

WELL
BEING

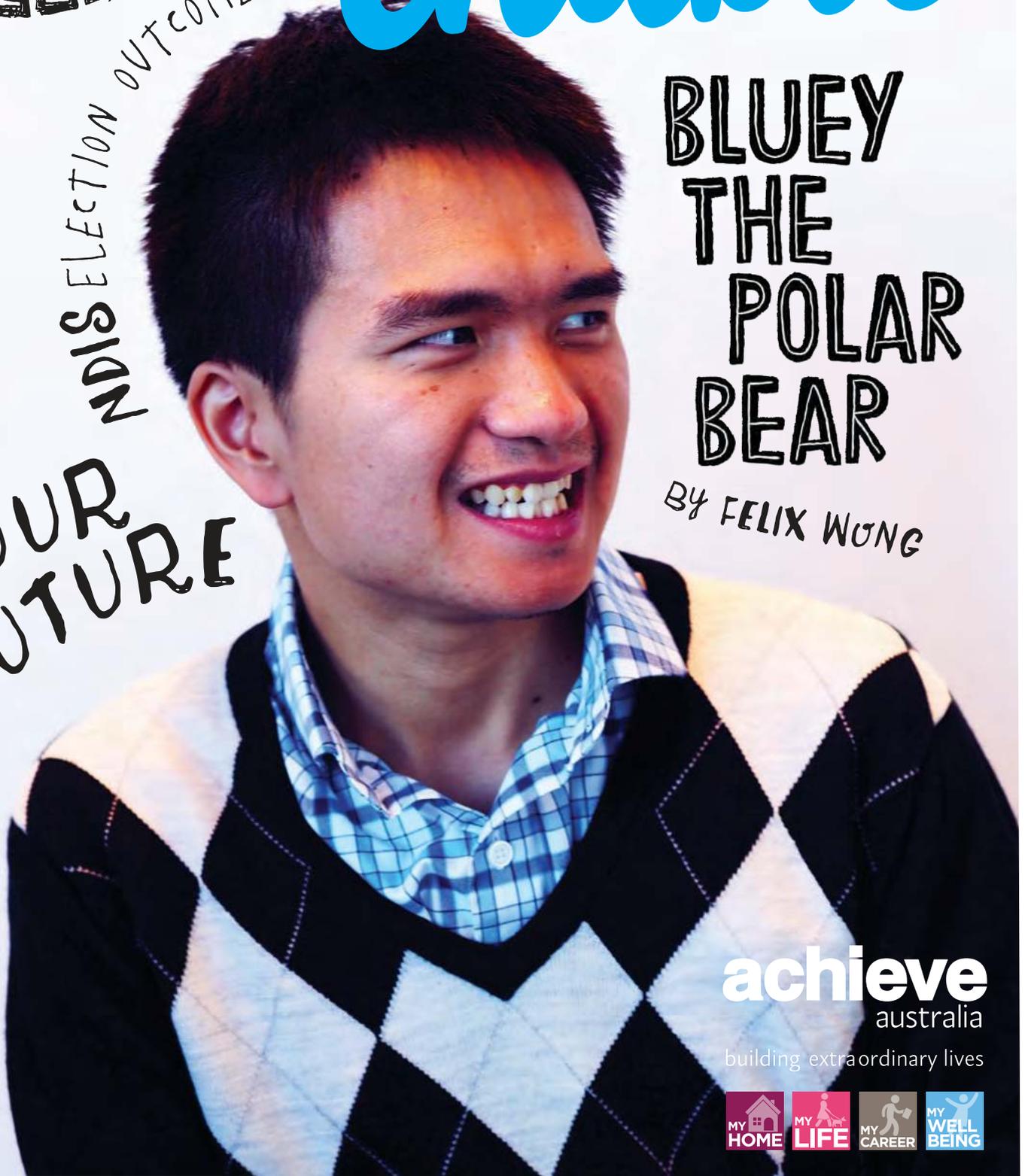
NDIS ELECTION OUTCOME

YOUR
FUTURE

enable

BLUEY
THE
POLAR
BEAR

BY FELIX WONG



achieve
australia

building extraordinary lives



Achieve My Dream

Achieve My Dream is a new initiative by Achieve Australia designed to turn dreams into reality. Stay tuned for more details coming soon as we get ready to launch this exciting program for the people we support.



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WELCOME

BRENT PITTS, ACTING CEO



Welcome to the winter edition of *Enable*. As we reach the halfway mark of 2019, it's incredible to reflect on the last six months at Achieve Australia. We have launched the Your Organisation, Your Future project, introduced Global and Local Talks and transformed the Summer Hill House short term accommodation service.

It has been a crucial moment in time for people with disability when, on 5 April 2019, the Prime Minister announced a Royal Commission into the abuse and neglect of people with disabilities. Achieve is in full support of the commission and everything it stands for in providing the opportunity for people with disability to speak out and be heard. In recent months, the new Global and Local Talks event series have provided fantastic opportunities for Achieve to meet face-to-face with families, hear feedback and suggestions, and provide important updates from each location as well as from an organisational perspective.

Our team is now working hard to address the matters raised at these recent forums and new initiatives are underway to improve and enhance our services as part of our Your Organisation, Your Future initiative.

