



SUFY protects and defends the human rights of vulnerable people with disability through individual advocacy to address injustices and to make a positive and sustainable difference to their lives.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016/2017

**Speaking Up For You Inc.**

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## SUFY REMEMBERS

SUFY remembers many people who have been part of our journey during the last thirty years. We acknowledge and appreciate the contributions and insights individuals have made to our SUFY work.

Over the past year, five people have died and we remember them -

George Kena,  
David Pyle,  
Mrs Margaret Johnston,  
Peggy Johnston and  
Linda Rebgetz.

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“Thank you for all you have done for me to advocate for me, and to support me in being granted funds to help with moving forward with my mental health and life skills. Thank you for all of the phone calls you made on behalf of me and with me. The time you put into the letters and emails you wrote lobbying for funds.

Thank you for putting safeguards into place for me and making sure of the right inclusions. For having the patience to deal with me when I doubted things were going to come through, and being worried and unwell. I really, really appreciate all the effort and time you have put into everything for me.  
Wynnum

”

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# ABOUT US

## OUR MISSION

“Speaking Up For You Inc. (SUFY) protects and defends the human rights of vulnerable people with disability through individual advocacy to address injustices and make a positive and sustainable difference to their lives.”

## OUR PRINCIPLES

**Human Rights:** SUFY will promote, protect and defend the lives and the human rights of each person with disability whom we support in the advocacy relationship.

**Social Justice:** SUFY will operate in ways that support the achievement of rights, equity, access, participation and equality in our advocacy work with each person.

**Inclusion in Community Life:** SUFY will operate in ways that value and support the inclusion of people with disability in the life of their diverse communities.



## OUR INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

SUFY provides a combination of individual advocacy and self – advocacy that is consultative and collaborative with each individual and with families / guardians where appropriate. Self-advocacy underpins the essence of our work, as we enable individuals to gain confidence, understand information and then act on their own behalf. We stand beside and with vulnerable people with disability so that they can feel confident that their voice is heard. Our advocacy work with them is often long term, creating positive, real and sustainable differences to each person’s well-being and lifestyle over time. This work is informed by the principles and elements of social advocacy.

## WHERE WE WORK

In the greater Brisbane and Moreton Bay areas including Redlands and parts of Ipswich.

## THE PEOPLE WE WORK WITH

Vulnerable people with disability, aged 16-65 years who are at risk with:

- Fundamental needs not met (adequate food and clothing, housing, health and well-being, safety and freedom from harm, having someone who cares)
- Least able to represent or defend their own interests
- Diverse mix of people who differ in age, disability, culture, living arrangements, relationships and complexity of life situations.

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND STAFF

There were seven management committee members elected at the AGM in 2015/2016 to oversee the work of SUFY for this financial year

<b>Management Committee</b>		<b>Staff</b>
President	Terry Fisher	Coordinator/advocacy worker
Vice President	Bianca Bailey	Dianne Toohey (full time)
Secretary	David Haxton,	NDIS External Appeal/Advocacy worker
Treasurer	Noel Pyle	Benita Bierzynski (full time)
Committee	Madonna Nicoll	Advocacy worker
	Margaret Bailey	Neal Lakshman (full time)
	Willie Prince	Kathy Kendell (full time)
		Advocacy resource worker/Bookkeeper
		Mary Kenny (18.5/wk)
		Bookkeeper/Supervisor
		Lucia Forman (8 hrs/wk)



# OUR WORK



We've done it! I got the following email this evening. No need to write to the Minister of Housing. I am happy with these outcomes, very pleased. I dare say if I'd advocated on my own the results would have been very different. Thanks for your help. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Carseldine



## NATIONAL DISABILITY ADVOCACY PROGRAM

SUFY is accredited under the National Disability Service Standards. Our focus:

- 1** To provide individual advocacy on behalf of vulnerable people with disability whose fundamental needs are not met and/or whose human rights are being denied.  
To assist some people to advocate on behalf of a vulnerable person with disability;  
Restrictive practices are repealed and the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability is implemented.
- 2** Independent social advocacy is embedded in the local community and responsive to people with disability in their community.
- 3** Vulnerable people are supported with independent advocacy throughout the NDIS processes  
Includes people who will not be considered under the NDIS
- 4** SUFY is a principled, effective, accountable and sustainable social advocacy organisation.

## NDIS EXTERNAL APPEALS

The NDIS has not yet rolled out in the Brisbane Metropolitan area, however, the NDIS External Appeals Worker has contacted more than 8,000 people and distributed information to people with disability, families, community networks, hospitals, and political representatives across the south east Queensland area. The information, education and training has been very warmly received.

Two people with disability who live in the North Ipswich area have received support to negotiate the appeals process and achieved a successful outcome.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

SUFY is developing expertise and coverage with a revamped website; [www.sufy.org.au](http://www.sufy.org.au) and this project is using Facebook, YouTube and Instagram to reach people with disability, families and allies more effectively.



“

It has been extensive/intensive few weeks to scrutinize that agreement. You were perfect, taking over from me when we hit a brick wall. And you were so calm but authoritative. I greatly appreciate the enormous time and reading you put into this. You are a great advocate and great teamwork today.

Sinnamon Park

”

## INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

SUFY provided individual advocacy to 136 individuals over the past year. 136 individuals were carried over from the previous year and SUFY commenced advocating for 22 new individuals this year.

Advocates completed advocacy for 15 individuals and their files were closed, 7 additional individuals are not actively receiving advocacy but SUFY maintains a watching brief to ensure ongoing safeguards are in place. The majority of the 136 individuals SUFY advocated for had several issues for which they required advocacy comprising more than 250 issues.

Some individuals require long-term advocacy and a commitment over a number of years.

SUFY has managed to fully or partially resolve many of these issues, but many individuals have ongoing issues which require advocacy.

