



Annual Report 2024-2025



Celebrating **30** YEARS
of providing supports in the local community

The page is framed by a decorative border of traditional Aboriginal art. On the left, there are vertical bands of brown and white dot patterns, and a series of yellow, downward-pointing arrow-like shapes. On the right, there are vertical bands of brown and white dot patterns, a series of yellow, upward-pointing arrow-like shapes, and a series of concentric circles. The background of the page is a light cream color.

Acknowledgement of Country

**We acknowledge the Traditional
Custodians of country throughout
Australia and their connections
to land, sea and community.**

**We pay our respect to their
Elders past and present and
extend that respect to all
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples today.**

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report is for the year 2024/2025. It provides a summary of the programs that Disability Matters has offered, reports on our Strategic Plan and outlines our financial situation as at the end of June 2025.

VISION

Living a life of possibilities...

MISSION

Providing creative quality support to people living with disabilities to identify and explore opportunities.

VALUES

SAFE

Ensuring a secure and supportive environment for all participants, staff, and stakeholders.

At our core, we are committed to creating a secure and supportive environment for all participants, staff, and stakeholders. Safety is our top priority, and we continuously work to protect the well-being of everyone involved. We respect personal spaces, offer emotional support, and ensure that every client feels secure, valued, and heard. By listening attentively and integrating safety into all aspects of our work, we foster a culture of care, trust, and protection.

PROFESSIONAL

Upholding the highest standards of conduct and expertise in all our services.

We uphold the highest standards of professionalism by delivering quality support with competence, integrity and respect. Our team demonstrates expertise and skill in every aspect of our work, reflecting our commitment to being a proficient and trustworthy organisation. We act ethically and with honesty in all interactions, striving for excellence in everything we do.

ACCOUNTABLE

Taking responsibility for our actions and their outcomes.

We take responsibility for our actions and the outcomes they create, maintaining transparency in everything we do. Our participants and their families

can trust us to honour our commitments and follow through with integrity. We hold ourselves accountable to our clients, value honest and constructive feedback, and maintain open communication.

RELIABLE

Being dependable and consistent in providing support.

We are dependable and consistent in the support we provide, ensuring participants and their families can count on us to be there when needed. We deliver on our promises, uphold professional standards, and always do what we say we will do. Through reliability, trust, and respect for the personal environments in which we work, we build lasting confidence and assurance in our services

KIND

Approaching all interactions with empathy, compassion, and respect.

We approach every interaction with empathy, compassion and respect, valuing the dignity of every individual and fostering a welcoming, inclusive community. We respect and support our people, working together as a team toward shared goals. By empowering others with choice and encouraging control over their own lives and rights, we promote independence and confidence. Through empathy and understanding, we create meaningful connections and a culture of genuine care

The SPARK that drives us! 

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

While the Board of Directors is fundamentally responsible for governance and compliance, we view this role through a more important lens: enhancing the care for each and every participant whilst fostering a workplace that truly embodies the values of Disability Matters. Every decision we make is guided by this purpose.

It has been an honour to serve as Acting Chair for 2025. I am deeply grateful for the incredible knowledge, insight, and professionalism of my fellow directors, whose guidance has been invaluable. This year, we were thrilled to welcome Sali Shayia to the Board. As the Founder and Director of Cramli Psychological and Behavioural Services, Sali's passion, energy, and extensive experience within the NDIS industry are already proving to be a tremendous asset to our team.

A significant highlight of this year was celebrating Disability Matters' 30th anniversary. This incredible milestone offered a moment to honour the pioneers who started this organisation. It was also the perfect occasion to look to the future, marked by the grand opening of the HIVE. This amazing new space is a testament to our enduring mission, providing an inclusive hub where participants can connect, learn, build confidence, and create community.

On behalf of the entire Board, I extend our sincere thanks to CEO Kellie Jarvis for her steadfast courage and inspiring leadership. Kellie's clear vision for Disability Matters fills us with confidence for the year ahead, and we look forward to an exciting 2026. Our gratitude also goes to the senior leadership team and every staff member. Your unwavering commitment and dedication are the driving force behind the positive impact we see in the lives of our participants every day.

At its heart, Disability Matters remains a grassroots organisation dedicated to the Tablelands community. This is our home and our passion, and we are committed to continuing our legacy of service for many years to come.



