

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Richmond
Fellowship
Queensland



50 YEARS | 1974-2024

Together, we can recover futures.



*A future recovered for those
facing mental health challenges
and social disadvantage.*

Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the original and continuing custodians of the land and waters. We pay our respects to the Old People, Elders and Leaders past and present and extend our recognition to their descendants. We celebrate the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's in Australia's history, culture and future.

Connect with us



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WHO WE ARE

Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) support people in recovery. We inspire hope and empower people by creating opportunities and championing future possibilities for people with mental illness and disabilities. Our vision is a future recovered for people facing mental health challenges and social disadvantage.

We provide individualised support, experiences and opportunities for 11,000 clients across Queensland and nationally via telehealth services. We are driven by our community's passion and commitment to inspire hope, self-belief and realise the possibilities available to them so they can lead a meaningful life.

RFQ partner with many primary health networks including hospital and health services across Queensland to provide a variety of tailored, specific and detailed psychosocial recovery orientated services.

OUR HISTORY

As we reflect on RFQ's 50 years of service excellence, it's essential to remember that just like mental health, our journey is ongoing. Our organisation has thrived by valuing not just results, but the people who make those results possible - ensuring everyone has the support they need to thrive both personally and professionally.

It is with gratitude we are celebrating the contributions of so many in RFQ's success over these past five decades. We acknowledge the contributions of volunteers, employees, clients, partners and stakeholders as together, we can recover futures.

RFQ began supporting the community in 1974 at the Eliza Street therapeutic home and has grown from humble beginnings. Our 50-year history and legacy gives us a solid foundation to overcome challenges and integrate new and innovative psychosocial advancements to ensure our clients live a quality life.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This year marks Richmond Fellowship Queensland's 50th anniversary. While this certainly is a milestone to be celebrated, especially since the organisation has grown so much in size and reputation year on year, it is also true that our primary focus remains centred on those people who seek support from RFQ, along with their families and carers. Board Directors have been and continue to be very proud of the level of care and commitment that RFQ has demonstrated so well since its inception. The Board congratulates the executive and leadership team together with all staff for their exceptional commitment to RFQ's purpose, vision and values.

The annual art exhibition which marks the start of Mental Health Week is always a highlight of every year. The event continues to evolve and this year's event, marking its 33rd anniversary, was one of the best yet! Opening night was a fabulous evening of art and music under the Grand Marquee in Brisbane's King George Square. Thanks to our wonderful master of ceremonies, Larry Stapleton who spoke so eloquently about RFQ and its 50-year history. Directors also particularly enjoyed speaking with the artists about their individual stories, catching up with staff and meeting clients and stakeholders in attendance.

Visiting the exhibition again over the long weekend provided further perspective for me, personally. I saw visitors provided with wonderful musical performances, artist demonstrations and children's art activities. The atmosphere was truly one of exuberance, energy and connection and on behalf of the Board, I thank Tea Delalic and the Communications and Events team, together with curator, Nicola Holly, for the huge amount of work required to deliver such a wonderful event.

The RFQ Board has seen some changes and renewal over the past few years. Directors bring considerable experience and skills to organisations and current RFQ Board members are skilled in



areas including corporate and clinical governance, mental health research and evaluation, Indigenous affairs, health management, accounting, finance and law. Many directors also have the knowledge and understanding that comes from having personal experience with mental health challenges, or from supporting someone who does.

I thank all directors for their ongoing contribution to the success of RFQ. There are two longstanding members of the Board retiring at the end of this year. Keren Harms has been on the Board since 2011 and, as carer for her brother, has had personal experience of the wonderful service provided by RFQ over many years. Keren has been a very committed director, secretary and governance committee member during her time with the RFQ Board.

David Goener has served on the Board for more than seven (7) years and has made a huge contribution to the Board as both director and finance committee chair. David's exceptional finance and managerial skills have been very much appreciated by the Board and his contribution will be greatly missed.

On behalf of the directors and the entire organisation I would like to sincerely thank both Keren and David for their dedication and commitment to RFQ.

Rhonda Chesmond

Board Chair | Governance Committee



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

For 50 years, RFQ has served the community by providing practical support for people with mental ill health, as well as their families, carers and wider networks. We envision a future recovered for people facing mental health challenges and social disadvantage.



1960's

Dr. Charles Elliott, a Brisbane GP, noticed that many of his patients were facing mental health challenges. After meeting Elly Jansen from the United Kingdom, he played an instrumental role in founding RFQ. Dr. Elliott persuaded the Anglican men's society to fund a purpose-built facility at Eliza Street, Clayfield, which could accommodate 21 people.



1980's

The Eliza Street program received intermittent funding, and at this time, the idea that a not-for-profit organisation could set up services that provided therapy and rehabilitation was considered 'dangerous.' The therapeutic community, in general, was subject to high levels of scrutiny. RFQ needed to fundraise to keep the house going (their annual garage sales were infamous) and mental illness was topical in the news. Small surplus funds from the Queensland Government began to assist with program delivery intermittently.

1995

Project 300, an institutional reform program, facilitated the transition of 300 individuals from Queensland's three long-stay psychiatric hospitals into public housing. As part of the program, each client received support from a dedicated case manager, psychiatrist and support person. RFQ was among the 12 not-for profits involved. An independent evaluation of the program over a three-year period showed a significant improvement in the clinical and overall functioning of clients.

2006

RFQ increases its service delivery footprint via various funding contracts including Hospital to Home (H2H), Transition from Corrections (TFC), New Access, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the Way Back Support Service (TWBSS).

2018

RFQ merges with the Mental Illness Fellowship Queensland (MIFQ), bringing together 77 years of combined experience. As part of this transition, RFQ also assumes grants from a large Gold Coast-based organisation that went into administration.

2024

Since 1994, RFQ has grown from a team of seven to over 400 in 2024, and we remain committed to supporting individuals on their recovery journey for many years to come.

1970's

RFQ was officially incorporated in May 1974, with James Riggs employed as its first staff member, spending six months in the UK training with Elly in the therapeutic community model. Upon his return, James became RFQ's founding Executive Director, from 1975 to 1995. Thousands of people across Queensland were transitioned from long-stay institutions into boarding houses, hostels and private facilities in the community, a process which was not without its challenges. Eliza Street community program commences.

1990's

Seven staff working across two programs during this time – Eliza Street and a small outreach service called Independent Living Service (ILS). In 1995, James Riggs resigns from his Executive Director position, and Kingsley Bedwell takes on the leadership role. Larry Stapleton and Rudolf Manu began their careers with RFQ, and both still work for the organisation to this day.



2000's

Establishment of academic partnerships both in Australia and abroad and with the creation of our evidence based collaborative recovery model to improve service delivery and outcomes.

2017

RFQ begins to deliver NDIS Core supports and Support Coordination services in Toowoomba. Followed by West Moreton, Metro North, South Brisbane, Gold Coast and Wide Bay.

2023

The Indigenous Cultural Supervision project launched with the recruitment of four identified staff members, hired to provide leadership, knowledge and advice to non-Indigenous staff, empowering our workforce to deliver culturally appropriate support to all Indigenous clients. The Wellbeing Literacy program was developed and adapted for First Nations audiences to ensure culturally appropriate materials were embedded for both Indigenous staff and clients.



LARRY'S STORY

With over 30 years of devoted service spanning everything from cleaning bathrooms alongside clients, to strategic tender writing and management, Larry Stapleton's career in psychosocial support services stemmed from studies in psychology, sociology and philosophy.

Larry and his family moved to Queensland in the early nineties prompted by his eldest daughter starting high school and his retirement from 20 years in the Royal Australian Airforce as a Flight Engineer. Shortly after the move, he came across an advertisement in The Courier Mail for a support worker position with Richmond Fellowship at the Eliza Street therapeutic community. Larry applied, was accepted, and began his role in March 1993.

"I didn't know anything about my job, there was no 'normal' day. I did a lot of work helping people. The program was to assist with household tasks and the chores around the house – so helping people clean toilets and showers, gardening and all kinds of projects like that. That was the job. It was a big learning curve for me for the first couple of years," Larry reflects.

During this period, RFQ secured funding for a pilot program, the Independent Living Service (ILS), aimed at helping people settle into community living. Larry also worked in the ILS, working alongside another employee with three decades of experience – Rudolf (Rudy) Manu. Rudy now works as a Transitional Supervisor in Client Services.

"Rudy and I were like Grace Brothers, we would go and assist people with setting up their homes – running furniture up and down stairs, getting people set up in flats, painting floors and doing all kinds of various activities for them."



"I think RFQ's foundational approach which underpins the values we have today is about having a genuine relationship with people, having empathy and exhibiting compassion. This approach demonstrates a solidarity with people with mental illness and that makes a difference. We try to support people in a truly genuine way."

