



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



A YEAR IN REVIEW

CEO UPDATE

It has been an exciting 2023 for WATCH, as my first year in the CEO role the participants, families, carers, Committee of Management, the leadership, and staff teams have warmly welcomed me, I note that the staff and management team have a high level of care and dedication to the participants. I thank the Committee of Management for their support and guidance in helping me settle into this role. I feel privileged to be working at WATCH.

Some of the highlights for participants this year include the WATCH Council joining the VALID Advocacy Network, and our creative participants entering the Disability Pride Art show.

An organisational highlight includes the Committee of Management holding a strategic planning day in September to commence discussion about the future direction of WATCH's service provision. In the first half of next year, we will be asking participants and families to take part in a questionnaire to gauge the type of services you would like WATCH to provide in the future. The Committee of Management are committed to ensuring quality services and outcomes to the people we support.

It has been a big year for the disability sector with the final recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability releasing its final report in September. There were 222 recommendations made by the report which includes improving laws, policies, and practices to ensure a more inclusive and just society. In early December, the final report of the Independent NDIS Review was released. The review's objectives were to put people with disabilities at the center of the NDIS, restore trust, and ensure the sustainability of the scheme. The Government is due to respond to both the DRC and NDIS Review reports in the first half of 2024. These reports will shape the future of disability supports and the delivery of the NDIS.

In 2024, WATCH will focus on developing its Strategic Plan, preparing for our NDIS Re-Certification, adjusting to the new NDIS pricing changes, and overall continuing to provide quality support, services, and assistance to the participants.

As our hardworking staff are taking a well-earned break away from work, I would like to wish our participants, parents, carers, staff, and our supporters a joyful holiday season and prosperous 2024.

Thank you once again for your support.

Laura Ubavin



IMPORTANT DATES

Last Day of Service	22/12/2023
Springvale Returns	08/01/2024
Mulgrave Returns	11/01/2024
New NDIS Pricing Arrangements begin	01/01/2024
Annual General Meeting	TBC



THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US

WHEELERS HILL ROTARY CLUB

This year WATCH has brought back its 'Cultural Diversity' program thanks to a generous donation of the Wheelers Hill Rotary Club. A big thank you to Judy Hasnat who was instrumental in WATCH receiving this donation.

The Group have ventured to multiple art galleries and explored beautiful parks, a favourite being the Indigenous Gardens at Monash, and the group have enjoyed tasting different cuisines from around the world.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DAY



With the support of Emily Jeffrey from Dulux, WATCH was chosen by the Dulux Group to complete a voluntary community engagement day.

With collaboration from the Service, it was decided that our hallway at Mulgrave would be painted. The fresh coat of paint has breathed new life into our hallway. The Dulux Group's commitment to giving back to the community is most commendable.

MUSIC THERAPY

A special thank you to the Vucic Family for their generous contribution that has subsidised this year's Music sessions.



BUNNINGS BBQ

The Bunnings BBQ at the Springvale Store was a great success. We raised a little of \$1000 which was a great outcome for WATCH!

We were grateful to all the staff and members of the Committee of Management that came and helped on the day. Also thank you to the WATCH Community, we had several participants, families, and staff attend the event and support us by buying some sausages or donating funds towards the day.

It was a lot of fun and we looked good in our WATCH outfits!



A special thank you to the Bunnings Activity Coordinators, Bonnie and Kayla at the Springvale store who assisted WATCH with the preparation for the BBQ.

Bunnings also donated to WATCH a \$500 Gift voucher.



QUALITY OUTCOMES

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The results of the participant satisfaction survey in 2022 were very positive, with our strongest strengths being:

- Communication**
- Staff Support**
- Support Planning**
- Personal Care**
- Being Safe**
- Feedback Management**

The areas the survey results identified for improvement were in our programs, activities, and home care. Although feedback showed satisfaction with the variety of programs offered especially the dance and music sessions, there were suggestions for more community, weekend, and nightlife activities, and programs to learn new skills.

At WATCH we have taken on board your feedback and we have recommenced the after-hours Social Group, introduced a second Music Therapy session each week, and have created a better formatted Participant Communication Book as some of the improvements in 2023. Please continue reading over the page to see some more of what we have achieved this year. We encourage participants to contribute to the next satisfaction survey to help us further improve.