SUFY provided advocacy support to 54 family members to assist with strategies and letter writing, negotiating with the Department and service providers on behalf of their family member.

SUFY's individual advocacy work over the last year. From 1 July 2016 until 30 June 2017, SUFY undertook advocacy for 136 people about a number of different issues which included:

- Restrictive Practices
- Abuse/neglect
- Accommodation
- Discrimination or rights
- Equipment
- Financial matters
- Health
- Independent living support
- Legal issues
- Recreational, social or family issues
- Service gaps, access, policy, reduction in service or complaints
- Vulnerability/isolation
- Forced co-tenancy
- Lack of recognition, fulfilment or protection of human rights
- Impact of block funding and institutionalised practices
- Impact for people who are involved with the Disability Services Forensic Unit

# 136

PEOPLE RECEIVED  
ADVOCACY FROM SUFY

# 54

FAMILY MEMBERS WERE  
SUPPORTED BY SUFY

## PRESENTATIONS AND TRAINING

SUFY staff have been involved in

- Human Rights Forum (5 staff)
- CAGQ forum (5 staff)
- QDN Assessible and Affordable Housing x three staff
- Webinar on NDIS 1st Plan (3 staff)
- NDIS Appeals Forum in Sydney (3 staff)
- Pathways/Teambuilding, staff appraisal and performance management
- Forum on Restrictive Practices
- Present at conference about Self Advocacy (Madonna was a member on the self-advocacy panel)

## NETWORKING AND ALLIES

- Met with QAI and provided case studies about people who are under Restrictive Practices for their submission in response to the review of Forensic Act.
- Participated in a conference about the NDIS and CALD communities access to the NDIS
- Participated in a roundtable to discuss the United Nations Human Rights and NDIS organise by QAI
- Participated in a discussion on the Supported decision making organised by CRU

## MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES

- Met with Department regarding review of the Forensic Act
- Attended meeting about Domestic family violence of people with disability and provided written submission in response to recommendation 10 in the "Not Now, Not Ever report"
- Gave input into the Forensic Disability Draft Legislation
- Met with the Public Guardian and the Public Advocate about issues regarding hostels and group homes

## SUFY'S RESPONSES AND PROPOSALS

During the past year, SUFY has directed a particular focus on issues that impact on the individual's Human Rights and enjoyment of an ordinary life.

*Senate inquiry into Abuse and neglect 21-7-2016*

*National Disability Insurance scheme (regarding Cost) 7-7-2017*

*Review of the Forensic Act*

*Review of the National Disability Advocacy program June 2016*

"To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity." Nelson Mandela

## REPORTING TO FUNDING BODIES

SUFY completed the following:

1

### Department of Social Services - Families, Housing, Community Services

- Annual Australian Government Disability Services Census;
- Australian Government Disability Program Information Collection service outlet form in relation to our Funding Agreement Schedule;
- Six monthly performance reports
- Self-Assessment and accreditation under the NDAP standards

2

### Disability Services Queensland

- Quarterly CSTDA National Minimum Data Sets;
- Director's Certification Certificates
- Annual Service Performance Report;
- Annual Financial Report

“

The great work and skill In Helping so many greatly disadvantaged people, my son is a perfect example of the sort of outcomes that have been achieved by your Selfless courage's Staff.

Bribie Island

”





# JOINT REPORT FROM MANAGER & CHAIRPERSON

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## OPPORTUNITIES

SUFY saw some exciting projects develop over the year, while maintaining a strong, principled individual advocacy response to over 136 people.

We have continued to deliver high quality advocacy to people with a disability who live in the Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Redlands and parts of Ipswich regions. Our advocacy focused on people living in boarding houses, people subjected to restrictive practices, homelessness and the housing crisis, abuse in group homes, people detained in locked facilities for years and young people living in nursing homes.

SUFY has focused on building the capacity of people with a disability to participate in decisions that impact on their lives. SUFY does this by ensuring individuals, with appropriate assistance have an opportunity to attend meetings, communicate choices and to exercise control over the type and intensity of services and support they receive.

SUFY acknowledges the valuable support from allies within the Combined Advocacy Groups Queensland especially QAI and AMPARO based in Brisbane. We thank CRU and QDN for their efforts and support for people with disability throughout the year.

SUFY received an offer of funding through the NDIS Appeals Program. The objective of this program is to ensure that all people with a disability and other affected persons have: Access to a support person, for applications seeking review of NDIA decisions: and Access to legal services, in circumstances where a case raised complex or novel issues.

We also received a slight increase in our Commonwealth National Disability Advocacy (NDAP) funding which was extended until June 2019. The Queensland State Government has granted an extension in our State funding support until June 2019. Whilst this has provided more certainty for our planning, we are aware that with the coming of the NDIS to Queensland, the State Government is planning to hand over their funding for advocacy to the NDIS. This will deny an important source of funding for some of the most vulnerable people in our State, who will not be eligible for support under the NDIS, and who will require well resourced, strong and vigorous advocacy to ensure their human rights for adequate housing, health and well being are met.

## RESTRUCTURE

The extension of funding until 2019 has led to a restructure of SUFY, improving the way we utilise our resources and the way in which staff are employed. For the first time since 2011 the advocates and Manager are employed full time and there was an increase in Administration and Accounts hours. The Moreton Bay Regional Advocacy worker position was changed and all advocates now work fulltime across the greater Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Redlands and part of Ipswich areas.

To accommodate these changes SUFY refurbished the office. The refurbishment has provided private spaces for individuals and advocates to meet and has made better use of space so that all of our advocates can work from the Brisbane office.

