



## Flexi Queensland supporting Queensland in the 2017 State of Origin Series

Back row: Geoffrey and Mark

Front row: Belinda and Teneill

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# CANEFIELD ASHES 2017



**Gavan batting at his first Canefield Ashes match**

On Saturday 22nd April, Flexi Queensland participated in the Invitational Match at the Canefield Ashes in Home Hill, for the third year in a row.

The Service Users practised their cricket skills every second Monday during Monday Madness leading up to the Canefield Ashes.

This year we had more Service Users participate than ever. Five new Service Users joined the Flexi Queensland team, with a total of 11 Service Users playing on



**Mark taking a big swing at the ball**

the day.

The Flexi Queensland team dominated the opposition team, coming out on top with the most runs.

The opposition team were every surprised with how well the Service Users played and said they are getting better and harder to beat every year.

There were some highlights for the day with Paul Roberts and his big slashing drives (cricket shot). Pete Pask calling the bowler a Wally. Andrew Dunn and Gavan McCoy running hard between wickets and the great sportsmanship showed by both teams.

A big thankyou to Doug McCubben for inviting Flexi Queensland to play at the Canefield Ashes, and to the opposition team, who were happy to help out and were very friendly.

Go Flexi!



**Kerrie assisting Nicole with a big hit**

# HI-FIVE AWARDS



Flexi Queensland has started a peer-to-peer acknowledgement—Hi-Five Award.

This is to recognise the great work and achievements by all Flexi Team Members.

Any staff can nominate any other member of the Flexi staff and then a winner is chosen at random.

The April winner is:

## **Andrew Bailey**

who was nominated for: *“Being competent when using Hoist/Sling, considerate and communicating respectfully when supporting SU.”*

The May winner is:

## **Michaela Mye**

who was nominated for: *“Taking on a late notice overnight shift.”*

The June winner is:

## **Brett Matthews**

who was nominated for: *“Helping out with SU at Football and showing how much he cares, putting the SU first. Instead of watching the Football, he prioritised the situation to help SU and his LF while his SU was supported watching the game.”*

The July winner is:

## **Lachlin Smith**

who was nominated for: *“His enthusiasm while supporting SU and getting SU out in the yard playing footy.”*

The August winner is:

## **Vasiliki Karagkiozis**

who was nominated for: *“Going the extra mile when supporting Service Users to ensure their day to day living runs smoothly.”*



Sue presenting Andrew his certificate



Joy presenting Michaela her certificate



Sue presenting Brett his voucher



Sue handing Lachlin his voucher



Steph presenting Vasi her voucher

# IMPORTANT EVENT INFO

## *Companion Cards*



If you have a disability and a lifelong need for 'attendant care support' in order to participate in community activities and attend venues, the Companion Card may help you with the costs of getting out and about with the support of a companion.

Companion Card holders receive a second 'companion' ticket at no charge at participating venues and on participating public transport. The 'companion' ticket is also exempt from booking fees.

A companion is any person who accompanies a cardholder and provides attendant care support. The cardholder's chosen companion may be a paid or unpaid assistant or carer, family member, friend or partner.

The Companion Card is not income or asset tested. To be eligible for the card, you must:

- Be a lawful Australian resident, living in Queensland
- Have a disability
- Because of the impact of the disability, be unable to participate at most community venues or activities without attendant care support
- Need, or be likely to need, lifelong attendant care support.

For more information please visit: [www.qld.gov.au/disability/out-and-about/companion-card/](http://www.qld.gov.au/disability/out-and-about/companion-card/)

Or pick up a Companion Card Application from the Flexi Queensland Office today.

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# SPEECH THERAPY

## ***Flexi Queensland's Speech Therapy Service – An Update***

Late in May I attended the AGOSCI (Australian Group Of Severe Communication Impairment) national conference in Melbourne. Aside from the cool weather and city navigation I was not accustomed to, my time in Melbourne for the three day conference was nothing short of spectacular.