The roll out of Project 300 began in 1995 as part of a Queensland Government initiative to develop community-based models of care for patients from psychiatric hospitals. According to Larry, this marked the beginning of wider reform and significant changes within the mental health system.

Larry oversaw the roll out of Project 300 in his role at the time as Regional Manager.

"The first few months of Project 300, we got thirteen people out of Wolston Park who had been just living there in that institution for 20 or 30 years, to get them out of hospital and into living with the right social supports in the community was very satisfying."

One of RFQ's clients, Rachel Smith, who moved from institutionalised care in the Toowoomba region into supported living, is still supported by RFQ today though our NDIS Core Support Program.

"It's been so good for her and really improved her quality of life in an amazing way."

As RFQ grew, so did Larry's roles and responsibilities, with the organisation's geographic footprint growing alongside increased funding for psychosocial support services across Queensland.

In 2006, RFQ rapidly expanded its program and service delivery reach, being successful in five tenders almost overnight. This significantly increased the number of offices and staff required to deliver new programs.

Throughout his time with RFQ, there has not been a program or part of the business Larry hasn't been heavily involved with – from crafting tenders alongside the CEO, working directly with clients, or providing guidance and oversight in a supervisory role.

Aside from Project 300, he cites the Transition from Corrections (TFC) Program as holding a special place in his heart, as well as RFQ's work with other marginalised groups such as advocating for and supporting the deaf community.

"It's very special to work alongside people on the margins of society, and appreciating how hard it is to get back into society after a period of incarceration, to be able to meet them at the gate, support them before release and assist in their journey post being locked up is very rewarding, and it's an amazing program."

"Also working with the deaf community and RFQ's deaf support workers has also been really rewarding – learning Auslan and being able to communicate with deaf staff and clients."

Larry's dedication extends beyond his professional life to his hobbies and family. He is a proud father of four daughters and a grandfather to 10 grandchildren, whom he enjoys taking sailing in his downtime. An avid cyclist, Larry also rides for leisure and participates in charity events to raise money.

"When I'm not riding or sailing, I've been learning classical guitar for a few years - my wife, Trish, sometimes complains she is a guitar widow, but we do play together often on the weekends as part of our church community."

When asked what the best advice he has taken on board or been given in life, Larry cites Stephen Covey as an inspiration.

"Begin with the end in mind, otherwise you will lose your way."

Larry Stapleton is Executive Manager of Service Development and has been with Richmond Fellowship Queensland since March 1993 and celebrated 31 years of dedicated service in 2024.



A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP



Elly Jansen
(Founder of Richmond Fellowships
in United Kingdom in 1959)

“It takes time and true empathy for staff to be available and to give genuine love. Providing this may be the most important contribution of staff and the most valid experience for clients, it may save lives.”

- ELLY JANSEN 2024



James Riggs
(Director 1975 to 1995)
Famous for asking “what’s next?” James’s experience and training with Elly saw him solidify RFQ and drill down on the key culture of the Richmond Fellowship therapeutic community approach, creating a culture of equals.



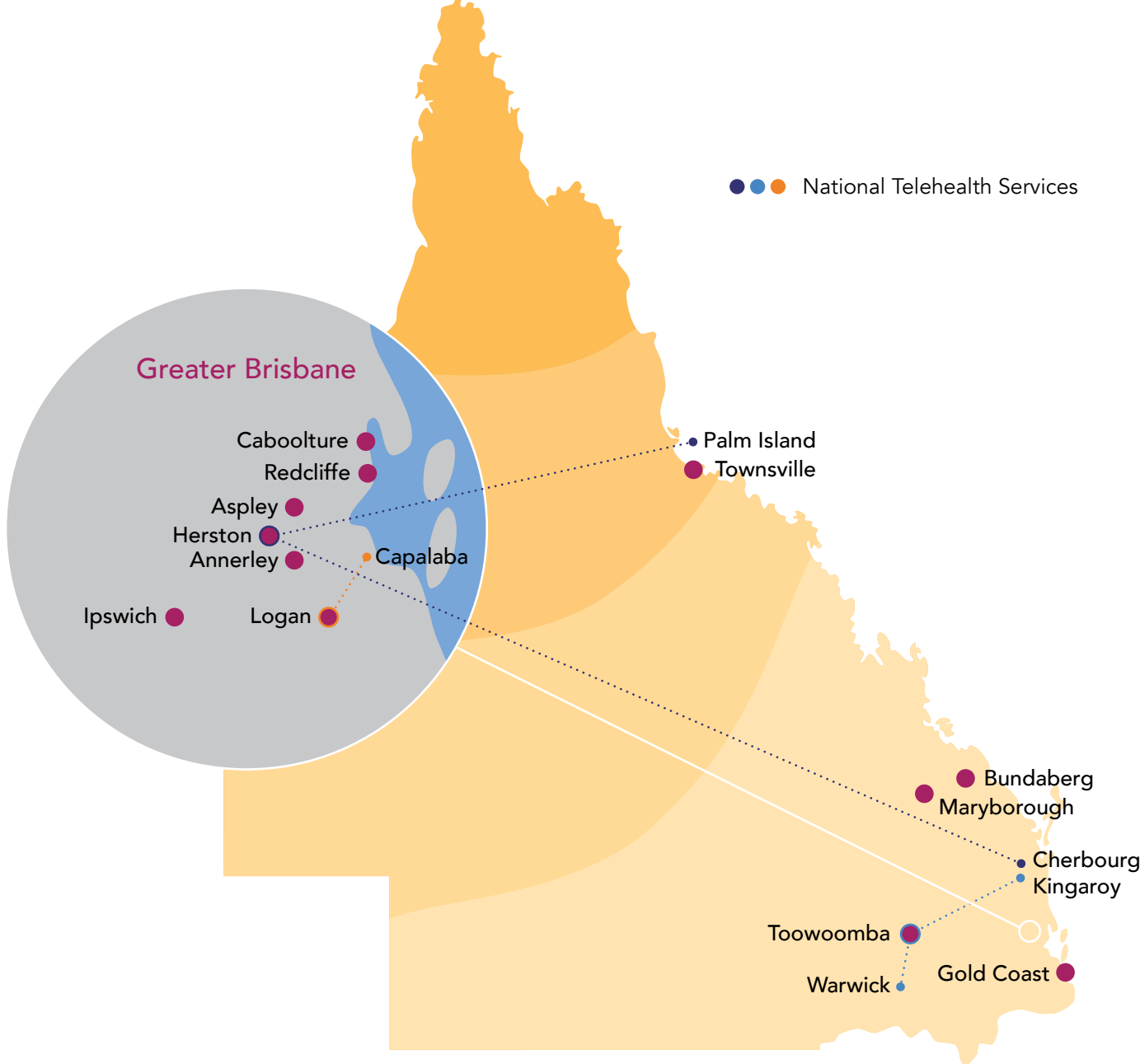
Dr. Charles Elliott
(Founder of Richmond Fellowship
in Queensland in 1974)
Responsible for building the relationship with Elly Jansen and instrumental in securing funding for Eliza Street, Charles was an advocate for better outcomes for the mental health patients he saw at his General Practice Clinic.



Kingsley Bedwell
(Chief Executive Officer)
Profound intellectual leadership with solid governance and cementing RFQ’s reputation for professional and ethical practice with over three decades of dedication to recovering futures. His contribution in this field has been a passionate life’s work to which he has brought the more personal insights as a carer and the impact mental illness can have on families. Kingsley is the proud recipient of a 2022 Centenary Medal for distinguished service to health from the Queensland Mental Health Commission.



OUR SERVICE LOCATIONS



Richmond Fellowship Queensland’s extensive range of services are designed to meet the needs of all people, ages and goals in locations across Queensland. Via our New Access programs developed by Beyond Blue, we provide telehealth services nationally.



OUR HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Celebrated the 10th anniversary of the New Access partnership with Beyond Blue, which began as a pilot program in 2014. Over the past year, the New Access for Small Business service received more than 6,000 enquiries.
- 2 Marked 50 years of providing recovery support in the community. From securing private funding to start the therapeutic community in 1974, hosting annual garage sales to raise funds, to strengthening our partnerships with our current funders to continue our impactful psychosocial work.
- 3 Strengthened our key partnerships as part of developing a center of excellence with 17 different academic or research communities. Recruitment began for a joint Professorial partnership with the University of Melbourne which will enable RFQ to be at the forefront of research into best practice psychosocial advancements.
- 4 The Recovered Futures Art Exhibition hosted the works of over 180 artists with lived mental ill health experience and was a key event of Queensland Mental Health Week in King George Square. Raised awareness and kick-started conversations surrounding mental health with over 10,000 visitors and over \$72,000 worth of artwork sold.
- 5 Solidified our cultural statement of intent and our journey of integrating cultural capability into all of our services and teams by way of cultural competency training and establishment of several Indigenous Identified positions. Building engagement and trust with the 300+ clients who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- 6 Invested in over 50 courses of learning and development to improve service delivery and support of RFQ staff and managers.



