



# 2022

## Annual Report







## Our Values

Integrity, respect, openness, person-centred, accountability, life-long learning.

## Our Vision

To be an organisation of excellence; a growing, flexible and proactive person-centred service.

## Our Mission

To provide exceptional services for people with disability, primarily those with an intellectual disability, and their support networks. Through person-centred support, we empower people to reach their individual goals and aspirations.

**Aspiring to the  
ideal state**





Hands  
Are  
Overrated

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# Table of Contents

Chair Report	06
Life Membership Awarded	07
CEO Report	08
Board of Directors Reflections	10
Committee Reports	12
Accommodation	16
Support Coordination	18
Community Access and Self Care	19
Behaviour and Allied Health Services	20
Activities and Events	22
People and Culture	24
Staff Satisfaction Survey	26
Employee of the Year	28
Goal Kicker of the Year	29
Contributions	30
Finance Report	33
Family Day	36
Out and About	38





# Chair Report

Pauline Vamos

The Board and I believe that Interaction has had an exceptional year in what were sometimes challenging circumstances due to the continuation of COVID-19, staff shortages and changes in NDIS funding.

There are many reasons we think that Interaction is in a good place. Our CEO has well and truly got his legs under the desk and started to drive an organisation with a not-for-profit heart with adherence to the best ethically commercial standards to ensure we are sustainable.

**Our finances are strong with total funds of around \$10.5m and annual revenue last year of over \$22m. This is an excellent result given the challenges and cost increases of COVID-19.**

Our strategy centres on our participants with our core strategic themes to provide whole of life support, housing security, expansion of current service models, implementation of innovative service models and the continuation of our industry leading Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) services.

Part of our strategy is also to invest more in our marketing to drive our organic growth.

The leadership team and the internal structure has been transformed. As a Board we are receiving reports to a level of transparency and quality that are normally within larger and substantially funded organisations. The insight they provide

allows the Board to plan, oversight and to look with confidence to the future.

In his report, CEO, Brett Thompson talks about our investments in systems and processes. We have also invested in our people who are our most precious resource and we will continue to do so.

As an organisation we will benchmark ourselves against the Royal Commission findings and best practice in governance to ensure we drive a culture of continuous improvement.

In my report last year, I mentioned a risk event regarding award interpretation. I am pleased to advise that the remediation programme was completed in a timely manner.

**In terms of the Board, I am saddened to advise that due to work commitments Laurie Boxwell stepped down in August 2022. Laurie's attention to detail and project management will be missed and we thank him for his enormous contribution to Interaction over the last 7 years. Over the next twelve months, we will continue to focus on Board renewal and to that end I can inform you we are currently recruiting for a Board member with lived experience of disability. We have also welcomed onto the Board Gavin Pearce who brings tremendous commercial and strategic experience.**

I would now like to take the opportunity to thank our wonderful team, our Board of Directors and of course you our participants, parents, carers and members.



# Virtual AGM

With restrictions continuing throughout 2021, Interaction hosted its Annual General Meeting (AGM) as a virtual members-only event. Along with Director nominations, financial reporting and general business, the Board and members watched a video filmed online by Interaction participants, sharing their experiences of the 2021 lockdown. With the 2022 AGM planned to be held in-person, we look forward to welcoming non-members to join in the event as has been done in the past.

## Life Membership Awarded

At the 2021 virtual AGM, Dr William and Dorothy Sorby were awarded Life Membership by Interaction's Board of Directors in recognition of their long-standing support of Interaction.

In 2002, Dr William and Dorothy Sorby's son, Andrew moved into Interaction's PWS-specific Keene Street program. They are strong carer advocates for appropriate funding for their son, the broader PWS program and Interaction. They have consistently donated time and money to the PWS house and to Interaction.

William and Dorothy have attended Interaction's AGM, Christmas parties and fundraising events and contributed to strategic planning and other consultation processes. Interaction is most grateful for their support.





# CEO Report

Brett Thompson

I would like to open my report by thanking our amazing staff for their commitment and dedication to providing great support to our participants throughout what has been a challenging year. You have endured all that COVID-19 and its variants have thrown at us, as well as natural disasters such as floods. On top of this you have maintained your focus on ensuring our participants have remained safe and well supported, even during prolonged periods of lockdown.

During the past year, we have continued to look for ways to improve our services and do more with our available resources. Aspiring to the ideal state is the theme of this year's report and a lot of work has been undertaken in striving to achieve this. Despite our best endeavours, we are not there yet and by retaining a focus on aspiring to the ideal state, we will continue to review and improve what we do.

A Continuous Quality Improvement Plan was established during my first year and has been maintained and updated. It is very pleasing to see so many of the improvement initiatives completed, but also to see new opportunities identified and added to the Plan. Our independent NDIS Approved Quality Auditor was so impressed with our focus on improvement that not only did we pass the audit with no recommended actions, she also commented on the Plan and the way we were continuously improving.

We introduced feedback boxes throughout our accommodation facilities this year and also provided QR code access to those who live independently as a means of obtaining feedback, positive and negative. In order to continuously improve, we are

reliant on feedback and this is another mechanism that makes this process simpler and more convenient.

**We also commenced the process of annual staff and participant and family/carer engagement and alignment surveys. Previously these were conducted every second year, meaning results were out of date and certainly not reflective of the impact of current or recent changes. It was fantastic to receive high engagement and alignment results (top 25% of the sector) from the staff survey which indicate our staff understand where the organisation is heading and feel a connection to it. We scored highly in terms of work health and safety (providing a safe work environment) and our focus on participant outcomes. This is so important, as it is the core of our being. The participant and family/carer surveys are scheduled for later this year.**

The areas staff identified as requiring improvement were in training and development and career pathways, communication (top down) and IT systems. These have been consistent themes for a number of years and I am pleased to note we invested heavily in new IT infrastructure this year. We are also finalising the implementation of new client management and rostering software. We

engaged a new IT provider to manage our IT systems and they have done a wonderful job in introducing additional cyber security, specific communication software (MS Teams and Sharepoint) and maintaining our computer fleet. Our People and Culture team have completed a learning and development calendar and are finalising a skills gap analysis, having identified the skills required for each role and matching existing staff skills to these. Finally, many different avenues for communicating with staff have been introduced throughout the year and we will continue to monitor their success (or failure).

The previous participant and family/carer survey highlighted the need for greater connection between families and carers. Despite the limitations associated with COVID-19 we were able to hold a number of virtual events this year, including a Magic Show and the Christmas Party. These provided opportunities for connections to be made. We also held a face to face Family Day in May of this year and this was immensely successful. It was fantastic to see so many participants reconnecting with friends, in person after such a long time, as well as for families and carers to make some new friendships. More of these are planned for later in the year.

Another area of concern raised by families and carers in the past has been cybersafety, online bullying and scamming. We were very fortunate to have been the recipient of a grant from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to develop training for participants and their families and carers, providing education on cybersafety. A special thanks to Emily (Marketing and Communications Manager) for being successful in attaining this grant.