Dr Chris Radcliffe
Chairman of the Board

Board Members 2024-2025

Donna Goodman
Board Chairman
(Until February 2025)

Dr Chris Radcliffe
Acting Board Chairman

Dr Ann Aitken
Secretary

Anne English
Acting Treasurer

Chris Oakley
Treasurer (Until July 2024)

Sali Shayia
Hilary Jackson
David Osborne
Committee Members

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present our 2024/2025 Annual Report, a year of significant progress and change. Having joined in March as Acting CEO and now stepping into the permanent role, I have seen first-hand the dedication and innovation that define our organisation. This year we proudly celebrated 30 years of providing disability support in our local community — a milestone that reflects our strong history, trusted relationships, and committed staff. Together, we have navigated change, strengthened our foundations, and positioned the organisation for sustainable growth. I am excited by the opportunities ahead and grateful for the trust placed in me to lead us forward.

This year has brought both opportunities and challenges, with ongoing uncertainty surrounding the NDIS reforms highlighting the need for continued adaptability and advocacy. Despite this, our team has continued to deliver high-quality, purposeful supports guided by our SPARK values — Safe, Professional, Accountable, Reliable, and Kind.

Among the year's highlights was our 30-year celebration and the official opening of "The Hive" by Member for Hill, Shane Knuth — a space designed to foster inclusion, creativity, and connection. In 2025/2026, we will continue to build and grow our activities and group programs to meet the evolving needs of participants.

Investing in our workforce remains a priority. Training in areas such as safety, medication, and personal care has strengthened capability across the team. The launch of SharePoint improved access to current policies and procedures, and a new communication platform planned for late 2025 will further connect field staff with our office team.

We successfully completed our NDIS Certification Audit, reaffirming our focus on quality and compliance. This year's staff and participant surveys also provided valuable feedback that will guide ongoing improvement and strategic change.

In July 2024, we released our new three-year Strategic Plan, focused on building a stronger leadership team, deepening collaboration with participants and families, and creating more opportunities for people with disabilities to live a life of possibilities...

Our Board of Directors has been a valued support throughout this period of transition, providing vital insight and leadership. I thank them for their continued commitment and for ensuring our decisions remain strategic and centered on the people we support

I also take this opportunity to thank the Leadership Team and all of our amazing staff for their ongoing commitment to our organisation and the people we support. Their dedication — and the way they uphold our SPARK values every day — remains central to our success.

As we look ahead, I am confident we are well-positioned for the year to come. With a passionate team, a supportive Board, and a strong community, we will continue to innovate, collaborate, and strive for positive outcomes. I am proud of what we have achieved together and grateful for the trust placed in us. Together, we will continue building a future grounded in inclusion, opportunity, and possibility.



Kellie Jarvis
Chief Executive Officer



KEY FINANCIALS

During 2025 Disability Matters experienced an overall reduction in income when compared to last year. Whilst most income streams did increase there was a marked reduction in Short Term Accommodation and Direct Supports which allowed the financial year to conclude with a profit of \$42,457.16

KEY FINANCIALS

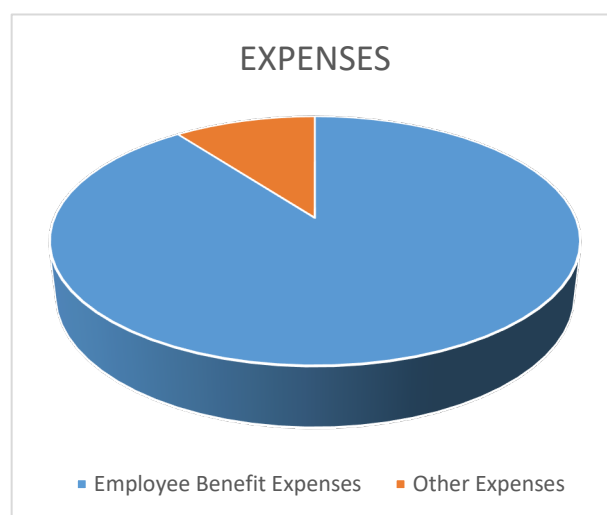
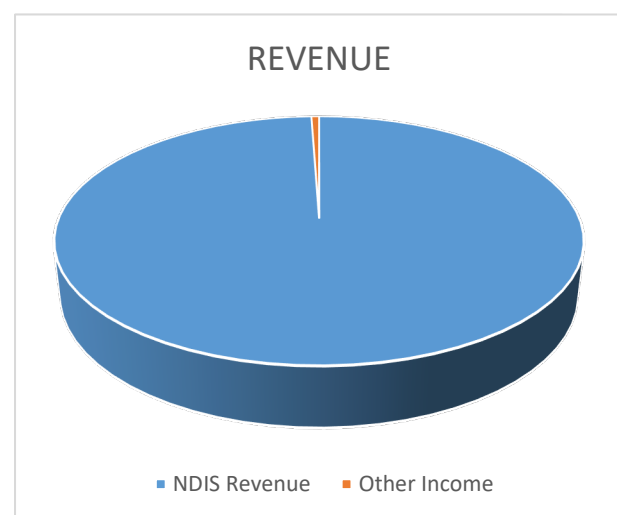
- Revenue : \$8.26 million
- Expenses : \$8.22 million