11,584
NUMBER OF CLIENTS
SUPPORTED ACROSS
ALL PROGRAMS AND
LOCATIONS



403
TOTAL
EMPLOYEES



121,343
NUMBER OF HOURS OF SUPPORT
ON THE WHOLE ACROSS ALL
PROGRAMS AND LOCATIONS



50+
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
COURSES UNDERTAKEN
(INSTRUCTOR LED, VIRTUAL,
ONLINE AND FACE TO FACE)



17
NUMBER OF
ACADEMIC
PARTNERSHIPS



7,350
LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT HOURS
SPENT BY EMPLOYEES

OUR PERFORMANCE

Delivered Service Excellence | Recovery supported

- 1 The Cultural Supervision project continued to grow throughout 2024, enhancing and building upon RFQ's twelve Identified positions (up from nine in 2023) to foster cultural empowerment in the workforce. Cultural Supervisors work with non-Indigenous staff to provide leadership, knowledge and culturally safe and appropriate advice.
- 2 New Access for Small Business Owners saw over 6,000 enquiries with most clients seeking short-intervention mental health coaching for 'work-related stress' as one of the top five reasons for reaching out. The sustained, positive impacts on people who access the program are reflected in many of the follow up sessions held six months post-program.
- 3 Collaboration with external training providers to customise learning modules specific to our programs. Current training on offer includes Foundation Training for Borderline Personality Disorder, Motivational Interviewing, Suicide Prevention and Intervention (ASIST & CALM), MAYBO – Positive Approaches to Behaviour and Safer De-escalation
- 4 Over 7,000 hours were spent by employees engaging in our commitment to continual life-long learning and improving their support and other skills to ensure best-practice in walking alongside clients in their recovery journey.
- 5 Hosting client BBQ's in our service delivery areas with support staff and clients coming together to share a meal and maintain connections with one another - everyone is welcome.

Build strategic engagement | Connections strengthened

- 1 The CALM Yarn suicide prevention program continues to develop with specially developed language and cultural considerations specific to suicide. Juanita and Elaine, both accredited trainers, are leading the delivery of this training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical centers across Australia.
- 2 RFQ were proud to sponsor a number of community-connected events such as Unsung Heroes by Carers Foundation, Queensland Wheelchair Rugby League, Arthur Beeton Queensland Murri Carnival, Open Minds Queensland Mental Health Week Awards among others.
- 3 Commonwealth Psychosocial support social group and art group were attended and facilitated by RFQ staff in the Wide Bay Region. This provided invaluable social opportunities for participants with likeminded peers and connections with other health services. The art group had their work presented in a professional gallery setting as part of Queensland Mental Health Week activities in Maryborough.
- 4 The Way Back Support Service (TWBSS) throughout the year attended weekly in-service sessions for Acute Care Team staff which were held at Hervey Bay inpatient unit. TWBSS staff strengthened awareness and connections to assist staff in these units refer potential clients who RFQ could assist in their recovery journey through this program. Similar sessions are ongoing and will be facilitated for rural services in the coming months. Metro North facilitated similar sessions in the region and worked alongside community hubs to ensure continuity of care from one service to another.
- 5 The University of Melbourne advertised for Professor (Community Wellbeing) as part of a joint position which will enable RFQ access to leading research and applications in wellbeing science to improve our service delivery to clients and their families. This appointment will be confirmed in early 2025.

"I have always wanted a better life for myself and my family, the idea of recovery and a better future – I feel that in my own heart, so to be able to go alongside someone else and be a part of their journey for a short period of time, I find that very meaningful." – DAVID LOVE HICKSON



Ensure future sustainability | Growth managed

- 1 Working With Our Mob is designed to equip managers with the tools needed to provide a culturally safe and inclusive workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Facilitated by our Indigenous team, these sessions provide managers with practical tools necessary in developing a culturally safe workplace to support, manage and assist in retaining Indigenous staff.
- 2 The Wellbeing Literacy program, adapted for First Nations audiences, with culturally relevant imagery, videos and voice overs, has now entered its pilot testing phase within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- 3 Development of a Citizen Ethnography pilot internally – focusing on how we can use lived experience to better support recovery methodology and strategies. A cross-section of staff with lived experience took part in a 12-month pilot project to explore Citizen Ethnography (CE) as a method in empowering and supporting staff and clients. Future steps will see a second cohort undertake the course into 2025.
- 4 Strategic investment in our operations, ensuring long-term sustainability and the ability to fulfill our commitments to the community whilst maintaining a modest surplus managing public funds. Our solid financial position enables us to enhance service delivery and support future growth.
- 5 An ongoing gap analysis by the quality and safety team in against both the National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Standards (NSQDMHS) and the National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed (NSQMHSCMO) organisations to ensure compliance to future proof requirements.

Influence change in the community | Awareness raised

- 1 Recovered Futures Art Exhibition, in its 33rd year, saw over 10,000 visitors through the Grand Marquee in King George Square. Part of Queensland Mental Health Week, the exhibition showcases works by artists with lived mental ill health experience and kick-starts conversations surrounding lived experience and how art assists with wellbeing.
- 2 Queensland Mental Health Week activities were attended by various RFQ teams - Thrive by the Bay in Cleveland, Art Beat in the Gold Coast, Wide Bay art exhibitions and workshops, Ipswich Mental Health and Wellbeing Expo and networking events in Townsville and Toowoomba all assisted in raising awareness of what RFQ does and how we assist people on their recovery journey.
- 3 Our Indigenous team continues to build connections in the community, building trust in RFQ among various community and allied health organisations. Key collaborations include Link UP, Kummara (through Lesley-Ann Clements), the Jaydon Adams Foundation (through David Love Hickson), and opportunities for engagement and workshop delivery with the State Library of Queensland.

David Love Hickson, a Wellbeing and Recovery Worker in an Indigenous Identified role, works a hybrid role which links RFQ directly to the community through the Jaydon Adams Foundation – working alongside First Nations youth, families and communities, providing social and emotional wellbeing support.



OUR PROGRAMS AND PURPOSE

RFQ deliver a variety of programs focused on recovered futures across our service delivery areas. These are referral-based services working with Queensland Health, Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and other partners, aside from New Access developed by Beyond Blue - where it is a self-referral service.

2024 saw RFQ deliver multiple programs across our service delivery areas such as Hospital to Home (H2H), New Access, Transition from Corrections (TFC), The Way Back Support Service (TWBSS), Housing Support, Commonwealth Psychosocial Support (CPS), Head to Health, Crisis Support (Emu Cafe), Transitional Recovery Service (TRS/Capstone) and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The following stories show how our programs have assisted the people we work alongside in their recovery journey.

MEG'S STORY

I saw the NewAccess x Beyond Blue program pop up on my Instagram feed and the tagline 'My business is ok, but I'm not' instantly resonated with me. My business was going from strength to strength but at the sacrifice of my own mental health. I was stuck on my never-ending to-do list, worrying that all my clients and staff were happy and neglecting my own self-care. My whole life felt like 'work', which I truly did love but it was becoming too much, so I completed the application form and within hours my first meeting was locked in.

My coach Carly was simply incredible! She was so personable, reassuring and supportive. Having someone to talk to outside my business gave me perspective, and talking about my problems made me feel seen and less lonely. The practical and timely tasks we completed together were so relevant and helped me become aware of the avoidance behaviours I was succumbing to. The weekly check-ins also made me accountable and helped me to complete my meaningful 'homework'.

Meg - Health & Fitness Industry
(Boutique Pilates Studio Owner)

"I now feel more in control of my 'to-do' list, have stopped avoiding the 'hard things' and created more time for things that bring me joy. I do not believe I'd be in the happy space I am in right now without this program."

NewAccess
Developed by Beyond Blue

FREE OF CHARGE & NO GP REFERRAL REQUIRED



CARLY'S STORY

New Access Coach

Hearing about how great the New Access program was from a close friend and how much they loved working for RFQ, Carly popped an expression of interest in the next day and is now one of our New Access Coaches delivering services nationally via telehealth.

"This is not a one size fits all category. Each client has their own individual needs, so we need to treat the client, not the condition. Additionally, you can't control what happens to you, but you can control how you react to it. I say this all the time!"

Carly says the responsiveness of the program and flexibility of sessions is what makes it so unique.

"A lot of my clients enjoy that they can have the sessions in the comfort of their own home."