In this edition we are also proud to share with readers a short story from

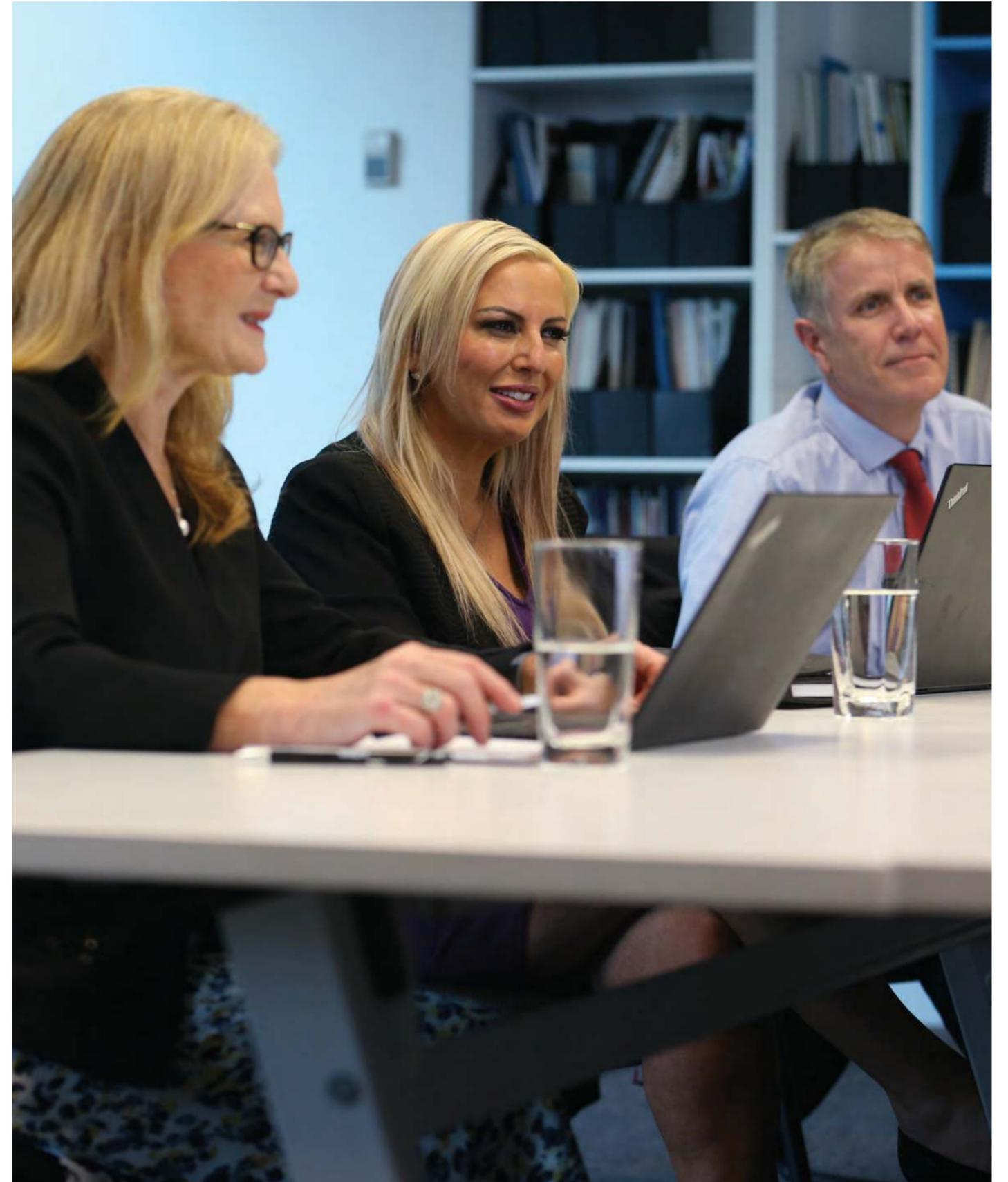
the new *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories* book soon to be released. The collection of short stories is the result of the second phase of the Positive Partners Program, which saw seven participants take part in a personal creative writing journey. Congratulations to everyone involved on such a wonderful outcome from this program and we look forward to sharing more short stories from the book in future.

Finally, we have enclosed a special invitation to the Annual Achieve Golf Tournament, which will be held on Friday, 1 November 2019 at the recently refurbished Strathfield Golf Club. This year, we will be raising funds for a new initiative, Achieve My Dream, where people with disabilities will have the chance to fulfil a life-long dream or aspiration as part of the program. More details on this special program will be available soon.

Even if you aren't a golf enthusiast at heart, you can still join us at the special luncheon event to be held on the day at the beautifully renovated clubhouse.

Please enjoy this edition of *Enable* magazine and I look forward to sharing more updates with you soon.

Brent Pitts, Acting CEO



What does the outcome of the 2019 federal election mean for people with disability?

Following a win in the 2019 federal election, the Coalition has promised to back Australians with disability, their families and carers with the continued rollout of the NDIS. As part of this edition, we looked at the Coalition's policy on 'Our Plan to Support People with Disability'*. Here are some of the key areas of growth set for the future:

- New NDIS participant planning pathways - single point of contact with the NDIS and longer NDIS plans of up to three years for some.
- Expand the NDIS to support and assist hard to reach communities including Indigenous Australians, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and ageing parents of children with disability.
- Shorter timeframes for people with disability to get an NDIS plan and to have their plan reviewed with a focus on children and participants requiring Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) and assistive technology.
- \$45 million to develop a national disability information gateway, including a website and 1800 number, to assist all people with disability and their families to locate and access services.

- Introduce a new 7 per cent employment target for people with disability across the Australian Public Service (APS) by 2025.
- Provide \$2 million to support people with autism to find and keep a job, including a \$1.5 million national expansion of the successful Dandelion Program in partnership with DXC Technology.
- Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability - with funding of \$527.9 million over five years.
- Growing the NDIS Market and Workforce Strategy to support the creation of an additional 90,000 full-time jobs under the NDIS in the next five years.

