800 spots on TV and radio, we successfully achieved 22,000 visits to our website and in excess of 400,000 view on search and social media advertising during the campaign. We also received positive feedback from members, industry leaders and key partners.

In addition to this major brand campaign, we continued to promote and advocate on a national scale with the Disability Doesn't Discriminate campaign. Efforts were firmly focused on the 2022 federal election, investing in a digital campaign supported generously by Coloplast. This digital investment, coupled with public relations activities, ultimately saw more than 25,000 signatures collected. We also provided key supporters with tools to proactively contact their local members and election candidates, asking them to publicly show their support for the campaign.

Digital channels remain a key avenue to promote the Spinal Life brand with ongoing investment into upgrades in this area. During 2021-22, this included implementing an online tool to improve our website accessibility, as well as launching the Healthy Living Centre Brisbane website and our own Instagram account @spinallife.

The Advocate magazine remains a key channel to not only promote Spinal Life's services, but celebrate the achievements of our clients and members as well as our advocacy efforts. We continue to distribute this in hard copy and via our website to a wide network including to our Personal Support workforce and patients within the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane and the Fiona Stanley Hospital in Perth.

Finally, Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week in 2021 focused on encouraging the business community to improve their accessibility with the theme of 'Good Access = Good Business'. We produced numerous tools including a checklist to assist any business who wants to become more accessible, and shared more about the benefits for businesses as well as customers. As part of the campaign, we partnered with BIG4 Holiday Park in Helensvale, Queensland, and created several videos showcasing the accessibility changes they have made and how this subsequently increased profitability.



CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 4

Have the expertise to deliver on our specialist role



Spinal Life Australia continues to be a specialist service provider for people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities. To maintain this position in the market, our recruitment and skills training needs to be consistently reviewed and fine-tuned to deliver the highest quality services and supports.

The onboarding of new Personal Support Workers has been remodelled to a three-stage training program, with regular touchpoints throughout the first six months of employment to strengthen engagement and keep all team members updated on best practice.

To facilitate training in regional areas of Queensland, we also employed a new Clinical Facilitator to assist new employees to begin their role in the field at a quicker rate while still maintaining our high standards. The new Clinical Facilitator also provides essential specialised training for high support customers, particularly those who require mechanical ventilation.

The introduction of the first pilot program for the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) has been received positively, with 16 participants learning from both the theoretical and on-the-job training approaches. The aim is to provide our Personal Support workforce with accredited training and qualifications that will support them throughout their career as Personal Support Workers with Spinal Life Australia.

Internally, our Personal Support and Home Care team underwent an intensive two-day training and team-building conference. This involved Client Service Officers and Team Leaders from all over Queensland and Western Australia coming together and collectively sharing ideas to improve

efficiencies and processes with positive flow-on effect to our customers.

Our clinical team of therapists continued to expand to fulfill demand, with a rigorous recruitment process to ensure the right employees are selected, who have the necessary experience to deliver positive outcomes for people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities. The Community Nursing team has doubled in size this financial year to meet demand. Additionally, we have added Lymphoedema specialist training to our Occupational Therapy skill set, further enhancing the holistic services we provide.

With the opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane, we added two experienced Exercise Physiologists to our Allied Health team who have delivered more than 620 hours of services in the short time the fitness hub has been operational.

Outside of service delivery, our Access and Inclusion team is continuing to grow with new members coming on board who are undertaking formal qualifications (Certificate IV in Access Consulting) at TAFE Queensland. The team has completed several accessibility reviews in regions across Queensland and Western Australia to share feedback with tourism operators, and also delivered a series of disability awareness training sessions for workplaces to educate about true inclusion.

Lastly our Peer Support program continues to provide essential support and advice to patients in the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit and other wards, as well as the Fiona Stanley Hospital in Perth in conjunction with the Paraplegic Benefit Fund.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 5

Maintain strong relationships with key partners, funders and suppliers

Forging new partnerships and strengthening existing relationships is critical to our operational success, and this year we continued to engage with our long-term partners who are aligned to our mission.