“Fantastic organization! Great ‘client’ support from beginning until now. The team are really informed and go the extra mile at every stage...”

QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Our WATCH Services Brochure has undergone significant work to provide prospective new participants with information about what we offer under the NDIS.

This will be available on our website in the New Year.

OUR NEW SERVICE BROCHURE





SERVICE UPDATES



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

WATCH entered in the Disability Pride Art show, and we won third prize!

The purpose of this event is to celebrate International Day of People with a Disability which is held annually on the 3 December each year. This year's Disability Pride Art Exhibition was sponsored by VALID and was held on the 30 November 2023. Participants from WATCH joined in this community event.

The Art Piece that WATCH entered is made from Silk and participants with the support of staff painted the piece.

The art piece is titled **"Watching Pride Unfold"**.

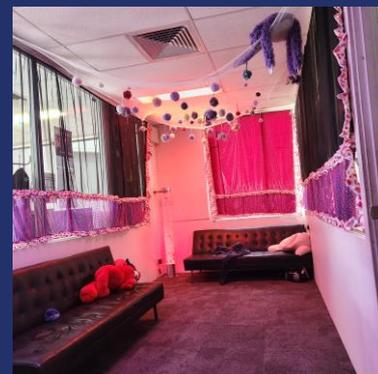
Click on this [video](#) link to see the participants producing the artwork.

SPRINGVALE SUPPORT CENTRE

The Team has been busy revamping a space to enjoy outside with a café style alleyway to sit and eat or just enjoy some sunshine. Participants have been learning to cook meals to share and enjoy this space.

Inside the centre, a loungey sensory space has been created with soft lighting, and music.

Participants have enjoyed using this room.



SOCIAL GROUP

Recently WATCH has been able to reignite the after-hours Social Group.

The participants, using their preferred way to communicate, have said that they have enjoyed the outings, including the friendships between each other, and the chatter about looking forward to the next event.

Support staff have been orchestrating games like Bingo and Charades with the participants to socialise with one another.

The games are somewhat loud however have been a lot of fun with plenty of hysterical laughter.

Support staff will continue to plan and coordinate fun games with participants to assist with further building of the camaraderie in the group.



The events are in the community, with participants ordering and paying for their meals (with little to no support). They all enjoy the chit chat and banter within the group and certainly eating the delicious food.

Social Group will be extended to Saturdays in 2024 and the next event will be in March to see the BABBAA Tribute to Abba. Participants interested in joining this event, please contact jana@watchinc.com.au.



WATCH COUNCIL

The Council has been busy this year revamping some elements within the council focusing on world news and calendar events as well as input from individual personal learning activities.

Members have this year participated in a successful Bullying workshop and spent time researching the Coronation of King Charles III. Our Council members gave amazing thought and reflection to the topic question “If you were crowned King, what would you do?”

Some of the responses were:

“I would fix all the transport”; “I would give money to the poor”; “I would help orphans”; and “I would give money to the hospitals”.

The Council have also worked as a team to design and create Thank you cards for members of the community expressing appreciation and gratitude from all at WATCH.



Representatives of Council along with other participants have joined the Advocacy Group ran by VALID to discuss equality in the community. This is a great opportunity for participants to engage in civic activities contributing to the common good of society and exercising one's rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

Topics covered this Year by the WATCH Council.

Safety & Risk

Communication Aids

AFL Footy Tipping Competition

Anti-Bullying Pledge

Writing Appreciations

World News & Current Events

Volunteering

Social Justice





The INSPIRE Group have continued to further develop their social skills, independent living skills, creative skills, and community connections.

The INSPIRE Group have had a busy year focusing on travel training, advancing from travelling by bus to travelling on trains. The participants are independently using their Myki Card to tap on and off, a skill they learnt while catching the local bus.

The INSPIRE Group have also been learning how to prepare food safely and how to make small purchases independently ordering and paying for their desired items. They have visited the local RSPCA, learning about the animals, and how to keep pets safe.



The INSPIRE Group are taking part in the Victorian Container Deposit Scheme.

Please support them in raising funds for WATCH to enable special projects, programs, equipment, and resources that aim to make a difference to the lives of WATCH participants.

Please collect your eligible containers and donate them onsite at a WATCH Centre.