The Coalition will invest an additional \$22 million for 'Our Plan to Support People with Disability'. While the rollout of the first part of the NDIS will be completed by 2020, consultation on a new strategy beyond this date has now commenced.

Achieve is hopeful that the plans to further improve and enhance the NDIS in the near future will continue to be a high priority for the government to ensure people with disability can live a full life in the community.

*Information sourced from liberal.org.au

Introduce a new 7 per cent employment target for people with disability across the Australian Public Service (APS) by 2025.



ROYAL COMMISSION: THE FACTS SO FAR

It was a day that many disability advocates had been waiting for. On 5 April 2019, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a \$527 million Royal Commission into the abuse and neglect of people with disabilities.

Prior to the announcement in March, a public survey for the draft terms of reference for the commission saw an astounding 3,700 submissions received in just 12 days. More than 1,000 were people with disability.

Disability advocate and Greens Senator, Jordon Steele-John, urged the Prime Minister to take action to set up the Royal Commission. He said in a statement: "A clear pathway forward for survivors of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect must be included in any Royal Commission including prosecution, investigation and most importantly, redress."

Achieve's Strategy and Business Development Executive, Daniel Kyriacou, who led the campaign to bring about the NDIS while working for National Disability Services (NDS), agrees the commission is a positive step forward, but urges that we need to get it right.

"It's critical that this Royal Commission gives people with disability, their families and employees in the sector an opportunity to speak out and be heard. It's vital it leads to people who have been wronged, receiving justice," he explains.

"But it is equally important that this royal commission doesn't just look to the past, but also to the future. That way we can highlight just how policy makers and organisations such as the NDIA, service providers and the broader

community can ensure the rights, safety and fair treatment of people with disability is guaranteed into the future," he says.



The three-year investigation will be based in Brisbane, but hearings will also be held across the country with former Federal Court judge, Ronald Sackville, leading the inquiry with five other commissioners. In April, almost 60 groups involved in the disability sector called for two former public servants to step down as commissioners on the basis of a conflict of interest.

The terms of reference for the upcoming Royal Commission will investigate:

- How to prevent, and better protect, people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- How to achieve best practice in reporting and investigating of, and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- How to promote a more inclusive society that supports the independence of people with disability and their right to

live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

- All forms of violence against and abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disabilities, no matter the setting or context.
- Recommendations including on policy, legislative, administrative and structural reform.
- Specific experiences and personal stories.
- The quality and safety of services including those provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- The critical role of families, carers, advocates and workers in providing care and support to people with disability.

An interim report is expected to be released in October 2020 with the final report due April 2022. This Royal Commission will highlight just how governments, service providers and the community can help better prevent, and protect, people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation in the future.

"The time for justice is now!"

Greens Senator, Jordon Steele-John



ROYAL COMMISSION TIMELINE

4 January 2018	Public and political pressure mounts in support of a Royal Commission for people with disability.
13 - 28 March 2019	Public consultation for draft terms of reference – 3,700 responses received, 30% of respondents were people with disability.
5 April 2019	Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP announces \$527 million Royal Commission.
9 April 2019	Calls for two previous public servants to step down as commissioners.
October 2020	Interim report due.
April 2022	Final report due.

YOUR ORGANISATION, YOUR FUTURE

In March 2019, Achieve Australia announced the launch of our 12-month Your Organisation, Your Future project.

The goal of this project is to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation, while building solid foundations and processes to better support people with disability and their families under the NDIS.

Your organisation, your future is underpinned by three main project goals:

1. Continue to improve our quality and consistency of frontline service delivery.
2. Continue to improve the standard of engagement and communications with all clients, families and stakeholders.
3. Ensure our business model is sustainable under the NDIS.

In addition, changes to our business practices and service offerings will continue to provide even more improvements across a number of areas over the next 12-months.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

- 12-month Customer Engagement Plan is underway.
- Global Talks, hosted twice a year, will be for all families to attend and will include Achieve, NDIS and disability sector updates.
- Local Talks will be tailored to each site and provide relevant updates and information for families.

NEW SERVICES AT SUMMER HILL

- Short term accommodation and respite service rebranded as Summer Hill House.
- House Manager, Naomi Fraser, appointed.
- Activity and event calendar introduced at Summer Hill House.

REINVESTING IN FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Ensuring we have the right workforce to deliver quality care under the NDIS.
- Review of back office processes and systems.
- Investment in new technologies.

ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

- Plans underway to provide a single point of contact for families.
- Creating more efficient team structures.
- Centralised rostering.
- Continue to provide high quality service for clients and families.

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

- Relocation and rebranding of Achieve's social enterprises, AchievAble Enterprises and The Sewing Basket.
- Growth in business customers and new fabric shop openings.
- Extended trading hours at The Sewing Basket shops to meet demand.
- Exploring more opportunities to further expand My Career.

SERVICE QUALITY

- Additional resource investments to be made in quality and compliance.

- Continue to maintain and enhance service quality.
- Implement a new learning management system for continuing staff development.

LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES (MY LIFE DAY PROGRAMS)

- Provide extended hours of service.
- Move to a program-based model, which includes an online booking system and improved reporting capabilities.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Since the announcement of the Your Organisation, Your Future project, the first round of Global and Local Talks have now been held. Families who attended these events provided valuable feedback and suggestions to Achieve, which we are working hard to address.

Common areas for improvement across various sites included enhancing our communication with families, improving our finance systems and reviewing our My Life programs. We know from these recent meetings that we have more work to do and are committed to further developing and enhancing our services for the people we support, their families and our staff.

