



2022 - 2023

Annual *Report*

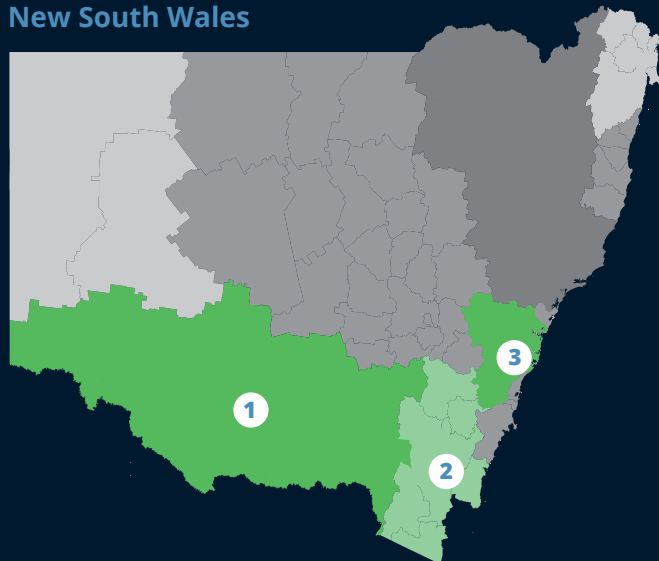
*Your*Side

Contents

On Your Side.....	4	Our Service Delivery.....	16
Our Story.....	6	Sector Support.....	28
Our Chair.....	8	Our Partnerships.....	31
Our CEO.....	10	Our Staff	34
Our Ambassador.....	13	Our Clients	46

Our Service Delivery Area

New South Wales



1. Murrumbidgee (Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Baraba Baraba, Wemba Wemba Perrepa Perrepa, Nari Nari and Muthi Muthi land)
2. Southern (Gundungurra, Ngarigo, Ngannawal and Yuin land)
3. Metropolitan Sydney (Cammeraygal, Guringai, Darramuragal and Dharug land)



Artwork: Reaching & Supporting Many
Artist: Leah Cummins, Mayi woman

Acknowledgement of Country

Your Side acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their rich cultures. We pay respect to Elders past and present and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we all live and work.



The Hon. Anika Wells (Minister for Aged Care & Sport) with Your Side Social Support Group

On *Your Side*

Your Side is here for older people, people with disabilities, other vulnerable members of the community and carers. We support people to live safely and independently by getting to know them and their circumstances. This enables us to assist individuals in selecting the most suitable supports for them within complex care and service systems, while also coordinating the delivery of their services. This is our Total Care model, which aims to reduce the stress of coordinating care.

Your Side began in 1987 - 36 years ago - as a forum to support organisations delivering home and community care in the northern parts of Sydney, and to coordinate and plan for future care needs.

Over time, we expanded to deliver direct care services to older people and carers throughout Sydney. We've extended our services to cover Greater Sydney, as well as the Murrumbidgee district and the Southern NSW region.

As we grow, we build on our strength, our knowledge of care services, and our history of working collaboratively and supporting other organisations.

Total Care means we partner with a network of 94 care and support providers, which means we have an 850 strong workforce. Our team help people select from a combination of services and supports that meet their specific needs. Maybe that's a particular language or cultural fit, maybe it's a specialist skill such as support workers trained in mental health, or maybe it's working out what mix of services would best suit your needs such as domestic assistance, transport or respite for carers. We aim to help you achieve your goals, keep your home safe and comfortable, your health as good as it can be, and maintain or increase your independence.

Our vision is simple:
that every life can be a good one



Our Story

2018-2023



2018

HOURS OF CARE:
49,904

ASSESSMENTS: 2,764

REVENUE: \$6,343,484

CLIENTS: 3,698

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 52

STAFF: 52

GEOGRAPHY:
North, East and
West Sydney



2019

HOURS OF CARE:
82,813

ASSESSMENTS: 2,764

REVENUE: \$8,264,365

CLIENTS: 5,410

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 63

STAFF: 59

GEOGRAPHY:
Greater Metro Sydney



2020

HOURS OF CARE:
124,229

ASSESSMENTS: 2,401

REVENUE: \$12,218,212

CLIENTS: 5,788

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 85

STAFF: 82

GEOGRAPHY:
Greater Sydney
including Nepean



2021

HOURS OF CARE:
195,708

ASSESSMENTS: 3,906

REVENUE: \$16,031,449

CLIENTS: 6,934

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 131

STAFF: 91

GEOGRAPHY:
Greater Sydney
and expansion into
Murrumbidgee region



2022

HOURS OF CARE:
221,215

ASSESSMENTS: 6,350

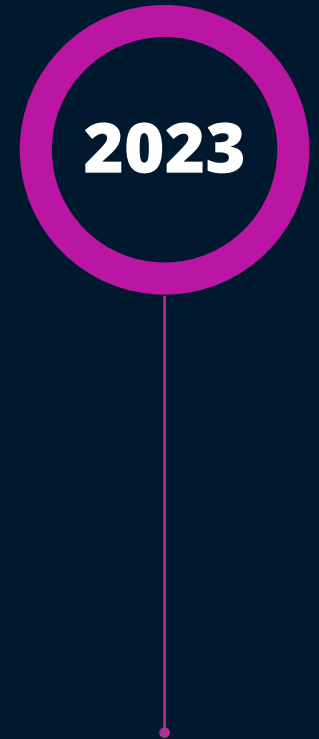
REVENUE: \$20,491,509

CLIENTS: 7,465

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 105

STAFF: 98 internal,
650 Total Care
partner staff

GEOGRAPHY:
Greater Sydney and
Murrumbidgee region
of NSW



2023

HOURS OF CARE:
235,233

ASSESSMENTS: 9,631

REVENUE: \$26,493,261

CLIENTS: 8,530

**PROVIDER
PARTNERS:** 94

STAFF: 151 internal,
700 Total Care
partner staff

GEOGRAPHY:
Greater Sydney,
Murrumbidgee and
Southern NSW region

Our Chair

In 2023 I am proud of our team for continuing to navigate some very challenging times.