VICTORIA'S CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME

HELP US RAISE FUNDS BY DONATING YOUR CONTAINERS

Every eligible drink container can earn 10 cents for a good cause!

If you would like to donate to WATCH Disability Services Inc., you can simply make a drop of your empty drink containers at our Mulgrave site (even over the holidays), and we can take them to a return point.

What can be donated for a 10-cent refund?

Most aluminum, glass, plastic, and liquid paperboard (carton) drink containers between 150mL and 3 litres are eligible. This includes plastic soft drink bottles, glass beer bottles, soft drinks and alcohol sold in cans, and small fruit juice cartons.

Visit cdsvic.org.au to find out more about the scheme.





PARTICIPANT UPDATES

Welcome

We warmly welcome our new participants over the last year:

Marsha



Marsha loves relaxing in the sensory room and is always happy for a head and neck massage.

Kenisha

Kenisha loves dancing and is always first on the dance floor in the Music Program.

Nitin



Nitin is an amazing singer and dancer and loves to show off his skills in Music Therapy.

IN LOVING memory

Wayne Miller

It was with sadness and a heavy heart that in July we shared the unfortunate news of the sudden passing of our dear friend and long-standing participant, Wayne Miller.

Wayne started at WATCH in March of 1988 and for 35 years he was an integral part of our WATCH community, and his absence has been deeply felt by all who knew him. We will forever cherish Wayne's spirit, humour, and resilience. He faced many challenges brought on by his disability with unwavering strength and smile.

Wayne's ability to overcome obstacles served as an inspiration to us all, reminding us to embrace life with gratitude and courage. We will forever hold Wayne in our heart and remember him fondly for the great person he was.

May Wayne rest in peace.



IN LOVING memory

Blair Anderson

It was with much sorrow that we heard of the sudden passing of Blair Anderson during the year.

Blair started at WATCH only this year, but it feels like Blair had been a part of WATCH for a lot longer. Blair had such a joy about him, he loved to greet everyone with a big hello and a huge smile that could instantly brighten your day.

Blair shined in everything he did, but he made his real mark in Music Therapy. Blair was always first to put his hand up to sing on the microphone, getting everybody up and dancing. One of his favourites was 'I wanna dance with somebody' by Whitney Houston. Blair also loved to play the Tambourine and had some great dance moves. We miss seeing his cheerful face every day and hearing his beautiful manners.

May Blair rest in peace.





EMPLOYEE UPDATES

WELCOME

We warmly welcome our new employees over the last year:

Finance and Administration

Nirmala Auty

Max Vukic

Manager Quality & Safeguarding

Meghan Lyons

Service Manager

Jana Majdalani

Support Workers

Anita John

Anita Su

Chloe Muxworthy

David Williams

Jade Torr

Margareta Broscoi

Sithal Singh

Vicki Fredrick

Yan Gao

SIGNIFICANT YEARS OF SERVICE

5 years

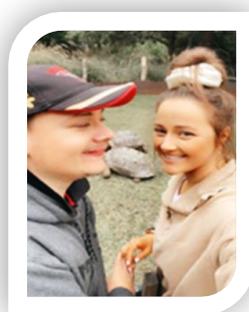
CONGRATULATIONS

Nahla Abaker	Dec 2022
Gladys Fernandes	Apr 2023
Sojan Thomas	Aug 2023
Genevieve Barboza	Sep 2023
Ramesh Reghunathan	Oct 2023

SIGNIFICANT YEARS OF SERVICE



CONGRATULATIONS



Claire Whelan who reached her 10 years of service in November 2022. It has been amazing to see her grow, from her first year starting in the WATCH Drama production to being promoted to Team Leader.



Shinoy Stephen who reached his 10 years of service in July this year. He is a dedicated and loyal Support Worker at WATCH who has a love for Cricket and his family.

ON EXTENDED LEAVE

Nahla Abaker has taken Parental Leave, and we congratulate her on the safe arrival of her baby girl in October.

Claire Whelan has taken Maternity Leave, and we wish her all the best with the expectant arrival of her first baby.

FAREWELL

We wish all our 2023 departed employees all the best for their future endeavours.