**On things financial, we achieved an end of year result of just over \$1m surplus which is a great result having managed the increased costs associated with COVID-19, reductions in participant SIL funding and completing the remediation payments associated with Project Green.**

All of the changes that have been made and our ongoing improvements are assisting us as we aspire to the ideal state. Our internal reporting is improving, which means we are better placed to manage the organisation and provide the Board with sound metrics, improving our accountability and governance.

I am excited about the year ahead as some of our new Executive and Senior Leadership Team members consolidate their roles

and we identify more opportunities and introduce improvements.





# Board of Directors Reflections



## Gail Bennell

This year has once again been punctuated by the challenges of living with COVID-19, with lockdowns and self-isolation continuing to form 'COVID normal'. Pleasingly, despite these obstacles, Interaction continued to provide the supports our participants value. These exceptional and ongoing circumstances have highlighted the need for business systems that enable us to deliver high quality, participant focused services.

Interaction has continued to examine the systems we use daily and streamline these so that we can continue to support our staff to be at their best so they can support our participants to live fulfilling lives. It is a privilege to be a part of this vibrant and forward-thinking organisation, and I look forward to facing the challenges of the next year alongside so many people who are committed to the wellbeing of our staff and participants.



## Rob Binskin

The past year has been an interesting time to be part of the Interaction Board as we navigated our way through the governance landscape covering Strategy, Risk, Finance, Compliance, People and Culture. The leadership demonstrated by the CEO and the Executive team continues to be outstanding, as they look for new and better ways to provide excellent care and services for our participants.

I have been pleased to be involved with the technology initiatives and projects that Interaction has been undertaking during the year. Again, the capability of our people and their clear vision for the continuous improvement of services is inspirational.

I am looking forward to the coming year of working together towards a bright future for Interaction.



## Laurie Boxwell

When you're in the midst of change, it can be hard to see progress; it can even feel like you're going backwards. But when you take the time to step back and reflect, it is heartening to see how far you've come. That's how I feel about the last year at Interaction. As I reflect, I am just so impressed by the reliable and consistent way our staff and leadership get on with the business of providing care and for the constant aspiration to get better. I am also grateful to be part of a Board which is aligned in our aspiration to provide the best possible governance to Interaction. I am blown away by the level of competence and compassion that sits around the board room. To all of the Interaction community; the Board, the staff, the families, and of course to the participants I say "thank you" for the privilege of being involved.



### Allan Dodd

It has been my honour to serve another year as a Director of Interaction, particularly as it allows me to be involved with so many capable and dedicated people, who willingly provide their services freely for the benefit of our participants and staff.

To watch our CEO, Brett Thompson, enthusiastically and with great integrity lead both the Executive and staff teams has been a pleasure. The challenges continually thrown up might thwart some, but Brett has continued to humbly lead his team and our organisation under trying circumstances. I hope that others enjoy Brett's dry sense of humour like I do.

As a Director, it is important that we continue to give direction to our CEO and Executive team and then stand back and let them get on with their jobs. Fortunately, I think that as a Board we have been able to achieve this and I hope that we can continue to do so in the future.

I look forward to Interaction going onto bigger and better things in the future, while we continue to serve all our participants.



### Michael Fairley

There seem to be so many challenges that it is easy to feel overwhelmed. This may contribute to the recent widespread denial that COVID-19 continues to be rampant. Health facilities and disability services stand out in their continued application of public health measures. When visiting homes, I have been pleased to see that masks for visitors and other measures that are not excessively onerous are still applied. Interaction has a good pandemic plan that has been used and served us well.

Interaction tries hard to do right by staff. This is reflected in the length of service of many who care for our people. In turn, this means stability, which is so important when things around are changing.



### Gavin Pearce

In the short period I have been involved with Interaction 2 things stand out. The first is our people's passion, commitment, and desire to do a great job. As the COVID-19 rollercoaster continued its journey, the teams and individuals across Interaction made the required changes and continued to deliver services consistent with our purpose and values. This was done in a very challenging and demanding environment. The second is the potential value NDIS can deliver to Australia if all stakeholders work together productively.

# Committee Reports

## Executive Committee

The Executive Committee's commitment to keeping participants and staff safe throughout lockdowns and restrictions saw the development and improvement of all emergency planning and business continuity plans. These plans, along with actions and progress against the Strategic Plan 2021-2026, the CEO and Executive Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and minutes of all Committee meetings are shared regularly with all staff through SharePoint and Microsoft Teams.

Improvement of internal systems and processes has continued to be a focus throughout the last 12 months. Regular feedback from Interaction staff led the Executive Committee to review and completely overhaul our IT systems, with the organisation moving to a cloud-based solution managed externally by The IT Department. The scoping project of a new Client Management System continues, and we hope to share the results of this project in the coming months.

Another key focus for the Executive Committee over the past 12 months was to improve the availability of feedback channels, and to increase the amount of feedback received. More options for staff, participants, families and carers to provide feedback include the newly installed feedback boxes at all Interaction facilities, a QR

code and survey, as well as face to face site visits from the Board and Senior and Executive Leadership Teams. The effects of this initiative have been overwhelmingly positive as we have not only seen an increasing trend in feedback provided to the organisation, but also more recognition from families and carers for the wonderful work our Support Workers do every day.

In the 2021 Annual Report, the Executive Committee shared news of the purchase of land at Gorokan on the Central Coast. Though progress has not moved as quickly as we had initially hoped we are pleased to report that an architect has been engaged and we are currently reviewing building options.

The next 12 months will see significant changes in the Executive Committee. We bid farewell to Gurdeep Masson from her role as Chief Financial Officer after more than 13 years of service to the organisation. We have welcomed Robyn Downie into the role and look forward to her contribution to the Executive Leadership Team.

Helen Amos (General Manager, Community Services and Supports) and Samantha Hiley (People and Culture Manager) have both elected to embark on a career change with a move to our Behaviour and Allied Health Services Team. We wish Helen and Samantha all the best in their new positions.





## People, Practices and Culture Committee

Previously operating as the Remuneration and Nominations Committee, the People, Practices and Culture Committee was recently formed to provide oversight of organisational culture and Interaction's performance and remuneration practices, and Board renewal.

**The staff culture is one of the great successes of Interaction. To ensure that this continues into the future, the Committee will focus on feedback from exit interviews, the improvement of annual performance appraisals and reviews, and ensure that there are adequate training and development opportunities for staff in every area of the organisation. As the Royal Commission comes to a close, we will consider its findings in relation to Interaction's policies concerning employee conduct and risk to ensure that we are providing best practice supports to our participants.**

At a governance level, the Committee will be reviewing remuneration policies, as well as oversight and evaluation of Board and CEO performance. I look forward to reporting on a productive 12 months ahead in the 2023 Annual Report.