Reforms are gathering pace in the sector. After the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, and while the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability continues, Your Side has responded by working hard to implement genuine, impactful quality improvements, whilst also meeting compliance demands from regulators that have been constantly evolving from COVID mandates to new requirements around disaster preparedness or the way fees are presented. And amongst that we have also grown.

While never wavering from our quality-of-service focus, there has been an increasingly urgent focus on the cost of delivery versus the fees we can claim for our funded services.

“Demand continues to increase for home-based care, driven by demographic pressures (our ageing population) and an increasing preference to stay at home rather than enter residential care, as people age and the quality of home-based supports increases.”

Costs have increased faster than our regulated fees: in particular wages, as well as insurance, compliance and other costs. We are not alone in feeling this pressure: the Ability Roundtable white paper found 64% of NDIS providers in the first 6 months of FY2023 reported

a loss, with no easing of the pressure on the horizon. In aged care, Stuart Brown reports 64% of residential aged care homes reported an operating loss to March 2023, and operating results in home care declined 21% from March 2022 to March 2023.

The Board began a strategic review in light of these pressures. Your Side will continue to grow but with an increasing focus on the twin pillars of quality and viability.

“Your Side has a strong plan for the coming reform period, with many of the key quality and service design elements already underway.”

We will continue to find efficiencies while focusing on the quality of delivery where it matters most – in the lives of the clients who have trusted us to support them to remain independent and to live a good life. I thank our staff, volunteers, and partners for their tireless work over the year, and I thank our clients for trusting us with their care, and for bringing the richness of their lives and stories into our services.

Finally, I would like to thank Tam Johnston and Margaret Kay for their time on the Board. Tam chaired the Governance and Nominations Committee from 4 November 2020 and Margaret was the Deputy Chair from 20 October 2021 to 19 October 2022. I wish them both well in the next phase of life.

Linda Mallett



From L to R: Yvonne Wheldon (Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council), Tracey Spicer (Your Side Ambassador), Kevin Barrow (CEO of Northern Sydney PHN), Sue Heins (Mayor of Northern Beaches Council), The Hon. Tim James (Member for Willoughby), Danielle Ballantine (CEO of Your Side)

Our CEO

Throughout 2022-23, we continued to navigate the ever-changing landscape of aged, disability, and community care. This year we faced some significant challenges, but also celebrated great accomplishments - cementing Your Side as a reputable and growing provider across NSW, in line with our strategic direction.



Supporting vulnerable members of our community as a care finder

We are delighted to report that Your Side Australia secured funding to deliver the care finders program in both Western and Northern Sydney.

This achievement speaks to the reputation we have built for meeting the evolving needs of our vulnerable communities.



Expanding our geographic reach

Under the auspices of the New South Wales Ministry of Health, we successfully expanded our services into Southern NSW for Out of Hospital Care. This expansion allows us to reach even more individuals in need.



Building cultural capability

Our organisation thrives on the rich tapestry of cultural diversity that our staff and clients bring. In line with our strategic focus that our workforce represents the communities we serve:

69%

have experience of being a carer

18%

identify as LGBTQ+

The team speaks

28

languages

2%

identify as an Aboriginal person

48%

were born overseas

In late 2022, we launched our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This reflects our dedication to acknowledging and respecting the First Nations people of Australia. Our RAP outlines strategies to enhance our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, build meaningful relationships, and deliver culturally safe care.



Financial challenges and government funding

This year has not been without its challenges. The care sector faced a period of high costs combined with downward pressure on prices due to government budget constraints. While we are proud of our ability to deliver exceptional care, we recognise the importance of navigating these financial challenges prudently. Our commitment to operational efficiency and strategic financial management remains central to our ability to sustainably provide the highest level of care to our clients.



Deferred aged care reform

It is important to note that the anticipated aged care reform, initially scheduled for implementation, has been deferred until July 2025. We remain agile in our approach, ready to adapt to any changes that may arise. Our focus remains on staying at the forefront of industry trends, advocating for positive reforms, and delivering exceptional care to our clients.



Responding to changing regulation

In preparation for the aged care reforms, and following changes to aged care legislation in 2023, we have been working to establish new governance arrangements including clinical expertise on the Board, formation of a Consumer Advisory Body and maturity of our internal quality management systems and delivery partners. Throughout the year, we participated in external audits and satisfactorily passed all.



New partnerships

We were thrilled to partner with Aspire4Life for aged care assessments, which significantly strengthens Your Side's position with the introduction of the single assessment in July 2024. This partnership has expanded our delivery of Regional Assessment Services beyond Sydney, with coverage over large parts of New South Wales into Queensland.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Your Side board, our dedicated staff, committed partners, funders and Directors who have been instrumental in our achievements over the past year. Your ongoing support fuels our passion for making a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve. As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and remain resolute in our mission to provide compassionate and quality care that enriches lives.

Danielle Ballantine



Tracey having a chat and a cuppa with Home Care Package client Ron Cohen

Our Ambassador

As the Ambassador for Your Side, I've been thinking about the real meaning of 'good care'.

In the wake of the Aged Care Royal Commission's recommendations, the sector is undergoing significant reforms aimed at improving the quality of care provided to older people.

These reforms will certainly improve the quality of care delivered in the home. This will happen in a few different ways. There'll be a higher level of care available, which is desperately needed if the government wants people to continue to stay in their homes. Higher wages for carers will attract more workers to aged care. At the moment, there are staffing shortfalls due to low wages and the impact of the global pandemic. This will also raise the status of the caring profession, which historically has been viewed as low-paid 'women's work'. With an ageing population, we need to revolutionise caring. These reforms are a crucial first step. And they can't come soon enough. The current services should also be streamlined. Trying to work your way through the system as it stands is almost impossible.