Each day an enormous cohort of teachers, medical staff, allied health staff, parents, carers, and people with a disability gathered to hear the numerous presentations on offer at the luxurious Grand Hyatt Hotel. I was proud to wear my name tag with 'Flexi Queensland' penned as my place of work. I was lucky enough to attend the workshops with a peer of mine from university at James Cook who works in the Cairns special education department, who offered me a great insight into her practice in education.

We heard from leading researchers from different countries around the world, as well as parents and people who use AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) themselves, who have walked the often long and difficult journey to find their 'voice' and place in society. Their testimonies were at times tear jerking, however their message would always echo through the audience. I was lucky enough to finally meet my Speech Pathology Australia mentor Darren, whom I speak with over the phone every month to receive guidance in clinical areas. Darren resides in the Gold Coast and works in his private practice for people with significantly complex communication needs, so meeting him at AGOSCI was quite a treat.

We heard the latest research and were (happily) bombarded with the message that we, as therapists, have the power, influence and position to advocate for those who have communication impairments. Too often these people are marginalised in society and barriers placed in their path to leading full and enriching lives. Some particularly interesting presentations were heard by Fiona Goven and Jane Farrell.

Fiona is a lifelong AAC user who does not use speech to communicate. Fiona works in the justice system in NSW as she completed her law degree at university many years ago. She talked about the difficulties she faced growing up, that being non verbal made people assume she was incapable of thinking for herself, and one day communicating effectively. Now, Fiona is a pragmatic speaker who advocates for AAC users to be "part of the action" in their own lives.

Jane Farrell is a renowned speech pathologist and special educator who has a strong belief that all people deserve the right to learn literacy. Jane's most known quotes say it all:

"No child is too 'anything' to learn to read and write. Literacy is shown to have the greatest impact on post school life."

"Don't say kids are being taught "life skills" instead of literacy, literacy IS a life skill, one of the most important!"

I look forward to sharing these ideas with everyone at Flexi Queensland.

I have come away from the conference rejuvenated by the experience and newfound knowledge. I have many plans I hope to implement to improve the therapy service offered at Flexi. I look forward to working with our existing families and those that are new to Flexi to ensure each child and adult can reach their full communicative and literacy potential.

*Many Thanks,*

***Stephanie Gianni***

**Speech Pathologist & NDIS Support**



**Stephanie at the AGOSCI conference  
in Melbourne**

# UPDATE FROM THE CEO

As I write for this newsletter everyone is preparing for the Sports Ability Games with training every Monday for both fitness and the Team's War Cry. A big thank you to the **Rotary Club of Ayr** for their generous donation towards the purchase of this years shirts for the Service Users. I wish all the team members to play their best and remember enjoy your time in Bowen, meeting old and new friends. I look forward to seeing the photos of what is one of the major events in the Flexi Calendar and some of which have been included in this newsletter for everyone to enjoy.

It is with sadness that many of the Flexi community gathered at the Uniting Church on 30 June, 2017 to the celebrate the amazing life of Gail Edwards. Gail has been a part of Flexi since the very beginning and each of us who had the honour to work with Gail, treasure very special memories of Gail living her wonderful life. Gail is sadly missed by us, and our thoughts have been with Merle and John during this very difficult time.

## **NDIS Claiming**

It is hard to believe that we are approaching the twelve month mark for the roll out of NDIS in the Burdekin. I am pleased to advise that our internal processes have been refined to enable the implementation of regular claiming of NDIS funding for our Service Users. Many of you have now been provided with statements of supports for your signature to enable Flexi Queensland to draw down against your NDIS funds. We have been focusing on getting claims up to date for Service Users whose NDIS Plans are due for a 12 month review. For those who we have not yet been provided this information, I can assure you it is on its way, hopefully in the next few weeks.