### Gavin Pearce

Committee Chair

## Safety and Quality Committee

The Safety and Quality Committee monitors contemporary sector developments and reviews organisational policies, processes and systems to ensure compliance to relevant legislation and standards. The Committee is passionate about upholding participants' rights across all areas of discussion.

Key achievements for the Committee included:

- The completion of the NDIS Registration Surveillance Audit, confirming that Interaction complies with the requirements of the NDIS Practice Standards with no identified non-conformities;
- Establishing a participant-led Practice Review Committee and calendar of topics that informs Interaction's current and future processes and policies;
- Reviewing the interim findings of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and recommending internal actions for continuous improvement;
- Reviewing thirty-one policies over the July 2021 to June 2022 period;
- Developing and implementing policies and related processes in response to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission practice alerts and updated NDIS Quality Indicators framework;
- Conducting its annual internal quality audit. This process involved cross-departmental reviews of program practices, site visits and participant feedback; and
- Regular oversight of compliance audit requests and responses ensuring all matters were addressed within their set timeframes.

### Lauren Asmussen

Committee Chair

## Work Health & Safety and Wellbeing Committee

The refreshed Work Health & Safety and Wellbeing Committee is comprised of members of both office-based and support staff. The Committee meets to review reported hazards and incidents across all Interaction sites, develop schedules for consistent and regular workplace inspections and to address any concerns arising from these inspections. As safety of Interaction staff is a key concern for the Committee, work health and safety training opportunities are identified and assessed according to the needs of each service area. Throughout the last 12 months this has included Fire and Evacuation Training, WHS Training for workers, and the review of available First Aid Officers and Fire Wardens for all work areas. Though restrictions have for the most part been lifted, the Committee monitors staff vaccination rates and any related concerns in line with NSW Public Health requirements.

To support the wellbeing of Interaction staff, the Committee supported the People and Culture team in the new Wellness Wednesdays initiative, where each week issues such as interpersonal communication and conflict resolution is explored. A new Employee Assistance Program provider was engaged, giving all Interaction staff access to free counselling sessions and other supports when and where they need it at no personal cost.

**Samantha Hiley**  
Committee Chair

## Projects Committee

The Projects Committee is in place to provide oversight to projects of strategic importance. Our charter is to do the following:

- Review new projects and report to the Board on strategic alignment and viability.
- Provide recommendations to the Board on go/no go of projects.
- Review progress on all projects and report to the Board on their health.
- Provide recommendations to the Board when remedial action may be required for projects.
- At the request of the Board, review individual projects and provide objective advice in the event of a disagreement between the Executive and the Board about aspects of that project

While historically we have overseen the development of properties, this year there has been a different focus. We've been reviewing and discussing projects which build organisational capability and a platform for growth. This includes projects such as the replacement of the Client Management System and strengthening our IT services.

I would like to thank the members of the committee and those who presented; Michael Fairley, Rob Binskin, Brett Thompson, Luana Atger, Helen Amos and Lauren Asmussen for their contribution in the last year.

**Laurie Boxwell**  
Committee Chair



## Finance and Risk Committee

"The only thing constant in life is change". This saying has been attributed to Heraclitus, who was an ancient Greek philosopher. It is recorded that he also said "The fear of change is also constant".

While I have been a Board member, almost the only thing that has remained constant has been change.

Firstly, we went from block, quarterly funding payments in advance from the State Government to weekly or fortnightly claims in arrears from the Federal Government for services rendered. Then our Chair retired after many years of faithful service, followed shortly by the resignation of our CEO. Our external auditor changed after the previous auditor reduced his workload leading up to his retirement. Throw in COVID-19 that has impacted all our community, the recent change of the Federal Government (with different emphasis on disability funding), changing our Chief Financial Officer, and a major change in our computer infrastructure and, well, things just continue to change.

Since the middle of 2021, the NDIA had consistently reduced the funding for our participants by around 5% every time their plans were reviewed. This reduction has led many organisations like Interaction to really struggle to survive. Fortunately, we have been able to cope relatively well.

On 18th July 2022, the chair of the NDIA resigned and (probably under the direction of the new Federal Minister), 2 days later the NDIA made Interaction (and other providers) a significant lump sum offer for possible underfunding since July 2021. This amount has been included in our current accounts.

There has fortunately been one constant – our staff who have been able to continue to provide wonderful support and care for our participants, under the watchful eyes of our Executive team. The work that they do and dedication they continue to exhibit, should never be underestimated. Our staff turnover is low for our industry and this in turn leads to many of our participants wanting to stay with us over many years.

**I would like to thank all the members of this committee for helping guide our Board and Executive – all have worked well together and that has made my role easier.**

It would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution of our previous Chief Financial Officer, Gurdeep Masson, over many years as she helped grow the company to our current size. I wish Gurdeep all the best in the future and welcome Robyn Downie as Gurdeep's replacement. Robyn brings a different skill set to the position and I look forward to working for her in the future.

We should not be fearful of change, but welcome it so that we can continue to better serve all our current and new participants.

### Allan Dodd

FCPA (retired)  
Committee Chair

## Stakeholder Engagement Committee

The Stakeholder Engagement Committee, consisting of participants, parents and staff, has continued to meet every second month. Connecting members of the Interaction community has been a key focus for the Committee, beginning with hosting a Virtual Magic Show for participants and families in late 2021. As restrictions lifted, the inaugural Family Day event held in May was a wonderful opportunity for participants, families, carers and staff to finally reconnect in-person after a challenging two years apart. We are looking forward to future events where the Interaction community can continue to come together.

**Each month the Committee reviews complaints and compliments received by the organisation to consider options for improvement in the delivery of supports. The Committee has assisted with various Interaction projects by providing feedback and insight from a parent/carer and participant perspective. A number of Committee members have assisted with recruitment by sitting on interview panels or have been involved in strategic planning and development.**

The next 12 months look to be an exciting time for the Committee with the delivery of the Parent/ Carer and Participant Survey and other upcoming projects of Interaction, the Committee will continue to support and encourage connection between participants and Interaction so that all voices are heard.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their contribution in the past year; Brett Thompson, Sue Waesch, Karyn McNeil, Daniel Brotheridge, Elisabeth Tassone, Dianne Robinson, Giovanni Mission and Emily Griffith.

### Lesley Robertson

Committee Chair





# Accommodation

Over the past year Interaction's accommodation services have undergone significant change in response to both COVID-19 and the impact of changes to participant funding.

Dealing with everything that COVID-19 has thrown our way has shown how we can bond together as a team to ensure service delivery continues. Staff stepping into spaces left by close contacts and positive cases kept us going through a particularly difficult time over Christmas.

We have seen the impact of mandatory vaccinations as some staff chose to move on from the industry, however although we lost a few staff, what we have maintained is a healthy group of participants and staff which is thanks to our vaccination rates as well as our ongoing management of personal protective equipment (PPE) measures.