## DATA BASE

New funding requirements mean that we need to adjust and upgrade our database and record keeping. SUFY has made a funding submission to Gaming Community Benefits Fund to upgrade our data base. Improving our data base while expensive will improve our reporting and statistical data retrieval so we can easily support submissions and requests for funding for advocacy in our area and across Queensland.





## SOCIAL MEDIA

SUFY's online presence took more of a priority for the organisation in the past year. In February we launched our modernised website which is the foundation to SUFY's online platforms. Our Facebook Page and YouTube Channel, both set up in the last 12 months, are still in their infancy but have already demonstrated their benefit to the organisation. In the past 12 months by using all of SUFY's online platforms we have been able to engage more extensively with our members and the wider community and build our network of supporters. Having a stronger online presence have given us new and exciting opportunities to inform, promote and educate the wider community on the advocacy work SUFY does and the rights of vulnerable people with a disability



"I wish to thank your organisation for the outstanding service we received to secure funding for our son. Today we got the call which lifted a lot of weight of my shoulders from Disability Services Qld. I believe without SUFY, we would not have achieved these results as we had been trying for a while.

Sandstone Point



## ONGOING CHALLENGES FOR SUFY

SUFY is pleased to see that the NDIS continues to be fully funded and there is a renewed commitment to see it delivered on time. However a key challenge going forward will be to ensure people with a disability remain central to the scheme and that there is still a strong independent advocacy program to ensure all people with a disability have a voice.

At a time when the future of state funded advocacy and the National Disability Advocacy Program is unclear and when the State is withdrawing from services, SUFY will need to maintain a focus on some of the most vulnerable people with a disability; people with intellectual, cognitive and psychosocial disabilities whose voice is rarely heard and who may not qualify under the NDIS. It is these people who will have difficulty accessing services and who will end up living in boarding houses and hostels, have contact with the criminal justice system and are likely to be homeless.

Over the year SUFY has met with The Minister for Disability Services, the Honourable Coralee O'Rourke MP and Federal and State MP's to discuss the continued need for state funded advocacy to ensure people with a disability have access to appropriate housing, transport, education, justice and health services.

## FINALLY WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

The individual donors and supporters of SUFY for their generosity and commitment to the organisation. Our particular thanks go to the individuals who shared their stories and made their time and images available for our publications and Alan Skiffington for his camera and video work with our social media project. We also thank Cynthia and Jack Tarry at Snap Printing at Milton, Pauline Heaney at Lettuce Create, Grill'd Local Matters at West End and Mrs Margaret Johnston and her two daughters Joanne and Peggy (deceased) for the generous bequest. The bequest of furnishings, white goods and furniture was used to provide much needed items for individuals who had just received public housing.

As the Chairperson I wish to acknowledge the committee, Bianca Bailey, Dave Haxton, Noel Pyle, Madonna Nicoll, Margaret Bailey and Willie Prince for their commitment, wisdom and support over the year. I acknowledge the work of our Manager Dianne Toohey and I know that Dianne joins me in thanking the staff, Benita Bierzynski, Neal Lakshman, Kathy Kendell, Mary Kenny and Lucia Forman for their diligence in providing strong independent advocacy for vulnerable people in our region.

Terry Fisher (Chairperson)

Dianne Toohey (Manager)



# CALL FOR ACTION

## ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN GROUP HOMES

“

Whilst John was sitting at the dining table, Jack walked up to him and leaned over quite closely to him. Jack clasped John's head with both hands, leaned in very closely, head butted him twice in very quick succession. It was loud enough for me to hear both loud thumps from where I was standing in the kitchen.

A passage from the Service User Report Form

”

The quote above is one of many entries that a support worker has made to record the abuse that happens to Jack on a regular basis. Jack is a person with a disability who lives in a group home. Jack has been subjected to physical assault, emotional abuse and what could only be described as torture for over 8 months.

Maybe if the recommendation in 2015 to have a Royal Commission into the abuse and neglect of people with a disability had been supported John would not have had to endure 8 month of abuse.

SUFY along with other advocacy organisations and more than 100 prominent academics is calling for a Royal Commission into the abuse and neglect of people with a disability.

A senate inquiry which SUFY participated in recommended a Royal Commission into the disability sector 18 months ago. The opposition leader Bill Shorten and the Greens Senator Rachel Siewert support the Royal Commission. Unfortunately Social Services Minister Christian Porter has reported that another inquiry was unnecessary as he knows what the problems have been. Mr Porter believes the overall reforms of the NDIS will result in an improvement of the system as there will be one single framework and one single commission where you go if something is not done properly.

SUFY does not believe that the NDIS Safety and Quality commission will address the issue as their role will be to investigate complaints arising since the Commission was established. People who do not qualify for the NDIS will not be able to access the complaints system and it will not address the abuse and neglect that has happened in the past.

Institutional living arrangements such as group homes, nursing homes, locked facilities and boarding houses facilitate environments where abuse and neglect can occur. In environments such as these where there is increased isolation and segregation, individuals have little or no privacy, choice or autonomy and where their landlord is also their service provider, it increases the likelihood of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation occurring.

It appears that the NDIS will do little to address the social and economic pressures that compel people with a disability to live together in congregate living arrangements. In fact in some States a clear plan for when group home resident's transition to the NDIS has been developed to ensure that the house hold stays together.

The Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) is also calling for a Royal Commission into the treatment of people living with a disability in taxpayer-funded group homes and has stated that

*“The federal Disability Watchdog brought in as part of the NDIS will fail to address all people with disabilities who may face abuse, exploitation and violence in care. More is needed and a Royal commission must be initiated to truly understand the depth of these issues and for these stories to be heard.”*

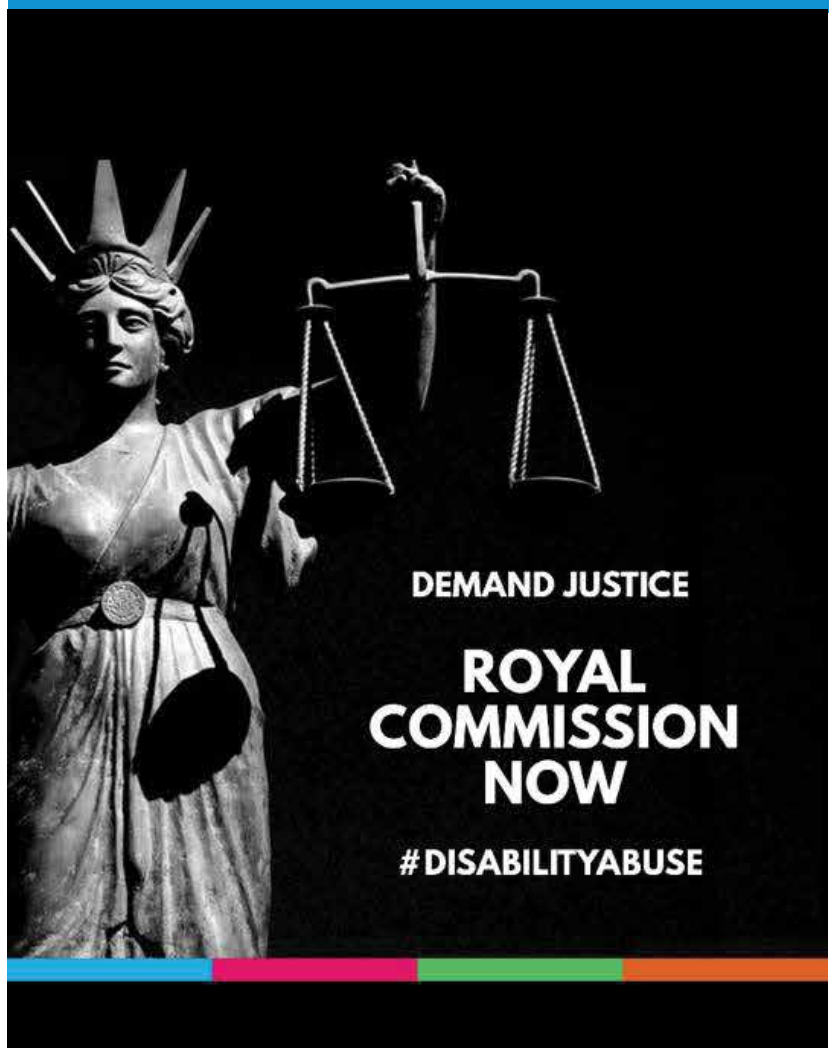


SUFY recently met with the Honourable Coralee O'Rourke MP Minister for Disability Services to express our concern about the ongoing abuse in both government and non-government group homes. At the meeting we were informed that Queensland's Human Services Quality Standards stipulated there is a policy requirement for funded disability service providers to report critical incidents to the relevant departments providing the funding for investigation and response. However it is the service provider who is responsible for identifying and reporting incidents and deciding how the response is to be managed. This internal reporting along with the moderating of crimes of assault and violence and calling them critical incidents has done nothing to address the lack of legal protections and justice that is extended to other citizens, where similar occurrences would be called assault and would be dealt with in the criminal justice system.

Despite overwhelming evidence that people with disability living in residential or institutional settings are subjected to ill treatment and violence governments have failed to act. This inaction has legitimised a culture that accepts the cruel, degrading and inhumane treatment of people with a disability as acceptable.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Support the call for the National Inquiry and Royal Commission into Abuse in Group Homes and Residential settings.  
[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Community\\_Affairs/Violence\\_abuse\\_neglect](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Violence_abuse_neglect)
- Contact your local member to raise this very important issue and demand that an inquiry begin without delay.



## CALL FOR ACTION ON THE USE OF RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

Restrictive Practices include restraint (chemical, mechanical, social or physical and seclusion. People with disability who have intellectual disability or psychosocial disability and who have “challenging behaviours” or “behaviours of concern” may be subjected to restrictive practices in a variety of contexts including supported accommodation and group homes, residential aged care facilities, hospitals, schools, mental health facilities and prisons including youth detention centres.

A statement from Jim a 50 year old man with an intellectual disability, epilepsy, and heart disease. *“At the nursing home I am locked in and when I ask to go out they do not open the door. The staff only let certain people out otherwise you can only go out with a nurse. I would like to live somewhere where I could go to the shop and buy a paper or a coffee.”*

Jim was not placed in a locked aged care facility to manage his challenging behaviours. Jim is like 7.000 other young Australians forced to live in nursing homes because they are unable to find suitable accommodation that meets their needs. It just happened that the nursing home that was selected for Jim was locked.

Despite the fact that restrictive practices in the disability or mental health sector in Queensland are regulated under the Disability Services Act 2006. There are still concerns that the use of Restrictive practices infringe on a person’s human rights. Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) protects the right of persons with disability to have equal protection before the law. Articles 14, 15 and 16 provide the right to liberty and security of person, freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse.

According to the Office of the Public Advocate the use of restrictive practices in a nursing home is of concern as the law governing these practices is unclear or non-existent The Australian Law Commission has recognised that the application of some restrictive practices can constitute elder abuse, deprive people of their basic legal and human rights and be classified as assault, false imprisonment and/or other civil and criminal acts.

