



# SHARING NEWS

Volume 35 Issue 1 March 2025

## From the Chair

I do hope you all enjoyed a wonderful festive season and are now settling into 2025. The Board welcomes our new participants, their families and carers for 2025.

Sharing Places' Board will continue to work closely with the Team to facilitate the successful ongoing practices such as special projects and the financial investment strategy framework. The 2024-25 Sharing Places budget was reviewed and revised in January taking into account the new NDIS pricing changes. Sharing Places remains financially viable and the Management Team will continue to monitor the Budget and finances on a regular basis.

The Board has sub committees which include Finance Audit and Risk and Insurance; Policy and Governance; Quality and Safeguarding and, Strategic Planning Development. Each sub committee meets and provides a report to the Board to discuss. A new 2025-2030 draft Strategic Plan has been developed and will go to the Board for discussion and finalization at our March Board Meeting.

The Risk Management Register has been reviewed and updated following NDIS reforms. The Register is reviewed and presented to the Board on an annual basis, with updates provided at monthly Board Meetings.

At the Board's February meeting, recent findings in the ACT disability sector was discussed following a critical incident that occurred within the sector which resulted in the death of a person with a disability. The Board recognizes that a human rights approach was crucial to providing support to a person with a disability and acknowledged that there is still abuse that occurs within the disability sector and service providers must be diligent at all times. Regular policy reviews, practical exercises and staff training are integral to maintain quality care and service provision.

Our Board members are very committed to working with senior staff and to seeing that service provision to participants continues to be of the highest quality.

Kindest regards

Sue Healy OAM | Board Chair

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# From the CEO

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well, and enjoying some beautiful Autumn weather.

Sharing Places has certainly hit the ground running in 2025, with the ever-changing disability policy environment keeping us on our toes. There have been some NDIS policy changes that have been impacting participants through their plans and, unfortunately, some participants have been left with insufficient funds through changes in NDIS policy where the impact was not foreseeable. It is so important within this changing environment to keep informed of any changes that may have an impact on your NDIS plans going forward. It is absolutely key to keep the lines of communication open with your planner, support coordinator, plan manager, and service providers.

Some of these changes are also having a financial impact on Sharing Places and, while these are relatively small, they will impact the current financial year's results. The recent NDIS pricing guide and legislation changes have affected some participants, having their supports changed from high intensity (including complex behaviour) supports to a standard level of support. There are now new requirements for people receiving high intensity or complex behaviour support, and evidence in the form of clinical plans are required in order for Sharing Places to apply the higher rates of support. The higher support rates compensate organisations for things such as increased staff training and increased staff supervision. With this change in NDIS policy resulting in a decrease in overall funding for the organisation, we are now considering how we need to respond to ensure the continued viability of the organisation without compromising on quality services. I will keep you informed as we progress through this process.

The Board has been extremely busy over the past months compiling the new Strategic Plan that will be coming out this year. The Plan is close to being completed and will be out in the next few months.

Our programs have been going full steam ahead and there is a busy calendar of events and activities planned for the year. The all-service pool day was a fantastic day with so much enjoyment had by all. More information on that day and other activities are contained within the newsletter.

We recently took possession of two new vehicles, with one being a replacement lease and the other an addition to our fleet, bringing us to 25 vehicles across the service. With the pandemic and its global impacts having an effect on our ability to replace vehicles, it is very nice to see the replacement schedule restored and being implemented.

Kylie Stokes | CEO

# Vehicles

Sharing Places is pleased to once again be on track with our vehicle replacement schedule with two new Toyota Hiace Commuter buses joining the fleet at the end of last year.

Both buses received modifications including hoists, steps and handrails to accommodate wheelchair access and assist with transition in and out of the vehicles.