In this role with Your Side, I've come to the realisation that good quality care should be personalised, individual, and meaningful. It takes into account every person's unique circumstance and gives support where they need it the most. This kind of care comes from the heart, as well as the head. It's more than just a job. The lovely workers who care for my dear Dad, who's in his early 80s, assist him in taking medication in the morning. But their more important role is as an empathetic companion: engaging in conversations, picking up any deterioration in his mental and physical health, and respecting him as one of society's elders.

Central to this approach is the recognition of effective communication as a fundamental aspect of delivering quality care. In response, Your Side has revamped communication channels to ensure that older people receive clear and timely information regarding any changes in their care. Be it a shift in caregivers or adjustments to schedules, Your Side is dedicated to keeping clients informed, valuing their input, and actively seeking their views.

My dad is currently on a Level 3 Home Care Package. My sister and I need to know how he is every day, because a small change in his health can land him in hospital. Over the past six months, he's been shuffling between the local hospital and the home. If we work together as a team with his carers, we can keep him safe and well in his home for as long as possible. Every person in care - as well as their families - deserves to receive clear and frequent communication about health status and ongoing needs. When I organised a carer last year, while living with a dynamic disability, my needs were complex and ever-changing. The carer and I had regular conversations to update the information around medications, appointments, mobility aids, and dietary requirements.

With an emphasis on kindness, empathy, and compassion, Your Side meticulously selects and trains caregivers who embody these qualities. This compassionate approach creates a nurturing environment where older people feel genuinely cared for, with workers going above and beyond their expectations. Cultivating a workforce with these attributes is the key to delivering good care. Fostering emotional wellbeing significantly enhances the overall experience.

Society should place a higher value on its elders. If we show elderly people - and anyone in care - respect, then optimal care will follow. We also need to view caring as the most important profession in the world.

We are a society, not an economy, after all. If we fail to properly care for one another, what future will we face? This is the most pressing question of our time.

As an aged care provider, Your Side is leading the charge in responding to the aged care reforms by placing older people first. As an aged care sector and workforce, we now need to join together, adopt these proactive measures, and dedicate ourselves to ensuring older people receive the care and support they deserve in their later years.



Tracey with her dad Paul



Tracey with the Your Side Team, Tracey MCing at the care finder program launch



Our Service *Delivery*

Accessing care and support can be complex and time-consuming. Your Side's **TOTAL CARE** model provides one-to-one care coordination support so that people receive the right care at the right time, with the goal of staying at home for as long as possible. We are a partner in care.

Your Side provides in-home and in-community services through the following programs:

Regional Assessment Services

Most people's first experience of the aged care system is a visit from a skilled, friendly assessor who visits them at home (or sometimes over the phone) to assess eligibility for home-based support. Our team works as partners with Aspire4Life, who are funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Commonwealth Home Support Programme

The CHSP program is the entry level home support program that supports Australians over the age of 65 (or 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) to live at home with a little extra help like domestic assistance, home maintenance, or flexible respite, funded through the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Home Care Packages

For those who need a little more support, but don't need to move into residential care. A tailored mix of support services up to an approved amount of funds, coordinated by one of our personal care partners. Includes clinical oversight, regular re-assessments, and the ability to choose services from our skilled mix of partners. Funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care.

care finder

Care finder is a free service that helps people to:

- Set up aged care services
- Change aged care services
- Connect with other supports like housing, health or mental health

Care finders visit clients in their homes or in the community. It's a special service for particularly vulnerable older people, funded by Sydney North PHN and Western Sydney PHN.

Carer Gateway

Carer Gateway provides services to Australia's 2.65 million unpaid carers. It is a program for carers looking after a family member or friend who is elderly or frail, ill, has mental health issues, or a disability. Specialist services like counselling, peer support, coaching, emergency respite and support packages help carers to sustain their critical role. Your Side works in Northern and Western Sydney, in partnership with the Benevolent Society. Carer Gateway is funded by the Department of Social Services.

Out of Hospital Care

The Out of Hospital Care (OHC) Program supports people at home after hospitalisation and prevents avoidable hospital admissions. Care at home helps to take the pressure off public hospitals by freeing up beds, reducing demands on emergency departments. Your Side's OHC offers short and medium-term packages of non-clinical care to eligible patients in Murrumbidgee and Southern NSW. OHC is delivered in partnership with Community Services#1, funded by the NSW Ministry of Health.

Funders



Partners



Your Side

Your Health and Wellbeing



care finder

The Aged care system is very complex. For someone who is isolated or dealing with several concurrent issues, it's even harder. Care finders are reaching out to people who have experienced things like homelessness, domestic violence, or other traumatic events such as fleeing their home country. Often, they don't trust the system and this means that they don't access the mainstream help that's available, and may end up in emergency rooms instead.

The Royal Commission found more face-to-face services would be welcomed by those who find it hardest to engage and sustain connection with services. That's why care finders are mobile, face-to-face, and in the community. Care finders are filling in a very specific gap to connect health, aged care and other systems.

Care finder is a free service that helps people to:



Set up aged care services

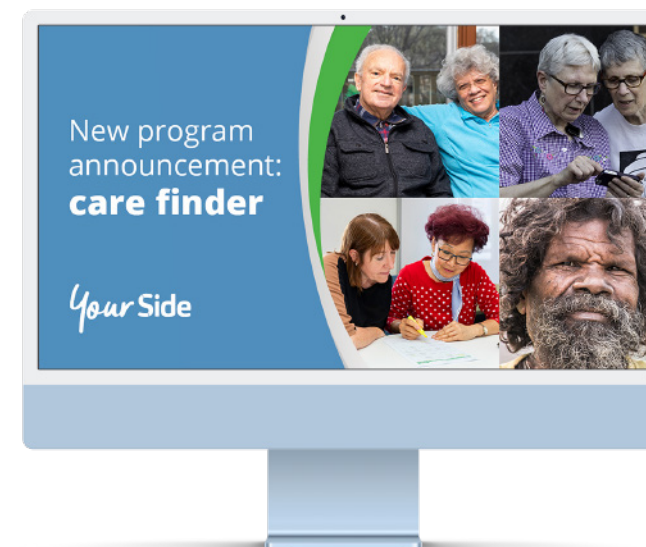


Change aged care services



Connect with other supports like housing, health or mental health

Your Side's care finders are degree-qualified in a mix of relevant disciplines like social work, psychology, or nursing. They are also experienced working with people with more complex needs, with local community connections through previous work roles, speak multiple languages, have a detailed understanding of the aged care system, and are committed to working in a person-centred approach with all individuals to understand each person's unique journey.