## **NDIS 12 Month Scheduled Review Meetings**

At this time many people have been approached to undertake a scheduled 12 month review of their NDIS Plan as their first plan is coming close to reaching the end date. Flexi has sat in on a few of these review meetings to date and are more than happy to sit in with those Service Users/families who would like our involvement. Please contact the Office and speak with myself or Joy. For many people these scheduled review meetings will be

held by Feros Care, this organisation has been appointed as an NDIA partner, providing Local Area Coordination services as well as meeting with NDIS Participants and their families to carry out information gathering on first plan outcomes and future needs for year two.

## **Queensland Government Tax Subsidy Scheme**

The Tax Subsidy Scheme was suspended for people with a disability in Queensland as they transitioned across to NDIS. However, following a review by the Queensland Government it has been reinstated for people who receive NDIS funding. Those people who were on the scheme prior to their transition will receive their reinstated membership card in the mail. If you use taxis to get about in the community you can apply to see if you are eligible for the Tax Subsidy Scheme by completing your section of the form, with a section completed by your treating doctor, and providing two passport photographs. Call into the Office if you need assistance with your application.

## **New Flexi Service – Psychology**

Sally O'Brien, Clinical Psychologist, commenced this new service on Tuesday, 8 August at Flexi's Therapy & Activity Centre. Many Service Users are now accessing this service with their NDIS funding. Sally provides appointments for Service Users one-on-one and works with them to help them understand their emotions and how they feel about changes that occur in their life. Sally helps with learning life skills to cope with daily living as well as any life changes. If this is a Flexi service you feel may help you, please contact the Office to be put on the wait list to see Sally.

## **Human Service Quality Standards Accreditation Audit 21-23 June 2017**

Carolina Williams from IHCA, our third party auditors, worked with the Flexi team for three days to complete our maintenance audit, and at the end of this time Flexi Queensland continues to hold its accreditation under the Human Service Quality Standards. I would like to give a big thank you to all those involved - Board of Directors, Centre Team, Lifestyle Facilitators and Service Users and their families. Carolina's report from the audit

# CEO UPDATE CONTINUED.

advised of the continuing hard work by all staff in the successful transition to NDIS. Those Service Users and families who spoke with Carolina expressed high satisfaction with Flexi services stating they have been well supported during NDIS transition with many receiving access to new services and opportunities under this new scheme. The Board and Centre Team will be working over the next 12 months to implement the audit recommendations made for Flexi, as part of our continuous improvement process to deliver high quality services to our Service Users and families in these changing times.

## Strategic Planning for the future

For those of you who may not be aware, I celebrated my fourth year with Flexi Queensland in July and I cannot believe how quickly it has passed. I feel honoured to hold my role in such a great organisation and I am constantly overwhelmed by support from Service Users, families and staff. My regular catch ups with Service Users, families and staff are the driving force for constantly improving the way Flexi does business, ensuring we all work together to make a

positive difference in the lives of the people at Flexi. I look forward to continuing my work with Flexi for many years ahead and as part of this process the Board and myself will engage an independent facilitator to assist with developing Flexi Queensland's Strategic Plan for the next five years. This process will start late 2017 and will involve the opportunity for Services Users, families and staff to provide input and feedback as we look to what the future can offer.

If you have any questions or queries about the supports Flexi Queensland delivers, I encourage you to contact myself or one of the Centre Team so that you can receive assistance as soon as possible.



# EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## September

Thursday 28th September

JR—Water Park & Lego Exhibition

## October

Tuesday 10th October

Midnight Oil

## November

Saturday 18th November

Cowboy Iron—PBR

Expression of Interest flyers can  
be collected from the Flexi  
Office or the Therapy & Activity  
Centre

# 2017 SPORTS ABILITY GAMES

On Wednesday, 13 September, Flexi Queensland participated in the 2017 Sports Ability Games in Bowen, which was held at the Bowen Cyclone Shelter.