Carly has a full and fast paced life herself. Whilst balancing her New Access commitments, she is a full-time student studying a Bachelor of Psychology, a wife and mother of two small children (2 years and 17 months) and performs most weekends in a band.



"I find performing so cathartic, it's so important to have an outlet for creativity or even frustration. I get all my feelings out when I sing."



RUDOLF'S REFLECTIONS

Rudolf Manu is a Transitional Supervisor in The Way Back Support Service and is one of RFQ's longest serving employees, having worked with the organisation for over 30 years.

"The Way Back Service is about setting up a safe foundation - one of the first things I noted in the therapeutic community when providing significant recovery is safety, safety, safety. Utilising our safety plans and discussions surrounding suicide that can enable it to be unpacked and remove the shame and trying to hide it."

"Sometimes when you are sitting down with a client to do a suicide plan, it involves the dreams and plans for the future – it's essential to integrate people's vision of the future to get that powerful meaning and connection."

"What's unique is the three-month timeframe to the TWBSS, one of the challenges staff have, is that they think recovery is going to take a long time."



"The program structure is well guided to engage with people, identify their values and link them into services in a collaborative way. The person is at the center of that recovery."

CRISIS SUPPORT SPACE (EMU CAFÉ)

The Crisis Support Space (Emu Café) is a partnership between Queensland Health and the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service.

Michelle, a RFQ Senior Recovery Mentor, shared the following positive outcome from this low-stimulus intervention and alternative space where RFQ staff work alongside Queensland Health clinicians to provide a safe, warm and culturally sensitive space away from a busy emergency department.



“A 31-year-old female presented with complex childhood trauma and no existing relationship with family and feeling isolated in her adult years. She had a chronic history of self-harm, hospitalisations and admissions to the Mental Health Unit. At one point this client had over 300 contacts in one year with emergency services.

She has been attending the Emu Café Crisis Support space and has had no contacts with emergency services for mental health crisis in a 12-month period. She actively engages in mindfulness activities with RFQ Recovery Mentors and benefits from peer connection in the space.”

RACHEL'S STORY

Rachel Smith has been supported by RFQ since 1996 after Project 300, a Queensland government initiative, enabled her and her housemate Christine, to relocate from Baillie Henderson psychiatric hospital to her home in the Toowoomba community.

Rachel described the hospital as ‘not a great place’ and loves the freedom she now experiences with RFQ, initially receiving support through The Housing and Support Program and later moving to the NDIS program.

As a child she was diagnosed with Prader-Willi syndrome, which is characterised by physical, behavioural and mental challenges including constant eating due to never feeling full (known as hyperphagia). Rachel also lives with schizophrenia.

Rachel continues to live independently with round-the-clock support to assist her with day-to-day living, including meal preparation for her special diet.

When asked what she thought of RFQ, Rachel said the support helps her lead a happy, better life.

“I appreciate everything RFQ has done, helped me with my mental illness and get better when I'm unwell.”



Christine sadly passed away two years ago, after more than 20 years of living together, but thankfully she has two other housemates that she enjoys spending time with.

Rachel is now 55 and enjoys crafting, shopping, writing letters to friends and family and going on long drives to some of her favourite spots including Picnic Point in the Toowoomba region.



"Together, we
can recover
futures"

ARTHUR AND BEV'S STORY



When Arthur retired from his 35-year-career as a semi-trailer driver hauling loads across the country, he envisaged a quiet retirement in his Gold Coast home of 34 years with his wife, Beverley.

Instead, he was faced with neighbours from hell and tensions simmered until he felt like he couldn't take it anymore. Arthur lived through a suicide attempt and the impacts of his recovery journey have reached far and wide.

After being hospitalised he was apprehensive to return home, which led to a referral to RFQ's Capstone program as a way to create a sense of community and safety through weekly engagement activities.

"They let me come home while I was in hospital twice, but I didn't feel safe at home. Because of the situation with the neighbours I just didn't want to be there, I wanted to go back," Arthur said.

"We felt like prisoners really, like our safety was taken away and our sanctuary had gone," he said.

Arthur and Bev have been married for 63 years and Bev has been instrumental in assisting Arthur through his recovery journey, encouraging and supporting him to attend Capstone.

"Arthur was a little bit anxious about going, but my feelings were fear for the future because I didn't know how I was going to be able to handle without some help, so I was all for whatever was thrown on the table – we would take up the offer," Bev said.

"It [Capstone] has helped me cos' in a way I was pretty aggressive. I'm so changed now, I can't believe it in myself that I just have settled right down with everything," Arthur said.

Bev said the changes have been so noticeable, both for herself and those around them.

"The art of communication has increased ten-fold plus! Arthur has never been a big communicator, he has been quite passive aggressive as well in his life; using me as the mediator all the time and that's been quite difficult – there is a time in your life when that becomes really hard," she said.

"At Capstone there is no judgement, all the staff are so professional and there is no talk about 'why' you are there, it's a social activity – it's the active part of therapy that works,"

- BEV

"Arthur and I have done more together now than we ever have in 60 years. We think we know about life, but really, we don't know the extensions and branches that go out of our daily lives. We knew nothing about mental health, nothing whatsoever," Bev said.

The Capstone community is one Arthur and Bev have embraced wholeheartedly, with Arthur using his new-found communication skills to have conversations with other participants and Bev bringing along her delicious baked goods to try and encourage younger group members to share their skills.

"We are living in a much calmer environment now – Arthur isn't focused on the little things that irritate him. It's all ceased, the house is so calm and easy to live in now."

Kereti Maniapoto, Recovery Support Worker (Advanced) who works with Arthur as part of the Capstone program said when Arthur was referred to the service, he really struggled to share his feelings.

"You wouldn't recognise the guy he is today – he can talk about his failures, he commits to every group he attends wholeheartedly, and he has grown to be a leader and mentor within the group," he said.

"Arthur is calmer, he knows he is valued within our group – he knows he is valued, and that value sits with him and has moved him forward in this journey with RFQ," Kereti said.

LOGAN & CAROLINE'S STORY

A succession of four hospitalisations in early 2024 and crippling social anxiety had plagued Logan in the past, restricting activities he enjoyed such as the gym – but a referral from a social worker to the Capstone program has assisted Logan on his recovery journey.

Logan is 23 and lives with schizophrenia and has found working with RFQ support staff as part of the Capstone program on the Gold Coast to be extremely rewarding.

Logan said being able to take his time and work at his own pace has been really important to him.

"I call the shots and I get to go along with how I feel it fits best for me and there is no pressure and I get to just chill."

Logan found working on himself to be one of the most challenging parts of the program.

"I feel like Mervin gets me; Mervin's made it easier because he gets where I'm coming from. He's open to any conversations and topics and certain difficulties I might have so he just kind of talks me through it," Logan said.

Looking forward, Logan hopes to get a job in carpentry, buy a car (a V8 is high on the list) and work on building relationships for the future.

Mum Caroline said that since starting the Capstone program she has been impressed by his progress.

"Logan has grown, like, exponentially since he started, particularly with building his confidence," she said.

"He used to get crippling social anxiety; he is nowhere near as paranoid and anxious around people or crowds anymore. He can comfortably go to the gym every day on his own without feeling afraid,"

- CAROLINE

"His body language is different, the way he holds himself and his maturity, it's all really improved. Logan's always been a wise old soul and that's just deepened through being around another beautiful soul like Mervin," she said.

Mervin Romain, Recovery Support Worker (Advanced) said when Logan joined the Capstone program from a community referral, he was very reluctant to participate in the group sessions.

"Logan would stand at the back and wouldn't say anything, and we worked actively on ways in which to make him feel comfortable to join in at his own pace," Mervin said.

Mervin has watched Logan develop his emotional intelligence and build upon awareness, empathy and social skills by going for walks, having tea and talks and working on his social anxiety alongside strategies provided by RFQ support staff.

Caroline said the opportunity to talk, feel safe, participate in group activities and build upon existing skills and learn new ones like fishing, have all boosted Logan's confidence.

"The growth is phenomenal; I have never seen him like this and seen him so well – it's been really profound."



OUR PEOPLE

We support our people through professional development and a commitment to lifelong learning, offering a range of tailored, integrated and program-specific training. Our focus is to create an inclusive culture and focusing on work-life balance to empower our people to thrive. While working together to create a lasting impact for our clients, we also prioritise employee wellbeing - cultivating a tribe of advocates and fostering internal growth.

