

Annual Report

2018-19

Welcome to the ComLink Annual Report. After a year of outstanding growth we now look to the innovation sector of our organisation, and reflect on how we can invent what the future of Aged and Community Care needs to be. Growing old is going to get a whole lot better.

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Who we are,

ComLink is a for purpose (non-profit) organisation which provides Home Care and Community services across Queensland. We are made up of hundreds of passionate staff and volunteers, all of whom are dedicated to a singular goal of improving the lives of people in our community.

Have you ever heard the old cliché money can't buy happiness? Well, money can't buy company culture either. A company's culture grows organically, from the foundation you lay at the outset. If you start by carefully cultivating the kind of culture that motivates and inspires you, your company will begin to naturally flourish in the direction you want it to go. It will, of course, require frequent and deliberate pruning, but the rewards and fresh growth are well worth it. At the heart of our vision are the values embedded in our corporate culture and the unique benefit our business brings to the world.

Our Vision

At ComLink our staff and volunteers are united by a shared vision, Leading the Care Revolution. Our philosophy is we never say 'no' and we find the 'yes'. If you need help, then we'll provide it for you, or find someone who can.

Our Mission

Our mission is to link the community through affordable Home Care and Community Transport solutions, develop a dedicated workforce of amazing staff and volunteers and continue to innovate to help people live longer, happier and socially connected lives!

Our Values

We are built from genuine values, traditions and beliefs which instill a 'sense of purpose' in our employees and naturally propels culture forward. We equip employees to create, innovate and problem solve while trusting and empowering them with creative freedom to blossom in the field they are planted in. What's important to us?

COMMUNITY

Ensuring we make contributions that strengthen our community and make our customers smile.

EMPOWERING

Empowering ourselves and others to carry out our work in the most caring and professional manner possible.

INNOVATION & CREATIVITY

Being visionary and forward thinking to ensure we exceed the needs of our community and develop solutions to daily challenges.

PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP

Being visionary industry and company leaders.

PROFESSIONALISM & RESPECT

Being respectful to every person, including ourselves, every day.

RESPONSIVE

Working collectively to identify and meet client needs.

CARE

Looking constantly at the world through the eyes of our clients.

CEO Report: Feda Adra



The landscape of the aged and community care industry is changing. We know that older people now make up a considerable proportion of Australia's population. Australians are living longer but with more chronic disease, dementia and loneliness, and their state of health in these years has important implications for health and wellbeing.

By 2050, the global population over the age of 60 will top two billion, and for the first time in history, outnumber the generation under the age of 15. When it becomes a global issue, we know we need to stand up and pay attention.

Loneliness is proving to be more than just part of the human condition. New research shows it's a serious public health problem, for young people as much as the elderly. Links to depression may not be surprising, but the idea that loneliness can be associated with poorer cardiovascular health and, in old age, a faster rate of cognitive decline and dementia is repositioning loneliness as a public health issue. There are 436,000 Australians living with dementia today. By 2050, that number will surge to 1.1 million. One in three of us will develop dementia at some point and we need to know how best to support people living with it.

At ComLink, we have welcomed the Royal Commission into aged care and disability sector. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and provided with quality care. Our organisation prides itself on providing quality of care, respect and dignity to our clients to promote independence. To ensure that quality is in everything we do, we had external auditors assess ComLink against the three standards and 18 outcomes. ComLink successfully passed all our Quality Audits and met every outcome.

While the Aged and Community Care sector has seen problems, as per the Royal Commission findings and statistics; there is good news. These statistics are spurring on leading think tanks, architects and technology brands to improve life for seniors. For us at ComLink, this has motivated us to see how we can invent what the future of Aged and Community Care needs to be.

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Growing old is going to get a whole lot better.

I am very fortunate to have a very forward-thinking Board of Directors and Senior team. A team united by a vision of thinking beyond the next couple of years. We held our two-day strategic planning, in March. Some of the outcomes of the two days included the ComLink team wanting to be of service during their time with this amazing organisation and to look at ways to help people live and age well at home and in their community. We also wanted to find solutions to some of the world's biggest problems and be a sustainable business well into the future through innovation and strong leadership. Tony Robins talks about the power of the questions that you ask and how the questions that you ask determine the quality of your life.

So, what if we asked, if we are here to be of service, who are we here to serve and why? Changing the traditional notion of success, from profit and money, to value creation. While we want to be profitable into the future, we want to do this through creating value for our customers, steering away from cost-cutting that produces short term results ahead of investments that enhance long-term competitiveness and growth.

It is clear that our focus on prevention and inventing the future is the way forward. The strategic direction to innovate, provide excellence in service delivery, to educate, inform and enable people to make informed decisions has informed many of the great programs and initiatives at ComLink. We hired our very own Innovator in Residence, Michael Doneman and commenced our Intrapreneurship program promoting entrepreneurial thinking within our ComLink team. Staff are encouraged to participate in designing and improving our day to day operations. Our initiatives include:

- Wellness ambassadors in each of our regional offices
- Intrapreneurship
- Research into mindfulness and improved service delivery
- Our 'Let's Talk' magazine
- Exploring projects in Artificial Intelligence
- Measuring Social Impact

These priorities have seen us develop our service delivery around creating meaningful connections through collaboration with creatives, researchers and consumers to inspire purpose, reduce loneliness and improve cognitive decline.

