

Annual Review

2020-21

Chair and CEO report

Never in our lifetime did we think that we would be reflecting on the impacts of a global health crisis now described as the pandemic era. But as vaccination numbers increase and we start living with COVID-19, the pandemic has demonstrated just how essential our services are and we cannot say thank you enough to Wellways staff for their efforts.

Our staff have gone above and beyond in these challenging times.

Our teams have shown unwavering commitment to participants and carers as they delivered continuous support amid the challenges COVID-19 has presented.

Across this reporting year our staff of almost 2,000 people worked to support close to 17,500 people across urban, rural, and regional Australia.

This is significant growth on last year, thanks in part to Carer Gateway which provided vital support to 9,000 people who care for another person.

We know that the pandemic and associated lockdowns have impacted the mental health and wellbeing of us all. In addition, many regional and rural communities are still recovering from the devastating effects of the 2020 bushfires. Our community mental health services have responded to this and grown by 17 per cent from the previous year.

This year we made a tough but strategically sound decision to change the focus of our NDIS supports. The current NDIS pricing regime makes it impossible to provide many quality services without subsidisation from other areas of our work.

OUR SUPPORT IN NUMBERS

17,474

PEOPLE
ACCESSED
SUPPORT

9,000

CARER GATEWAY
SUPPORT AND
SERVICES

7,550

COMMUNITY
MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT

6%

IDENTIFY AS
FIRST NATIONS

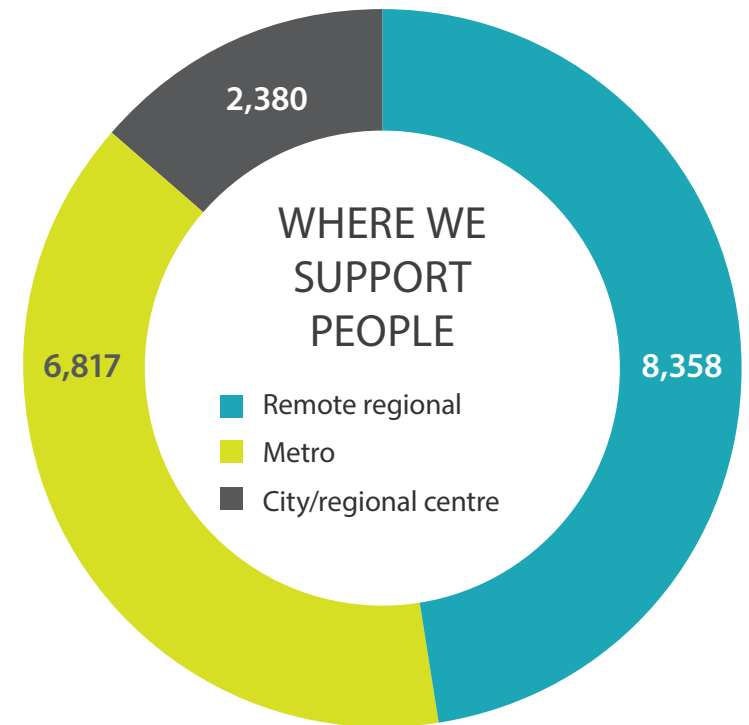
Our renewed strategy is to strengthen our specialist NDIS offer to people with complex care needs. Concurrently, we are transitioning people with less complex care needs to new providers, which is on track for completion by the end of November 2021.

Thank you to the many staff who have supported participants during this time, even as they face uncertainty themselves. We are sad to have a number of people leave Wellways but are confident the changes we're making will strengthen our impact.

It is an exciting time for Wellways. The outcomes of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System offer a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help create and deliver a truly recovery-focused mental health system built by and for participants and families.

We are advocating for inclusion and quality community supports, and governments are listening. In recognising the vital work of the entire community managed mental health sector, the Royal Commission placed greater emphasis on our sector playing a leading role within the mental health system. The changes to the system in Victoria, could pave the way for improving elements of the mental health sector across the country.

This year, unfortunately we uncovered payroll system errors, but have worked quickly with the workplace regulator, the Fair Work Ombudsman, to repay \$965,000 (plus interest and super) as at 30 June 2021. To past and present staff impacted by these payroll errors, we again offer an unreserved apology. We are pleased to say we have established processes to make sure this does not happen again.