Recent months have seen a staffing restructure across all

accommodation services to reduce the challenges faced with Accommodation Managers taking on support tasks and the burden of the continuous responsibility of managing on-call system for the service.

Accommodation Managers will now be responsible for 3 to 4 facilities, and report to Senior Managers. This allows for clearly defined roles so that each person can focus solely on the intended requirements of the position. Another element of the accommodation restructure is the creation of a Rostering Team.

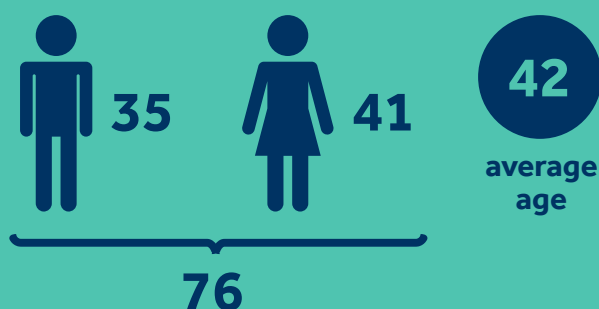
I understand that change can be difficult for some participants, we are working closely with the residents and families of each house to ensure that everyone is comfortable with any new staff. I am confident that this restructure will provide more focussed and consistent supports for our accommodation participants.

An exciting development has been the creation of a Practice Review Group where participants and staff work together to review Interaction's policies and procedures. Each month a different topic is explored, and recommendations from participants taken on board and actioned. This important group supports the work of the Stakeholder Engagement Committee as the organisation continues to seek feedback from participants and families.

Though we have seen a lot of change within a short period of time, I am confident that our team is resilient and adaptable and will be able to confidently and continuously provide the best supports possible to each and every one of our participants. The focus on consistent service delivery will allow us to maintain the strong reputation Interaction has built over the years.

**Luana Atger, General Manager Accommodation**

## Number of accommodation participants



## Properties

5 Drop-In Support Homes

19 High Support Homes



## Ben's Story

When Ben was a teenager, he had a serious mountain bike accident and sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury. Although Ben has been faced with many challenges since his accident, he continues to lead an energetic and happy life. He has been actively involved in many volunteer roles in his community as he loves to help people, but more recently has built and opened his own business - Benny Barker's Dog Walking Service. Everyone who supports him is so proud of his motivation and dedication to his new business venture.

Ben loves woodworking as much as he loves dogs and has started selling his handcrafted pieces at market stalls around the Central Coast. He recently had his first stall and it was a huge success!







# Support Coordination

The Support Coordination team grew this year, not only with new staff, but also with babies. There are more to come so watch this space! The expansion of the team has enabled us to concentrate on capacity building to help support our participants and families to develop independence.

With thanks to some of our insightful participants who supported us with interviews, we were able to add to our passionate and supportive team.

If I were to describe the drive that this team have for supporting their participants to achieve the best they possibly can, I can confidently say that I would want any one of them in my corner any day.

When speaking with some of our families, they described to me a few of the things they receive from their Support Coordinator:

- "When families have other things going on in life, it's good to feel that someone else is there to help manage my supports and take the pressure off"
- "It's so good to know when someone has my back and helps me keep my supports in line"
- "I love that my Support Coordinator thinks outside the box and offers me different options to my supports"

Participants have experienced some amazing achievements this year through their Support Coordination. The growth within the team has enabled us to concentrate on providing more capacity building supports with our participants and families, to help them in developing greater independence.

## Donna's story

I would really like to get a job in a café, so I did a barista course every Friday for 8 weeks. It was in a coffee truck behind a school, and I got one on one training. I really enjoyed it because I got to meet people and talk to them. I loved learning to make coffee. My brother used to work in a coffee shop too and he knows a lot about coffee, so now I do too. The first lesson I was a bit nervous but now I know what I am doing. I already have a job 4 days a week, but I would like to do something else on my day off. If I can get a job in a café on my day off and on weekends, then I can save up to go on a holiday and do more things.





# Community Access and Self Care

Several changes have been implemented throughout the year to further assist our participants and staff, starting with the name change from 'Direct Support' to 'Community Access and Self Care'. The new name is to better describe what services we offer our participants and what goals our participants aim to achieve.

Our Community Access Coordinators have been spending time visiting participants, families, and Support Workers to build stronger relationships as well as foster safe practices for our staff. What remains consistent for us is that our Support Workers are the backbone of what we do. Supporting our frontline staff is paramount to continuously improving our services. I would like to thank our participants and carers who nominated their Support Workers for Employee of the Month throughout the year or gave us your feedback. It is so wonderful to hear all about the outstanding work

our Support Workers are doing, and the achievements our participants are making with their supports.

As the need for non-face-to-face supports emerged throughout lockdowns, we realised the benefit for some of our participants so have kept this option as a permanent solution when it is needed. These types of supports have included help to set up personal appointments, online training, developing living skills packages and zoom catchups with participants.

We have implemented a goal tracking system for our participants to record the awesome work they are doing with their support workers. This year, 611 goals were met by participants, and 163 goals are currently in progress.

**Helen Amos**

General Manager, Community Services and Supports

## Celebrating Participant Outcomes



### OUT AND ABOUT

- Attend hydrotherapy
- Attend OT and speech services
- Got a new support worker
- Leave hospital after a long stay
- Returning to work
- Visiting a sibling
- Visit mum for morning tea



### NEW ACTIVITIES

- Sewing
- Buy a coffee
- Learning to use the ipad
- Moved house
- Joining hip hop classes
- Follow a physio exercise plan
- Received a vaccination



### LIFE SKILLS

- Cooking
- Attending appointments
- Grocery shopping
- Attend a job interview
- Get ready for school
- Learning to change bedding and vacuuming
- Completing personal care





# Behaviour and Allied Health Services

The Behaviour and Allied Health Services (BAHS) team provides both mobile and clinic-based supports to participants and their support networks. The BAHS team currently provide services across two key areas under the NDIS - Improved Relationships and Improved Daily Living. Improved Relationships includes all aspects of behaviour support, implementation and training with varying degrees of complexity. The Improved Daily Living category includes supports such as individual psychological therapy and assessment.

The BAHS team have continued to adapt and demonstrate a strong dedication to all participants during the changing conditions and challenges of the pandemic by providing safe and flexible supports and work practices.

Over the past 12 months, the BAHS team has seen significant growth in the number of practitioners offering supports on the Central Coast, and our services continue to expand in this region. The number of participants receiving BAHS services has increased to 163 across the Sydney, Wollongong and Central Coast regions.

As the BAHS team expands, we look forward to offering additional supports, both in previously offered and new service areas as well as training not currently offered. In 2023 we will be introducing a calendar of training and programs to support staff, siblings and parents. This will include topics such as Safety Intervention Training, and Dementia Training. The BAHS team will also continue to play a key role in the delivery of supports for people with PWS.