I am proud to say that our drive this year has been grounded in solving "wicked problems", improving the health and well-being of our communities; building our company not just around services helping people, but around prevention and connection. This is just the beginning and I look forward to sharing more success stories with you all in the years ahead.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Bruce Warrell, my previous Chairperson for his dedication, love of all things ComLink and the tireless hours dedicated to ensuring the organisation continued to flourish and never losing sight of the customer. A big thank you to all the Board members and Tim Robson, the new Chairperson, for their belief in me and my executive team to deliver on the exciting, forward thinking vision they have created. The tireless hours given on a regular basis has been very much appreciated. To our staff and volunteers, once again, you have all nailed it! What a year! There is continued growth in funding and service delivery and at the same time, customer and industry feedback is at an all time high.

Well done, I feel truly proud. The future is looking bright and we have the right people to take ComLink to the next stage, building a healthy and connected community.

Feda Adra
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Directors



TIM ROBSON
Chairman

I'm motivated by: For me satisfaction is being involved in effecting positive and meaningful change to people's lives. I strive to make a positive difference in my community, our country and hopefully one day throughout the world by supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people and communities.

Tim's area of expertise is corporate governance for the non-profit sector. Over the past 10 years, Tim has advised the senior management and Board of Directors for numerous non-profit organisations. Additionally, he has also supported the establishment, development and expansion of commercial enterprises, including the establishment of five enterprises that he is a partner in. Tim has experience in large scale project management, developing small businesses, and providing business and corporate governance advice to not-for-profit community organisations, businesses and government agencies.

In addition to his role as the Managing Director of a Queensland wide consulting, training and recruitment company based on the Sunshine Coast, Tim has been actively involved in community and projects and volunteering. He is currently an Executive Director of the not-for-profit Indigenous organisation Five Bridges Ltd, has been the Regional Chair of the Sunshine Coast Advisory Committee for the Institute of Managers and Leaders, and previously a committee member and Vice-President of the Kawana Chamber of Commerce.

Tim is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders, he holds a Masters in Commercial Law, Bachelor of Business and Diploma of Project Management.



KENNEDY FOX
Director

I'm motivated by: My motto. You get out of life what you put into it.

Kennedy is currently a Consultant Solicitor with Fox Taylor Mildwaters, Caloundra. Born in Nambour, he attended Nambour Primary School and Brisbane Boys' Grammar School. He was admitted as a Solicitor in 1977 and was the senior partner in Fox Mildwaters Solicitors which was established in 1913 by his grandfather until his retirement at the end of 2014. After practicing in many areas, he lately practiced in the Commercial, Wills and Estate areas and had considerable contact with the elderly. Kennedy now provides presentations and talks to Aged Care Groups and is a Board Member of Bloomhill Cancer Care Limited and one of the 6 Members of the Buderim Foundation.



JOHN PEARSON
Director

I'm motivated by: I hope in old age that I am treated with dignity, kindness and understanding, and I am motivated by being part of an organisation that views older people in that way.

John is a respected and award winning businessman, non-executive director, consulting business psychologist, and organisational researcher. He is driven by a need to address injustice and disadvantage, and it's on this foundation that he has built a group of well-known companies which provide training, project management, recruitment & labour hire, and social justice services. He is currently Associate Professor with the University of the Sunshine Coast's Business School, and Associate Professor at Torrens University's Chifley Business School, and combines his practical and academic experiences to complement and support the ComLink Board.

BAppSc, BTeach, GCertPubSecMan, PGDipSocRes, MAdminLead, MScBusPsych, MABP, GAICD



RORY CONNOLLY
Director

I'm motivated by: Customer satisfaction and appreciation.

Mr Connolly started with ComLink as a committee member in 2008. He brings with him over 36 years of knowledge and experience in banking and finance, administration and Human Resource Management. He is a past board member of SCILS (Sunshine Coast), been in various community groups such as Rotary and Lions Clubs throughout Queensland and overseas. He initiated a school leavers programme throughout Queensland schools, teaching young people the basic fundamentals of banking and obtaining credit. He currently operates a Skin Cancer Clinic in Caloundra servicing all areas of the Sunshine Coast and surrounding areas.



DANTE CECCON
Director

I'm motivated by: A sense of community, fairness and equality is my motivation. I strongly believe in 'being the change you want to see in the world' and to do that, you must stand up for what you believe in and play an active role in society. I've lived and worked in many regional areas and I'm always in awe at how people rally together when it's needed the most. I hope my work on the ComLink board goes in some way to helping the lives of the elderly and most vulnerable in our community.

Dante is a journalist and television producer with experience in regional and metropolitan newsrooms. He holds a Bachelor of Professional Communication and a Graduate Diploma in Journalism from RMIT University. Dante has spent time on youth advisory boards including for the Queensland Government.



SHAREE WEBSTER
Treasurer / Director

Sharee Webster joined Holmans in April 2007. Sharee manages the Holmans Maroochydore office, which was opened in April 2008. Sharee is a Chartered Accountant and holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Queensland, a Chartered Tax Adviser from the Taxation Institute of Australia and a Registered Tax Agent. In July 2016, Sharee obtained her Diploma of Financial Planning, allowing her to be a licensed Financial Adviser.

Prior to joining Holmans, Sharee was based in Sydney for almost 20 years. During this time, Sharee was a partner in a chartered accounting practice, as well as holding the position of senior manager in both small to mid-tier accountancy firms. In these roles, Sharee provided strategic advice and specialised business solutions to suit the tax and accounting needs of a wide variety of privately owned businesses.