Throughout this project, we look forward to sharing more exciting updates and further improvements as work progresses.

If you have any feedback and questions in relation to the Your Organisation, Your Future project, please email us at info@achieveaustralia.org.au or call 1300 22 44 38.

A FINE ROMANCE



It was while working at the Windara nursery, five kilometres outside of Casino in the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, when romance blossomed for Peter and Gloria. Some did not like the idea of two people with disabilities being together, but that did not deter Peter and Gloria who fell in love very quickly.

Peter recalls the pair's wedding day in August, 2000 with fond memories. "It was a big wedding, all of our friends were there. I remember being happy in the church waiting for Gloria to come. She looked beautiful," he says.

"I picked out materials for someone to make my wedding dress - a plain pink skirt and a pink top with roses, I still have it in the wardrobe," remembers Gloria.

Now married for nearly twenty years, the pair receive Drop-in Support on a regular basis from Achieve to help with day-to-day living in their Casino home. "We have a worker come every day of the week. They help me to get ready for the day, make sure we have taken our medications and take me to my appointments," explains Gloria.

The services also help to build independent living skills. "I know how to cook better now and I can cook a roast chicken dinner. I still need

some help with things, I worry if I don't have help I might burn it," she says. In her spare time, Gloria likes to travel to visit new places with Peter, her friends and support workers and go to the beach for fish and chips.



For Peter, he says gardening is one of his passions. "I really like to garden, I have a veggie patch that I look after," he says. "I sell my tomatoes for \$2 a bag, they are really good tomatoes. I like to keep my gardens looking good."

Not only does Drop-in Support provide people with disability the opportunity to follow their passions, but with the right support individuals can live as independently as possible or transition to more independent living arrangements. The services also provide support for people who may live on their own, with family or in other shared living environments.



For Peter and Gloria, the pair can continue to share a full life together while maintaining independent living in their own home with Drop-in Support, which is wonderful to see.

To find out more or to connect with Achieve's Drop-in Support team, contact us on 1300 22 44 38 to arrange a meeting to discuss your specific needs.

Top - Peter and Gloria were married nearly 20 years ago.
Bottom - Peter and Gloria's vegetable garden. Opposite page - At home in Casino today.

SPECIALIST DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION (SDA) REFERENCE GROUP

In recent editions of *Enable*, we have taken a look at some of the problems and potential solutions around the roll out of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) under the NDIS.

Recently, a new SDA Reference Group has been established by the NDIA to deliver the outcomes needed to turn things around. In 2019, Achieve Australia submitted a successful expression of interest to join the group and help to bring about change in this vital area for the people we support.

“The roll out of SDA to date has been difficult and it has not always delivered appropriate accommodation options for people with disability in a timely manner,” says Achieve’s General Manager of Property, Mark Lawler, who is now also a committee member on the SDA Reference Group.

“The SDA Reference Group provides an exciting opportunity to collaborate directly with the NDIA and other stakeholders to improve the current system for the future,” he says.

Other members of the group include the Department of Social Services (DSS), NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and NDIA staff as well as representatives from peak bodies, SDA providers, developers and investors, participants and their families.

The main aim of the group is to support the development of the SDA market, increase choice and control for participants, and the long-term sustainability of SDA investments under the NDIS.

Achieve hopes that in future an improved SDA system will provide:

1. Quicker entry for participants who need SDA or who are in crisis.
2. A simple and clear application process.
3. An increase in choice and control for participants.
4. Flexibility to react to people’s changing needs.
5. The ability to adapt and better understand market forces.

Furthermore, it is now widely accepted within the sector that the best way SDA would lead to better choice and control is through ‘separation’. This means that an SDA housing provider becomes separate from the service provider in any SDA property.

This change would also provide participants the opportunity to exercise greater choice and control in their lives such as where they live, who they live with and who their support provider is.

As the SDA Reference Group strives to improve SDA for the future, Achieve will continue to provide updates as this crucial work progresses. The group will meet over the next 18-months for a total of eight meetings, the first of which was held in March 2019.

For more information, visit ndis.gov.au/sda-reference-group



VACANCY

My Home Vacancies

Achieve Australia’s accommodation and support services offers you a range of options to best suit your individual needs.

Current listings

- Asquith - 1 room**
- Guildford West - 1 room**
- Kellyville - 3 rooms**
- Kellyville Ridge - 2 rooms**
- North Ryde - 1 room**
- Parramatta - 2 rooms**
- Ryde - 5 rooms**
- Summer Hill - 1 room**

To view more details on these vacancies, visit our website or contact the team at Achieve Australia.

📞 1300 44 22 38 and ask for My Pathway

✉️ MyPathway@achieveaustralia.org.au

🌐 achieveaustralia.org.au/my-home/my-home-vacancies

ACHIEVE IN ACTION: FINDING THE RIGHT PATH

From the fast paced advertising agencies of London, to farming tea tree and breeding parrots, it's been a fascinating journey for Caroline Nation to find a career that was right for her.

"It took me many years to find out what I really wanted to do. I didn't leave school thinking I want to do this or that, but when I finally discovered I wanted to work in disability I knew it was just meant to be," she says.

Inspiration came to Caroline when she visited a friend's brother who was living in a Northern Rivers group home and she saw the type of care he was receiving. "It took me by surprise when it happened," she recalls. "It was a genuine light bulb moment that was both exciting and comforting knowing that I had found exactly what I wanted to do from this moment forward."



Once she knew exactly the path to take, Caroline went on to explore other roles in the community sector where she worked in crisis support for Lifeline and as a social educator. "To have that connection with the people you are supporting and to make a positive impact in someone's life is the most rewarding thing you can ever do," she went on to say.