Success Story 1

Empowering Pat to Live Independently

Pat faces severe hearing loss, debilitating anxiety and lives alone. Her situation was further complicated by the absence of close family members nearby, with her daughter facing her own health concerns. Despite being eligible for an approved package after a hospital stay, Pat was unable to access the necessary services for eight long years. Her three hospital admissions during this period saw her being sent home with instructions related to CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Programme) and HCP (Home Care Package) codes, which she found confusing and anxiety-inducing.

Pat's journey took a positive turn when she was introduced to care finders. One of our care finders assisted Pat in her first meeting with a support worker, ensuring she received the tailored care she needed. This included 4 hours of support each week for shopping assistance, meal preparation, and social outings. Care finders guided Pat through the complexities of the DVA (Department of Veterans' Affairs) and Services Australia systems, helping her complete the means-tested form for better financial support. Pat was also presented with multiple Home Care Package providers and explained the associated fees, allowing her to make an informed choice that suited her needs.

Pat appreciated having someone to talk to without feeling like a burden or being embarrassed. Care finders provided emotional support by actively listening to her concerns and helping her put things into perspective.

Pat was fortunate to have access to an array of services through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, including transportation, daily nursing care for insulin management, showering assistance, allied health services, and home modifications. These services were essential in enabling Pat to maintain her independence.

The Home Care Package provided Pat with additional support enhancing her quality of life. With assistance in meal preparation, cooking, companionship, shopping, and accompanied trips to various places, Pat experienced a newfound sense of freedom and happiness.

“Pat's journey is a testament to the transformative impact of compassionate care and dedicated support of the care finder program.”

Success Story 2

Transforming Aged Care Support for John*

John* is a 75-year-old man living alone with no family or community support. He has early-onset Dementia that impacts his daily life. John's condition had reached a point where he struggled with basic tasks. He frequently misses crucial appointments, neglects laundry, and forgets to take his medication. He even continued to drive without a valid license. His mobile phone, his lifeline to the outside world, was also not working.

Initially, John was reluctant to engage with the care finder program to help him with My Aged Care access, believing he could manage without assistance.

Our approach was to establish trust and rapport. Regular home visits were made by our care finder, and John's life stories were actively listened to. Accompanying him to medical appointments provided valuable insights into his condition, especially since the initial referral contained limited medical information and omitted mention of his Dementia diagnosis.

Upon consultation with his GP, John was advised to consider residential aged care due to his declining self-care abilities. However, he strongly resisted this option. Instead, our care finder encouraged John to accept care that would enable him to continue living at home.

Because John's mobile phone didn't work, he was inaccessible to assessors and doctors. We supported him to replace his mobile, guiding him in selecting a suitable replacement within his budget.

We assisted John in reaching out to a Regional Assessment Service assessor and were present during the Aged Care Assessment Team's evaluation. In line with his preferences, we actively researched suitable care providers and helped him to complete the necessary paperwork for both the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and a Home Care Package.

“As a result of our efforts, John began receiving the long-awaited services he required to enhance his quality of life.”

His environment has become more comfortable, and he now enjoys daily visits from a community nurse for medication management. With the support of Meals on Wheels and domestic assistance, John's daily living conditions have improved significantly. Importantly, he has developed meaningful social interactions with his care workers, ensuring his overall wellbeing.

* name de-identified for privacy reasons

Success Story 3

Bridging the Language Barrier for Ling*

Ling* is an 85-year-old client living independently with no family support. Her non-English speaking background posed a significant obstacle to accessing the care she deserved.

Ling had been approved for a Home Care Package (HCP) but was unaware of this due to the language barrier. Regrettably, this lack of awareness led to the withdrawal of her HCP.

Ling declined the use of an interpreter service and preferred to communicate in English, albeit with some difficulty, especially over the phone. She greatly preferred face-to-face communication.

Our care finder made a home visit, taking the time to explain the HCP program in simple English. Additionally, our client shared her life story with enthusiasm, discussing overseas trips and sharing cherished photos.

Our assistance enabled Ling to opt back into the HCP. Once assigned, we assisted in shortlisting providers according to her preferences. Ling requested our presence during the provider assessment, during which we explained the provider agreement in plain and easily understandable English.

Today, Ling is content and grateful for her Home Care Package. The package includes professional cleaning services and ample funds to purchase necessary hygiene products.

“Through overcoming language barriers and providing tailored support, we have made a meaningful difference in Ling’s life.”

** name de-identified for privacy reasons*



Carer Gateway

“In my role, I’m never alone - Carer Gateway’s in my phone. When I feel like I am sinking and just can’t hack it, they provide me a lifejacket!”

Kate
Carer Gateway client

“The Carer Gateway guides me, teaches me, helps me, supports me, counsels me and cares for me so that I can care for those that need my care.”

Meeta
Carer Gateway client



The Carer Gateway provides services for carers including:



Counselling, coaching, courses & peer support



Short-term tailored support packages and services



Respite care (emergency and planned)



Additional services for young carers including tutoring and even driving lessons

Every month, around 300 new carers register for our services. The services are designed to help carers not just in emergencies, but to have the skills and balance to thrive in their carer role.

This year we've delivered support to up to 1500 carers every month. This included 2530 counselling sessions, 1142 coaching sessions, 3563 peer support sessions, 3216 tailored support packages and 1483 hours of emergency respite.