At Holmans, Sharee specialises in business structures, taxation advice,

superannuation and in particular Self-Managed Super Funds (SMSFs). She has extensive experience in providing strategic tax advice to private clients, owner-operated family businesses and large corporate entities.

Sharee is passionate about being part of the Sunshine Coast Community and about giving back to the community.

Previously, Sharee was the Treasurer of the Sunshine Coast Business Women's Network for 6 years stepping down in early 2018. As a Buderim local, she was on the Board of Directors of the Buderim Community Enterprises Limited, trading as the Buderim Community Bank[®] Branch of Bendigo Bank for six years stepping down from that role in 2018 too.

BComm (UQ), CA, CTA, RTA, Dip FP



DAVID QUIGLEY
Director

I'm motivated by: Love and fear; love of family, friends, and community, which draws me to values based organisations. Fear of failure motivates me to pay attention. I love the cycle of positive feedback when things go well.

Qualifying in medicine in 1988 from London's St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, the home of Florence Nightingale, David has extensive experience as a medical practitioner, predominantly in anaesthesia and intensive care.

He also brings to the Board significant experience in Quality and Safety in hospital healthcare.

David founded his own business, Medmin in 2002. By leveraging information, this business adds millions of dollars to hospital funding enhancing the patient experience along the way.



BRAD READ
Director

I'm motivated by: My favourite quote - "Work for a cause and not for an applause. Live life to express and not to impress. Don't strive to make your presence felt, just make your absence felt."

Brad moved to the Sunshine Coast over 30 years ago while studying architecture. After working for a company for 15 years, he started his own business, Brad Read Design in 2000 and later changed this to become Brad Read Design Group in 2008 with an office in Maroochydore and a second office in Loganholme. He is passionate about all forms of Built Form Design including Urban, Building, and Interior design. BRD Group, specialises in all sectors of the Industry including many projects involving Aged Care.

Brad has a mother in an Aged Care home, and is very interested in helping to advance facilities and services that are required in the Aged Care sector. He is involved in many projects in all areas of Australia and has consulted on projects internationally.

Brad is also a member of the following groups: Australian Institute of Company Directors, Building Designers Association of Australia, Building Designers Association of Queensland, Design Institute of Australia and Urban Design Institute of Australia.

Unite, relate, celebrate.

ComLink Reunites a Family

Family is one of the most precious and priceless gifts there are. In a book by Louis Cozolino, professor of psychology at Pepperdine University, *Timeless: Nature's Formula for Health and Longevity*, he emphasises the positive impact of human relationships. "Of all the experiences we need to survive and thrive, it is the experience of relating to others that is the most meaningful and important," he writes.

"Our brains are social organs, and that means that we are wired to connect with each other and to interact in groups. A life that maximizes social interaction and human to human contact is good for the brain at every stage, particularly for the ageing brain."

"How we bond and stay attached to others is at the core of our resilience, self esteem, and physical health," Cozolino writes. "We build the brains of our children through our interaction with them, and we keep our own brains growing and changing throughout life by staying connected to others."

Sweethearts, John and Pat Willett met in 1959 when they became pen pals from an article John saw in the local paper while convalescing in hospital after a vehicle accident. They met in person about 3 weeks later and were so smitten with each other they were soon engaged and 6 weeks later were married.

When John and Pat came to ComLink as clients this year

they shared that they had celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with their daughter Trish at the Caboolture Sports Club, and that their 60th wedding anniversary was soon approaching.

Further conversation revealed that unfortunately they hadn't been as close with their daughter as they once were and that they thought they would be spending their "diamond" anniversary without her.

ComLink immediately wanted to help and seized the opportunity to make it a special day to remember. The team at North Brisbane organised flowers and balloons, lunch, and made a call to their daughter Trish.

The day rolled around, and John and Pat were told they were going on a 'surprise' outing. They arrived at the venue and walked in to be greeted by their daughter Trish and grandson James and enjoyed a lovely meal together. John stated on several occasions, "look at Pat's face - she hasn't stopped smiling all day."



THE WILLETT FAMILY REUNITED:

Pictured back row left to right: Cheree Brydon (Care Support Officer - North Brisbane), Ashlee O'Neil-Groves (Personal Care Assistant), Karen Christiansen (Care Coordinator - North Brisbane), James Willett (Grandson), Trish Willett (Daughter), Gayle Tebby (Personal Care Assistant).

Pictured front row left to right: John Willett and Pat Willett.

Chairman Report: Tim Robson



I would like to begin my first report as Chairperson of ComLink Limited by formally acknowledging and thanking our immediate past Chair, Bruce Warrell, who retired from the board last November.

Bruce dedicated 8 years on the board and over 16 years as a volunteer driver and a volunteer with ComLink's Kawana Companions. We are all grateful for his commitment and devotion to ComLink over the many years.

The past year has once again seen ComLink go from strength to strength as the organisation continues to grow and service more clients. This growth is a reflection of the quality of care and service that ComLink's staff and volunteers

provide every day. The board acknowledge the dedication of all our staff and volunteers for building the reputation of ComLink as we emerge as a significant provider in the regions in which we operate.

The board would also like to thank our CEO, Fedra Adra, and the leadership team for their tireless commitment and diligence towards leading the organisation in achieving the outcomes that we obtained over the past year.