Our major people initiatives have focused on:

- Further development of our Emerging Leaders program and Thrive Guides who encourage growth by sharing practical tools and leveraging trust they have with their peers and teams, improving overall culture.
- Collaboration with external training providers to customise learning modules specific to our programs. Current training on offer includes Foundation Training for Borderline Personality Disorder, Motivational Interviewing, Suicide Prevention and Intervention (ASIST & CALM), MAYBO – Positive Approaches to Behaviour and Safer De-escalation.
- Investment in Schwartz Rounds, which provides staff with a structured interprofessional forum to discuss difficult social and emotional aspects of providing care in healthcare settings.
- Wellbeing Literacy Program created in partnership with the University of Melbourne's Centre for Wellbeing Science, which empowers staff to leverage tools and knowledge in order to prioritise wellbeing in their own lives and in their work with clients. This program was tailored by our Indigenous Program team to better meet the needs of our First Nation's clients.

- Development of a Citizen Ethnography project, investigating how to use peer and lived experience to better inform the work RFQ does.
- Implementation of the Mindfulness Leadership Coaching for leaders in the NewAccess team which seeks to develop mindfulness confidence and competence in leaders.

Recognising our extended community:

- The role that other community support organisations, mental health services and Primary Health Networks (PHNs) play in collaboratively working with our support staff and clients.
- The extended support systems, and carers of our client's that aid and assist in their journey of recovery.
- Government funding relationships with Queensland Department of Health, Queensland Hospital and Health Services, Queensland Corrective Services, The Australian Department of Health, Australian Department of Social Services, National Disability Insurance Agency, Comcare and Primary Healthcare Networks across Queensland.
- Our research and academic partnerships with Australian and International academic communities to provide leading edge evidence-based recovery practice.

403 NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

30.5% NUMBER OF MEN

12 NUMBER OF FIRST NATIONS (IDENTIFIED ROLES)



69.5% NUMBER OF WOMEN



4 NUMBER OF STUDENT PLACEMENTS



AMANDA'S STORY

Goal setting, accountability, compassion and optimism are all elements of the THRIVE program Amanda uses to elevate her wellbeing and to inspire others around her, both at work and in her personal life.

"When I first read about the THRIVE program, I was so excited and knew this was for me. I am extremely passionate about living life to the fullest and believe no matter where you are in life there is always a way to make change and move forward."

Amanda has been with RFQ for nine years and has worked in the Independent Living Service (ILS) and Transition from Corrections (TFC) programs.

"I love so many things about RFQ's culture. Everyone helps each other out and the opportunities and encouragement from management keeps me motivated to continue learning and getting better at what I do."

Amanda has applied the THRIVE training with some of her clients by encouraging them to notice strengths and write them down each day, as well as documenting three things that went well and why – focusing on empowering clients to make positive change.

In her own life, she said setting goals and making them tangible, as well as holding herself accountable has been a real 'lightbulb' moment.

"I invited my friends and family over for a vision board and dinner night and shared how to prepare. I was surprised how much everyone really looked forward to being part of my project."

Amanda hopes her training with the THRIVE program can inspire compassion and teach people even the tiniest acts of kindness can make a massive difference in someone's day and boost confidence and self-esteem.

Amanda is an Recovery Support Worker (Advanced) based as part of our Wide Bay team.

THRIVE is a training program that uses evidence-based tools to go beyond recognising and responding to mental health challenges to begin the journey to thriving.



NADDY'S STORY

Naddy is a fiercely independent and driven person dedicated to equipping herself with the personal artillery needed to be the best at whatever she puts her heart and soul into.

Having worked in the mental and allied health sector for over 20 years, Naddy is committed to the recovery of others and the wellbeing of those who support them.

Her journey hasn't always been easy and in her mid-20's a series of challenging life events without the necessary support led to Naddy surviving a suicide attempt.

"I fell pregnant, which was a surprise, but then the partner I was engaged to at the time was having an affair and left me. I then lost my job, had lost my relationship and then I lost the baby."

"Within three weeks I felt like I had lost everything."

"I felt overwhelmed and like there wasn't a way forward. I felt like I was being blamed for the relationship breakdown and the loss of the baby and I just didn't have the right support from networks during that time."

"Reflecting now, I was so lucky that I survived that experience as my housemate who wasn't meant to be home, ended up coming home early and got me into hospital."

"I was in a coma for three days and when I woke up the treatment team were concerned I wouldn't have any cognitive ability, but the first thing out of my mouth was 'stupidity personified'."

For many years Naddy felt shame surrounding her experience and it wasn't until she came across Durkheim's theory on suicide, she started to explore her own lived experience and how that could be used to help others.



"A peer on the other side can be very powerful because it can alleviate the shame straight away."

Drawn to the mental health sector, not just through personal experience, but by observations of the collaborative nature of the services, Naddy said all the people in the organisations do it for the right reasons.

"The Way Back Service is an extremely well set up, supported and supervised program to be successful, not only for clients but for staff to stay safe and well. As staff we have to let our guard down and sit in the client's space and make sure they are comfortable and at RFQ we do that very well."

Naddy is a Support Coordinator with The Way Back Support Service based in our Metro North office.



“This creativity is an inspiring reminder of how critical expression through art is for us all collectively as human beings. Seeing a story through the eyes of someone else opens our own minds and hearts to the experiences of others.” -s

EXECUTIVE & LEADERSHIP TEAM



Kingsley Bedwell, Chief Executive Officer

Kingsley is the long serving CEO and a non-voting member of the Board. His contribution in this field has been a passionate life's work to which he has brought the more personal insights as a carer and of the impact of mental illness on families.

Kingsley's career has developed across professional service delivery and public mental health administration and policy reform. He has also contributed at a senior executive level to higher level strategic policy reform and system improvement. He was acknowledged for his achievements by the award of a Centenary Medal "for distinguished services to health".

In his community sector role, Kingsley's independent expertise is regularly sought and he has served on numerous government committees. Kingsley's primary qualification is in social work and his postgraduate studies have been in public administration; public and social policy; administrative law and, human services management.



Alex Couley, Chief Leadership Officer

Registered as a Mental Health Nurse in 1983 in the United Kingdom and then Australia, Alex has delivered and managed services in both clinical and non-clinical settings. He is internationally recognised in coaching and leadership practices across the mental health space and positive psychology. An accomplished author, he has published books and papers on mental practices, coaching, and leadership. Additionally, he has coached leaders from 13 countries, further solidifying his reputation in the field. Alex has completed numerous university-level coaching courses and was the first practicing coach globally to complete the positive psychology coaching program at Ecole Centrale's (Paris). He also served as a consultant to RFQ for several years before joining the team on a permanent basis.



Olive Xing, Chief Performance Officer

BCom CPA MFIN

Olive Xing has been with RFQ for 18 years. Olive managed financial operations for the first 15 years, demonstrating exceptional leadership and expertise. Over the past seven years, Olive has pursued numerous studies in data analytics and IT, further enhancing her skill set. Since 2022, Olive's role has expanded to oversee the new Performance and Analytics Unit, significantly enhancing RFQ's data and business analytics capabilities. Olive's extensive knowledge and experience in multiple business areas have been instrumental in ensuring intelligent use of data for decision-making, accountable reporting and performance monitoring.



Larry Stapleton, Executive Manager Service Development

B Soc.Sc, GradDip Gestalt Psychology, GradDip Management Non-profits, MLdshp (ongoing)

Larry has worked for RFQ for over 31 years in a variety of roles following a distinguished career in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) where he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal. His current position is Executive Manager Service Development where he has lead responsibility for the development of RFQ's tender responses and executive responsibility for RFQ's risk and compliance team.

Larry is married to Trish with four (4) daughters and 10 grandchildren. He often takes part in fund raising cycling events and is a passable classical guitarist.



Louise Davis, Executive Manager Brief Interventions

B Arts (Psych), BSW, MLdshp.

Louise brings over 25 years' experience as a social worker, with more than 15 years in management and leadership roles across public and not-for-profit sectors in Australia and internationally. Her experience spans adult, child and youth mental health, child protection, out-of-home care, domestic and family violence, disability services and alcohol and other drugs. Guided by ethical and evidence-based governance frameworks, Louise is dedicated to helping clients and their families achieve lasting outcomes that enhance their quality of life and empower their communities. She is passionate about fostering an organisational culture that supports individuals, teams and organisations to thrive.



Suzanne Desailly, Executive Manager Service Operations

B Psych/Post Graduate Diploma Clinical Psych

Suzanne has held high level operational and business development roles across the not-for-profit, private and public mental health and suicidal prevention sectors in Australia and the United Kingdom. Suzanne became part of the RFQ team in April 2023 and as part of her Executive Management role, oversees the Brisbane South service delivery and management.



Kenny Mclachlan, Executive Manager People and Engagement

With over 40 years of experience in human resources, Kenny has a wealth of knowledge in the people and engagement field. His career began with more than 20 years of dedicated service in the Royal Navy, followed by two decades of passionate involvement in the not-for-profits sector, contributing to its growth and success. In 2012, he relocated from the United Kingdom to Australia, spending five enriching years in South Australia before making Southeast Queensland his home. Kenny is dedicated to cultivating positive workplace environments and driving organisational excellence.