BAHS will continue to focus on providing quality goal driven services with a focus on sustaining positive outcomes to all of our participants and their support networks.

**Kim Konowec**  
Practice Manager



# 20 Years of Friendship

My relationship with the ladies in this photo spans over 20 years. As a young woman who just turned 20, I decided I wanted to make a change in my career, from a sales support position to something where I could perhaps make a difference in people's lives. Wendy (left of top photo) was one of the people who interviewed me. Straight away Wendy made me feel comfortable and certain in my decision that I was going to be working with such lovely people.

While I thought I could make a difference in people's lives, little did I realise at the time just how much these ladies would impact on my own life. Some of the things these ladies brought to me and taught me were their compassion, their understanding, empathy, care for others, and most definitely their sense of humour and cheekiness.

There were areas of our lives we shared along the way such as joy with family weddings, new nephews and nieces arriving, the grief of the passing of a loved one, and many more experiences. One of my favourite memories was Cathy (bottom photo, front left) saying to me in all seriousness 'your husband looked so beautiful at your wedding Helen, and you looked alright too.'

At the time, I thought I was unique in this situation, but as the years go by, I realise these ladies have impacted on the lives of so many other people who have had the honour of working with them. Recently I had the chance to visit the ladies in their new home. While so much had changed such as legislations, policies and procedures (and we've all aged 20 years!) it was very clear that the same humour, love and compassion was still there, and what a wonderful job the current staff working with these ladies are doing. It absolutely filled my heart.

## Helen Amos

General Manager, Community Services & Supports







# Activities and Events

## Interaction Goes Virtual

With more lockdowns and restrictions in 2021, staff and participants worked hard to stay safe and happy, despite the challenges they were faced with once again. Interaction's wonderful frontline staff continued to provide the positive supports, encouraging participants to embrace the return to craft, going for walks, exercising at home and joining in with our online activities to keep in touch with friends



## Virtual Magic Show

Since we weren't able to get together in-person, the Stakeholder Engagement Committee hosted a Virtual Magic Show for participants, families and staff to join in one Friday evening. The magician had everyone enthralled with amazing card tricks, magical illusions and plenty of jokes and laughs.



## Virtual Christmas Party

Despite needing to move the event online, the annual Christmas Party was a fantastic night for participants, staff and families. DJ Darran played our usual favourites, there were a few games, some excellent Christmas outfits, and Santa and his elves even made an appearance. We can't wait to see everyone at the 2022 Christmas Party where we can dance the night away together in-person.

## Shereen and Amy's Story

Shereen has loved going to Canberra since she was a little girl. She would go with her parents and visit family, so we decided to take a trip to Canberra and enjoy all the beautiful things it has to offer.

We visited the Cockington Green Garden and went on the steam train. We also went to The Royal Mint to watch how they make money and listen to the staff teach us how money first came to Australia. We enjoyed beautiful dinners at our hotel and at one of the best Yum Cha restaurants in Canberra.

Shereen's favourite place was The Arboretum in Canberra, a botanical garden devoted to conservation with spectacular views. The weather was cold, but we kept warm with plenty of layers.