At the board level, we have welcomed new members who are passionate about what we do. This will further strengthen our governance oversight. It is great to have fresh eyes that offer diverse perspectives on our business, including from our first First Nations director Rod Little.

We are also building the voice of those with lived experience into our operations and governance structures.

Both the board and staff have set meaningful deliverables across all our regions and business departments to make reconciliation everyone's business. And we're proud to have launched a caucus for First Nations staff to connect and hold us accountable to culturally safe and competent practice.

The sale of one of our properties in St Kilda has released additional resources to invest back into our services and people.

Significant investments in communications, finance and human resources infrastructure that work towards ensuring the care and services we provide are done safely, sustainably and improve people's lives.

Michael Gorton AM and Laura Collister
Chair and CEO

 [Click to view Wellways: what a year](#)



WELLWAYS BOARD AND DIRECTORS
2020-21

Creating inclusive communities

Everyone should have the opportunity to lead a meaningful and satisfying life in the community where they want to live. Together, we make sure people experiencing disability or challenges to their social and emotional wellbeing are supported to imagine and achieve their hopes and potential.

Here's how...

Wellbeing and community connection

All our programs provide access to care in the community. Doing so improves the health and resilience of the people we support.

Our Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) provides people who have a severe mental illness support to overcome barriers to participating in the community, in the way that they want to.

Beyond individual supports, we work to transform communities – from training local hairdressers or butchers to identify someone at risk of suicide to guiding governments on building a mental health system that puts people first.

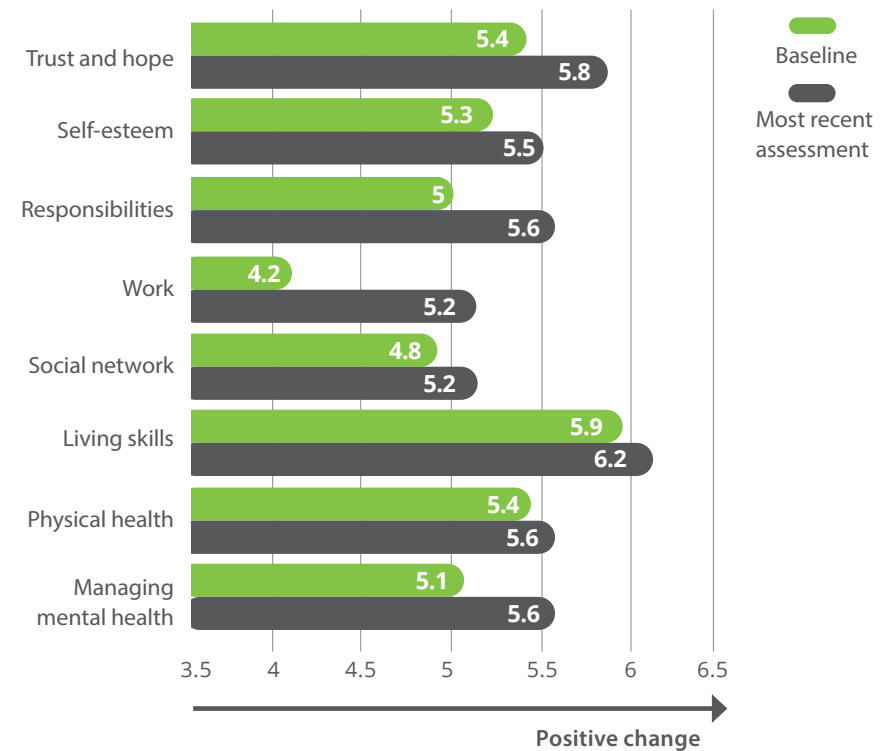
The Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative uses the Recovery Star to track the gains participants make in their recovery.

Last financial year 330 people made the significant progress after taking part in the program.



Click to view *Wellways: wellbeing and community connection*

HASI PROGRESS IN RECOVERY



Partnerships that work

When we marry our peer and wellbeing skills with the skills our clinical partners bring, we reduce barriers for people who need or want support.

This is evidenced through our Prevention And Recovery Care (PARC), of which we are the biggest provider in Australia.

Across 2020-21 our PARC teams worked alongside hundreds of people, their families, carers and others to support them in their journey at critical life periods. This included preventing hospital admissions as well as supporting people to return to their home and community after leaving hospital.