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It is important that as an organisation we continue to evolve and innovate to ensure we remain relevant to the clients.

Acknowledging this, ComLink has embraced an innovation agenda and embarked on a mission to lead the care revolution. We want to ensure that as an organisation we are leading, not being responsive to, industry changes.

Throughout the past year we have witnessed the delivery of some successful innovative initiatives led by the leadership team. The organisation has taken an active role in leading research that will shape future service delivery, we have embraced innovation and entrepreneurship within our organisation, and implemented technology to ensure we are preparing ComLink for the future. With more exciting initiatives to be announced and launched in the year ahead, it is an exciting time to be a part of the ComLink journey.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my fellow Board Directors for their dedication and ongoing contribution throughout the past year and for trusting in me to undertake the role of Chairperson for our organisation. I feel privileged to play a part in a such a dedicated team of volunteers, staff and board members at ComLink.

Tim Robson
Chairman

From the grass roots up

We spoke with Chairman, Tim Robson about his involvement with ComLink and how he sees the organisation in the future.

How did you come to be involved with ComLink?

I chose early on in my career that I wanted to make a positive difference in society, particularly at the grass roots level.

I have been fortunate enough to be involved in the community services sector for around 15 years, in different areas relating to employment, indigenous communities, youth, mental health and also the care industry.

The care industry, has a special place in my heart. We are all ageing every day. We watch people around us age every day. I personally watched some people close to me age. Age without dignity I would say. Some people who were quite proud people, that didn't have the support around them nor the access to care services to support them as they diminished in their capacity later in life. There is an emotional colour of that kind associated with ageing.

When I came across ComLink and got to know the organisation, the culture, the people and the genuine care aspect, it all resonated with me.

ComLink has been discussing the framing of ageing, not through a deficit lens but through an asset lens; what are your thoughts about what ageing people have to offer us as an asset and what can we learn?

Many different communities around the world view ageing as an asset. I have been involved with a lot of indigenous communities throughout Australia and one of the many lessons I have taken away from indigenous culture is respect for elders. I know of other communities where the elders raise the grandchildren while the children go to work. There is a large respect put on the education taught from elders down to youth. As a western society we can learn a great deal from other cultures.

We live in an ageing population. With the changes in technology, health and medicine ageing people are more advantaged than ever. They are able to live more active and fulfilled lives as they grow older. It is important that we embrace and nurture this generational shift. Regardless of whether you are young or old you bring something to the table.

ComLink is pursuing an Innovation Agenda; how will we know that we are successful and what will we notice?

We inhabit a large and growing industry which is "ripe for disruption". Although ComLink has gone through substantial growth over the last few years, to be successful we can't rely on only growth from demand or growth from Government funding. The industry is naturally going to innovate and change.

History is littered with organisations, products and services that have disappeared because they didn't innovate. You look at the VHS and the record, they are still around, but they have disappeared to innovation in different sectors. ComLink needs to be at the forefront of the innovation space as a "leader" so we don't fall behind.

For an organisation like ComLink the future will look both familiar and unfamiliar. Take mobility for example. Unfamiliar in the sense, when you look at the whole discourse about mobility as a service, as distinct from characterising ComLink as a transport company we may find ourselves positioning mobility differently. Familiar in the sense that the core values that underpin the innovation such as culture and quality of service will not change.

Simple innovations such as reframing terminology or looking at untraditional methods that could involve the shared economy may be the key to success and future proofing the organisation.

Create, connect, motivate.

Health & Wellness Program

As part of our commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of our employees and volunteers, ComLink has implemented a Health and Wellness program designed to create more opportunities for people to connect.

Our program goals include fostering social support, increasing the accessibility to mental health support and resources, and improving our team members personal wellbeing.

Over the past 12 months we have participated in many events that can be found on the National health and wellness calendars including but not limited to: the biggest morning tea for breast cancer, R U OK day, memory walk and jog for dementia Australia, National superhero week for Muscular dystrophy and jeans for genes to name a few.

As part of these events staff have also contributed to numerous charities and great causes. Christmas time is a great time to give back to the community and across all of our regions many team members chose to contribute gifts to local hospitals.

We have had pot luck lunches, clothing drives, steps challenges and fitness challenges and arranged financial wellness seminars for our team members to attend. So we have been pretty busy!

In August we took some time out to celebrate our aged care employees by giving a boost juice gift card as a heartfelt thank you for the contribution our employees make on a daily basis to the care and wellbeing of older people and making a real social impact.

With this year's health and wellness program, we wanted to keep it simple and plug into things that we already have

in place and amplify this. We also felt it was important to provide a range of tools and activities based around the four pillars of health and wellness being physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.

Every month we hold field week, which is a dedicated week all about connecting field staff, volunteers and office-based ComLinkers. This is an opportunity for Field Staff and VOLLIES to pop into the office, grab a snack, say hi and catch-up. This initiative, while part of our wellness program, is also a direct result of the outcome of our Employee Satisfaction Survey. We heard how our team members want to get together more often with their co-workers so this is one way that ComLink can help create an opportunity to increase social connection at work.

As part of the field week, we have introduced the Field Feast, where we put on a Field Feast for all employees and volunteers in their region. The idea is to change up the date and time so everyone has a chance to attend. We recognise that food brings people together, like family. Each month, during the feast one of our wellness ambassadors will host a 5-minute talk and encourage discussion on the monthly theme, which for example might be brain health, sleep hygiene, heart health or mental health.