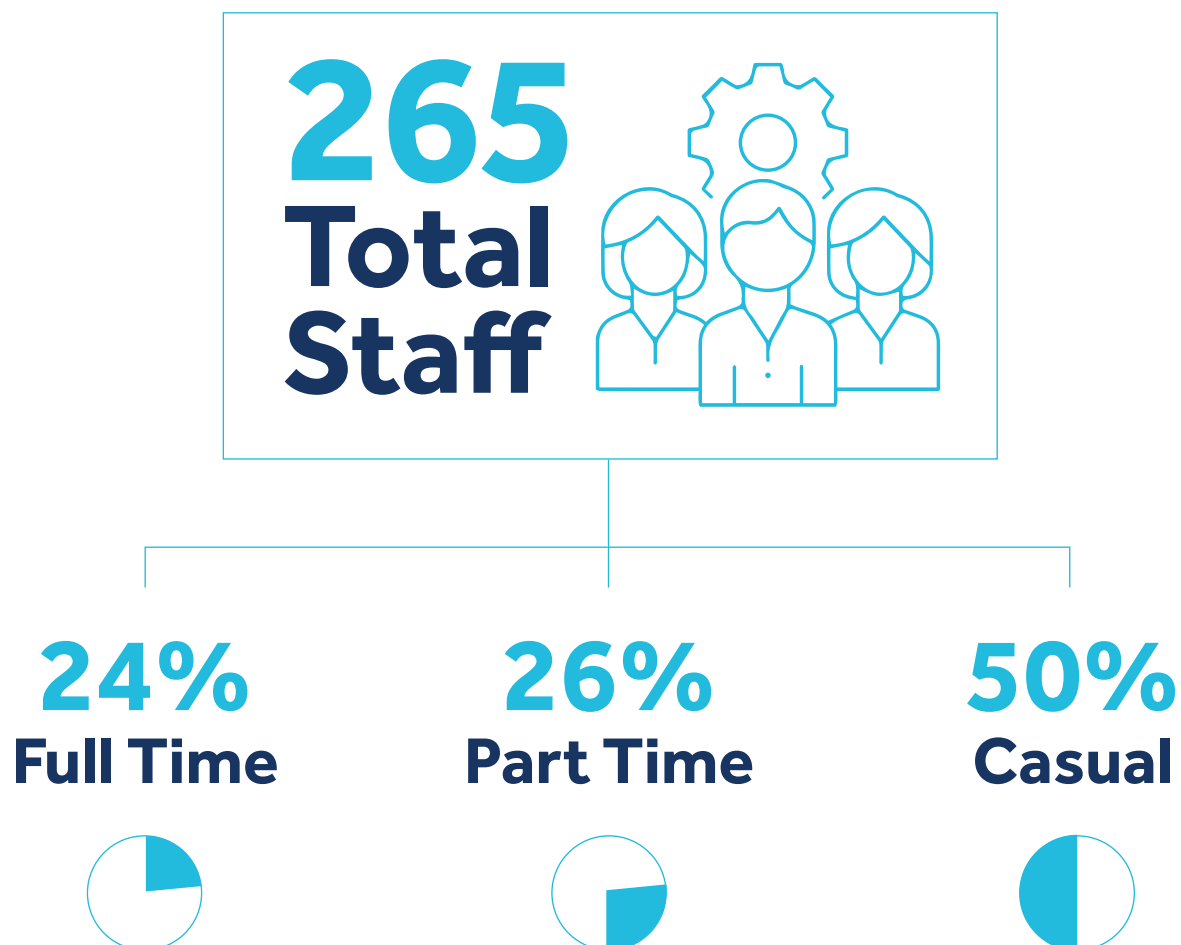


# People and Culture Report

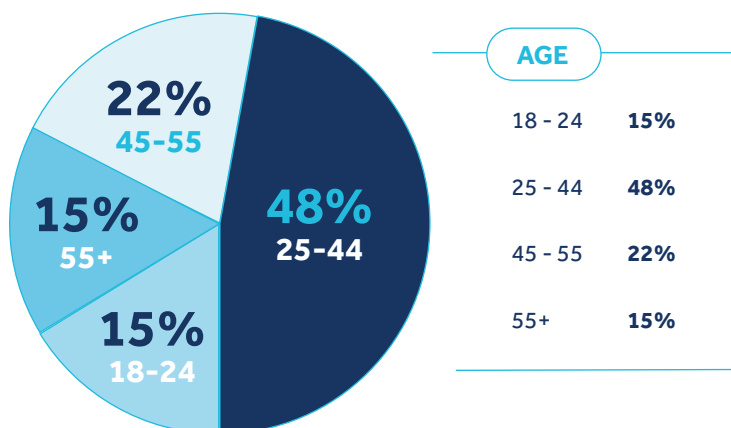
Interaction had a reduction of almost 9% in staff in the last financial year, bringing our total number of employees to 265. Interaction has a turnover rate of 1.22% which is low in comparison to many other sectors.

Once again, we have seen consistency in the number of staff ranging between the ages of 25-44. Interaction continues to maintain a notable percentage of employees over the age of 45, most of whom have maintained a loyal and lengthy employment with our organisation.

We saw significant growth in our Support Coordination team and Accommodation remains our largest service area in terms of staff numbers. The People and Culture team focussed on providing the necessary supports to frontline staff throughout lockdowns and restrictions to assist in the organisation's ability to provide continuity of service for all participants.



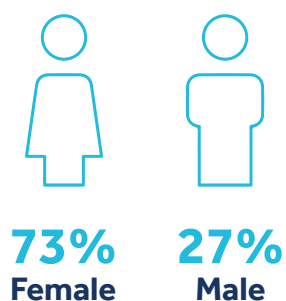
## STAFF BREAK DOWN BY AGE



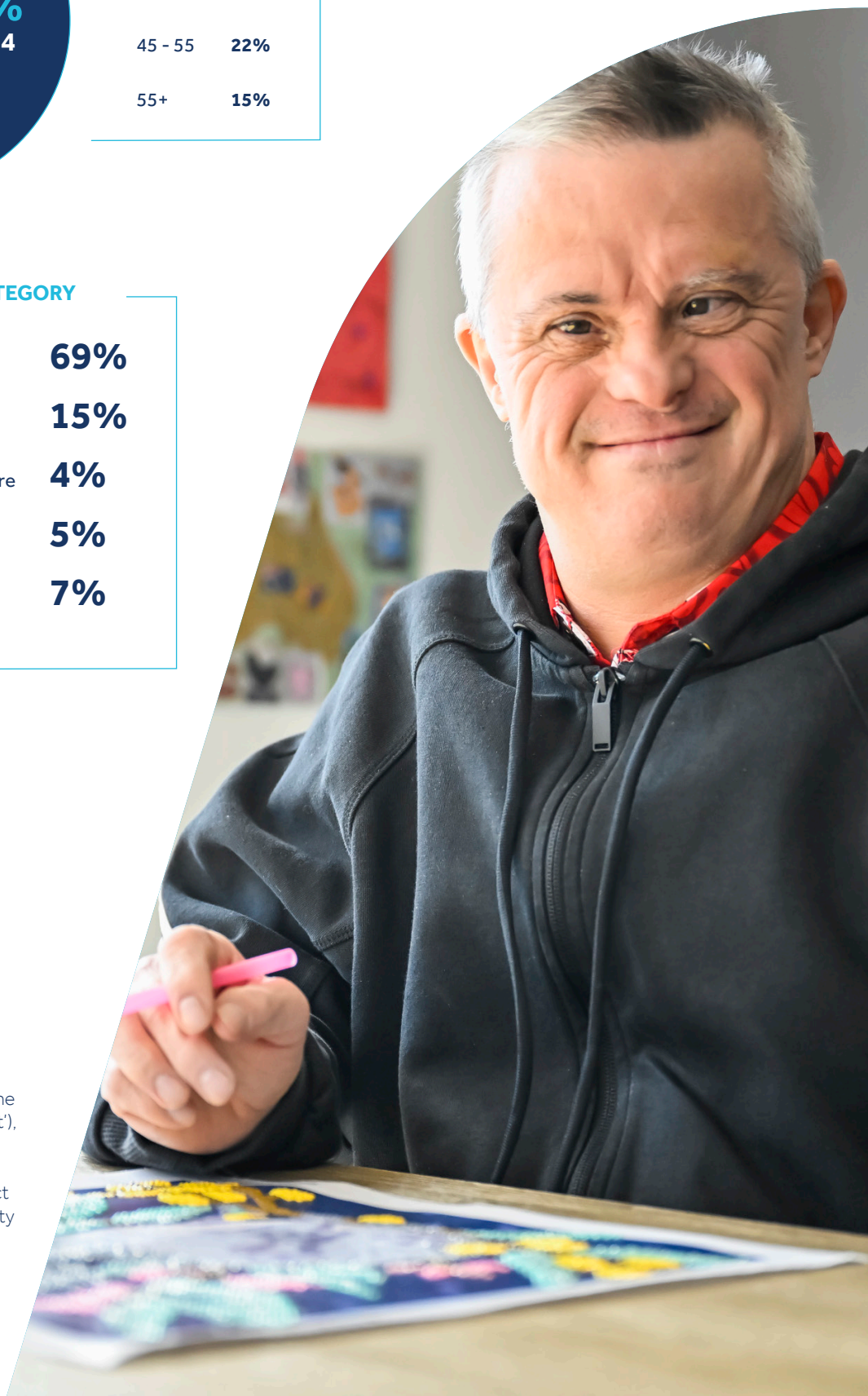
## STAFF BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY

Accommodation	69%
Support Coordination	15%
Community Access and Self Care	4%
BAHS	5%
Shared Services	7%

## GENDER BREAKDOWN



In accordance with the requirements of the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 ('Act'), Interaction lodged its annual compliance report for 2021/2022 with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency ('WGEA'). The Act provides for feedback from the community to comment on the report either to Interaction via email or to the WGEA.





# Staff Satisfaction Survey

At Interaction, we strongly believe that if our employees are happy, there will be a roll-on effect resulting in positive relationships with our participants.

To ensure that we are providing the support our staff need to be able to best perform in their individual roles, we engage an external agency to survey all employees. This helps us to improve and develop specific areas of the organisation which benefits not only our staff, but the wider Interaction community.

## Interaction staff responded that the top 3 things that Interaction does well are :

**84%**

Focussing on participant outcomes

**84%**

Caring about employees

**87%**

Providing a safe work environment

## Interaction staff responded that our greatest strengths are:



**Knowledgeable and understanding staff**



**Reliable staff**



**Privacy and confidentiality**

**87%**

of respondents said they are proud to work at Interaction.