Our key partnership with the Motor Accident Insurance Commission continues to grow, funding the Spinal Life Australia Back2Work program which is entering its sixth successful year in operation. The vocational program supports patients at the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit to return to work or study, or find a new career path. In 2021-22, the program reached the milestone of 300 patient referrals since its inception, with 53 referrals this financial year alone.

Our SEAT school education program, also funded by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, had more than 50 booking requests for our team to present to schools including regional Queensland locations.

With the opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane, we have formed key partnerships with services that complement our services, for example Orthotists and a visiting Dietician service.

We also continued to work closely with The Hopkins Centre, which undertook an Innovation Series at the Healthy Living Centre in Cairns that involved Spinal Life customers, clinicians, industrial designers and manufacturers. Workshops were conducted to highlight the day-to-day mobility challenges of people with a disability to inform and encourage the designers and manufacturers to create practical solutions.

We understand the critical importance of continuing to invest in various research projects, so this year we formed a new committee with key employees and Board members to take a leading role in directing efforts in the research space in future. As always, our aim is to support projects that are tailored to our specific clientele and working to achieve tangible outcomes.

Other key partners we continue to collaborate with include Bionics Queensland, QUT, Griffith University, Paraplegic Benefit Fund (WA), KinKera, ARMHUB, Polio Australia and the QSCIS at Metro South Health.



Accessible Tourism and Partnerships

To advocate for improvements in accessible tourism, we have formed key relationships with local governments and Regional Tourism Organisations including Tourism Tropical North Queensland, Visit Mandurah, Visit Sunshine Coast, Visit Rockingham and Moreton Bay Region Industry and Tourism.

Our work with partners such as Brisbane City Council, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Mackay City Council and Sunshine Coast Council in Queensland, along with Wanneroo, Subiaco, Rockingham and Mandurah in WA have formed the basis of partnerships that we hope are long-term and productive and positive for the organisation, our members and the wider community.

We commenced the campaign for 2023 to be declared the 'Year of Accessible Tourism' in Queensland, presenting the State Government with a proposal about the benefits this would bring to operators as well as customers. We sought and received the support of our close collaborators with this initiative and look forward to seeing this through to fruition in late 2022/early 2023.

Drive improved quality and efficiency focused on customer value

We continue to invest into our operating systems and customer service tools to ensure we provide the best user experience possible.

A significant investment was made into the construction and opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane with cost efficiencies gained by remodelling Spinal Life's head office simultaneously. With the Healthy Living Centre occupying much of the ground floor space, most internal departments were relocated to the upper level with a new open-plan design, creating a more cohesive working environment.

The CarelinkGo app (which is our tool for Personal Support and Home Care Services rosters and communication) was also upgraded during the financial year, for our customers and team members. The works undertaken were aimed at improving the flow of information and communication to enhance the overall usability of the app, after its launch in 2020.

Our Plan Management customers also benefitted from a new software platform that allows them to access real-time financial information, which can be also used by their Supports Coordinators, ensuring better service and improved payment terms for providers.

Furthermore, our Accounts Receivable team has completed significant progress on a debtor portal to allow customers and providers quicker access to account information, as well as the ability to pay outstanding invoices.

Streamlining our existing systems also remains a focus of our IT team including the transition to the Cloud, which impacts our HR, Finance and Payroll teams.

Spinal Life goes green

Board Director Michelle Wilson is leading Spinal Life's sustainability journey, using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint to make tangible changes in our workplace and beyond.

"We are exploring new ways we can genuinely make a difference, by changing the way that we do business," Michelle says.

Michelle recently undertook additional sustainability studies with the Global Reporting Initiative, which helps organisations to understand and better manage their impacts on people and the planet.

A committee of employees and customers is being formed to collate ideas and create an action plan to improve our progress towards sustainability. From working towards better employment outcomes for people with disability to increased inclusion in the community through to reducing our carbon footprint, we look forward to sharing more about this important work in the future.



ADVOCACY

Disability Doesn't Discriminate



The Disability Doesn't Discriminate campaign commenced more than a year ago to address the severe inequality of funding for people with a disability over the age of 65, who are unable to access the NDIS.

The campaign was coordinated by Spinal Life with 28 partner organisations, gaining more than 25,000 signatures on our petition ahead of the federal election earlier this year. While we had discussions with many candidates at the time, we did not receive a clear commitment from either major political party that this issue would be resolved.