Today, Caroline works as a Team Leader at Achieve's Frances Street group home in Casino where she has been for two years. "I'm really proud of the home we've created at Frances Street and it's really satisfying when you see people reaching their goals

and getting the best out of life," she says.

Creating the best possible home environment is very important to Caroline's team and last year everyone at Frances Street took part in Achieve's Creating Home Competition. The competition saw project teams at Achieve's group homes come up with creative ways to meet the individual needs of participants and create a greater sense of 'home'.

"We all really enjoyed the experience. Everyone got involved, families came to help and we all got very inspired by the possibilities," she recalls.

The upgrades to the home at Frances Street included the design of a new shared sensory room complete with a wall mural, music, lighting installations, lounge furniture and physical objects to create an interactive and stimulating area.

Although the competition is now over, there are still more ideas to add further improvements to the Frances Street group home in future including a new Indigenous mural in Thomas' room and finding more ways to get families involved.

"The guys light up when their family comes to visit and that interaction with the people who they are closest to is so important," says Caroline.

For Caroline, finding her dream job in the disability sector has been the ultimate fulfilment – even if it took many years of searching, it was worth it.

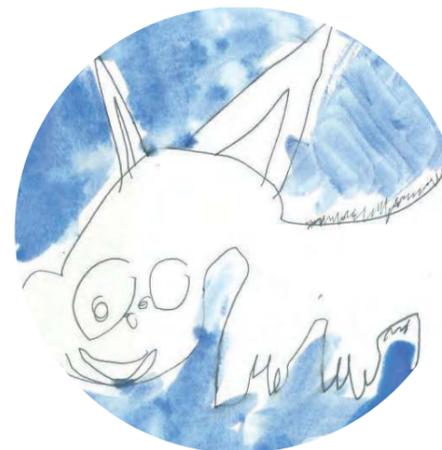


Positive Partners Program

During the second phase of the Positive Partners Program, seven participants explored their creative writing talents by learning to write and edit a short story together with the support of corporate volunteers from PricewaterhouseCoopers.

The result is a beautiful book called *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories* with artwork and illustrations created by Achieve's Art Group.

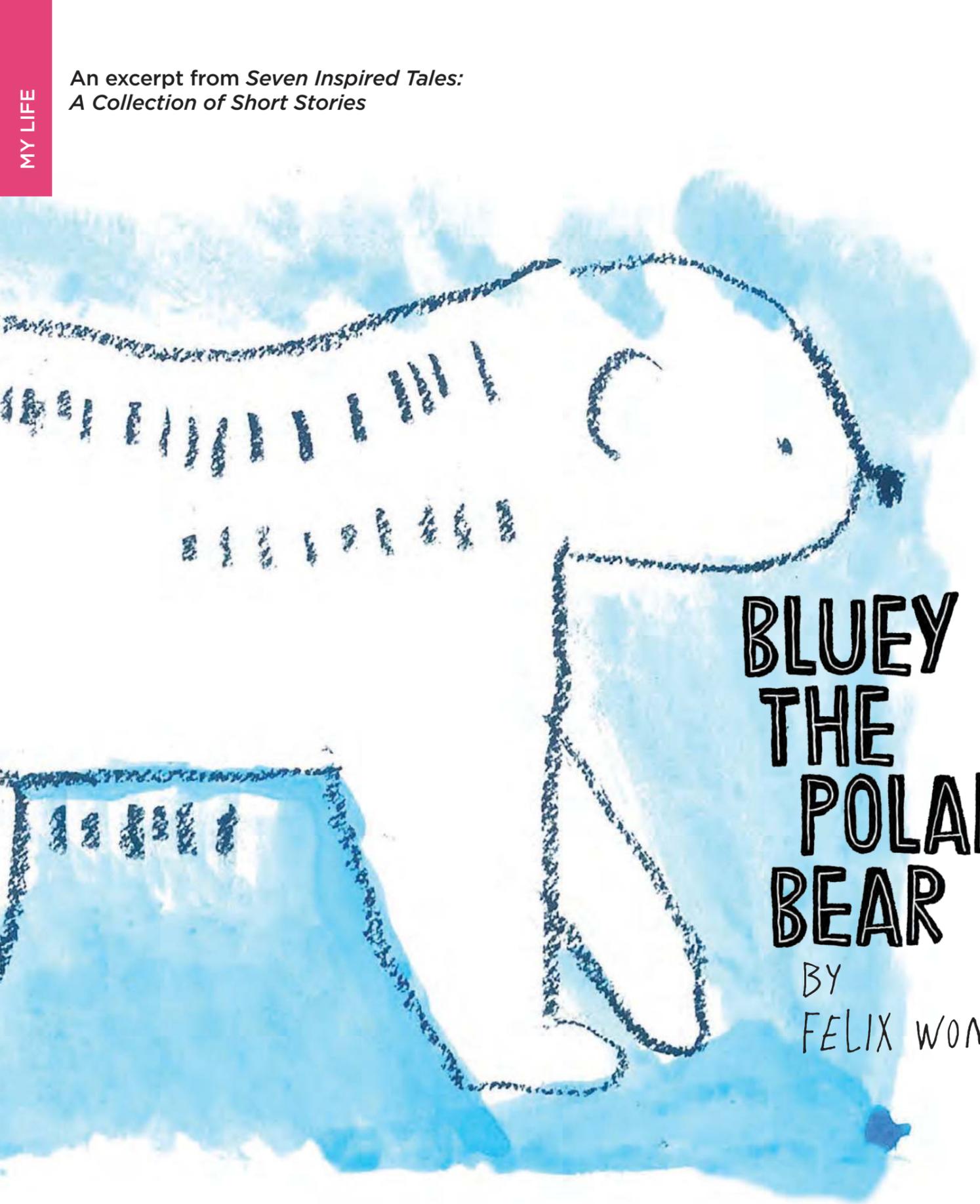
In this edition, we share Felix Wong's short story, Bluey the Polar Bear.