In March 2014, Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers endorsed the National Framework for reducing and eliminating the use of Restrictive Practices in the disability service sector. The development of a national approach to the regulation of restrictive practices will result in the development of high level guiding principles and implementation of core strategies to reduce the use of restrictive practices in the disability service system. However it will not change service systems or the environments that are the main contributing factors to “challenging behaviours” Issues such as forced co-tenancy, stigma, abuse and neglect, isolation and discrimination need to be addressed rather than looking at strategies that focus on changing the person

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Support the call for a Human Rights Act in Queensland [www.humanrights4qld.com.au/announcements/dont-let-our-human-rights-act-slip-away](http://www.humanrights4qld.com.au/announcements/dont-let-our-human-rights-act-slip-away)
- Write a letter to the Queensland Attorney General requesting a Human Rights Act in Queensland



“

Thank you so much for your assistance and support over this year. Your advice, moral support, letter writing and determination has been crucial in obtaining the support our son needs to lead an independent live. This achievement is not just immediate but will continue to reverberate throughout my son’s life.

Morayfield

”



## CALL FOR ACTION TO ENSURE NOBODY IS LEFT BEHIND

The eligibility rules for the NDIS identify who is included in the scheme and who is excluded.

Jill does not relate to having a disability but says she went to special school and has been in contact with the criminal justice system. She is having difficulty maintaining her tenancy with Qld Housing. Jill does not receive any formal services.

Jill will most likely be excluded from the NDIS because the focus of the NDIS rules suggests a strong diagnostic framework to establish the existence and degree of impairment, whether the impairment is permanent and how the impairment results in substantial reduced functional capacity to undertake a range of activities.

It will be up to Jill to prove her eligibility by getting a doctor to access her intellect and report on how this affects her functional capacity. Jill does not have the ability to understand what is required administratively to prove her eligibility. But she has experienced the stigma of being labelled intellectually disabled and does not wish to be identified as having an intellectual disability.

It is envisaged that other disadvantaged groups including people with disability from CALD backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will have difficulties accessing the NDIS. The disability service system has not effectively served the needs of these population groups. This is particularly the case for people with intellectual disability from CALD backgrounds due to a range of cultural barriers including distrust when engaging with government administrative process and stigmatisation within their ethnic communities.

The NDIS Act aims to increase the rights, decision making and control of people with a disability. However there is a risk that people with intellectual disability who also have a range of disadvantage including low economic status, poor education attainment, coming from culturally diverse background and having contact with the criminal justice system will be excluded from the scheme.

If individuals are not able to access the NDIS they will be expected to self-advocate as there will be no state funded advocacy to assist them to exercise their rights to support and social and economic participation.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Join the Campaign #AdvocacyMatters
- Have your photo taken with the #AdvocacyMatters sign and send it to SUFY via Facebook or email it to benita@sufy.org.au
- Send a letter to the Queensland Disability Services Minister, the Honourable Coralee O'Rourke supporting strong independent advocacy for vulnerable people who will not have the resources to speak up for themselves and have their voices heard.
- Go to SUFY's website [www.sufy.org.au](http://www.sufy.org.au) for links to letters.



“

“We were getting nowhere with the NDIA, until we got Disability Advocacy and then things changed.

We are happy with our plan now. We have the support that we should be getting.”

NSW

”



# #AdvocacyMatters

# TIPS TO GET READY FOR THE NDIS TRANSITION

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a new way of providing people with a disability with the support they need to live an ordinary life.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) implements the NDIS and makes decisions about

- If you will get support through the NDIS
- How much support you will get
- What kind of support you will get

With the rollout commencing in Brisbane June 2018 and Moreton Bay January 2019 SUFY has been working with the individuals they advocate for to get ready for the transition. Here are some tips:



## REMAIN INFORMED

Keep up to date as the NDIS evolves. Accurate information ensures you are better prepared and can make informed decisions.

Follow SUFY's Facebook Page or join a Facebook Discussion Group. Sign up to the NDIS e-newsletter or check out the NDIS weekly Q&A.



## KNOW THE LANGUAGE

The NDIS is a new system and it has its own language. What are the commonly used NDIS words and phrases and what do they mean?

Knowing this will assist you when trying to navigate the NDIS system. SUFY has a Go To Glossary of terms on their website.



## BE PREPARED

Be prepared for your conversations with the NDIA. Each conversation you have with them is important and the information obtained could be used to determine your funding level.

Know what you want to talk about and have supporting documents. Decide how you want to manage your funding before your planning meeting.



## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

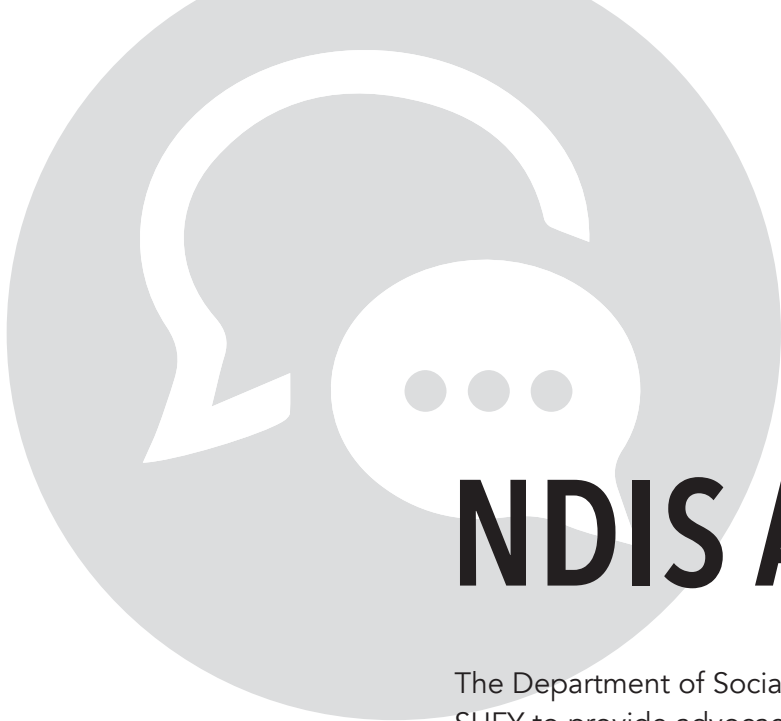
You have the right to a face to face planning meeting in a location that works best for you.