"Carer Gateway has given me the gift of unwinding, the chance to bond with so many other inspiring carers and made me feel proud to be a carer!"

Sisi Peer Group client, Carer Gateway

Carers were able to access:

- Peer support groups in person in Hornsby, West Ryde, Parramatta, Chatswood, and Kellyville
- Specialist peer support groups for LGBTQIA+ carers, male carers, mature age and young carers
- Groups for people support those with dementia, cognitive impairments, and in specific languages like Mandarin and Arabic
- Training to help carers thrive in their roles, on topics like Accidental Counsellor, aged care residential respite, stress management, understanding dementia, strengthening personal relationships, autism, nutrition and mental health
- Activities to give carers much needed time to do self care: like dance and movement, art class, and meditation
- Practical help like respite, domestic assistance and transport using support packages



"Two Worlds, One Heart"
cast and team



Cheryl (third from the left, yellow
hat) on a young carers outing

Young Carers Theatre *Premiere*

We were delighted to showcase the skills of our young carers in the theatrical production "Two Worlds, One Heart." This touching and thought-provoking play shed light on the remarkable challenges young carers encounter, and also celebrated their resilience and dreams. This screenplay was written by Carer Gateway Project Lead, Snow Li, based on the real-life experiences of young carers. Its purpose was to demonstrate on stage the inner thoughts, worries and issues that young carers experience while still learning to navigate the world itself.

"When I was little my grandparents cared for me and now, I am caring for them. It's just really nice to help people you love. My favourite young carer activity has been camping. The Carer Gateway is a gate to happiness, friendship and support and I have made a lot of new friends."

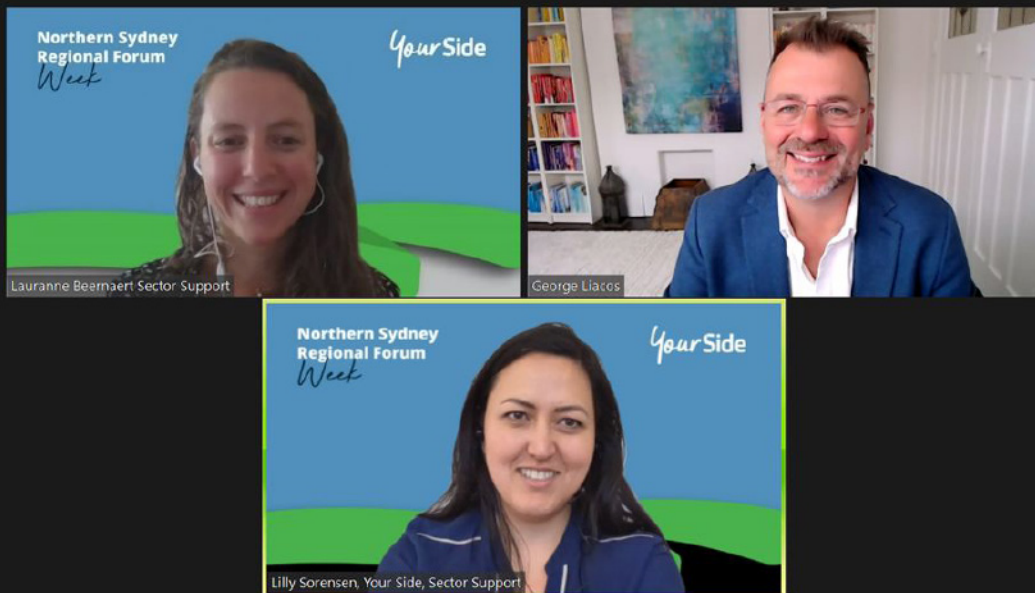
Cheryl
Young Carer, 9

"Counselling from Carer Gateway has been the catalyst for me in my role as a carer. I have been able to start seeing through the fog and get the support I needed for my family. Thanks for all you do for us."

Sharmila
Counselling client,
Carer Gateway

"The domestic assistance received has been amazing. This service has had such a positive impact on my life as a carer. It's one less stress and I can get a lot more things done with the extra time back in my week."

Terry
Carer Gateway client



A snapshot from the Reform Update and Strategies webinar

Sector Support

The Sector Support & Development program builds the capacity and capabilities of Aged Care providers through relevant training, resources, and information sharing. Sector Support contributes to the broader sector by providing valuable support during significant reforms.

Acknowledging that service providers possess a wealth of knowledge, experiences and strengths, our Sector Support program delivered the following in 2022-23:



2 sets of discussions centred on reform, designed for executive leaders and managers. These discussions saw representation from 30 Aged Care organisations, with over 90% of participants reporting significant insights and strategies to implement the reforms.

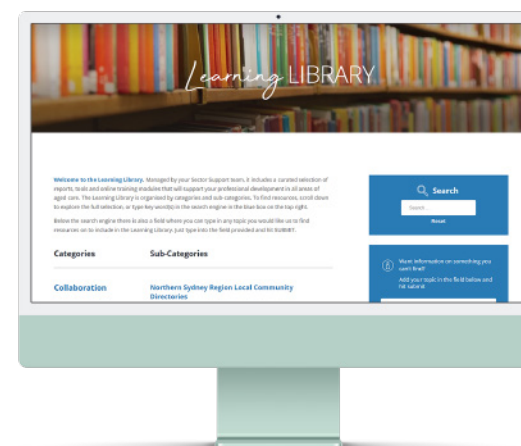


3 forums to facilitate learning about digital transformation, quality care and instil innovative thinking on how organisations can operate and collaborate. More than 300 delegates benefited from these forums.



15 online events to support staff to understand the regulatory changes and set their teams up for success. Our Reform Update and Strategies webinar attracted 257 attendees, and our Financial Sustainability and Sector Consolidation webinar was attended by 138 people.