““

Look after employees' welfare and safety.

““

Interaction helps its participants with integrity & honesty.

““

Deal with crisis quickly and effectively. Put participants safety and well-being first.

““

Endeavours to support participant needs, promotes independence.

““

They care about the participants. They look after the staff well. They make sure they listen to participants and staff alike.

““

Has done its best to engage participants during covid to foster connections.

““

Interaction is very good in looking after its staff & participants.

““

Rapid response to emergencies.





# Employee of the Year

We congratulate all staff nominated for Employee of the Month Awards. Listed are the recipients, along with the Employee of the Year, who were recognised by Interaction's CEO and Executive Leadership Team.

## Employee of the Month

### Sharon Kassoutas

Recognition from both colleagues and participant family members for her thorough, down to earth, professional and genuine support of participants.

### Eileen Rostron

Successfully moving the Narara program and going above and beyond to ensure a smooth transition for participants and staff.

### Mike Choi

Providing exceptional support and going above and beyond for a participant.

### Sanja Tamburic

Support a participant to achieve her goal of a day in the city.

### Pat Symes

Pat is very good and understanding, and I enjoy Pat being my worker" (nominated by participant).

### Alexandra Ziade

Making positive changes for participants in her role as House Manager.

### Naaz Hussain

Securing grant funding for 3 projects that will benefit both participants and staff.

### Debbie Zamor-Bangout

Showing commitment to keeping a participant motivated and engaged in lockdown.

### Lee-Ann White

Being efficient and supportive while stepping in as Acting House Manager.

## Employee of the Year

### Danielle Hicks

Danielle received her Employee of the Month nomination for always going above and beyond to assist the wider Interaction team with any Human Resources issue. Nothing is ever too big a task for Danielle, and she is always friendly, approachable and a pleasure to work with.



# Goal Kicker of the Year

Goal Kicker of the Month is a way for us to recognise the hard work our participants put in to achieving their goals. The 2021 Goal Kicker of the Year was announced at the 2021 Christmas Party and all monthly winners are listed below.

## Goal Kicker of the Month

### Lynne Porter

Working hard on her health and fitness goals to become more independent.

### Amy Green

Showing an incredible positive attitude while recovering from a serious accident.

### Donna Ashton

Showing kindness, compassion and empathy for her housemates.

### Elizabeth Tod

Assisting the Executive Officer with the development of easy-read policies for use throughout the organisation.

### Edna Thompson

Committing to her healthy eating and exercise plan throughout lockdown.

### Emma Smith

Working hard to stay positive and productive during a challenging time.

### Stephanie Somerville

Showing fantastic improvement in her communication skills.

## Goal Kicker of the Year Rowan Thomas

Rowan and his family made a big decision to move to warmer weather just north of Sydney. Although a huge move and change in schedule, Rowan not only managed the transition and ongoing lockdowns and restrictions but made incredible improvements in his physical abilities.





# 2021-2022 Contributions

Interaction sends a special message of thanks to every person who made a donation this past year. Your support is valued and has enabled us to continue to provide excellent services and resources to the people we support.

## CYBER SAFETY TRAINING

Young people with disability and their support networks will be able to access free online training specifically developed to promote safe behaviour and positive online experiences, thanks to grant funding by the eSafety Commissioner.

As a disability services provider with a sound understanding of the needs of participants and their families, Interaction is working closely with ySafe to develop a series of online cyber safety training modules to meet the cognitive needs and learning requirements of young people with disability.

Thanks to this very generous funding and support from the eSafety Commissioner, Interaction will soon be able to offer this vital support to a vulnerable community in the ever-evolving online world. We look forward to reporting on the progress of this exciting project in the 2023 Annual Report.



It has been an honour to sponsor the cyber safety project. Young people have always engaged in new technologies, often to the dismay of their parents and guardians. Today's young people are no different, however while being able to interact online allows young people opportunities for learning, social connection and even employment that previous generations did not have, the nature of the technology is that there are risks when used without care. While there are other cyber safety training programs, few are targeted at the unique needs of young people with cognitive and communication disabilities. It is exciting to be involved in the development of this program, and I can't wait to see the final product and the impact it makes to increase the safety of young people with disabilities.

**Gail Bennell**  
Board of Directors

## THE WAY AHEAD

Each year in support of Mental Health Month, the Way Ahead funds activities that support people to 'tune in' to their daily lives and the lives of others. To help our participants 'tune in' to each other and their community, The Way Ahead generously funded a brand-new Vege Pod for our lovely Romeo Place ladies, who have been enjoying homegrown salad and fruit with their dinners. Thank you, The Way Ahead!



## THE AWESOME FOUNDATION

Interaction was the lucky recipient of one of The Awesome Foundation's monthly grants, allowing us to purchase and install a brand-new Vege Pod at two Interaction houses. Our participants have been enjoying the opportunity to watch their herbs and vegetables grow so they can harvest and share with their housemates. Thank you, The Awesome Foundation!



THE AWESOME FOUNDATION

## STOCKLAND CARE GRANTS

The annual CARE Grants program is implemented throughout Australia to assist organisations with local community-building initiatives. Interaction was thrilled to receive a generous grant from Stockland CARE grants which funded two brand-new Vege Pods for our wonderful participants. Thank you, Stockland CARE Grants Team!



## BAULKHAM HILLS SPORTS

Thank you to Baulkham Hills Sports, the Bankstown Sports Group and its Board of Directors for the generous financial support to provide Mental Health First Aid training to Interaction staff which teaches people to recognise and respond to the mental health needs of those around them. This issue has become incredibly prevalent as the impacts of lockdowns and restrictions were felt by all, so Interaction is very grateful to Baulkham Hills Sports for their generous support on this important training.

**BaulkhamHillsSports**

**BankstownSports**



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID  
Australia



## CASTLE HILL RSL

Interaction's Fitability program was first created in 2018, however it can only run with external funding. Thanks to Castle Hill RSL and its Board of Directors, we were able to hold a 12-week gym-based program for participants to focus on their physical health and mental wellbeing. The opportunity to come together in-person to work out, spend time together and learn more about their health was very welcomed by participants after a challenging two years. Thank you, Castle Hill RSL!



## ALITA SALES

As a not-for-profit, community support is always very welcome, particularly when it comes to being able to provide for our participants and staff. Thank you to Alita Sales for the incredibly generous donation of 720 x 1L bottles of hand sanitiser, which has greatly assisted us in providing further protection of the health and safety of participants and staff. Interaction also thanks Rotary Club Lane Cove for facilitating this generous donation.



## APEX EXECUTIVE INTERIORS

A very lucky handful of participants submitted winning entries to an Interaction competition to attend a Sydney Kings game. A corporate box including refreshments and a chance to meet the players was generously donated by Apex Interiors. Everyone who attended absolutely loved the game and were thrilled to be invited. Thank you, Apex Executive Interiors!