'Bluey' by Samantha Stibbard



'Bluey's mum' by David Wetzler



BLUEY THE POLAR BEAR

BY
FELIX WONG

Once upon a time in a very cold place, lived a very special polar bear whose name was Bluey. Bluey was a happy bear and was popular with many friends. His most special friend was an arctic fox, called Fred.

Every day, Bluey played, and played, and played with his friends. Bluey and the other bears would wrestle and roll in the snow, while Fred the fox bounced, jumped and barked around them. At the end of each day when the sun would go down, Bluey and his friends would head to their camp to have a big meal of fish for dinner. When their bellies were full, all of the animals would curl up and sleep, so they could wake up early to play the next day.

One day, Bluey was play-wrestling with one of his friends when he came close to his face. Bluey stared closely at his friend's face and noticed that he had different coloured eyes to him. Bluey stood up quickly and looked at all his other friends around him and noticed that their eyes were different too. Bluey's eyes were bright and blue in colour, while all the other polar bears had deep black eyes. Bluey couldn't understand why he was different to the other bears and this made him feel sad.

"Why do I have blue eyes and you all have dark black eyes? Am I the only one with blue eyes?" asked Bluey to his friends.

"We have not seen anyone other

than you with blue eyes," said Bluey's friends.

Bluey became sadder and sadder until he knew that he had to do something to find out the truth about his eyes. Bluey decided to go on a journey to find his mother Pinky, because she would know why his eyes were blue. His mother was called Pinky because she had pink nose. Pinky lived in Alaska, while Bluey lived at the North Pole. Bluey knew it would be a long journey, but he was sure he would make it. Ready for his journey, Bluey walked to the edge of the iceberg, jumped into the ocean and started swimming towards Alaska.

As Bluey was swimming, dark clouds gathered in the sky, turning into a storm that rained down on him. Although Bluey had been swimming for a long time and was tired, he did not let the storm bother him and so he kept swimming because he was very strong and brave. After a long day and night of swimming, Bluey reached Alaska. Excited to find his mother, Bluey started asking everyone he met whether they knew his mother Pinky.

One day while walking, Bluey ran into another bear and asked, "Do you know a lady bear named Pinky, she is my mother and I need to find her?"

"I do know Pinky, let me take you to her."

The very kind bear took Bluey towards a group of trees and

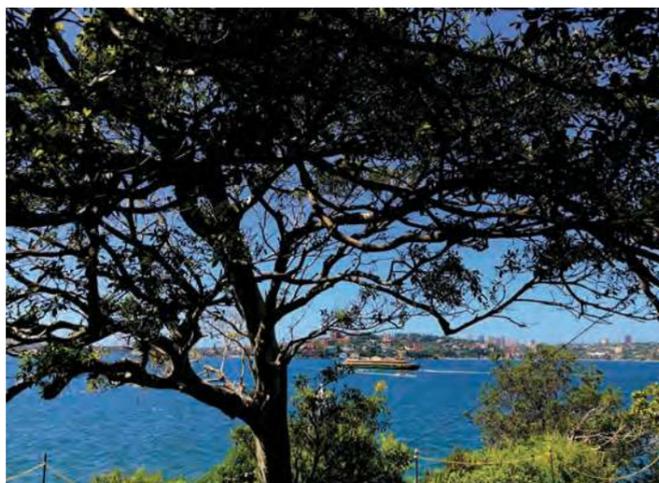
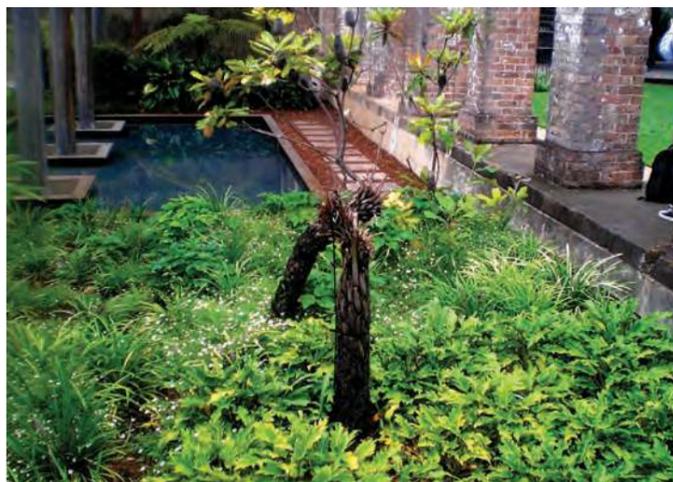
there stood his mother, Pinky. Pinky was overjoyed to see her son as she had not seen him since he was a little cub. As soon as Bluey saw Pinky, he noticed her blue eyes and knew why he was different. His mother had them too! This made Bluey so happy to know that he was not the only bear with blue eyes.

Bluey missed his mother a lot and asked her to come home and live with him at the North Pole. Pinky had also missed her son for so long, that she was very happy to say yes. The next morning, both Pinky and Bluey started the long journey home together. The swim was very hard for Pinky, but Bluey helped her every time she became too tired.

When they reached land at the North Pole, both Pinky and Bluey walked to the camp where he lived. At the camp, Bluey's friends were waiting to find out what had happened to him. They ran over and gave Bluey and Pinky big bear hugs to welcome them home. Fred the fox wagged his tail and barked with excitement.