We are continuing to battle this discrimination and will be moving forward on two fronts. Firstly, we are collaborating with another advocacy group to lobby for this change directly to the offices of federal politicians.

Secondly, we are liaising with a law firm that believes there is a chance a class action lawsuit may force the Government to introduce much-needed funding support for people with a disability aged over 65, so they can live more independently in the community.

We will continue to liaise with members as we work towards resolving this age discrimination.

Personal Support Workers in Hospital Settings

For many years, NDIS participants (and people with other funding sources) have experienced inconsistencies in their ability to be appropriately supported while admitted to hospitals in Queensland. We have continued our advocacy efforts to try and find solutions to ensure people can maintain their routines that are essential for their health and wellbeing, such as bowel therapy and assisted coughing.

While ongoing discussions with various health services were unfortunately disrupted by COVID, we plan to further engage with hospital management and Government to work towards a resolution on this key issue.

Individual advocacy

Our team continues to assist individuals who are facing adversity and need support, such as actively participating in Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases – regardless of whether they are a Spinal Life customer or not. We

will continue to share our expertise with NDIS access requests, plan reviews on an individual case-by-case basis, corresponding with a broader advocacy approach with state and federal governments for systemic change.

Accessible Australia app

Our free online resource continues to grow with more than 1,480 reviews of hotels, restaurants, cafés, shopping centres, public bathrooms, beaches, parks and more.

After the app was launched in 2020, we have continued to invest in improving the user experience and functionality.

We have also taken a proactive approach to further strengthen the information displayed in the app, working with Choice Hotels, Big 4 Holiday Parks and also through a partnership with Flight Centre to encourage hospitality providers to list the accessible features of their properties to attract a wider audience.

Raising Awareness of the Late Effects of Polio

As members of the board of Polio Australia, we have proudly supported their efforts to raise awareness of the late effects of polio in hospitals across Australia.

As part of the organisation's clinical education program, more than 200 kits were developed to be sent to hospitals, including key documents covering three areas: Allied Health, Medical/Surgical and Nursing. These kits will provide valuable information for hospital staff, when patients advise they have the late effects of polio. We also continued to support the efforts of Polio Australia's clinical education sessions across the State.

At Spinal Life, we continue to provide a resource endorsed by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to educate GPs about the condition, aiming to increase their knowledge and support them to better diagnose and treat polio survivors as they age.

Our Board

GYL STACEY



What action was taken this year that will have the greatest impact on future success and why?

“Review of our 3-5 year strategy has ensured that our focus and priorities are about investing in the things that will benefit our members the most. We have some exciting projects in our sights.”

MARK DILLMAN



What do you think was the greatest organisational achievement this year?

“We managed to successfully build and open the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane despite the disrupted operating environment while continuing to deliver on our agreed strategic direction. Ultimately, our efforts have led to improved services available to members.”

GERARD O'BRIEN



What do you think was the greatest organisational achievement this year?

“Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff and clients remained our highest priority despite the ups and downs of a turbulent year and we delivered on this.”

MICHELLE WILSON



What do you think was the greatest challenge this year?

“Our greatest challenge was looking after the health and wellbeing of our Personal Support Workers. That's why we continue to invest in training as we work towards ensuring all of our support workers hold a Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) benefiting all involved.”

Visit spinal.com.au to read more about our Board and Executive.

PROF PHILLIP MORRIS



What action was taken this year that will have the greatest impact on future success and why?

“The development of an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for Personal Support Workers, encouraging movement to permanent part-time work without loss of pay. It will enable us to grow by filling the staff shortage by making the role a more desirable option that people see as a long-term job.”

REBECCA TWEEDY



What do you think was the greatest organisational achievement this year?

“The opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane. A fabulous achievement for those involved in the many years of planning. This innovative centre will provide rehabilitation for our clients through a wide range of therapies and services. It will support our clients to achieve their personal goals.”

CAROL TAYLOR



What do you think was the greatest challenge this year?

“No doubt the greatest challenge has been navigating our way through a worldwide pandemic which continues to disrupt and significantly impact upon the disability community.”

DR DINESH PALIPANA



What do you think was the greatest organisational achievement this year?