FINANCIAL POSITION

- Net assets at 30 June 2025 was \$3.18 million
- Cash reserves reduced to \$0.46 million
- Non-current assets after depreciation was \$3.30 million
- Total liabilities at the end of the financial year decreased to \$0.99 million
- Mortgage on the McConaghie Street property was the majority of the total liabilities

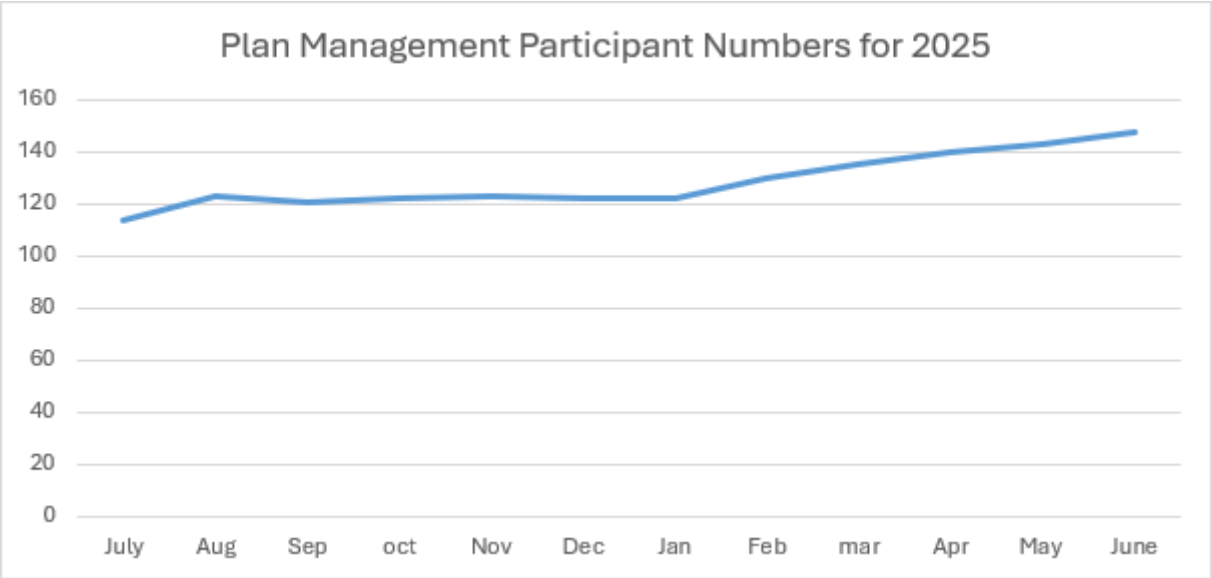


	FY 2024-25	FY 2023-24
Income	8,260,105	8,746,807
Expenses	(8,217,648)	(8,564,174)
Profit (Loss)	42,457	182,633
Retained Surplus	3,187,701	3,145,244



PLAN MANAGEMENT

During the 2025 year, Franca Raccanello who is the Plan Manager for Disability Matters has brought in just over \$180k in fees. The number of participants that Disability Matters manages has been slowly increasing and at the end of June 2025 had reached 148. The amount of invoices that had been processed during the financial year was \$3.3 million compared to \$2.7 million in the previous year.



David Feeney
Finance Manager

OUR PEOPLE

At the end of June 2025 we had 85 staff

48% casual

52% permanent part time

67 support workers

18 corporate staff

Support workers delivered 94,155 support hours



OUR PARTICIPANTS

Participant Story: The Twins

Ten-year-old twin brothers, both on the autism spectrum, recently experienced respite for the very first time. Their primary caregiver — their grandmother — had never been apart from them overnight, making this a significant milestone for the whole family.