Corporate Managers

Alex Ren, Senior Financial Accountant

Anna White, Transition Corporate Manager

Jouni Stroja, Information Communication Technologies Manager

Juanita Johnson, Manager Indigenous Peoples Programs

Paul Trapp, Facilities Manager

Praveen Shastry, Senior Executive Manager

Tea Delalic, Manager Communications and Events

Trina Allen, Manager Quality Systems

Service Managers

Deb O'Sullivan, Acting Area Manager -Townsville

Diana Bennet, Area Manager – Gold Coast

Karen Suey, Area Manager – Wide Bay

Laura Lattanzio, Area Manager – Darling Downs

Sue Mahoney, Area Manager – Brisbane North

Tegan Fermor, Area Manager – West Moreton

LYDIA'S STORY

At just 23 years of age, Lydia has achieved more than most do in a lifetime but has also experienced great hardship, which has led her to explore a career in mental health and created a fierce dedication to helping people in her community.

As a young girl her family fled from Sierra Leone due to the persecutions of Christians at the time, leaving behind her dad who sacrificed his own life for their safety and residing in a refugee camp in Guinea.

Her arrival in Australia was met with mixed emotions as she was extremely connected to her dad and was now left to process this loss for her family to escape a war-torn country and live a better life.

It wasn't until many years later at the age of 17 Lydia received a jolting phone call from the hospital about her sister that her eyes were opened to the mental health struggles her family had been experiencing but didn't understand due to little knowledge and awareness.

"I grew up in a family where mental health wasn't a thing, you know. If you were struggling with something, it was because you aren't doing enough or you're not keeping yourself busy. A lot of things I was experiencing, I didn't know there was a name for it, I didn't know about 'anxiety' or 'depression' or a 'panic attack'."

"My sister was going through post-partum depression, and I didn't know how to have conversations surrounding how to help her and support her and this sparked my interest in exploring the mental health field," she said.

Lydia had begun studying biomedical science with the intention of becoming a doctor but found herself drawn to psychology. This led her to commence a double degree and she loved exploring the interconnectedness between behaviour, development and neuroscience.

"You kind of figure out what's going good with the body and then you learn in psychology what happens when the body isn't functioning the way it's supposed to be on that psychological level," she said.

During university Lydia got her first full-time position at 18 years of age, which was initially in disability before moving into an African support worker role. From there, she began working for a not-for-profit that helped individuals from African communities, which stemmed from online debates she was having during COVID19.

"You come to a country, and you want a better life and there's some people who don't agree with that and some who just don't care about that."

"I battled with that a lot during lockdowns. I had debates with people regarding religion and immigrants... that sparked my interest to wanting to help my community," she said.

This role saw her providing support in communities, prisons, detention centers and schools, including school-based events centered around embracing and understanding culture.

"We would run events tailored towards embracing who you are as an African, as an Australian and as an African Australian individual, and about identity and that you don't have to pick, you can be both and it's okay to be both."

Fast forward to 2023 and Lydia had become incredibly burnt out from the cultural load, countless hours of volunteer work and the pressures of receiving further funding, which is what led her to finding her role as a Recovery Support Worker at RFQ and prioritising her own mental health and self-care.

"It's taken a very long time for me to take care of myself... one thing I got from my mum is you're always giving, and you're giving even from an empty cup."

"Now I turn off my phone when I get out of the office and it's not to say I don't care, but it's about wanting to show up as my best self."

The future looks bright for Lydia who sees herself one day moving into more of an advocacy role in the public and mental health sector, but for now she's busy looking after our Hospital to Home clients, managing a wedding business and finishing her Masters in Public Health.

When asked about the best piece of advice she's ever been given, her answer beautifully encompasses her own lived experience and the work she does today.

"When you haven't seen, you cannot truly give, but when your eyes see all that you need to see, that's how you know what needs to be given."



OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Recovered Futures Art Exhibition

As part of Queensland Mental Health Week, RFQ were proud to host the Recovered Futures Art Exhibition in King George Square. Returning for the 33rd year in 2024, 270 works were displayed by 180 artists with lived mental ill health experience.

Recovered Futures is a powerful platform to raise awareness and kick start conversations surrounding mental health, recovery and wellbeing in the community, and for many artists, is an opportunity to show their works in a professional, curated, gallery setting.

Artist Pauly Jay painted live on stage daily and chatted to exhibition attendees, alongside captivating piano recitals, featuring emerging pianists and musicians from the Queensland Music Teachers' Association's Queensland Piano Competition.

Recovered Futures was made possible and proudly sponsored by – Queensland Mental Health Commission, Pure Source Recruitment, Collective Maintenance Services, Amaree Collective, Austbrokers Comsure, CBT Institute, TAA Connect and Brisbane City Council.



“I found it very relatable to the challenges I faced, which makes me a little lighter and reinvokes to bring art in life” - IVAN

“I loved the way mental health well-being is portrayed in most of the paintings. It makes me think about my dark times and how I overcome them. And it made me realise how far I have come.” - CAMILLA

“I just happened to see the exhibition and decided to have a look but I'm really glad I did. Many of the artworks were amazing and really made me think and have a genuine response which is something that I have never particularly experienced before.” - s.




 **180**
ARTISTS

 **MORE THAN 270**
ARTWORKS

 **117**
ARTWORKS SOLD

 **MORE THAN 10,400**
EXHIBITION ATTENDEES

 **MORE THAN 16,000**
VISITORS TO THE ONLINE STORE

 **MORE THAN 85%**
OF PROCEEDS GO BACK DIRECTLY TO THE ARTIST

 **MORE THAN \$72,000**
WORTH OF ARTWORK SALES

MARK'S STORY

When you view Mark Gibson's artworks, themes of hope, resilience, beauty and nature surround you, but life hasn't always been full of peace and tranquility for Mark, who struggled with alcoholism and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to a serious motorcycle accident.

"I had a motorcycle accident when I was 18/19 that stayed with me for a while; I got hit by a car and then was fearful of being around people. I found being in crowds and rooms with people very overwhelming and hard."

"With the PTSD alcohol was my friend, then I went on a journey with yoga and meditation... but when I closed my eyes, it was like a wave rolling, but it was all brown and black."

"I knew I had learning difficulties when I was younger but was gifted with making things with my hands. I had trouble counting, spelling and speech, so when I finally got the diagnosis at 45 years of age with ASD and ADHD I burst into tears – it was a shock."

The diagnosis brought clarity for Mark, who was a long-term resident in the Bundaberg Region and when he made the move to the Gold Coast, new challenges presented themselves, but also new opportunities.

"When you move you sort of go backwards in life, but being part of an art group and making art has really helped with the anxiety. Art has given me something to focus on and put my emotions into colour, it's been a very big help."



Veronica Carreno Tapia, a RFQ Support Worker and art therapist herself, has been working with Mark as part of the NDIS Support Coordination program and said it has been a pleasure to watch him thrive and use art as part of his recovery journey.

"He is so appreciative of myself, making time to go to his art exhibitions. I really encourage him to keep going and have been witnessing the huge impact that art has in his life."

"Even though he has issues with tremors, he has grown so much and his confidence has grown."

Mark's recovery journey has encouraged him to work with a psychologist, regularly attend his Men's Shed and sailing group to work on his socialisation skills and connect through art with Diana at Kookaburra Art Studio, which is an all-abilities art group.

Diana and Mark met as he was preparing for the Recovered Futures Art Exhibition two years ago and said he was very anxious and didn't want to put his work forward for consideration.

It took a year to build his confidence and to believe he could be an exhibiting artist and Recovered Futures ended up being the first large-scale public showing of his work.

"Working toward art exhibitions like Recovered Futures gives a purpose for painting and something to work towards. Mark has talent and does it for the love and from the heart and when he paints from the heart, the canvas does the talking," Diana said.

Mark uses his art as a source of inspiration and a vision for the future he would like to create for himself.

"Now I just keep painting and doing what I'm doing – I can allow the difficulties to come and go without judgement and just be in the moment. Not worry about tomorrow or yesterday, just today, be grateful I got to wake up this morning."

Mark Gibson exhibited two pieces Beach Access and The New Day as part of Recovered Futures 2024, and sold them both within the first two days of opening.

"It's given me hope and inspiration and I'm painting what I'm hoping to manifest in my life through my art."





“I saw visitors provided with wonderful musical performances, artist demonstrations and children’s art activities. The atmosphere was truly one of exuberance, energy and connection.”