“Being a doctor and a person with a disability, the pandemic was an incredibly difficult time for our community. And so, I think the greatest organisational achievement is the way that we have navigated the pandemic and are emerging from it.”

SECTION 2

Our Executives

Highlights from our Executives



MARK TOWNEND AM
Chief Executive Officer

"I am proud of many things achieved this year, including the work we have commenced to improve conditions for our Personal Support Workers and continued efforts we are undertaking to improve the customer experience – the successful opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane is a clear demonstration of our commitment to customers."



FRANCES PORTER
Executive Manager, Business Development

"I am so proud to be part of the team that opened the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane and seeing the growing fitness hub community. It is fantastic to see so many members benefit from having all their rehabilitation needs taken care of in the one location and the uptake of our new services including the Assistive Technology Mentor and Dietician."



NATALIE VON SNARSKI
Chief Operating Officer & Chief Finance Officer

"Strategising and implementing various initiatives to help ensure our clients continued to receive the services they are accustomed to, over the Christmas period, when we were faced with opening of borders, the Omicron wave and school holidays. Our customers were incredibly understanding, helpful and patient during this time and we all came together to make it happen."



ROSS DUNCAN
Executive Manager, Member Services

"What an exciting year that was! The two highlights were the momentum we built in our first ever national advocacy campaign - Disability Doesn't Discriminate and the inroads we made in influencing greater accessibility in the tourism sector in both Queensland and Western Australia."



VICTORIA HARRIS
Chief Human Resource Officer

"My key highlights are launching the new communication platform Thrive, implementing a staff reward and recognition program and commencing the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement process with our Personal Support Workforce. I am also proud of how we've focussed on increasing training and development opportunities for our staff."



DANIELLE READY
Acting Chief Finance Officer

"I was excited to be part of the Executive team in 2021-22 with the absolute highlight for me being the opportunity to lead the successful design, construction and opening of the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane – a state-of-the-art facility built to help our customers achieve their goals."

SECTION 3

Our Patron and Ambassadors



HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE DR JEANETTE YOUNG AC PSM

Governor of Queensland

Her Excellency, the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, hosted a morning tea in support of International Day for People with a Disability, 3 December 2021.

The event recognised Spinal Life Australia's longest serving Personal Support Workers, of which a number were in attendance. Our Personal Support Workers were accompanied by members of the Board, the Executive team, the Personal Support and Home Care Team Leaders at the event.

We thank the Governor of Queensland for hosting the event and her ongoing support as Patron for Spinal Life Australia.



WARREN PITT AM

Warren is our Community Ambassador for Far North Queensland and Cairns, showing his support for our Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre and activities across the region.



GREG CORNELSEN OAM

Greg has been a long-time supporter of Spinal Life, lending his profile to assist us whenever needed.



TIM HORAN AM

Tim has previously arranged for rugby players to visit the Spinal Injuries Unit and attended to meet patients and their families.

Financial summary

The 2021-22 financial year has been a time of consolidation for Spinal Life Australia as the effects of the global pandemic continued to be felt by customers and employees.

As disclosed in the financial statements, the organisation's group net assets have reduced by 3.3% to \$40.2M (2021: \$41.5M). The total comprehensive loss for the financial year, as shown in the Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, was \$1,359M (2021: profit \$5.94M).

During this past year, the most critical response was to effectively plan for the future. The Board and leadership team have focussed on investment opportunities that are innovative and have long-term benefits for our customers. This includes investments into the upgrade of our internal IT systems as well as applications so we can continue to offer efficient and high-quality care and supports for our customers.

In this financial year, we opened the Healthy Living Centre in Brisbane of which the Spinal Life team is exceptionally

proud. While still in its infancy, we are seeing strong usage rates in the state-of-the-art fitness hub and a variety of new services now available such as the Assistive Technology Mentor and a Dietician.

The Healthy Living Centre in Cairns has also been in successful operation for more than two years. Despite the tourism industry facing ongoing challenges from COVID, the Centre is still performing strongly and attracting business from both domestic travellers and a close-knit local community. The hydrotherapy pool continues to be a popular asset for the Centre alongside the fitness hub and accessible accommodation.