The first night presented with some adjustment as the boys became familiar with their new environment. With gentle guidance and consistent support from staff, they gradually settled in. Over the following days, the twins engaged in a range of activities, learned new skills such as cooking, enjoyed outings in the community and made great use of the Cook Street sensory room when they needed a quiet space to relax.

Since their initial visit, the twins have stayed on two separate occasions and are already looking forward to returning over the Christmas holidays. Their grandmother has noticed improvements in the boys' social behaviours and was delighted to see them confidently participating in cooking activities. The respite experience has provided valuable independence for the twins and much-needed rest and reassurance for their grandmother.

Participant Story: A New Chapter of Confidence and Calm

It's been wonderful to see one of our new Participants really come into his own lately. Those who know him best say he's "a different person" — making great choices at home, looking healthier, and enjoying life with a newfound sense of calm and confidence.

With consistent, structured support from his team at Disability Matters, he has found a rhythm that works for him. His support workers are helping him take part in activities that truly resonate — both at home and out in the community — and it's made all the difference.

He loves spending time with his support workers, and that positive connection shines through in everything he does. Whether he's helping out around the house, joining in social activities, or exploring new interests, he's doing it with pride and a big smile.

Life is less stressful now, and the progress he's made is inspiring for everyone around him. With the right support and a team who really cares, he is thriving — and loving every moment of it.



SUPPORTED LIVING

Supported Living Overview

Our Supported Living portfolio encompasses accommodation-based supports designed to enable participants to live as independently and meaningfully as possible. Under this umbrella, we include Short & Medium-Term Accommodation (STA/MTA) as well as long-term living arrangements such as Supported Independent Living (SIL).

This year, we strengthened our focus on marketing and staff training to increase awareness and access to our Supported Living services. Investing in staff training ensures our team is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to provide high-quality, person-centred support. Better-trained staff can respond effectively to individual needs, foster positive social interactions, and create a safe, welcoming environment — all of which contribute to a richer, more rewarding experience for participants.

Through refreshed branding, engaging content, and consistent storytelling, we are helping more participants, families, and referrers understand the benefits of Supported Living — from skill-building and social connection to respite and independence. By enhancing our online presence, developing clear information materials, and sharing real participant stories, we are fostering stronger community connections and supporting sustainable growth for the year ahead.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)

Program Overview

In alignment with our strategic focus on enabling independence and high-quality living environments, our SIL services continue to evolve. We currently provide care across seven SIL homes in the Tablelands region, delivering tailored support that meets individual needs.

Our approach emphasises innovation, participant choice, and cost-effective service delivery, while maintaining sustainable operations and ensuring our support teams are well-trained and equipped. By focusing on strong operational practices and reducing barriers to safe, affordable housing, we are strengthening our capacity to provide meaningful, personalised living solutions for our participants.

SHORT/MEDIUM TERM RESPITE (STA/MTA)

Program Overview

Over the past year, our STA and MTA services at the Cook Street site have continued to deliver high-quality transitional accommodation opportunities. These supports serve as both a respite and stepping-stone pathway for participants working towards greater independence and achieving their NDIS goals.



Our STA services are strengthened every day by the dedication, compassion, and expertise of our staff. Their commitment to person-centered care ensures participants feel supported, safe, and empowered to try new experiences and build independence. Beyond providing essential support, our team helps participants develop skills, connect socially, and enjoy meaningful moments. The professionalism and passion of our staff are at the heart of every positive experience, making our services not just a place to stay, but a place to grow, thrive, and feel valued.



Strategic Focus

Looking Ahead - We will:

- **Engage in continuous research and development** to stay abreast of emerging trends and best practices in the disability support sector.
- **Adopt flexible service delivery models** that cater to individual needs and preferences, ensuring personalised support.
- **Enhance transition pathways:** Strengthen and formalise processes assisting participants as they move into longer-term living solutions.
- **Evolve Housing and service innovation:** Remain responsive to the evolving national environment for home & living supports and housing reform.
- **Expand Programs:** Introduce further lifestyle and inclusion-oriented programs aligned to participant interests and goals.
- **Develop the Workforce:** Continue to invest in staff training and wellness to support strong service delivery.
- **Enhance Sustainability and governance:** Maintain strong operational practices to ensure financial prudence while delivering high-quality supports.