Given that the ongoing workforce challenges persist within the health and community sector, and with staff members continuing to face time limitations, Sector Support has taken steps to enhance and expand their online education through our Learning Library and Events page. This comprehensive resource now comprises a collection of over 100 high-quality online links to various resources and many training options. The Learning Library attracts an average of 120 visits per month from aged care professionals.





Our flagship resource, the Provider Workbook 'Transitioning to the new In-Home Aged Care program' was developed in-house in late 2022. Updated regularly to incorporate the latest sector information, it has been downloaded over 700 times.

Our provider mailing list has grown too, and we now deliver our monthly Sector Support eNewsletters to more than 1,200 aged care professionals and organisations across the country. A subscriber commented on a Sector Support briefing, describing it as 'spot on' and providing an eye-opening perspective.

Next year we will be strengthening our existing collaboration with other Sector Support teams to provide the Aged Care sector with relevant training and networking opportunities, both in person and online. We have also reconfirmed our commitment to support the volunteer workforce and recognise their incredible contributions to the community. Finally, we will be proudly organising two Aged Care Career Expos in the Northern Sydney region to promote the diverse career opportunities available in the sector, and support providers to attract much-needed new workers.



Our Partnerships

Our provider eco-system is a major strength of Your Side. It provides us with the ability to match workers to clients across a range of clinical, technical and cultural needs. Our relationships with providers are evolving and becoming more robust as the needs of our business continue to change.

Quality and compliance have emerged as key pillars as we move into a reform period in aged care. While Your Side has been working with providers on compliance for several years, in March 2023, we matured our Provider Quality and Compliance Framework to formalise the way we work and increase our focus on delivering quality care.

At Your Side, we believe in proactively scanning the horizon and making adjustments; waiting for things to go wrong is not part of our culture. Therefore, our approach to quality with our provider eco-system involves prevention, monitoring and continuous quality improvement.

The cornerstone of this approach is simple. We are clear on what we expect, then listen to what clients, consultants, and our providers are telling us. If risk factors are emerging, we work together to clarify the underlying causes and address them, as they occur, as quickly as possible.

Our approach currently focuses on:



Upfront scrutiny and screening of new providers. All new providers are assessed against a compliance framework, code of conduct and practice standard benchmarks embedded in a new Service Level Agreement.



Finger-on-the-pulse monitoring. We closely monitor all client feedback on providers whether it's positive or negative, as well as any incident involving a provider. Providers also notify the partnerships team if they have clinical or quality concerns.



Periodical reviews and audits. Your Side conducts a quarterly Worker Compliance Register and do a comprehensive bi-annual Quality Review online survey for all support worker compliances. The organisation also reviews input from providers during an annual Aged Care Standards self-assessment audit.

Key Quality Initiatives in 2022/23

Moving on Audits (MoA)

This year, Your Side implemented MoA and has been consistently sending surveys to providers, specifically targeting front-line worker responses. Over the last 12 months, we have distributed 13 surveys to 10 providers to gather worker input, covering various themes such as: Incident Management; Infection Prevention and Control; Consumer Identity, Dignity and Respect; Privacy, Dignity & Respect; Falls; Responding to Dementia; and Responding to Changes and Deterioration in Health. This is part of our commitment to ensuring our frontline workers have direct input and accountability.

Building a Digital ShiftNote System

Over the past 18 months, Your Side has been actively developing a ShiftNote workflow to enable front-line workers and clients to complete a wellbeing check at the end of each service. This will enable consultants and the Clinical Care Manager to immediately identify and manage any emerging issues for clients and quickly respond.

This digital workflow is landmark and has been built with input from various stakeholders including customer care, clinical governance, digital developers, front-line workers and clients themselves.

Up to now, we have conducted technical efficacy trials of the system and gauged client and worker adoption through two pilot phases. We send our thanks to the partners who helped us pilot this system: Around the Clock Care, National Nurses Plus, Heart and Soul Community Care, and MeToU Care - alongside 50 clients with high clinical needs. Our ongoing process of testing and learning from the module persists, with the anticipated full rollout to 31 providers and approximately 730 Aged Care clients slated for August 2023.



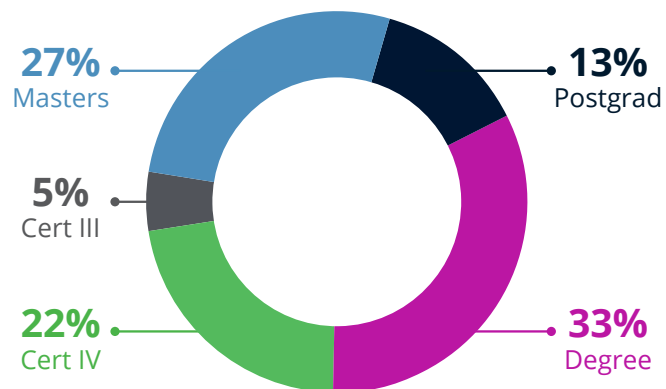


Our Staff



We are qualified!

Expertise and specific qualifications are important in the delivery of quality and safe care. Our team are qualified across a range of disciplines.



We have a multidisciplinary approach and our team has a breadth of skills.

Qualifications include:

- ★ Certified Practicing Case Manager
- ★ Enrolled Nurse
- ★ Registered Nurse
- ★ Cert IV in Complex Care
- ★ Masters of Social Work
- ★ Associate Diploma in Recreation
- ★ Bachelor of Science (Psychology)
- ★ Diploma of Community Services (Alcohol, other drugs and mental health)
- ★ Cert IV in Disability
- ★ Postgrad Diploma in Educational Studies and Psychology
- ★ Masters of Psychology
- ★ Masters Occupational Therapy
- ★ MA in Interpreting, Translation and Asian Studies
- ★ Masters International; Social Development
- ★ Masters of Teaching
- ★ Bachelor of Psychology
- ★ Masters of Public Health
- ★ Masters of Gerontology
- ★ Bachelor of Health Science
- ★ Master of Counselling
- ★ Bachelor of Nursing
- ★ Genetics



We love learning!