Since taking management of an extra six PARCs last financial year, we have increased participants' experience of care on previous years, with Travancore PARC receiving a 100% rating.

People who used PARC services between April and July 2021 rated their experience of care and told us the service had a very positive effect on their wellbeing, their ability to manage day to day life and their hopefulness for the future.



Click to view *Wellways: partnerships that work*

- BROADMEADOWS PARC
- TRAVANCORE PARC
- NORTH FITZROY PARC
- GIPPSLAND PARC



Supporting carers in their own right

Across 2020-21, Wellways Carer Gateway helped 9,000 people who care for another person to talk about their challenges and needs, connect with services, set up support plans and access crisis care or respite. A quarter of these carers also accessed emergency respite, 1,041 took up in-person peer support and 1,475 received in-person counselling.

Carers have told us that Wellways Carer Gateway has provided a lifeline during the pandemic through the continued delivery of support.

Living our values

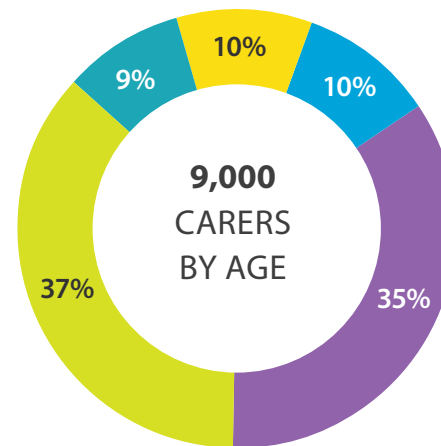
We are a team of almost 2,000 who proudly live our values of honesty, acceptance, fairness, commitment and participation.

Through sharing knowledge from lived experience, peer workers inspire hope and recovery. We are working to strengthen our peer workforce to ensure people with lived experience lead at all levels of our organisation.

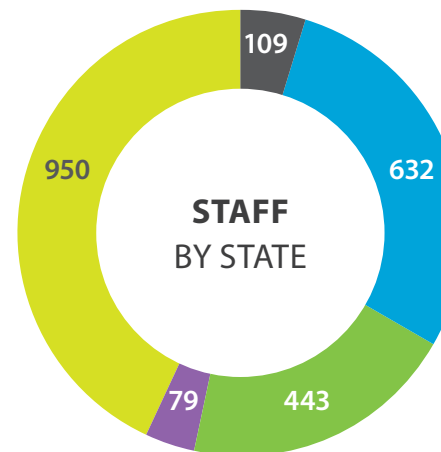
 [Click to view Wellways: lived experience leadership](#)

We are wellbeing workers, clinical consultants, support workers, finance partners, peer workers, counsellors, policy and advocacy advisors, art therapists, people managers and designers. Wellways is compliant with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency annual report – affirming our commitment to gender equality.

 [Click to view Wellways: a great place to work](#)



- 25 years and under
- 26-39 years old
- 40-59 years old
- 60-79 years old
- 80 years and above



- VIC
- NSW
- QLD
- ACT
- TAS

5%
ARE PEER WORKERS

Financial position

Wellways financials were strong and stable during the 2020-21 financial year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. A 32% increase in revenue and a re-valuation of land and buildings to recognise their current value grew the organisation's total equity. This is after providing for repayments to staff of previous underpayments and a significant investment in digitising and streamlining work processes. The organisation did not require Job Keeper payments or cash flow assistance from the NDIA.

At the time of publication of this annual review, the full 2020-21 financial report was being audited. This report will be published in January 2022 on the Wellways website after the Annual General Meeting.



[Click to view Wellways financial reports](#)

Wellways acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we live, work and play and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We are committed to inclusive communities, workplaces, policies and services for people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

Wellways is a leading not-for-profit mental health and disability support organisation with services in Queensland, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Tasmania. Our services span mental health, carer support, disability and community care, and reach thousands of people each year. We connect people, strengthen families and transform communities. We work with individuals of all ages experiencing disabilities or challenges to their social and emotional wellbeing. This can include creating a home, securing a job and building meaningful relationships.

Our vision: An inclusive community where everyone can imagine and achieve their hopes and potential.

Our mission: We connect people, strengthen families and transform communities for individuals of all ages experiencing disabilities or challenges to their social and emotional wellbeing.

Please contact publicaffairs@wellways.org if you have any questions about this publication or would like support to access it.

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