During the weeks that followed, Bluey settled back into life at the North Pole. He spent his days playing with his friends, wrestling in the snow and being happy, while Pinky watched her son play from a distance feeling happy to be a part of a family once again... and they lived happily ever after.

The End



Clockwise from top left: Photography by David Wetzler, Vivian Fung, Simon Smith and Maria Anderson.

PAINTING WITH LIGHT

"You don't take a photograph, you make it." - Ansel Adams.

The first ever type of photographic process, known as heliography, was invented around 1824 by Nicéphore Niépce. Since this time, photography has advanced from the dark room to the digital world, making it more accessible than ever before.

Digital photography now provides a wonderful opportunity for people with disability to learn the art through Achieve's My Life programs at Araluen.

As part of the program, five participants are building their photographic skills each week and learning about different types of photography such as landscape and portraiture. Regular day trips out to Sydney's Botanical Gardens, Centennial Park and Sydney Harbour lookouts have been providing the perfect inspiration for the enthusiasts to practice their skills.

"I like going out to beautiful places - it makes me happy," says David who takes part in the program each week. "I've also learnt how to take pictures of trees and water."

The group are currently learning how to capture an image of a scene, how to focus and zoom in as well as how to hold and operate a camera. Participants are also encouraged to look at what is happening in the foreground and background of the image they are taking and consider when it

might be best to move into a better position. Maria says that she's been learning how to hold a camera correctly and enjoys taking photos of gardens and her friends. "Next, I want to make an album of all my photos," she says.

Achieve's Social Educator, Audrey Perez, explains that everyone in the group has their own interests. "We try and cater to every individual and tailor the program based on what each person enjoys the most," she says. "Some people like portraits, others prefer more abstract photography or landscapes so we try to do a bit of everything."

Discovering and building new skills is empowering for individuals, but Audrey says it's important to give the group as much choice as possible. "People with disability love learning new skills and being creative, but it's important to be flexible and get everyone involved in the decision making process. Each week, we discuss things as a group such as where we'll go next or what we'll photograph," she says.

At the end of the program, the goal is for participants to build up a selection of their favourite images from their day trips, edit and print the images, and create their own individual portfolios to display their work.

For more information about Achieve's My Life Community and Lifestyle Services visit, achieveaustralia.org.au/my-life

Top 10 Photography tips for beginners

If you are a beginner photography enthusiast, these tips can help you get the 'wow' factor from your images.

1. The Rule of Thirds

One of the most effective rules of composition is the Rule of Thirds. Some images will look best with the focal point placed in the centre of the image, however when using the Rule of Thirds your main focal point will be off-centre.

To do this, imagine four lines with two lying horizontally across the image and two vertically. Place your focal point at one of the intersecting points to create an image that is more balanced and pleasing to the eye.

2. Avoid camera shake

Blurred images due to camera shake can affect even the pros, but there are ways to prevent it. First, learn how to hold your camera using both hands, with one around the body and one around the lens and always keep the camera close to your body for extra support. If you are using a manual program mode ensure your shutter speed is not too slow when compared to your lens' focal length. You can also use a tripod or monopod and remember to clean the front of your lens regularly with a microfiber cloth.

3. Create a sense of depth

When photographing landscapes, you can create a sense of depth using a variety of techniques. By changing your viewpoint by crouching down rather than photographing at eye level you can include more of the

ground and add perspective. Place an object or person in the foreground to give a greater sense of scale or you can also use leading lines that extend the foreground by using a fence or a bridge.

4. Use simple backgrounds

Once you have chosen your focal point, remove any distractions that you might notice. Is there a rock off to one side that could be removed or an odd building in the background? Use a simple approach with a clear and uncluttered background. As the photographer, you can decide which elements will stay in your image.