Acknowledgments

My Team and I would like to express our deepest gratitude to:

- The participants and their families/trusted networks for their engagement, courage and partnership.
- Our staff teams across all residences whose daily efforts translate into meaningful outcomes.
- The local community, support organisations and stakeholders whose contributions enhance our service reach.

Together, we are creating homes, supporting independence, connecting people and building meaningful lives.

James Whitehead
Team Leader Supportive Living

DIRECT SUPPORTS

This year has been a busy and rewarding time for the Direct Supports team. We have continued to focus on what matters most—enhancing the lives of participants through supports that are guided by their individual needs, goals, and interests. With new faces joining both our team and participant community, we’ve strengthened our ability to provide meaningful, person-centred experiences every day. Our group activities have brought people together in ways that foster confidence, connection, and inclusion, while bespoke staff training has ensured our team is equipped to deliver the highest standard of care and support. We have also continued to refine our service offerings to better reflect the voices of participants and the values we stand for. Through collaboration, compassion, and commitment, our Direct Supports team remains dedicated to empowering each person to live life in a way that is purposeful and fulfilling.

Community Activities and Events

We love seeing our participants getting involved in activities they enjoy—and we’re always listening to feedback to keep our programs fresh and exciting.

Some of this year’s highlights include:

- A fun day trip to the Kuranda Koala Gardens with a BBQ lunch
- The vibrant Port Douglas Village Carnival day trip
- Overnight camping adventures at Camp Barrabadeen
- Men’s Group and Ladies Day outings
- Fortnightly Cooking Group, offering healthy & delicious meals
- Free monthly BBQs at the Hive, chance to connect with friends and make new ones
- Our much-loved annual Christmas party, Santa’s Workshop theme
- Attending community events, Mareeba Multicultural Festival, Yungaburra Folk Festival, Savannah in the Round, Malanda Bull Ride and many more



At Disability Matters 30th birthday celebrations, we officially opened our multipurpose hub, The Hive, located just behind our main office in Atherton. This is a great, versatile space that our staff and participants can use, and continues to be a buzzing space for connection and creativity. It’s fully wheelchair accessible and walker friendly—designed for everyone to enjoy!

This year, the Soundplay Band was invited for return engagements and to perform at prominent community events across the Tablelands, reflecting the strong impression they continue to make and their valued presence in local celebrations.

- Carols by Candlelight
- Disability Matters 30th Birthday celebration
- Atherton Show



As we wrap up a wonderful year and look forward to the next, our passion for what we do remains as strong as ever. We're proud of how far we've come—and even more excited about what's ahead.

Together, we'll keep growing, creating, and making a positive difference in the lives of our participants and community.

Lyndall Flynn
Team Leader Direct Supports

COORDINATION OF SUPPORTS

The Support Coordination Team has continued to adapt and grow steadily throughout the year as we learn more about the future of our sector and remain committed to providing high-quality support to vulnerable members of our community.

This year, we have welcomed more participants and continued to receive consistent referrals thanks to the outstanding work of our team. The team's dedication to delivering person-centered, outcome-focused support has been recognised through positive feedback from participants, families, and service providers alike — a testament to the professionalism and care shown in every interaction.

During the 2024–2025 financial year, we significantly improved the financial position of the Support Coordination unit. The team embraced key changes and improvements, resulting in more hours of meaningful support delivered to our participants. For most of the year, the team has operated with 2.5 FTE and will continue to do so. Over the coming months, we will welcome new faces to the team, say goodbye to one of our valued coordinators, and manage the team leader's transition into a new role within the organisation.

We have also strengthened our relationships with key stakeholders by attending workshops, networking events, and participating in the Disability Matters 30th Anniversary celebrations. We are grateful for the many services and partners who assist our participants to live a life of possibilities, and we look forward to building new partnerships with providers who share our commitment to excellence.

After serving in this role for a year, I continue to be inspired by the incredible dedication of the Disability Matters team. Celebrating 30 years of service to our community this year was a powerful reminder of our organisation's impact and legacy. I have no doubt that Disability Matters will continue to honour this legacy, and I am excited to be part of the next chapter.



Declan Rienecker
Support Coordination Team Leader



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Registered NDIS Provider