While it is still relatively new, so far we have received an overwhelming positive response, so we must be on the right path. ComLink has created a sound health and wellness program foundation, which we can continue to enhance each year.



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS:

Staff at our Sunshine Coast office held a 'pink up' morning tea to raise funds for the McGrath Foundation and show support for people experiencing breast cancer.



CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE:

Greg Thomas and Mikhaela Wever dropped off presents for our Christmas Toy Drive. Donated toys were delivered to children at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

Leading with Innovation

In recent years ComLink has developed an Innovation Agenda as a response to increasing volatility and also increasing opportunities in our industry.

In the 21st Century, health “business as usual” is not an option. It is increasingly costly, at the level of the family and at the level of government, to care for a steadily growing population of people over 65, and everyone is looking for new perspectives and practices. We want to “future proof” our business, and also take advantage of emerging opportunities, but not surrender or devalue what we already do so well.

So what is “innovation” for us - this word we see so often these days?

Innovation is the application of ideas that are novel and useful.

We want to create new products and services that our customers and community will love, which help make their lives more liveable and joyful. This is not a one-off project but rather a transition across our organisation to a shared mind-set, like the mind-set we see in entrepreneurs, which creates an agenda of innovative thinking across our whole working culture.

What does this look like?

For a start we hired a “specialist-generalist” Innovator in Residence, Michael Doneman, who comes to us from a broad background in creative industries, education and training, entrepreneurship and small business development.

Reporting directly to our CEO, Michael collaborates with key staff to develop our on-board potential for innovation, and also ‘face outwards’ and seek new partnerships and collaborations. As part of this he is involved in planning for the Vitality Village, which will feature innovation services and support as a core activity.

Michael is working with several colleagues on various kinds of story-gathering and story-telling project work, including ‘ComLink Conversations’ and ‘Future Makers’. We see story as an important way of communicating and connecting as we age, and as a potent strategy for engaging the phenomenon of loneliness, a major health issue. We are also exploring the ways in which story gathering and exchange might be extended and broadened through the use of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and the Internet of Things, in a project called ‘Storylink’.



‘ComLink Intrapreneurs’ is a program of training offered to our staff, both paid and volunteer. (An *intrapreneur* is an *entrepreneur* who works within an existing organisation, rather than founding a new one.) During the program, staff members identify and develop an innovative business idea, something that could make us money, save us money, or increase our social impact. Having developed the concept using a set of simple and specialised planning tools, participants ‘pitch’ their idea to senior management and Board, with a view to those ideas actually being implemented. In the process they earn a formal qualification, the Certificate III in Micro Business Operations.

ComLink Intrapreneurs have so far generated six innovations, with another six in development at the time of writing. This wealth of innovative ideas includes a community garden, *Zest For Life*, and a community kitchen, the *Nourishment Network*.

Importantly, we are developing the program as a commercial offering in its own right, for sale to organisations wishing to follow our lead. Most important of all, we have a sense of an organic growth in entrepreneurial thinking inside our own walls, a flourishing of our innovation agenda generating tangible, valuable benefits.

In the same way, a major medium-term component of our innovation agenda involves the development of a creative health *Animation Engine*, a venture capital network designed to research, prototype and commercialise new products and services.

The ComLink innovation agenda has grown like topsy, and with every month, with every graduating Intrapreneur, with every new partnership and consortium venture, we refine and deepen our practice. But at the heart of it all is our love of what we do, and the human-to-human contact and relationships we treasure.

COMLINK INTRAPRENEURS:

Presented with their formal qualifications.

Pictured from left to right: Barbara Roscoe, Susan Archer, Mikhaela Wever, Fedra Adra (CEO), Michael Doneman (Innovator in Residence), Peter Mardiste, Charmaine Lucas (Community Partner Coordinator) and Kerrie Woll.

*Enable,
empower,
engage.*

ComLink is a NDIS Transport Provider

An estimated 261,000 Queenslanders are living with a profound or severe disability. Disabilities are not only physical, they can also include intellectual, sensory and mental disability.



From 1 January 2019 the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was made available in all communities across Queensland.

The NDIS will transform the way Queenslanders with disability are supported and change the way disability services are funded and delivered.

The government funded Scheme aims to provide flexible management, increased assistance and create better outcomes for people under the age of 65 for people with a disability to live an ordinary life. It also helps families and carers with information about services to support people with a disability.

Over 53,000 people in Queensland are currently benefiting from the NDIS.

Under the scheme, Queenslanders with disability will have choice and control over how they access support and who delivers them.

They will also have certainty that they will be supported throughout their lifetime to achieve their personal goals.

For many participants, access to community is extremely important for their quality of life. ComLink is proud to be a registered NDIS provider for transport.

Our transport services will provide

eligible NDIS participants equitable access to a myriad of vital everyday needs, help clients stay engaged with their friends and family and supports autonomy and dignity.

Whether it's meeting with friends and family, getting to work, going to the shops or attending medical appointments, ComLink is here to connect participants to their community.



CVS Program; combatting loneliness, one visit at a time

As we grow older, we experience a lot of changes in our life, including loss. Whether it be loss of confidence, loss of independence, loss of motivation, loss of normal health or even the loss of a loved one, we all experience loss in some shape or form.