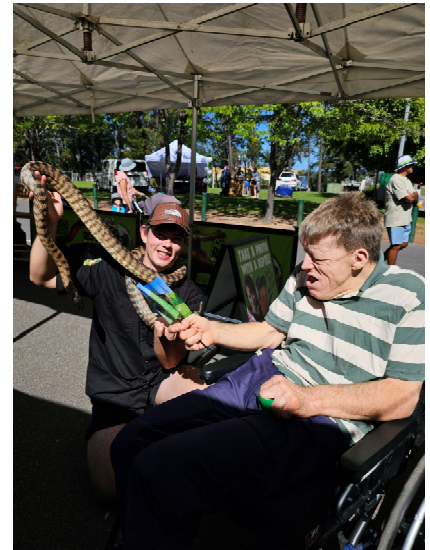
Sharing Places works closely with Toyota Fleet Management for acquisitions, leasing and maintenance of our fleet. Sharing Places employs an inhouse fleet coordinator to oversee the entire fleet to ensure our vehicles are operating safely and efficiently.



# The Royal Canberra Show

The Royal National Capital Agricultural Society graciously donated nearly 100 tickets for our teams to attend the Canberra Show on Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>.

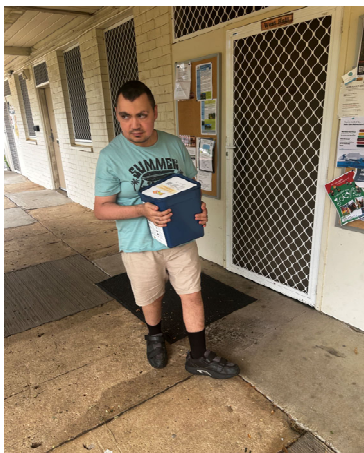
Participants thoroughly enjoy walking through the variety of exhibitions, shows, and agriculture that created many and varied positive experiences, creating opportunities for people to see, touch, hear and participate in so much activity in one day.



# Waste Warrior Programs

Our volunteering opportunities with Lids4kids continue to expand with the new Waste Warrior Programs. Donned with a Lids4kids Fluro Waste Warrior uniform vest participants from our teams in Pearce and Holt are collecting recycling tubs from several swap and go locations North and South. Lids4Kids members fill their waste tubs and bring them to swap and go locations throughout Canberra. These containers have a mixture of small household recyclable items. Sharing Places is delighted to support Lids4kids programs and be a part of such a wonderful community initiative. If you would like to join the zero-waste warrior initiative, please visit <https://www.lids4kids.org.au/>

Just a reminder, Sharing Places Holt and Pearce accept clean Lids4kids approved plastic lids for recycling. These will be sorted during the inclusive community session on Thursdays at the depot in Fyshwick or sorted at our locations as an additional program for those participants unable to attend Thursday's program.



# All Abilities Gym Fitness

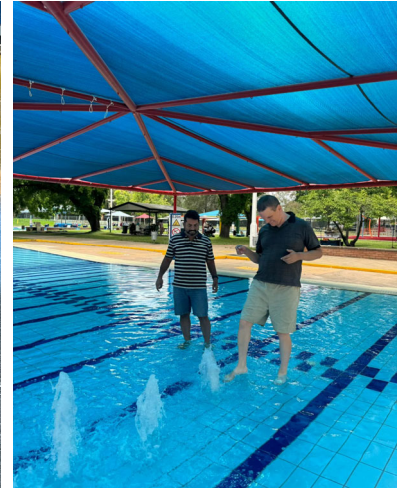
Sharing Places is excited to offer participants an opportunity to join an ALL-Abilities fitness session at Lakeside Leisure Centre in Greenway. The fitness session commenced in February as a pilot program for our Pearce teams. This program will take place fortnightly for 6 sessions. This initial pilot program will be at no cost to participants as it is funded through our Special Projects. At the conclusion of the pilot program, participants may continue with the Lakeside Fitness program if they choose.

The All-Abilities class is a one-hour group fitness session that is run by two of Lakesides' fitness instructors. The classes range from learning basic exercise movements, fun interactive fitness-based games, dance classes, chair-based classes and potentially gym workouts depending on the group attending.



# Dickson Pool

As a welcome to 2025 event, Sharing Places participants and teams had exclusive use of the Dickson Pool Facility. Participants had access to several pools, big splash water park, variety of outdoor games and picnicking in the lovely shaded grounds of Dickson Pool.