Finance Manager

Wendy Blight

Coordinator

Sharni Bryant

Support Workers

Goutam Das

Joanne Stewart

John Brannan

Linda Hammond

Sandra Vongsykeo

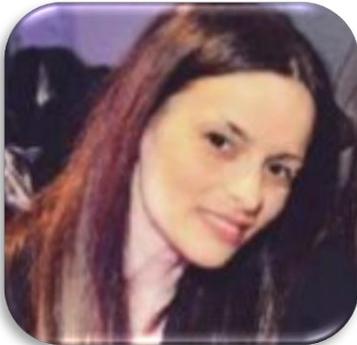
Serena Emary

Suzie Milovanovic



EMPLOYEE FEATURE

ZUHRA KESKIC



We welcomed Zuhra on the 14 July 2022 in the position of Support Worker. On the 11 December 2023 she has been appointed Acting Team Leader.

Zuhra has worked previously in Aged and Health Care settings and has her Certificate IV in Disability and Ageing Support. She has also previously managed her own hairdressing business in Melbourne.

Zuhra is passionate about making a difference and having a positive impact on the lives of others.

Here is a bit about her from an interview with the WATCH Council.

First Job: Babysitter

Hobbies & Interests: Ballet

Rec & Leisure pursuits: Spending time with family and going on long nature walks.

What Animal would you like to be? Lioness

Favourite Food: Hot Chips

Favourite Drink: Diet Coke

Favourite Dessert: Chocolate and Apple Pie

Favourite Movie or Performance: God Father Trilogy & Musicals

Favourite Holiday Destination: Europe

Favourite thing about WATCH: Spending time with all the participants and support staff.

MEGHAN LYONS



We welcomed Meghan on the 3 October 2023 in the new position of Manager Quality & Safeguarding.

Meghan has a bachelor's degree in applied science in Intellectual Disability with Honours, an Advanced Diploma in Business Management, and a Distinction Certificate specifically in Positive Behaviour Support.

For 25 years Meghan has worked across several disability organisations in the East and North Metro Regions, and regional Victoria in varying roles including managing Supported Independent Living Services (SIL) in Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), Flexible Support Services, Practice Leadership, System Administration, Support Work, and Projects under the Victorian Disability Act 2006 regarding residential rights and restrictive practices.

Meghan has participated in several audits under DFFH and NDIS frameworks. She has previously prepared policies, procedures, and operational instructions and been involved in NDIS commission enquiries.

Meghan is a logical, practical, and creative person who always has a can-do attitude with safety in mind.

She comes with generalist knowledge of Human Resource practices and processes related to performance, training, recruitment, return to work, and investigations.

Outside of work Meghan enjoys her family, horse riding, and playing number games like Sudoku.



EMPLOYEE FEATURE

JANA MAJDALANI



We welcomed Jana on 31 July 2023 in the role of Service Manager at our Springvale site.

Jana has 23 years of experience in the disability sector wearing various hats including Disability Support Worker, Team Leader in what was known as Group Homes, Human Rights Advocate, Business Development Manager, Support Coordination, Service Coordination, Service Management, Trainer in Certificate IV Disability and Advanced Diploma in Community Sector Management and refreshers in Manual Handling.

Jana holds qualifications in Disability, Management and Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management and has a background in hospitality, having been an owner operator of a café in Sydney.

Jana is very focused on WATCH delivering best practice under the NDIS Quality Framework Standards and in growing WATCH's Services. She will be developing more after-hours social events and networking further with the local community.

Jana likes to laugh and promote a professional but lighthearted workplace culture.

NIRMALA AUTY



We welcomed Nirmala on the 11 May 2023 in the new position of Finance & Administration Assistant.

Nirmala has over 30 years' experience in accounting and payroll practices along with work in intake, quality, and compliance.

Nirmala has a Master of Business Administration, Diploma in Financial Counselling & Community Support, and a Certificate in Auditing Skills for Management Systems. She is currently studying a Graduate Diploma of Psychology.

Nirmala's broad experience across corporate, sporting, administration, and the disability sector have enabled her to develop skills to handle complex problems and recommend solutions to improve outcomes.

Nirmala is flexible, confident, and self-motivated. She collaborates with team members and adapts well to changes in software applications.

Outside of work Nirmala enjoys spending time with family, gardening, hiking, and crosswords.



Merry Christmas and a have happy and safe New Year.