Just some of the formal training members of our team has done this year include Mental Health First Aid, First Aid, Aboriginal Cultural Awareness, and Inclusion for LGBTQIA+ Elders.

Each program has its own essential modules, delivered in a mix of online, self-paced and in-person sessions. These might be things like case note writing, clinical assessments, scheduling, or client-centred care. This year our team has completed **2,435 hours of training**.

Life isn't all about work. Other skills in our team include Archery, Jiu-Jitsu, Bronze Medallion, barista, sewing, massage therapy, interior design, and some pretty amazing cooks who we all celebrate at the annual Your Side tradition of Grub Day.

“Out of Hospital Care helped us to concentrate on recuperating and the support once a week was just what we needed and we certainly looked forward to it.”

Client
Out of Hospital Care



Testimonial

“We greatly valued the patience and flexibility our Your Side Senior Customer Care Consultant demonstrated towards us when bringing our family member into the Home Care Package program. This included responsiveness in explaining terminology and processes to us, and the ability to adapt communication to the different personalities within our family. Most importantly, the Your Side representative took the time to understand our family member's individual care priorities and preferences. We are so pleased we chose Your Side from the multiple possible providers we liaised with. Thank you!”

Kim
Daughter of
Home Care Package client



“Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being there for me. Your warm listening ear, understanding, compassion and guidance have been immensely helpful, and I am so grateful for all you have done.”

Daisy
Counselling client,
Carer Gateway





Meet *Heather* care finder

Why did you decide to come and work for Your Side?

When I was first offered the chance to undertake my student placement at Your Side, I was excited by the organisation's reputation and the favourable feedback I had received from different sources. During my 6-months placement, I quickly realised that Your Side was more than just a reputable organisation; it was a workplace that nurtured growth and provided a supportive and enriching environment.

During my placement, I had the privilege of working alongside a team of highly skilled and experienced professionals who were always willing to share their knowledge and expertise. The willingness to help each other created an atmosphere that fostered learning and development. This experience not only enhanced my skills but also taught me the value of collaboration and teamwork.

I received an offer from Your Side at the end of my placement and that was incredibly rewarding and validating. I felt lucky and happy.

What roles have you held at Your Side? Can you take us through the journey?

I began my journey at Your Side by joining the NDIS team. During the three years in this role, we focused on supporting individuals with disabilities to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

After three years in the NDIS team, I took a good break and returned to China to be with family.

Upon returning from my break, I rejoined Your Side as a part of the Carer Gateway team where I helped carers with services such as respite care, counselling, coaching and peer support. I have now transitioned into a new role in the care finder team helping vulnerable older people to access aged care services.

Your Side has encouraged and supported me every step of the way.

What have you learned working at Your Side?

Working at Your Side has been an incredibly enriching experience, and I have learned valuable lessons that have contributed to my personal and professional growth.

Some of the key learnings from my time at Your Side include:



Teamwork & Collaboration: I have learned the importance of effective communication, active listening, and respecting different perspectives. Collaborating with colleagues from different backgrounds and expertise has not only improved the quality of my work but also fostered a sense of mutual support.



Customer-Centred Approach: Understanding the needs and preferences of our customers has been central to my work, allowing me to deliver solutions that cater to their specific requirements and exceed their expectations.



Problem-solving & Case Management: Working at Your Side has exposed me to complex problem-solving situations. We work with clients together and explore potential long-term supports to help our clients live the life they choose.

What are some of your favourite memories or examples of helping clients?

During my work with the Carer Gateway team, I had the privilege of assisting a 68-year-old client who was caring for her 88-year-old husband. When they first contacted Carer Gateway, they were facing the challenge of not having any support services in place. My client was seeking help to ensure her husband's wellbeing while also finding respite for herself.

Upon connecting with them, I took the time to understand their unique needs and circumstances. I introduced them to the available support packages and resources, explaining how they could benefit from in-home assistance and coaching services. The goal was to create a comprehensive care plan that would address their specific requirements and provide the support they needed.

With assistance from Carer Gateway, the couple gained a clearer understanding of Home Care Packages, and they have since been approved for a customised Home Care Package to address their long-term care requirements. With this package in place, they have gained access to consistent in-home support, providing valuable assistance to the carer, and ensuring that her husband receives the best possible care.

The impact of our efforts was profound. The carer experienced a significant release from the demands of caregiving, finally having more time to tend to her own well-being and personal needs. This newfound time for herself brought a sense of relief, and equally important, the elderly husband received the care he deserved, allowing him to age comfortably and with dignity.

Witnessing the positive impact on this couple's life reinforced my commitment to providing compassionate care and support to those in need.

What do you like the most about working at Your Side?

There are so many reasons I appreciate and enjoy working at Your Side. The organisation has a supportive and inclusive culture where employees are encouraged to voice their ideas, collaborate, and grow together.

There are also opportunities for growth, continuous learning, skill enhancement, and career advancement.



I also love the sense of teamwork, mutual support, and genuine friendships that develop within the organisation to create a positive and enjoyable work atmosphere. Knowing that I can rely on my colleagues and collaborate with them to tackle challenges is a significant source of satisfaction.



What does the future hold for you in your career?

As I look to the future in my career, I am filled with excitement and a sense of purpose. While the future is unpredictable, I will continue growing both professionally and personally. I plan to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by Your Side, such as training programs, workshops, and mentorship, to further enhance my skills and expertise in my field of work. With the support of Your Side and my own dedication, I am confident that I can achieve career growth and contribute to the success of the organisation and my own personal fulfillment.

What would you like to see improved in the way we help and support people in the Aged Care and carers space in this country?

It is crucial to enhance access to Aged Care and support services for all individuals who need them. This includes streamlining the application process, reducing wait times, and ensuring that services are available to those in remote or underserved areas.

Working in the Carer Gateway program I realised that carers play a vital role in supporting their loved ones, and they often face challenges balancing caregiving responsibilities with their own wellbeing. Improving respite care options can provide much-needed relief and support to carers, allowing them to recharge and take care of their own needs.