You can have an advocate or someone else at the planning meeting to support you.

If your circumstances change you can ask for an earlier review of your plan.

If you are unhappy with a decision the NDIA has made you can request a review.





# NDIS APPEALS

The Department of Social Services has provided funding to SUFY to provide advocacy, support, information and referral to people with disabilities and their families for NDIS Appeals.



Upon receiving my son's NDIS plan in June, I found that there was no transport allowance included and I wasn't sure if the funding for core supports was adequate. I contacted the NDIS Appeals worker at SUFY who helped me go through the plan and identify the supports my son needed and what category each one could be funded from.

Once it was established that I only needed to apply for a review to include a transport allowance, the Appeals worker supported me the whole way from locating the review application form to the final submission and everything that was required in between.

I found her assistance in helping me navigate the whole process to be invaluable.



## WHAT CAN I DO IF I FEEL A DECISION MADE BY THE NDIA IS WRONG?

Any person that is directly affected by a decision of the NDIA can submit an application for an Internal Review of a decision. There is a list of reviewable decisions in the NDIS legislation. Decisions such as being accepted as a participant of the NDIS or the level of support deemed reasonable and necessary are reviewable.

## HOW DOES THE INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS WORK?

A request for an internal review of a decision must be made within three months of receiving notice of the decision from the NDIA. The internal review is undertaken by the NDIA. The NDIA member who works on the internal review will not have been involved in the original decision. This person will decide whether to confirm, vary or set aside and replace the original decision.

- 1 Original decision made by the NDIA
- 2 Internal Reviews
- 3 NDIS Appeals

## WHAT IS THE NDIS APPEALS PROCESS?

This process allows individuals to appeal an internal review decision. It is done through the Administrative and Appeals Tribunal (AAT). An application can be made to the AAT within 28 days of being notified of the Internal Review decision.

## HOW CAN SUFY HELP?

SUFY's NDIS Appeals Officer can provide a range of supports and help a person understand their rights. Supports can include assisting the applicant to understand their NDIA plan, navigate the appeals process, assist with preparation of required documents, attend AAT conferences and hearings with applicant or supporting applicant to put their own cases before the AAT. This support is free and independent.

# NDIS APPEALS – SUFY'S FOCUS

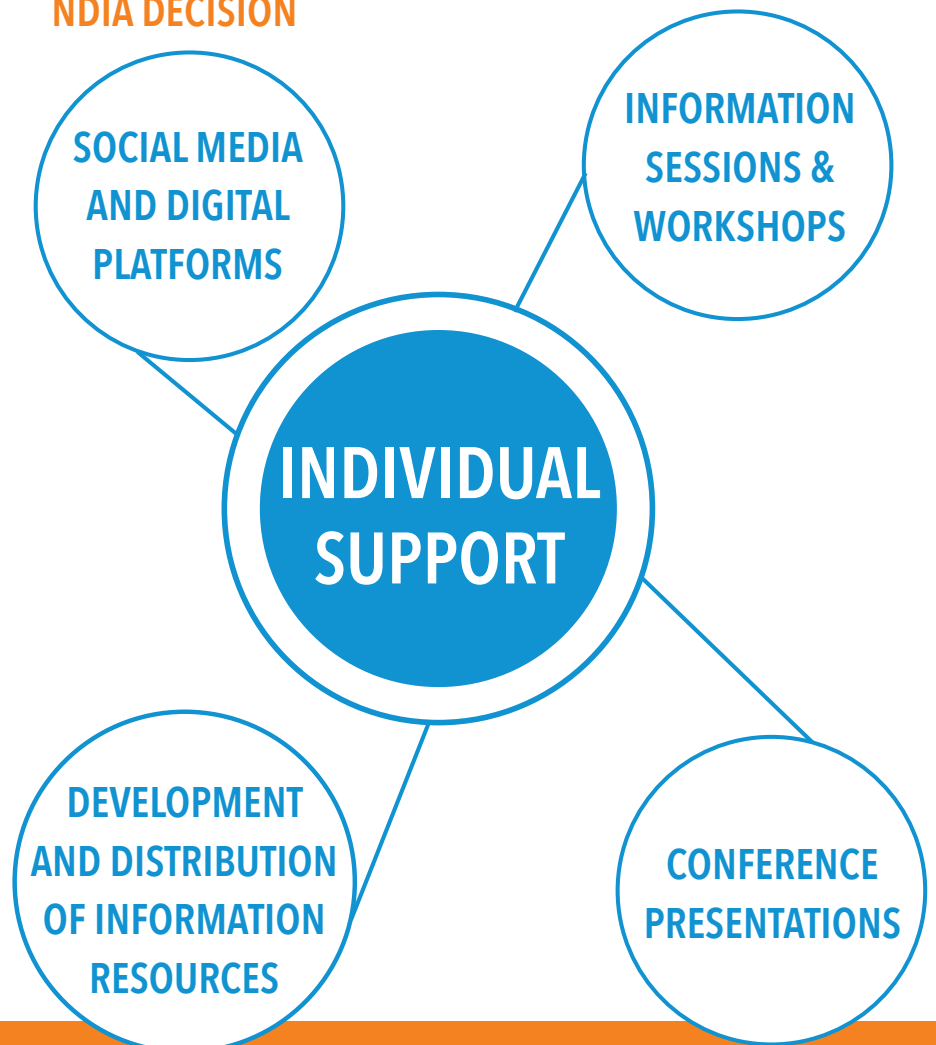
SUFY has and will continue to use different formats to ensure people are aware of their right to appeal a NDIA decision that directly impacts upon them which they feel is wrong and that there is support available to do this.