Feelings of loss can also come from smaller, but still significant things, such as loss of driver's licence, loss of mobility, loss of hearing or loss of memory. Feelings of loss can often lead to feelings of loneliness.

Loneliness is a bigger problem than simply an emotional experience. Research shows loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health and may contribute to serious health conditions such as a stroke, heart attack, dementia, depression, anxiety and even early death.

ComLink's Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) Program is designed to reduce the negative effects of loneliness and social isolation and encourage community connectedness.

Our CVS Program allows older Australians receiving a Home Care Package or living in a Residential Care facility, to receive regular one on one social support to contribute to living a quality life through friendship and companionship.

We have an army of passionate and caring volunteers. Visits can be regular, one on one or in a group, either in the client's home or a location of choice, depending on the client's individual preferences. The opportunities are endless, but may include:

- Having a cup of tea and a chat
- Do a crossword puzzle together
- Pottering in a garden
- Going for a short walk together

- Reminiscing about old times and looking through photo albums
- Reading a book or newspaper together
- Sharing stories and memories
- Having a coffee and cake at a local cafe
- Driving to the beach or visit the local nursery

ComLink will work with the client's individual needs and interests and match them with a compatible volunteer to ensure they are given every opportunity to form a genuine friendship. All of our volunteers are screened and appropriately trained, but most of all, have a genuine interest in helping older Australians feel connected to their community.

Because our CVS Program utilises volunteers, it is a free service with no out of pocket expenses.

Funded by the Commonwealth, ComLink has long been providing free companionship services to older Australians, via the CVS Program. ComLink relaunched the Program in October 2018 which included the appointment of 2 CVS Coordinators servicing the Sunshine Coast, Caboolture, North Brisbane and Ipswich/West Moreton regions.

To date, ComLink has 47 active clients between the regions as well as 12 in clients in residential care facilities at Southern Cross, Tricare, and Buderim Views and 6 clients from other external service providers, including Annecto, Bromilow, Southern Cross, Arcare, and Ballycara and Seasons.

ComLink proudly have 60 active volunteers who visit multiple clients, not just one. We also have clients who have become volunteers and are actively visiting other clients. ComLink is combatting loneliness, one visit at a time.



Teresa & Enid's Story

Teresa and Enid have formed a special freindship through the CVS Program. Teresa shares their story.

"Friday mornings I normally pick Enid up around 9 o'clock. Enid and myself try several different cafes and go off and have fun together. I wish I had a dollar for every cafe we have been to in 3 years. Our number one favourite has the best vanilla slices in town! In the cooler weather we sometimes go and sit at the beach or visit a park and feed the ducks. Often we go back to Enid's home and spend half an hour to an hour just chatting and sharing our week together and just generally just enjoying each other's company.

Originally I volunteered for ComLink because I was under retirement age and was looking for 15 hours a week volunteer work in my mid 60's. Someone mentioned ComLink and I got involved in volunteering at their Kawana Companions program and it was through that I heard of the CVS Program. I have always been involved in working with people as a support worker and I missed that, I wanted to be more involved one on one with people, and I thought the CVS Program was something I would really enjoy. I have been very blessed in the years that I have been a volunteer in the program. I have had 4 different clients and they have all been such wonderful people.

Being matched with a client when I first volunteered was something, I was anxious about, what if we meet each other and we have nothing in common? But ComLink are very good at managing that. On the first meeting someone from ComLink comes with you and you are introduced to the client and then both the client and the visitor are given time to decide if the friendship is mutually suited.

So, if someone said to me... What is the main thing you have got out of the CVS Program? I would say... Yes, the vanilla slice is great but most of all it's about the deep friendship and hearing the stories of people's lives. You hear some really inspiring stories about how people have gone through great highs in their life and also really big lows and yet you see how in each case they have blossomed and grown, and they have surmounted the obstacles and moved forward. So, you get a lot of joys from sharing people's lives."

Passing the torch.

Former Chairman: Bruce Warrell

On the 21st of November 2018 ComLink said ‘thank you and farewell’ to our outgoing Chairman of the Board, Bruce Warrell. A community man, Bruce has volunteered with ComLink for many years, racking up thousands of social support hours and more than 50,000kms across the Sunshine Coast.

Bruce Warrell is someone who goes back 16 years with ComLink, when he joined on a whim as a volunteer after his wife Het was asked at a small shopping centre stall in Caloundra if she has a car and a few hours to spare to volunteer. She answered “yes” and said, “could my husband join as well?” - Yes, by all means was the answer she received. Back then it was called Caloundra Home & Community Care or “Caloundra HACC” for short.

Bruce and Het started volunteering by driving a 95yr old client from Point Cartwright to go shopping and have her glasses fixed.

In the years to follow, they had many clients each one unique in their own way and each trip ranging in diversity. From shopping trips and paying bills, to attending hospital appointments. Some trips took longer than planned and at times were challenging, but their compassion and dedication never deviated. Bruce fondly reminisces about his past clients, Gladys who he drove to dialysis 3 times

a week, even on Saturdays, for 7 years and Jessie, who he shopped for for 5 years. Jessie loved fresh figs and whenever they were out and saw figs, he specially bought some for Jessie.

By mid 2003 Bruce and Het began volunteering at Kawana Companions in the kitchen making sandwiches and within the year Het was on the mic for the first time. The social group of over 100 Sunshine Coast seniors, originally created from Caloundra HACC funding in 1987 was a program for link-minded people to play games, sing, dance, chat and enjoy the company of others. Bruce and Het ran the 30 year program for 16 years up until 18 April 2019. They were instrumental in building the Kawana Companion’s profile, reaching more and more people and spreading joy and community support while looking for ways to enhance the lives of seniors through health and wellness initiatives.

