



RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH AMIDST ADVERSITY

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has changed the world as we know it. It's likely that we'll feel the repercussions of this pandemic for many years to come.

Early in the crisis Able came together to determine how best to ensure the safety of our clients, many of whom have underlying medical conditions that would have put them at great risk if they contracted COVID-19.

While not an exhaustive list, we are pleased to share with you some of our more significant

achievements. Collectively, these actions meant Able was on the front foot when dealing with the pandemic.

- We developed and implemented a comprehensive COVID-19 Management Plan. Able Australia was one of the first disability support providers to do so. This plan includes policies and procedures to support staff and clients and has been shared and used as a prototype for a number of disability support providers. It is a 'living' document that is

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CEO MESSAGE



It has been an extremely difficult start to the year, first with the Summer bush fires and now the Coronavirus pandemic. During these uncertain times, I hope you and your loved ones are staying safe.

Our number one priority at Able Australia is, and will always be, ensuring the health and safety of our clients, families, staff, volunteers and donors.

To that end, this edition of Friends of Able outlines just some of the measures we've taken to keep our clients, workforce and community as safe as possible.

We have led the formation of a CEO forum, secured Personal Protective Equipment for the disability sector and developed COVID-19 Response Packs for all our accommodation services.

Able Australia has worked collaboratively with a wide range of people and organisations over the last few months.

To the countless people who have supported us and those who continue to support us we say thank you. We are so glad to have taken this journey with you. We are all the better for it.

Together, we are able.

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- updated to reflect changes as they come through from the state and federal government.
- A CEO Forum was established bringing together over 30 CEOs from across the disability sector, nationally. The Forum was set up as a means to give these CEOs an opportunity to discuss the common challenges coronavirus had created for the sector, share information and their learnings so everyone was collectively better informed about coronavirus.
- The CEO group was also able to speak as 'one voice' when advocating to government about the urgent need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - gloves, hand sanitiser, gowns and face shields - to protect Australia's vulnerable along with disability support staff. While government changes to the NDIS as a result of coronavirus are welcome, more needs to be done to support the sector.
- As a result of supply issues sourcing surgical masks for the disability sector, Able Australia sourced its own supply on behalf of the disability sector. 650,000 face masks were ordered and supplied. Similar work has taken place to also source hand sanitiser and face shields that can also be used by disability support workers across the sector.
- To address a shortage in protective gowns for disability support workers, Able Australia banded together a group of volunteers to sew protective gowns for the sector.
- COVID-19 Response Packs were developed and distributed to all Able accommodation services. The packs included PPE, cleaning products and other resources that would be of immediate help to disability support workers were they faced with a suspected case of COVID-19.
- To keep Able staff updated at a local, state and national level, daily meetings began in early March using Zoom. These meetings have become a forum for staff to share information, ask questions and, most importantly, stay connected.



COVID-19 Response Packs



650,000 face masks were ordered for the disability sector

It is extremely heartening to know that Able Australia has not had any confirmed cases of COVID-19 across any of our services. We have and will continue to work hard to maintain this statistic.

For more information about Able Australia's coronavirus response go to www.ableaustralia.org.au/resources/COVID-19-resources

ACCESSIBLE KITCHENS FOR INCLUSIVE LIVING

Adrian and his friends, Gerry, Ian, Barry and Rhonda, have been living together in their Springvale home in Victoria for almost thirty years. The property is one of many operated and supported by Able Australia.

Adrian and his friends love living together in their home, hosting large Christmas parties with friends and family. They have fond memories of their annual soirées, dressing up and performing concerts in their dining room.

Over the years, the ability and mobility of Adrian and his friends have changed. Many of the residents now require electronic wheelchairs. Unfortunately, their

kitchen does not accommodate their changing needs, leaving Adrian and the other residents to rely on Able support workers



Adrian (second from left) with his friends

to carry out everyday tasks, such as getting a glass of water or grabbing a snack.

To address this pressing need Able Australia has set about to renovate the kitchen.

We aim to add height-adjustable benches and cabinetry that is voice-activated in the kitchen. Our hope is that the kitchen will,

once again, become a communal area where Adrian and his friends can enjoy a meal together.

Adrian says that once the kitchen is renovated, "I hope to make cups of tea or anything like that".

With every step of this renovation, Adrian and

his friends have provided their input to ensure the kitchen reflects their unique needs and personal preferences.

Kitchens are an integral part of enhancing independence, and we are excited to have this project and three similar projects also in the pipeline.

THANK YOU!

While COVID-19 may have turned the world on its head, the pandemic has also brought out the very best in people. Able Australia has been overwhelmed by the generosity and support we have received.

Protective gowns

In Victoria, a small team of volunteers with vast sewing experience gave up their time to develop a sewing pattern for the gowns along with detailed instructions. The team at Signarama Hawthorn came to our aid, donating their printing services to print the protective gown patterns for free. While the City of Boroondara and Fabric Deluxe supported our efforts by putting out the call



for seamstresses within their communities. To top this all off we have been overwhelmed by everyone who responded to the

call and have been busy sewing countless gowns for us. If you would like more information about this project go to www.ableaustralia.org.au/gowns

Sporting equipment

In Tasmania, sporting equipment was donated by Reclink. This equipment will be a well-used resource to keep our clients' minds and bodies active. This donation will continue to benefit clients well beyond the pandemic.

Winter clothing

In Queensland, our clients and the community based in the Logan region received a much needed donation of winter

clothing from Logan East Community Neighbourhood Centre. This clothing will help ensure those struggling to get by at the moment, keep safe and warm this winter.

Lindt chocolate

Nationally, the Easter period was made much sweeter thanks to the team at Lindt. Their generous donation of chocolate helped bring a smile to the faces of our clients across the country, many of whom were not able to visit their family due to social isolation restrictions.



The support we receive each week continues to grow and with this we are helping deliver better days, every day to our clients.

Thank you all!

DAY CENTRE OPENING



L-R Kat Theophanous, MP, Cr Susan Rennie and Kate MacRae

The first quarter of this year was marked by the opening of our new, refurbished Day Centre in Northcote, Victoria for people with disability.

The event in February was a celebration bringing together Able staff, donors, clients and several special guests.

We were honoured to have the Board Chair of NDIS, Helen Nugent, member for Northcote, Kat Theophanous, MP and the

Mayor of Darebin, Cr Susan Rennie join the official opening.

The new centre features a fully accessible kitchen with height adjustable benches and dual stoves where clients can learn cooking skills. It also includes a sensory garden, sensory room and most excitingly, a technology room where clients have the opportunity to use new technology, donated to us by Google, to learn new skills and increase their independence.

Your donation to Able Australia is welcome at any time

Able Australia appreciates all the support received from the many friends of the organisation. Thanks to this support, we are able to deliver otherwise unfunded programs and activities, ensuring we continue to provide high-quality support. These programs enable people to reach their full potential and live the life they choose.

Yes, I would like to enable people to live the life they choose

I would like to make a one-off gift of \$_____

By: Cheque (made out to Able Australia) OR Credit card

Card number Expiry

Name on card _____ Signature _____

My details:

Name _____

Address _____ Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Email _____ Mobile _____

To make a donation, simply complete and return this form to "Able Australia Services, Reply Paid 4000, Surrey Hills VIC 3127".

Alternatively, you can visit www.ableaustralia.org.au or call us on 1300 220 602 to donate.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. For a copy of Able Australia's Privacy Policy, please visit www.ableaustralia.org.au/privacy-policy

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