# Empower Gym Fitness Bootcamp



For our Holt teams, we welcome back a fun gym fitness bootcamp program at Club Lime in Belconnen. The sessions are facilitated by an exercise physiologist from Empower. The participants are guided through a series of interactive fitness stations sure to get them moving. This program commenced in February and will take place monthly for five sessions. This program is also at no cost to participants as it is funded through our Special Projects.





Join Sharing Places staff and participants on 21<sup>st</sup> of March, choose some socks that are going to get noticed! They might be mismatched socks or your boldest and most colourful socks, whatever takes your fancy!

The idea is to start a conversation, so when people ask you about your socks, you can tell them, “I’m wearing them to raise awareness of Down Syndrome”. If you’re a social media guru, make sure you upload your pictures and use the hashtags **#WorldDownSyndromeDay** **#LotsOfSocks**.

Sharing Places will also have fun activities such as fun sock colouring and design to join the world’s voice for Down Syndrome Awareness Day.



March is Make it Purple for Epilepsy Awareness.

Epilepsy Purple Day is an international grassroots effort dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide. On March 26th annually, people in countries around the world are invited to wear purple and host events in support of epilepsy awareness. Last year, people in more than 85 countries on all continents participated in Purple Day!

During the month of March, you will see iconic landmarks around the world light up PURPLE. Check out the Epilepsy ACT website for what will be going PURPLE in Canberra and Queanbeyan.

Our Sharing Places Teams will once again be supporting Epilepsy ACT by volunteering at their awareness merchandise stalls. Stop by and visit our teams at Coleman Court and Kippax on March 19 and 20 between 9:30-1:30, Westfield Woden on March 28 between 9:30-1:30. There will be an assortment of purple items to purchase from plush toys, ribbons, badges and more!

# Important Dates

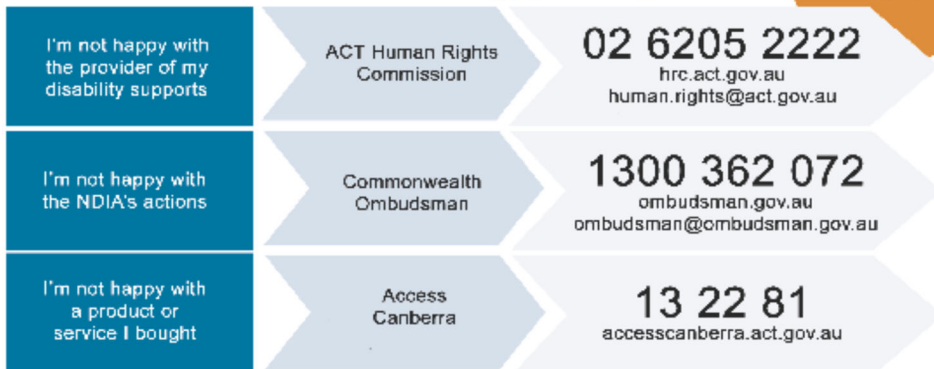
March	10	Canberra Day Holiday
April	18	Good Friday
	21	Easter Monday
	25	ANZAC Day Holiday
May		General Meeting (TBC)
June	2	Reconciliation Day
	9	Sovereign's Birthday Holiday
September	15	SPI Training Day (TBC)
October	6	Labour Day Holiday
	27	Annual General Meeting
December	19	Last Day for clients – SPI Closure
January 2026	5	SPI Reopens

Please be aware of the days marked in purple as on these days Sharing Places will be closed and will not be open to clients.

## NDIS Unsure who to complain to?

*there is no wrong door*

If you call any of our offices we will help you get to the right place



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Sharing Places Inc  
**Membership 2024/2025**

First Name ..... Family Name .....*or*

Business Name .....

Address .....

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Individual Membership <input type="checkbox"/> \$11 (incl GST)	Association Membership <input type="checkbox"/> \$22 (incl GST)
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