“Kawana Companions started slowly but once Het was established on the mic we were a team and worked hard to ensure every Monday was a great day for the Companions. They all became like a second family to us. Volunteering has been and still is a wonderful experience and has kept us busy and healthy in body and mind.”

In 2007 Caloundra HACC was renamed to Suncoast Transport & Care (STAC) and on the 1 October 2010 Mick Graham stepped down as Chairman and Bruce was elected as Chairman. In 2012 ComLink launched to replace STAC. By 2014 growth funding positioned ComLink successfully in 7 regions.



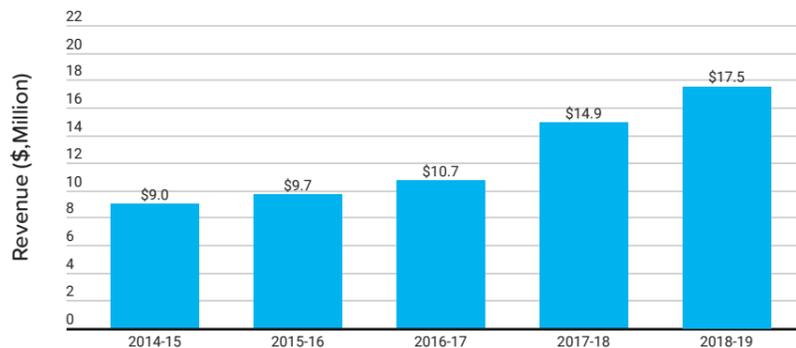
Bruce Warrell

When I look back at my time with ComLink I look at three very different aspects; driving clients, Kawana Companions, the Management Committee and the Board. In the early days I did many different driving jobs, some easy, some difficult and some very special. My highlight of driving was with dialysis clients and the interaction with the renal nurses.

“Being a Committee Member, then Secretary rising to Chairman in 2010 gave me a very detailed insight into the working of the organisation and an opportunity to see first hand how our CEO Feda Adra has advanced since she joined in 2004 to the wonderful CEO she is today. ComLink has grown dramatically, from humble beginnings as Caloundra HACC with 2 staff members, hosting nine clients and nearly as many volunteers fast forward to 2019 with over 35,000 registered clients with ComLink, a team of 200+ staff and 220+ volunteers.”

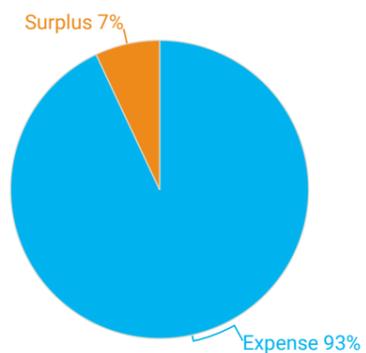
Bruce has, and will continue to be, intrinsic to the ComLink story as he continues to work on special projects within the organisation.

ComLink growth; financial performance



Financial Performance

ComLink maintained its focus on maximising funds directly benefiting people we support, with 14% of income utilised on management and business support services.



Revenue

ComLink has seen a growth in revenue for supporting people by 17% from last year to \$17.5m. This increase is a direct result of the trust and confidence in our service.

Home Care Package numbers have increased by 43% from last year to 187 packages.

Our revenue stream comes from both funded and non-funded sources: 60% Grants, 19% Home Care Packages, 8% Client Contribution and 13% from other sources including fee for service.



\$5.12M NET ASSET

Ensuring long term sustainability

Financial Stewardship

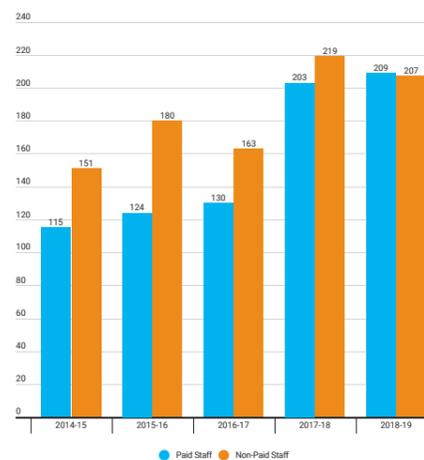
Net assets has increased by \$1.14M in 2018-19 financial year to \$5.12M reflecting our continued prudent financial management and helping ensure the long term sustainability of ComLink Limited and the services it provides to the community.



Staff

ComLink has 209 paid staff and 207 non-paid staff. Contribution in-kind by non-paid staff is valued at \$1.2 million.

We have sustained the staffing level even though there has been an increase in revenue by being more efficient and also transitioning casual staff to part time or full time.



Year in Review

ComLink has serviced 9174 clients this year in more than 535 suburbs in Queensland.

Services are provided in metropolitan, regional and remote areas.

Most of the remote areas are neglected and overlooked. We are proud to be able to reach and provide services to clients in these areas by subsidising through our Social Enterprise Arm of the organisation.

Services include provision of Transport, Social Support, Community Visitors Scheme, NDIS, Domestic Assistance, Personal Care, Flexible Respite and Home Care Package Management.

We have delivered more than 200,000 transport trips, over 2.9 million kilometres travelled.