– RHONDA CHESMOND, BOARD CHAIR

QUEENSLAND MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

During Queensland Mental Health Week, our RFQ teams were actively engaged in the community, fostering connections and promoting mental health awareness. This annual event shines a spotlight on individual and community wellbeing and we were proud to be a part of it.

In **Cleveland**, our team attended Thrive By the Bay hosted by Bayside Community Health, to promote wellbeing through guest speakers, activities and a free BBQ. Attendees were invited to plant a seed for their wellbeing and make a commitment to personal growth for the year ahead on our mini blossom tree.

On the **Gold Coast**, RFQ participated in ArtBeat, a vibrant festival celebrating the creative strengths of individuals living with mental illness. One of our clients, Jay Ferry performed onstage alongside his Support Coordinator Veronica Carreno, captivating the audience. Kat, a support coordinator with our NDIS team, also facilitated a creative arts activity focused on promoting wellbeing.

In the **Wide Bay** region, a series of art workshops culminated in two exhibitions showcasing works from artists of various mental health services, including RFQ clients. The exhibition featured over 60 artists from Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Gayndah, Eidsvold and Bundaberg. One exhibition was

held at the School of Arts in Bundaberg and the other at Gatakers Artspace in Maryborough. These workshops and exhibitions were proudly sponsored and supported by Queensland Health, Wide Bay Integrated Mental Health Service and Social Shift.

Our **Townsville** team attended a networking event at the Medicare Mental Health Hub, engaging with local service providers to explore referral opportunities and partnerships. They also participated in a Centacare Blue Table event.

In **Toowoomba**, our team attended the Mental Health and Wellbeing Expo, hosted by the Queensland Government and West Moreton Health, alongside over 50 other service providers. The event raised awareness of available services and created valuable connections to better support our clients.

Through these diverse activities, RFQ demonstrated our commitment to strengthening community connections and supporting mental health across Queensland.

RFQ staff also attended the **Ipswich Mental Health and Wellbeing Expo** at Riverlink Shopping Centre with over 50 health providers from the region in attendance raising awareness and connecting to raise awareness for mental health.



NAIDOC WEEK

Elaine Bernard, Recovery Support Worker (Advanced) – Indigenous Identified, actively participated in several NAIDOC events, including the Kambu ball, while Robert Moore attended the NAIDOC celebrations in Laidley. The Ipswich office celebrated the NAIDOC theme Blak, Loud and Proud, by celebrating First Nations culture and highlighting local Aboriginal language through a special office display.

CLIENT COMMUNITY BBQ'S

A long-standing tradition of RFQ is to host BBQ's throughout the year to maintain connections with clients and staff where everyone is respected, valued and welcomed.



SPONSORSHIPS

Murri Carnival

The Arthur Beeston Foundation Murri Carnival 2024 was held from 20 to 28 September, and RFQ were proud to sponsor a women's open team, along with two girls under 14 teams and two girls under 16 teams. Juanita Johnson, RFQ's Manager Indigenous Program, highlighted the event's popularity among players its role in promoting RFQ's achievements and community.

Queensland Wheelchair Rugby League (QLDWRL)

We are proud to sponsor inclusive programming and community engagement through our partnership with QLDWRL, working to remove barriers to participation, foster a sense of belonging and promote physical activity, teamwork and sportsmanship among individuals with mobility impairments. Go the Maroons!



Unsung Heroes

The Carers Foundation Australia's signature annual fundraising event, Unsung Heroes, celebrates and uplifts the often-overlooked family carers who selflessly provide support, comfort and care to others without seeking recognition. In 2024, RFQ was proud to sponsor the event for the first time, with members from our Communications and Events team attending to show their support.

Open Minds Queensland Mental Health Week Awards

Celebrating diversity across various sectors united with a shared commitment to improving mental health, RFQ proudly sponsored the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Award. On Friday, 14 October, Manager, Indigenous Programs Juanita Johnson had the honour of presenting the award. The award was received by Yarns Heal – a statewide suicide prevention program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The program provides culturally safe suicide prevention training, group support and aftercare for families affected by suicide.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Rhonda Chesmond, Board Chair | Governance Committee
BA, LLM

Rhonda is a former partner of a large Australian law firm practicing in the area of commercial and corporate financing. She has over 30 years' experience representing corporate clients and financial institutions in relation to financial transactions, debt restructuring and associated government issues.

Rhonda has also taught university law undergraduate and masters level programs, and holds a Bachelor Degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Queensland and a Masters in Law from the Australian National University.



Ann Mealey, Company Secretary | Chair Governance Committee
B PHty/ G Dip Arts

Ann has a healthcare, clinical excellence and improvement background. Now retired, Ann's work focuses on leading major change programs across healthcare systems to improve service delivery including facilitation of various workshops. Ann has a Bachelor of Physiotherapy and a Graduate Diploma of Arts (Science Communication) from University of Queensland.



Keren Harms, Director | Governance Committee
Dip T (Primary) / B Ed St

Keren has a background in primary teaching and educational publishing. She has a diploma in Teaching (Primary) from Klevin Grove Teachers' College and a Bachelor of Educational Studies from the University of Queensland. Keren ventured into the world of publishing and has worked as a sales consultant for major educational publishers for 30 years, mostly working with secondary teachers to find the best classroom texts for their students.



Tom Meehan, Director
RN, BHlthSc, MPH, MSocSc, PhD

Tom is a Registered Nurse and a Fellow of the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses. He has worked in the mental health field for almost 30 years having devoted the past 15 years to research and evaluation work. He has accumulated over \$3 million in research funding and has published 80 papers and two textbooks. The primary focus of his work (and publications) has been the rehabilitation and recovery of people with severe mental illness.



David Goener, Director | Chair Finance Committee
B Com, GAICD, FFIN

David has a background in financial and professional services. He is a management consultant and partner at Beaton, a provider of research and strategic advice to professional service firms in Australia and New Zealand. David has a Bachelor of Commerce from Griffith University and a Certificate in Financial Markets from Finsia. He is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia.



Maria Watson-Trudgett, Director
BSocSC

Maria is a Koori woman of the Wiradyuri people. She is a First Nations consultant and Aboriginal artist. Maria has a Bachelor of Social Science – majoring in Community Welfare and Human Services, with 30+ years' experience in community and stakeholder engagement. Maria provides subject matter expertise and a First Nations perspective and key insights into the development and implementation of First Nations Strategies and programs, including strategic direction, planning, evaluation and implementation.

Maria has successfully guided national organisations through their cultural capability development, by creating and implementing strategic frameworks, Reconciliation Action Plans, including HR policy review and redevelopment, terminology review of documentation, programs and websites, culturally appropriate content and resources creation, community engagement and service delivery, and all programs and initiatives pertaining to First Nations peoples and communities.

Notably, Maria has won several awards and achievements for her artwork, including exhibiting in Parliament House and galleries throughout Australia. Her artworks are featured on national book covers, RAP documents, NAIDOC merchandise and more. Maria's artworks adorn the walls of organisations and private collectors – both national and international.



Caitlin Gough, Director | Finance Committee
B. Business (Accounting), CA

Caitlin is currently Chief Financial Officer at Kaicon (a building and construction company). She has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) from QUT and is a Chartered Accountant (CA).

Caitlin has over 15 years' experience in Public Practice Accounting, specialising in the Property Services and Health sectors. Her broad range of experience has provided a depth of knowledge to be able to solve problems for clients and help them grow to reach their potential.





QUALITY & SAFETY

Our unwavering commitment to safety and quality ensures that clients receive the highest quality support, while safeguarding everyone, including our internal staff. Strong leadership, along with robust safety, quality and risk management frameworks are fundamental to our ongoing success.

It has been a challenging but highly productive year for the quality team. Following a routine NDIS re-registration audit the Quality team worked very closely with the Learning and Development team to develop and rollout six (6) training modules alongside the finalisation of the Learning and Development (L&D) framework, L&D policies, and procedures and RFQ's Learning Catalogue. Several Human Resources (HR) related issues were also addressed within this period.