You will find more detail within our full financial report and we invite you to contact us if you have any feedback or questions. This report is available on our website.

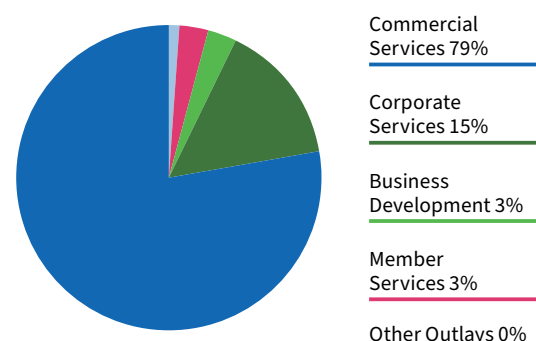
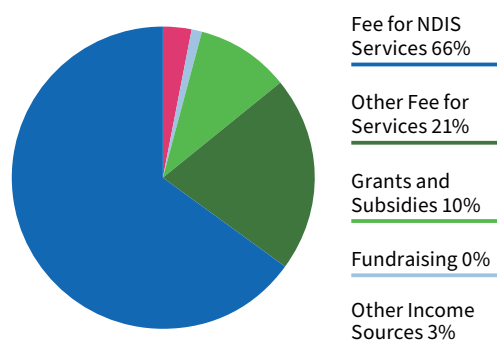


Natalie von Snarski

Chief Operating Officer & Chief Finance Officer



Financial highlights



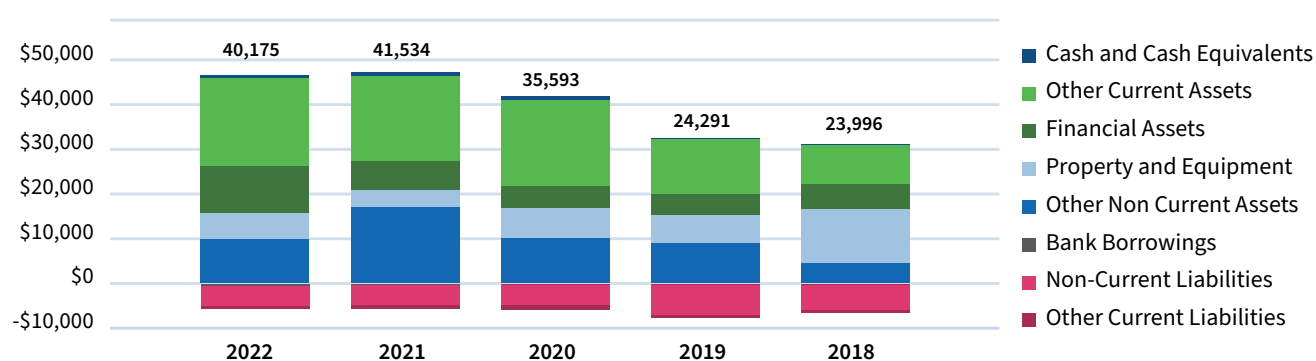
Where the Money Comes From

	\$'000
Fee for NDIS Services	30,855
Fee for Other Services	9,775
Grants and Subsidies	4,756
Fundraising Income	154
Other Income Sources	1,437
TOTAL	46,977

Where the Money Is Spent

	\$'000
Commercial Services	37,071
Corporate Services	7,032
Business Development	1,587
Member Services	1,120
Other Outlays	63
TOTAL	46,873

Equity (\$'000)



Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

These are extracted from the full set of Consolidated Financials. Full sets of Consolidated Financials are available on request.

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
REVENUE	46,977	45,580
EXPENSES		
Salaries and on-costs	40,771	38,746
Staff related costs	1,099	3,107
Client support costs	156	385
Depreciation and amortisation	1,086	1,120
Finance costs	41	25
Information technology & telecommunication expenses	1,309	1,190
Motor vehicle expenses	144	133
Occupancy costs	656	517
Unrealised loss on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	670	-
Other expenses	1,979	1,628
TOTAL EXPENSES	47,911	46,851
NET OPERATING LOSS	(934)	(1,271)
OTHER INCOME		
Capital grants received	29	39
Other income received	0	6,484
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	29	6,523
NET (LOSS)/PROFIT	(905)	5,252
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
ITEMS THAT MAY BE RECLASSIFIED TO PROFIT OR LOSS		
Changes in the fair value of debt instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income	(9)	10
ITEMS THAT WILL NOT BE RECLASSIFIED TO PROFIT OR LOSS		
Changes in the fair value of equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income	(445)	679
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE (LOSS)/INCOME	(454)	689
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE (LOSS)/INCOME	(1,359)	5,941

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

These are extracted from the full set of Consolidated Financials. Full sets of Consolidated Financials are available on request.