Our vehicles comprise of 4 passenger sedans to 22 seater buses. Some of our vehicles are fitted with bariatric lifts to accommodate users who are greater than average weight.



Clients:
Serviced 9174 clients this year.



Location:
Seven locations across Queensland servicing 14 regions.



Suburbs Serviced:
535+
Suburbs serviced.



Hours Delivered:
171,000
Social and care hours delivered.



Trips Delivered:
204,000
Transport trips delivered.

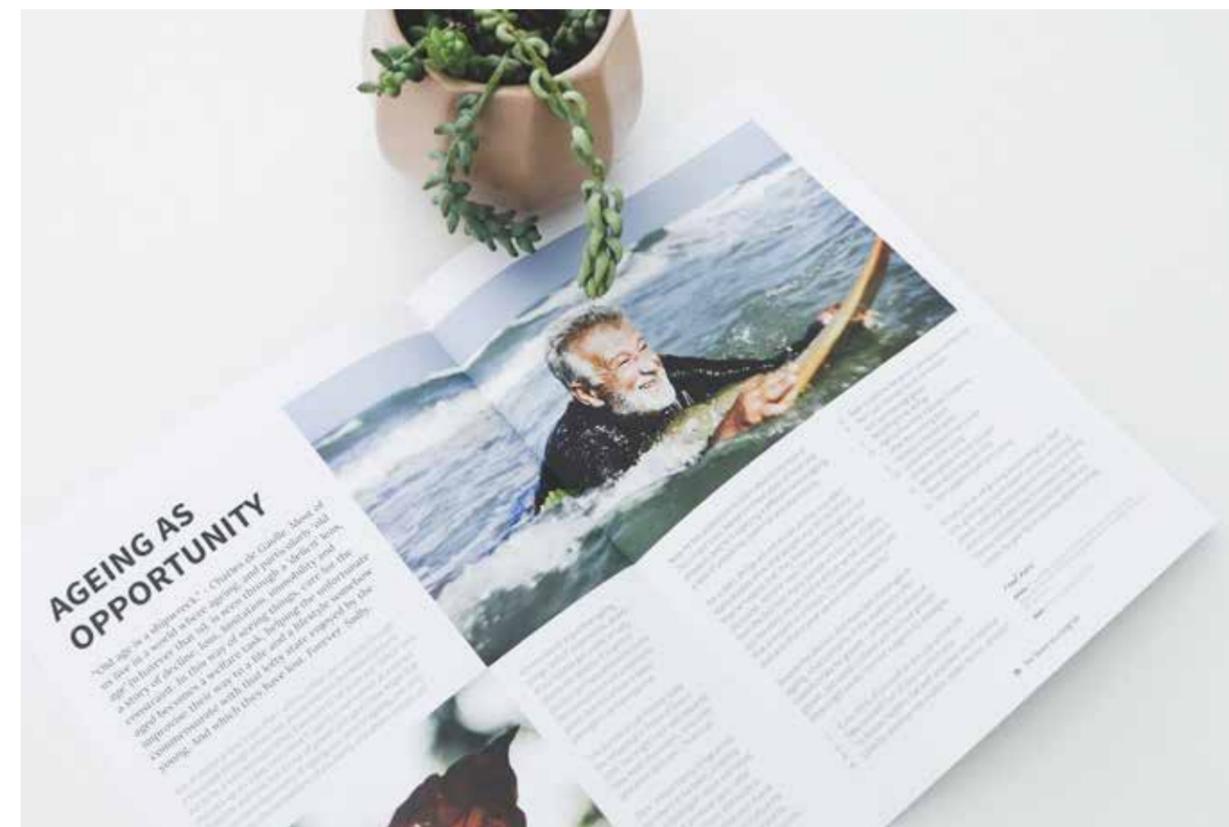


Number of Vehicles:
66 Vehicles.

Educate,
teach,
inspire.

Let's Talk Magazine

Let's Talk is a free bi-annual magazine developed by ComLink. ComLink values the power of language – to educate, teach and inspire.



Print and digital issues feature a host of health and wellness content ranging from short stories, industry news, physical and mental health advice, financial advice, healthy living tips and even food recipes.

Distribution sits at over 3,000 printed copies spanning state-wide throughout Queensland, across all ComLink regions. You might find a copy in your local cafe or coffee shop or in the waiting room at your next doctor's appointment.



To date ComLink has produced and published three issues. Each issue is seasonally tailored to appeal naturally to a “more mature” audience but readership encompasses the wider community with an overarching holistic approach to ageing.

A big part of what ComLink does, is delivering through feedback. Over the past 12 months, ComLink has explored the scope of Let's Talk and made continuous improvements to the quality and growth of the magazine such as:

- The inclusion of “guest writers” - external contributors from state and interstate who write professional expert advice about a specialty area.
- Sharing more stories through the implementation of the ComLink’s Conversation Project whereby trained storytellers gather client stories through interviews and copywriting.
- Increased articles tailored specifically to health and wellness.

Good information can empower people in ways a person cannot expect, it can enhance vitality and create a life of greater satisfaction - and that’s what ComLink try to achieve with Let's Talk!



Coming soon...

ComLink is currently working on a new and exciting project that future proofs the organisation and will make a massive impact on the health and wellbeing of our community.

Find out more by following our social media pages!

FACEBOOK: @thevitalityvillage

INSTAGRAM: vitality_village

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