Flexi Queensland were able to register two teams this year, Burdekin Barras and Burdekin Bridge, with a total of 20 Service Users participating.

Burdekin Barras and Burdekin Bridge were up against two other teams—Bowen Flexi Care and Cannonvale Endeavour Adventurers.

Once arriving in Bowen the Burdekin prepared for their march past and war cry. All teams were ready to represent their organisations and had made banners, posters and cheer streamers.

We then played four games of T-Ball. Many of the Service Users were hitting hard and running fast to achieve quick points with a home run.

Next was bocce, where we played eight games against fellow competitors. Both Burdekin teams excelled in bocce, bowling their balls closest to the jack.

The Burdekin Barras and Burdekin Bridge then competed in relays and tunnel ball.

After a big day of playing games it was time to find out the results. The winners were Burdekin Bridge, with Bowen Flexi Care, Cannonvale Endeavour Adventurers and Burdekin Barras being runners up.

Some of the Service Users won personal awards. Andrew Dunn won Team Player for Burdekin Barras, Lizzie Smith won Team Player for Burdekin Bridge, Catherine won the Inspiration award and

Mark Poli won the energiser award.

Everyone played competitively throughout the day and showed great sportsmanship.

All staff ensured the event ran smoothly.

Thank you to the **Rotary Club of Ayr Inc** for contributing towards the team shirts this year, thanks to Bruce Reid for coming along and being our First Aid Officer for the day and thank you to Bowen Flexi Care for hosting the games this year.

It was a great day for all who attended!

The Service Users are very proud to hold the Sports Ability Games Shield for the next year, as we haven't won it back since 2011.

We are currently taking an order for the Burdekin team photo. The photo will be \$1. If you would like a team photo please contact the Office on 4783 5866.



**Catherine receiving the Shield from Whitsunday Mayor Andrew Wilcox**



# DONATIONS



Flexi Queensland would like to thank the **Rotary Club of Ayr Inc** for contributing towards the Burdekin team shirts for the 2017 Sports Ability Games. The Service Users love to wear their team shirts and are proud to promote the **Rotary Club of Ayr Inc**.



Michelle and Peter modelling their team shirts



Sue and Teneill receiving the cheque from Hayley Laidlow



## FLEXI QUEENSLAND ID CARDS



Flexi Queensland are creating Flexi ID Cards for Service Users who are interested in holding a card.

The ID Cards can be used for identification, with Flexi's contact details.

If you would like a card, please come into the office to have your photo taken.

# ON THE GROUND



## Puzzle Perfect

Karen is very proud of some puzzles she has completed and framed—looks great Karen.



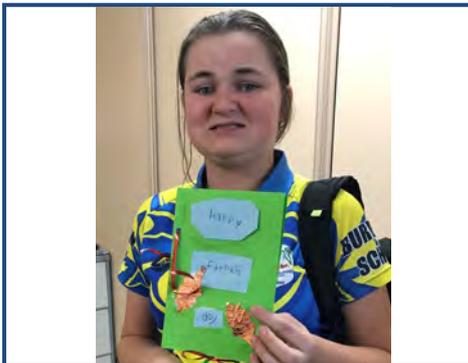
## Story Time

Molly has taken on the role to read to everyone at Story Time at the Ayr Library.



## On the Green

Andrew and Johnny have been hitting the golf greens on Friday mornings.



## Arts & Crafts

Ashleigh created a Father's Day card during a craft session at the Therapy & Activity Centre.



## Music Fun

Zaira enjoys playing the keyboard at the Therapy & Activity Centre.



## Sausage Sizzle

Gerard was a great help cooking on the barbeque for everyone when Bowen Flexi Care came to visit.

## Connect with Flexi!



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Flexi\_QLD

## Flexi Team 2017

Change is a constant state here at Flexi Queensland so we have a new member to welcome to the Team:

Lifestyle Facilitator:

Rhonda Pyott

Welcome to the Flexi Team!