The NDIS Appeals process is an important process as it helps ensure NDIA decisions are fair and robust. Cases brought to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) influence how the NDIS is implemented and operationalised. The review process ensures the NDIA decisions are correct and preferable.

With the NDIS not yet rolled out in the Brisbane and Moreton Bay Regions the primary focus of SUFY's work has been education and awareness.

SUFY has and will continue to use different formats to ensure people are aware of their right to appeal a NDIA decision that directly impacts upon them which they feel is wrong and that there is support available to do this.

## SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM SUFY TO APPEAL A NDIA DECISION



Want to know more about the NDIS Appeals process and what your rights are? Would you like to access some of SUFY's resources or have the NDIS Appeals worker hold an information session or workshop? **Contact us.**

# NDIS & THE ROLE OF ADVOCACY

Independent individual advocacy has an important role in ensuring choice and control, the aims of the NDIA, is realised for all individuals with a disability.

People with disabilities throughout the NDIS consultation were very clear that there would be an ongoing need for independent advocacy to ensure people were well positioned to maximise the opportunities the NDIS presents.

Advocates can assist people to navigate through the complex choices and decision making that would come through the NDIS system.

Strong independent advocacy is important to all people with disabilities who experience or are vulnerable to discrimination, neglect, abuse and exploitation and whose human rights are commonly ignored.

**SUFY**  
SPEAKING UP FOR YOU



## YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to have an advocate support you in anything related to the NDIS. You have a right to choose your advocate. The NDIA is required to recognise your right to be supported by an advocate.

### THE NDIS ACT ACKNOWLEDGES AND RESPECTS THE IMPORTANT ROLE ADVOCACY HAS.

The NDIS Act 2013 states:

(13) The role of advocacy in representing the interests of people with disability is to be acknowledged and respected, recognising that advocacy supports people with disabilities by:

- Promoting their independence and social and economic participation
- Promoting choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports
- Maximising independent lifestyles of people with disability and their full inclusion in the mainstream community

### HOW AN INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST YOU

Some examples of how an independent advocate may be able to assist you are:

- Prior to and throughout the NDIS eligibility and assessment process
- Through the pre-planning process
- Help you to identify what supports are considered reasonable and necessary
- To understand the support and services options that are available to you and to exercise choice and control in relation to support and services options
- Support you to make informed decisions
- Support you through the Internal Review and NDIS Appeals Process
- To assist you to address issues, conflict or a complaint with a service provider



# TREASURER'S REPORT

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## FINANCIAL YEAR 1ST JULY, 2016 TO 30TH JUNE, 2017

All aspects of the financial control of SUFY are conducted in accordance with legislation covering financial governance of incorporated associations and SUFY's policies.

I am able to report that all SUFY's monetary obligations are met as and when required. SUFY's financial obligations to staff for annual leave, sick leave, long service leave and redundancy are covered with sufficient secured funds available to meet these costs.

The Audited Financial Statements for 2016/2017 financial year show an operating surplus.

SUFY's financial position remains viable and the organisation will be able to continue operations until the end of the current funding round. Staff were employed for a four-day working week due to government funding being insufficient to cover full time salaries at the current award. However, in May, with more certainty in both Commonwealth and State funding grants, three of our staff, the Manager and two advocates resumed full time work and we were able to employ a full time NDIS External Appeals Worker.

SUFY maintains a standard of excellence with very limited funding. With all the issues of uncertainty with government funding, the staff of SUFY are to be commended for the advocacy support they provide to persons with disability in our community. My congratulations to all SUFY staff for a job well done.

I recommend that the Audited Financial Statements for the year 1st July, 2016 to 30th June, 2017 be accepted by the Annual General Meeting of Speaking Up For You Inc.

Noel Pyle  
TREASURER

# FINANCIAL REPORT

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**This financial report covers Speaking Up For You Incorporated. as an individual entity. The financial report is presented in the Australian currency.**

**Principal place of business is:  
Speaking Up For You Inc (SUFY)  
The Precinct  
Unit F2 1st Floor  
12 Browning Street  
West End, QLD 4101**

## INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>Income</b>			
Grant funding	2	504,397.29	416,698.56
Interest received		7,547.09	9,739.33
Donations		326.90	627.15
Membership fees		270.00	240.00
Other income		5,402.10	10,744.55
<b>Total income</b>		<b>517,943.38</b>	438,049.59
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration and overhead expenses		(75,501.01)	(76,590.27)
Depreciation		(11,467.47)	(9,459.47)
Employee expenses		(372,344.27)	(361,069.43)
Finance costs		(388.79)	(345.95)
Individual advocacy		(7,456.75)	(7,510.75)
Travel expenses		(8,009.27)	(8,810.86)
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>(475,167.56)</b>	(463,786.73)
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		<b>42,775.82</b>	(25,737.14)



# BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2017

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	<b>359,546.44</b>	271,027.62
Trade and other receivables		<b>3,855.54</b>	1,144.43
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>363,401.98</b>	272,172.05
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Plant and equipment	4	<b>38,320.20</b>	34,424.04
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>38,320.20</b>	34,424.04
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>401,722.18</b>	306,596.09
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	5	<b>58,936.98</b>	16,321.64
<b>Provisions</b>	6	<b>144,623.01</b>	134,888.08
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>203,559.99</b>	151,209.72
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>203,559.99</b>	151,209.72
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>198,162.19</b>	155,386.37
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained earnings		<b>198,162.19</b>	155,386.51
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>198,162.19</b>	155,386.51

## CASHFLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Grants received	600,684.80	458,368.90
Other receipts	5,729.00	11,372.37
Payments to suppliers and employees	(509,689.65)	(474,588.12)
Interest received	7,547.09	9,739.33
Borrowing costs	(388.79)	(345.95)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>103,882.45</b>	<b>4,546.53</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(15,363.63)	(11,381.82)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	-	-
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(15,363.63)</b>	<b>(11,381.82)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>	<b>88,518.82</b>	<b>(6,835.29)</b>
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	271,027.62	277,862.91
<b>Cash at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>359,546.44</b>	<b>271,027.62</b>

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

## NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of Speaking Up For You Inc.

The Board of Management has determined that the association is not a reporting entity, except for the purpose of reporting to the grant funding bodies. The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors

AASB 1048 Interpretation of Standards

No other Australian Accounting Standards or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on accrual basis and is based on historic costs. Amounts have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report:

### (a) Income tax

The association is exempt from income tax in accordance with the provisions of Section 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 accordingly no liability is recognised.