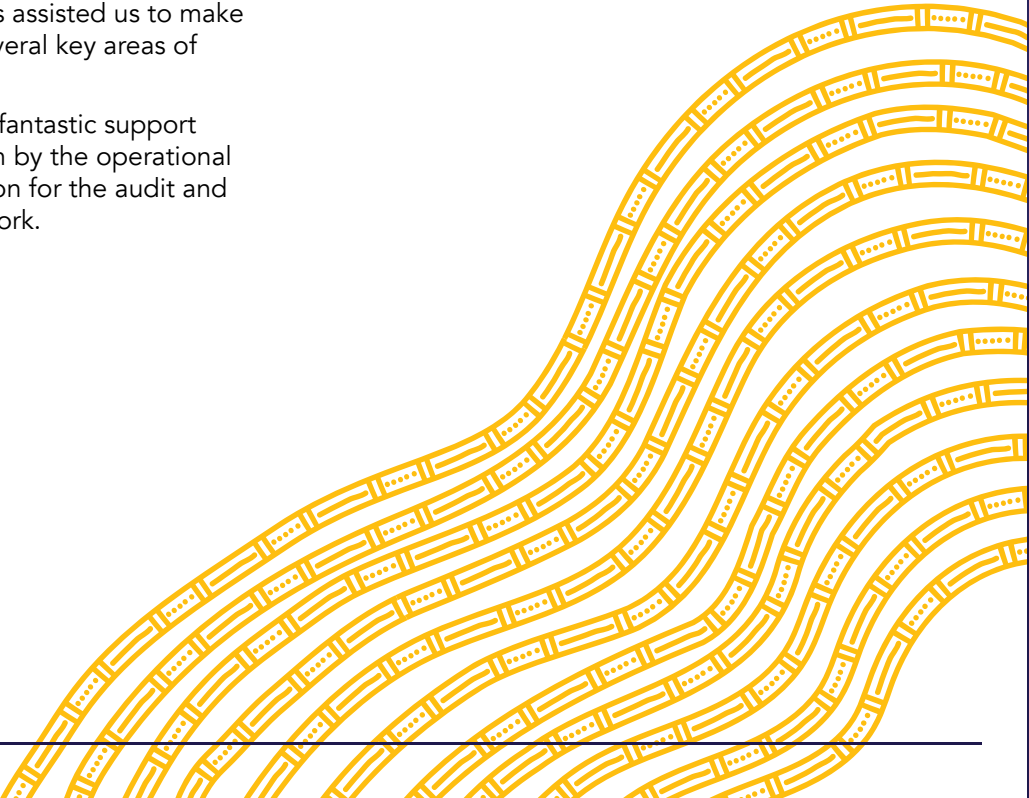
The auditor returned for a follow up review of the NDIS registration and it was gratifying to see the hard work by many members of the team come to fruition. There were two minor non-conformances relating to mealtime management guidelines and support planning and recording procedures. These will be resolved prior to the next NDIS midterm audit scheduled for November 2025.

Overall, the NDIS audit process has had a positive result as far as it has assisted us to make considerable progress in several key areas of the business.

We are also grateful for the fantastic support provided to the quality team by the operational teams both in the preparation for the audit and the subsequent follow-up work.

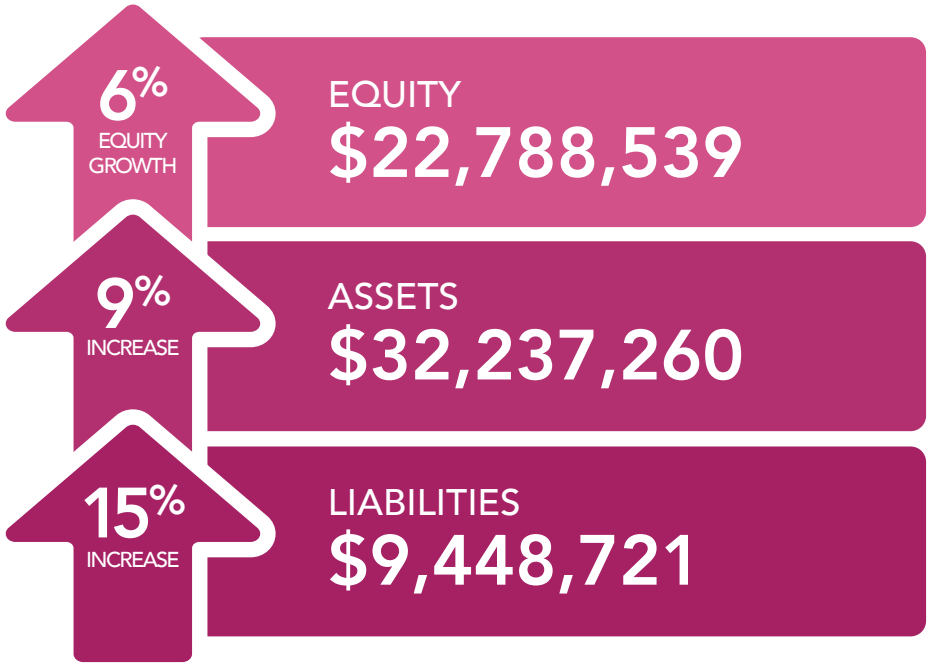
Additional Quality Standards

The quality team is currently undertaking a gap analysis against both the National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Standards (NSQDMHS) and the National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed (NSQMHSCMO) organisations. Work has also recommenced with the IT team on the ISO 27001 standards with the engagement of an external provider to undertake a gap analysis. It is expected that each of these standards may be mandatory requirements for funding contracts in the not-too-distant future.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

RFQ has maintained strong financial performance, successfully maintaining a modest surplus while responsibly managing public funds. This prudent approach has allowed us to invest strategically in our operations, ensuring long-term sustainability and the ability to fulfill our commitments to the community. Our solid financial position enables us to enhance service delivery and support future growth.



OUR SUPPORTERS

Funders

Australian Government Department of Health
Beyond Blue
Brisbane North PHN
Comcare
Country to Coast QLD
Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN
National Disability Insurance Agency
Neami National
Queensland Department of Health

Government Partners

Darling Downs HHS Mental Health Services
Department of Justice and Attorney-General
Gold Coast HHS Mental Health Service
Gold Coast Primary Health Network (Joint Regional Plan – Adult and Older Persons Mental Health Partnership Group)
Metro South HHS Addiction and Mental Health Services
Metro North HHS Mental Health Services
Queensland Corrective Services
Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
Queensland Mental Health Commission
Townsville HHS Mental Health Service
West Moreton HHS Mental Health and Specialised Services
Wide Bay HHS Mental Health Service
WorkCover Queensland

Council Partners

Brisbane City Council
Bundaberg Regional Council
City of Gold Coast
Fraser Coast Regional Council
Ipswich City Council
Logan City Council
Moreton Bay Regional Council
North Burnett Regional Council
Redland City Council
South Burnett Regional Council
Southern Downs Regional Council
Toowoomba Regional Council
Western Downs Regional Council

Community Partners

APM (LAC Fraser Coast)
APM Employment Services
AT Psychology
Blue Knot Foundation
Bridges AODs
Brisbane Blacks Football team
Brisbane Housing Company Limited
Brook RED
Burnie Brae

BYS
Caboolture Neighbourhood Centre
CALM - Education in Suicide
Carers Queensland
Caxton Legal Service
Centacare
Central Queensland Indigenous Development
Churches of Christ Care Housing
Choice Passion Life
Community
Community Housing Limited
Disability Services Queensland
EACH
Encircle
Flourish Australia
Footprints
Galangoor Duwalami Primary Healthcare
Gatakers ArtSpace
Headspace Bundaberg
Headspace Hervey Bay
Headspace Ipswich
Headspace Maryborough
Headspace Nundah
Headspace Redcliffe
Help Enterprises
Indigenous Wellbeing Centre (LAC Bundaberg)
Jacaranda Clubhouse
Jaydon Adams Memorial Foundation
Life Without Barriers
Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Qld Ltd
Lives Lived Well
The MARA Project (SERO4)
Marcus Mission
Mater Education
Max Employment
Maybo
Micah Projects
Migration Agents Registration Authority
Mind Australia
Momentum Mental Health
Murri Gummaz Girls Football Team
Mylestones Employment
National Disability Service
Neami National
New Farm Clinic
OCTEC Employment Service
Open Arms
Open Doors
Open Minds
QShelter
Queensland Alliance for Mental Health
QulHN
Regional Housing Limited
Richmond Fellowship Australia

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Roses in the Ocean
Rural and Remote Mental Health
Safe Space
Salvation Army Crisis Relief
Standby Support After Suicide
Stepping Stone Clubhouse
Step Up Step Down
Stride
St Vincent de Paul Society
Suicide Call Back Service
TASC National
Trauma Assist
Under 1 Roof
UnitingCare Community
Wesley Mission
Women’s Legal Service
World Wellness Group
YAMBI
Young Minds
Youth Space Redcliffe

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United approach
to mental illness

FELLOWSHIP IS BA

RIENNE BROWN

in a family situation or
for individuals.
The other problem is a
lot of the places catering
for people with these pro-
blems are not satisfac-
tory," he said.
"It is a question of qua-
lity of life. Why should
someone on the poverty
line live the way we
wouldn't expect anyone
to live."
Clayfield building is
returned
are rehabi-
lited to in-
dependent
living skills.
"I always
enjoyed in-
teracting
with people in a
positive way
and the day
and the day
spills over
into the
community."
"Each year
because it
together
ting older