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	9,535	16,725
Trade and other receivables	2,200	1,286
Term deposits	1,947	139
Other current assets	1,746	2,232
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	15,428	20,382
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	4,602	3,421
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	5,807	3,218
Property and equipment	19,311	18,619
Right-of-use assets	308	346
Intangible assets	531	692
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	30,559	26,296
TOTAL ASSETS	45,987	46,678
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	1,547	1,773
Unexpended grant funds	1,307	388
Lease liabilities	85	74
Provisions	1,676	1,832
Bank loan - Insurance premium finance facility	382	140
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,997	4,207
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Lease liabilities	271	318
Other liabilities	6	6
Provisions	538	613
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	815	937
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5,812	5,144
NET ASSETS	40,175	41,534
MEMBERS' FUNDS (EQUITY)		
Other reserves	598	1,052
Accumulated surplus	39,577	40,482
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS (EQUITY)	40,175	41,534

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

These are extracted from the full set of Consolidated Financials. Full sets of Consolidated Financials are available on request.

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from government and customers	47,923	53,660
Payments to employees and suppliers	(47,296)	(47,125)
GST paid, net	(87)	(197)
Interest received	16	31
Interest paid	(41)	(24)
NET CASH INFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	515	6,561
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds on sale of financial assets, net	1,261	1,822
Acquisition of financial assets	(7,963)	(953)
Payments of property and equipment	(1,442)	(324)
Payments of intangible assets	(87)	(358)
NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(8,231)	187
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Principal elements of lease payments	(86)	(133)
Dividends and realised gains	370	216
Proceeds from borrowings	242	140
NET CASH INFLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	526	223
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(7,190)	6,755
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	16,725	9,970
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS END OF YEAR	9,535	16,725

SECTION 5

Our thanks

Our funding partners

Australian Government – Building Better Regions Fund
 Australian Government – Department of Health
 Australian Government – Department of Social Services
 Australian Government – Department of Veterans Affairs
 Motor Accident Insurance Commission
 Queensland Government – Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
 Queensland Government – Department of Justice and Attorney General (Gambling Community Benefit Fund)
 Queensland Government – Department of Transport and Main Roads

Our key partners and supporters

Advanced Robotics Manufacturing Hub
 Amputees and Families Support Group Queensland
 Assistive Technology For All Alliance
 Australia Disability Support Agency
 Bionics Queensland
 Bowerbird Industries
 Briometrix
 Brisbane City Council
 Cairns Regional Council
 Clem Jones Centre for Neurobiology and Stem Cell
 Coloplast
 Disability Justice Australia
 Flight Centre
 Followmont
 GIVIT
 Griffith University
 James Cook University
 KinKera
 Lifetec
 Mackay City Council
 Menzies Health Institute Queensland
 Metro South Health and Hospital Service
 MND Australia
 Moreton Bay Region Industry and Tourism
 Motor Accident Insurance Commission
 Muscular Dystrophy Foundation Australia
 National Disability Services (WA)
 Paraplegic Benefit Fund
 Paraquad South Australia
 Paraquad Tasmania
 Patient Zero
 Physical Disability Australia
 Physical Disability Council of New South Wales

Point Zero Five
 Polio South Australia
 Polio Australia
 Post Polio Victoria
 Push Adventures
 Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service
 Queensland Advocacy Incorporated
 Queensland University of Technology
 Seqwater
 Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association
 Sunshine Coast Council
 The Hopkins Centre
 Travis Schultz and Partners
 Townsville City Council
 Townsville Health and Hospital Service
 Victoria Park
 Visit Mandurah
 Visit Rockingham
 Visit Sunshine Coast
 Wheeliecampers
 Youngcare

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