# Finance Report

Interaction finished another year with strong and consistent financial management. This robust consistency will lay the foundations for a solid future for the organisation.

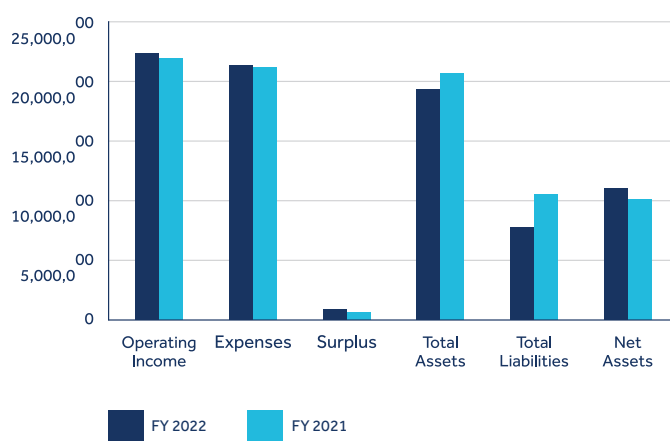
Whilst COVID-19 continued during FY 2022, Interaction's dedication to providing quality services, from our committed workers to our loyal participants, has shown the great strength this organisation can pull together during the most difficult times. During this challenging year, our costs remained in line with low increase of costs of prior years. Interaction continued to stay the course and deliver against strategic plans despite interruptions due to COVID-19.

Interaction is positioned for future success as the value of our assets have been maximised through disciplined investment, to ensure the longevity of the organisation for participants.

Interaction's financial reports were prepared in accordance with all relevant Australian Accounting Standards and in compliance with Corporations Act 2001.

## Financial Highlights

### FY 2022 vs FY 2021



## Financial Snapshot

### Income:

- 93% Total Income derived from NDIS Revenue
- Total Revenue increased 2%
- One-off NDIA Deed Payment of \$658K

### Expenses:

- 86% Total Expenses derived from Employee costs
- Total Expense increased 1%

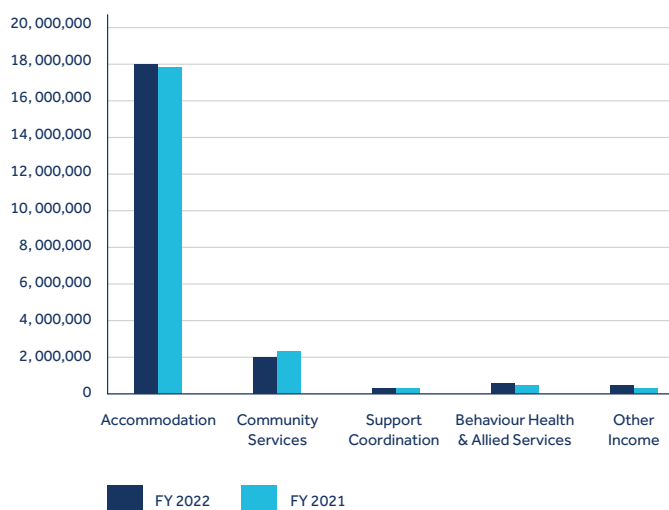
### Net Surplus:

- FY2022 results: \$1,061,873
- Increased 19%

**FY 2022 Results conclude the organisation resulted in a strong financial position:**

- Net Assets \$11,071,825
  - Increased 9%
  - Includes \$4,584,068 Asset Revaluation Asset revaluation from prior years

### FY 2022 vs FY 2021 - per Service & Supports





# Statement of Financial Position

AS AT 30TH JUNE 2022

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,158,824	4,759,361
Trade and other receivables	1,556,103	837,840
Total current assets	3,714,927	5,597,201
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	14,846,338	15,078,713
Right-of-use assets	405,192	201,873
Total non-current assets	15,251,530	15,280,586
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>18,966,457</b>	<b>20,877,787</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	608,249	535,732
Borrowings	491,631	486,819
Lease liabilities	139,713	59,020
Employee benefits	1,110,600	3,355,225
Total current liabilities	2,350,193	4,436,796
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Borrowings	4,746,066	5,804,056
Lease liabilities	277,542	147,628
Employee benefits	520,831	479,354
Total non-current liabilities	5,544,439	6,431,038
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>7,894,632</b>	<b>10,867,834</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>11,071,825</b>	<b>10,009,953</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>		
Accumulated funds	6,487,757	5,425,885
Reserves	4,584,068	4,584,068
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>11,071,825</b>	<b>10,009,953</b>

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>	22,272,884	22,028,624
Employee benefits expense	(16,159,697)	(15,787,926)
<b>Gross Margin</b>	6,113,187	6,240,698
Interest received	4,240	3,099
Other income	251,600	16,241
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>6,369,027</b>	<b>6,260,038</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Indirect wages & on-cost	(1,748,357)	(2,393,808)
Depreciation expense	(505,224)	(437,875)
Finance expenses	(213,148)	(140,569)
Loss on disposal of assets	-	(56,925)
Motor vehicle expense	(356,911)	(446,709)
Occupation costs	(145,426)	(224,061)
Other client expenses	(609,103)	(520,081)
Service charges	(1,225,951)	(803,981)
Other expenses	(290,554)	(293,678)
Professional fees	(212,481)	(86,108)
	<b>(5,307,155)</b>	<b>(5,403,795)</b>
<b>Surplus before income tax</b>	<b>1,061,872</b>	<b>856,243</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,061,872</b>	<b>856,243</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b> <i>(items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss)</i>		
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	-	2,110,645
Other comprehensive income for the period	-	2,110,645
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>1,061,872</b>	<b>2,966,888</b>

## Statement of Changes in Equity

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	2022	2021
Opening retained equity	10,009,953	7,043,065
Surplus/(loss) for the year	1,061,872	856,243
Net gain on revaluation of land and buildings	-	2,110,645
<b>Closing retained equity</b>	<b>11,071,825</b>	<b>10,009,953</b>

# Family Day

Interaction's first Family Day event in May 2022 was a way for participants, families and staff to re-connect with friends and meet new people after the last 2 years of lockdowns and restrictions. With over 100 people in attendance, everyone enjoyed a BBQ lunch, a few games, a sensory corner and entertainment from a roving clown. Brett Thompson, CEO, took the opportunity to discuss the Defend the NDIS Campaign in the leadup to the Federal Election.

A very big thank you to local sponsors for their generous donations of gift vouchers and lucky door prizes.

- [Woolworths Kellyville and Norwest](#)
- [Coles Kellyville](#)
- [Officeworks Castle Hill](#)
- [Gelato Messina Norwest](#)
- [Concierge Car Wash Baulkham Hills](#)
- [Flower Merchants Norwest](#)
- [Bunnings Warehouse Castle Hill](#)









# Out and About











**1300 668 123**

[www.interactionservices.org](http://www.interactionservices.org)