I want to play my part in reforming and improving the quality of care delivered to both carers and ageing Australians.



Meet Amanda

IT Manager

Amanda has been with Your Side for 20 years! In that time, she has led and delivered countless IT transformations, staying ahead of the curve in adapting our business tools to meet an ever-changing environment.

Why did you decide to come and work for Your Side?

I've always had a passion for Information Technology. Back in the 90s, I was working in Human Resources within the construction industry. After having two kids, I made the decision that it would be more cost-effective for me to stay home with them and pursue my education at TAFE, rather than paying for their childcare. That's when I finally had the opportunity to study Systems Admin, Web Development, and Programming.

Upon completing my studies, a significant event occurred when my mother suffered a catastrophic stroke. I visited her daily at the hospital while simultaneously searching for a full-time job. During one of these visits, I shared with her my newfound ambition to



Amanda (on the far left) with the Your Side Corporate Services Team

work in community services, just like she had. I embarked on a quest to find job listings in the newspaper, and to my amazement, I stumbled upon a single advertisement for a community service role that required a blend of administration, IT, and website maintenance skills. What's more, the office was conveniently located near my home. Hooray!

Although I was tempted to immediately reach out to them and proclaim, "Look no further!", I restrained myself. Instead, I spent the entire weekend meticulously addressing the essential criteria in their job posting. To my delight, I was subsequently invited for an interview. The organisation, known as Northern Sydney Regional Community Forum (NSRCF), now recognised as Your Side, welcomed me on board on August 13, 2003.

It felt like stepping into a workplace filled with family, a sentiment that has remained unchanged ever since. The atmosphere here is a unique blend of laughter, tears, joy, and dedicated hard work.

What have you learned working at Your Side?

My time at Your Side has always been about upskilling and continued learning and professional development. In my second month, I was given the responsibility of overseeing a full server and network upgrade. I engaged an external IT provider to handle server management and train me in assuming various systems administration tasks. I also managed calls for both the Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre and the Commonwealth Carelink Centre (prior to their merger), while simultaneously working on the development of our initial intranet. This allowed me to gain valuable insights into our staff's workflow and identify any bottlenecks, as well as address their frustrations through technical solutions.

What are some of your favourite memories of working at Your Side?

I love seeing new staff blossom when they come to work for Your Side. Some come from challenging previous workplaces, and they open right up when they come to Your Side. I love that. Having the chance to meet our clients who appeared in Old People's Home for Teenagers on ABC TV was great. I really enjoyed all their funny stories and how much they loved the experience. Hearing good news stories about our clients is always such a joy. Telling ghost stories with Emilie and Suyash after work is also a recent highlight. I actually just love everything about working with the team here.

As an IT manager in the aged care and carer support space what have been some of the challenges?

One of the primary hurdles we face is the absence of peers with whom we can engage in discussions, seek advice, and discover new approaches. In a not-for-profit setting, roles like mine can often become isolated. However, I have since become a member of a not-for-profit IT roundtable discussion group, which has helped mitigate this challenge. Another complexity arises from the diverse demands of being an IT manager in aged care and carer support. I must be across a wide array of areas including IT administration, hardware, programming, web development, portal management, adherence to government funding requirements, and safeguarding privacy and security. Phew! I love the challenge though.

How long have you worked for Your Side and what has changed in that time?

Twenty years this month. So much change. In those 20 years I have been on a long winding journey, going through funding model reforms, carer and aged care reforms, various name changes, staff changes, growth, so much growth – wow! We started as just a little cluster of services in the Northern Sydney region - now look at us. In the first few years, NSRCF consisted of 25 staff and now we have grown to 151 staff. We've gone from delivering 2 or 3 services to help the community to half a dozen. I've also seen Your Side go from a staff using cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors, a PC acting as a server, and staff members taking home the backup tape in their handbag, to access-anywhere systems where you can get your work done on your mobile phone if you need to.

What does the future look like for IT in this space?

Technology for social impact is where most of the development should go. We will need speedy response times to ensure the right care and protection of older people in their homes, as our environment is ever-changing. I think if we can get the right mix of human interaction and technological innovation so that people are happy, safe, and well-served, we would be doing very well.



What do you like the most about working at Your Side?

I feel extremely lucky to feel excited about coming to work every day! I love what I do and the challenges I face here, I love who I work with, and I love that I am working for a good cause that helps people. I also love that we have dress-up days - a lot of them!!

What would you like to see improved in the way we help and support people in the aged care and carers space in this country?

That's an enormous question. More than anything, when I'm older I will want to be able to spend time with younger people, have a laugh, and not be isolated. Sounds simple, but for our ageing Australians, it often isn't. That is why Your Side is here to help.

Our Clients

Your Side
Your Health and Wellness.



"I now feel a sense of relief knowing that supports and services are set up around me to help me live my life. My care finder listened to me and wanted to hear about what help I needed. That was refreshing. I now feel settled and safe with my new Home Care Package provider."

*Eugene**
care finder client

** name de-identified for privacy reasons*



"I've been part of Your Side's social activities for two years now. The weekends have been the best part, allowing me to explore new places, make friends, and stay socially active. When I needed assistance with Home Care Packages, Your Side impressed me so much that I switched from my previous provider without hesitation. I'm lucky and grateful to be part of an organisation dedicated to making older people happy and comfortable."

*Sharon**
Home Care Package client
** name de-identified for privacy reasons*



"I want to say what a wonderful program you have. My mother was so reluctant to services but after her 6 weeks of Out of Hospital Care, she has now had a My Aged Care assessment and is receiving ongoing services under the Commonwealth Home Support Program which has taken so much pressure off myself."

Client
Out of Hospital Care



"Thank you for the recliner and wheelchair to help me feel comfortable while I recover from my surgery. And thank you to everyone who helps with my services and takes such good care of me with cleaning and gardening."

Verica
Home Care Package client





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LET'S
CONNECT.