### (b) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense. Receivables and payables in the Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

### (c) Revenue

As is common for organisations of this size and type, it is not practicable for the Association to maintain an effective system of internal control over income until their initial entry into the accounting records. Accordingly, income recorded in the financial report, with the exception of grants, is limited to the amounts banked and recorded in the bank accounts of the association.

Donations are recognised as revenue when received unless they are designed for a specific purpose, where they are carried forward as a liability on the balance sheet until they satisfy the specific purpose.

Grants are recorded as a liability upon the receipt until the grant is expended in accordance with the grant agreement.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

### (d) Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

#### *Depreciation*

Depreciation on plant and equipment is calculated on a straight-line basis to write off the net cost of each item of plant and equipment over their expected useful lives.

Depreciation on motor vehicles is calculated on a diminishing value basis to write off the net cost of each item of plant and equipment over their expected useful lives.

### (e) Employee entitlements

Provision is made for the organisation's liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements expected to be settled within one year together with entitlements arising from wages and salaries and annual leave which will be settled after one year, have been measured at their nominal amount. Other employee entitlements payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those entitlements.

### (f) Mortgages, charges and securities

There are no mortgages, charges or securities held over the assets of the Association.

### (g) Economic dependency and going concern

These financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis as the Management Committee states that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will continue to operate as a going concern. The Board of Management acknowledges that the Association is dependent upon to following to continue operating as a going concern:

The Association sources a significant portion of its revenue from Commonwealth Government grant funding. At the date of this financial report, the Association has funding agreements with the Commonwealth Department of Social Services in place through to 30 June 2018. The Management Committee is confident that funding will be extended past that date.

The Management Committee acknowledges that, should grant funding be removed or reduced, it would need to take appropriate steps to source alternate funding or reduce operating costs, including wages, so as to satisfy the going concern doctrine.

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>NOTE 2: GRANT FUNDING</b>		
Department of Social Services	324,556.96	307,306.92
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	100,611.62	103,003.00
Job Access	3,430.00	7,070.00
NDIS	75,798.71	-
Gambling Community Benefit Fund	-	(681.36)
	<u>504,397.29</u>	<u>416,698.56</u>
(i) refund of unspent grant funds		
<b>NOTE 3: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Cash on hand	450.00	450.00
Cash at bank	308,608.60	40,060.75
Cash at bank - short term deposit	50,487.84	230,516.87
	<u>359,546.44</u>	<u>271,027.62</u>
<b>NOTE 4: PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
<b>Leasehold improvements</b>		
Office fitout	15,363.63	-
Office fitout accumulated depreciation	(189.41)	-
	<u>15,174.22</u>	-
<b>Motor vehicles</b>		
Motor vehicles at cost	39,049.46	39,049.46
Motor vehicles accumulated depreciation	(19,552.36)	(11,742.47)
	<u>19,497.10</u>	<u>27,306.99</u>
<b>Office equipment</b>		
Office equipment at cost	39,616.29	50,068.79
Office equipment accumulated depreciation	(35,967.41)	(42,951.74)
	<u>3,648.88</u>	<u>7,117.05</u>
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<u><u>38,320.20</u></u>	<u><u>34,424.04</u></u>
<b>NOTE 5: TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES</b>		
Trade payables	8,222.31	3,972.41
Accruals	8,458.41	12,349.23
Unexpended grants	42,256.26	-
	<u>58,936.98</u>	<u>16,321.64</u>
<b>NOTE 6: PROVISIONS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Provision for employee entitlements	144,623.01	134,888.08
	<u>144,623.01</u>	<u>134,888.08</u>

## STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The Board of Management has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

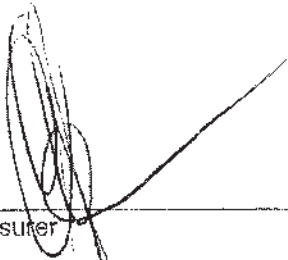
In the opinion of the Board of Management the Income Statement, Balance Sheet and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Speaking Up For You Inc. as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date; and
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management and is signed for and on behalf of the Board of Management by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
President



\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer

Dated this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October 2017.

## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SPEAKING UP FOR YOU INC.

### Report on the Financial Report

#### Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of the Speaking Up for You Inc., which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2017, the income statement and cashflow statement for the period then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by the members of the committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Speaking Up for You Inc. gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Association as at 30 June 2017, and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

#### Basis for Opinion

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the management committees' financial reporting responsibilities to their members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

#### Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and for such internal control as the Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Management Committee is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so. Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

#### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



Paul Smith CA

Dated this 5<sup>th</sup> day of October 2017.







## HONOURING SUFY'S HISTORY

SUFY has been represented by a number of logos in the last 30 years, and SUFY continues to advocate with and for vulnerable people with disability in the greater Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Redlands and part of Ipswich areas.

### Speaking Up For You Inc.

The Precinct, Unit F2  
1st Floor, 12 Browning Street  
PO Box 5649, West End Qld 4101

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