5. Move around to get a different angle

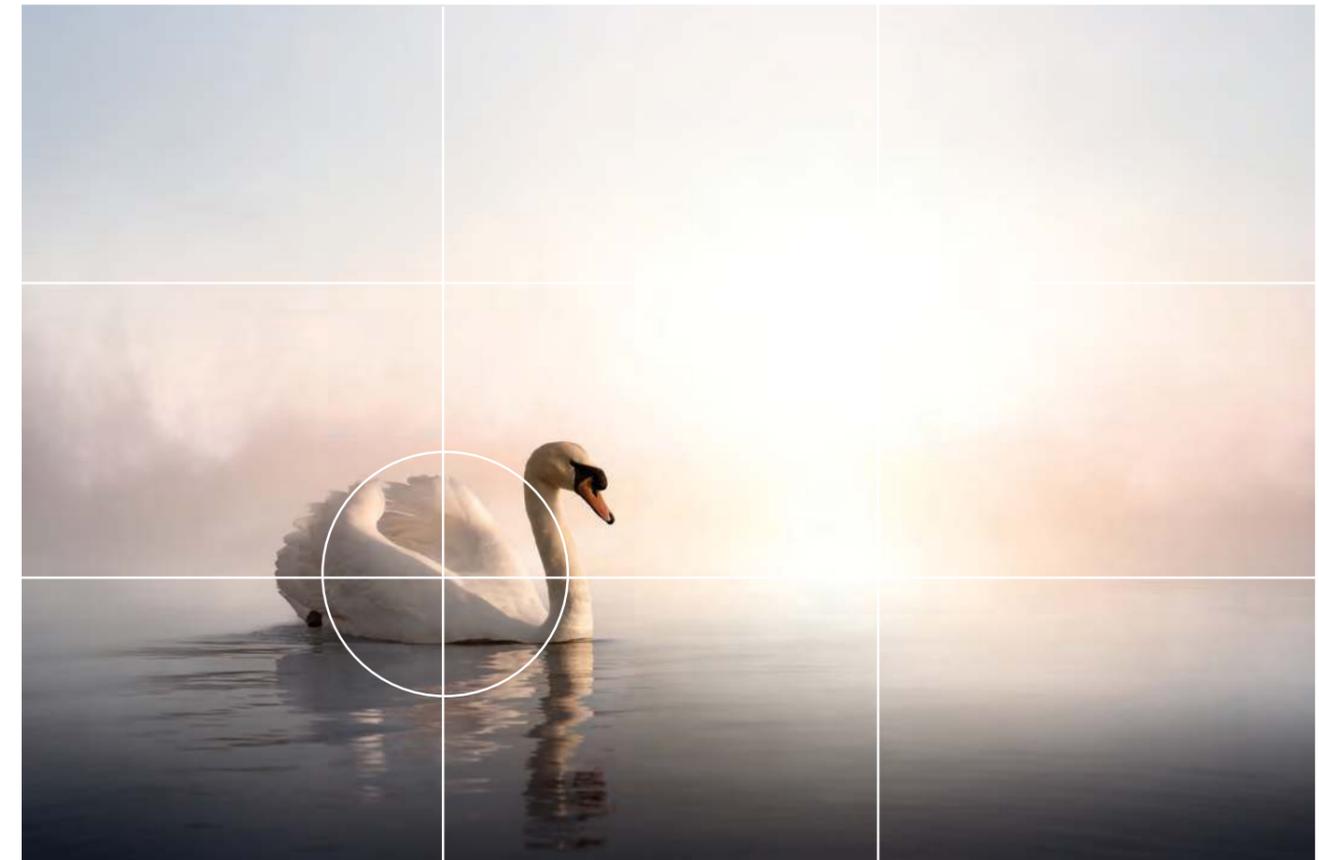
Move around your subject as much as possible to create variety in your images. Move forwards or backwards, zoom in and out, vary the height using a tripod or get down on one knee, and declutter to remove any unnecessary features in your image.

6. Get organised, back up your photos and print your favourites

Print out your favourite photos and frame them to decorate your spaces with your photography or create an album. Always back up your images on different hard drives and organise any digital files into monthly folders or collections. Compare your photos regularly to see how they might change over time as you develop your skills.

7. Meet others who like photography

By meeting other enthusiasts, you can keep improving and learning. Many photographers enjoy sharing tips and advice with others so don't be afraid to join a local photography club or get in touch with a professional photographer whose work you admire.



The Rule of Thirds

8. Try something new and experiment

While you may have a preference for taking portraits, it's great to try something new every so often and experiment with different ideas. Try a new location or a different type of photography such as macro or black and white. One of the best things about digital photography is that you can experiment as much as you like with no printing costs.

9. Practice, practice, practice

As with any skill, the more you practice photography the better you will become. There are many resources available for beginner photographers such as books,

magazines, short courses, online blogs or forums, plus much more. Study or follow other photographers that you admire and keep learning.

10. Have fun!

Think about why you like photography and keep having fun with it. Meet other creative people and try new things to keep the spark alive. If you have a passion for photography, you will have a lifetime of inspiration and endless opportunities to discover.

MEET OUR ACHIEVERS

Meet our team at AchievAble Enterprises

In this edition, as we continue with the Meet our Achievers series, we caught up with Stuart - a bright, independent and dedicated supported employee. Stuart has a long history with Achieve, which started more than 15 years ago.

Stuart began working with Crowle Industries at the age of 20 and since this time he has built up a versatile skill set that now sees him working across many different projects for some of Australia's biggest brands including Fulton Hogan, Unilever and Finsbury Green.

Today, Stuart says that one of the best things about working at AchievAble Enterprises is the variety. "I've worked here for many years and I like doing lots of different things," he says. "I feel good and happy when I come to work."

Stuart's dedication and hard work makes him a wonderful contribution to the team. Achieve Australia's Operations Manager, Leanne Larche, has worked closely with him for many years. "Stuart can do just about anything and he really enjoys going off site to other jobs," says Leanne. "So whenever there is work externally, we know just who to ask."

When a new opportunity came up recently to work at Finsbury Green's Greenacre premises, Stuart was one of the first to volunteer. "Stuart really shines when he

works off site because he enjoys working on new projects and likes to be independent," says Leanne.

Finsbury Green supplies a range of retail, corporate, packaging, print and logistics services to customers across Australia and the company is now working closely with AchievAble Enterprises on collaborative opportunities for supported employees to work more permanently on site. Stuart now works two days a week at the Greenacre premises, which he says he really enjoys. "I like working there," he says.

In addition to discovering new challenges and opportunities, supported employment gives people with disability the chance to earn an income and work in a supportive team environment where continuous learning is encouraged.

In his spare time Stuart is an avid sports lover who enjoys watching all types of sports with cricket being one his favourites. As an employee who shines in everything he does, we hope that Stuart's journey with AchievAble Enterprises continues for many more years to come.

For information on AchievAble Enterprises including employment opportunities, visit achieveaustralia.org.au/my-career

stuart

"I feel happy when I come to work and I like doing lots of different things."



Beating depression

One in 20 Australians are affected by depression every year. It's an alarming statistic impacting the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities across the country.

While it appears to be a common condition, Achieve Australia's Senior Psychologist, Michael Caballero, explains that depression is not always obvious. "People can sometimes be unaware they have depression because they don't know what the signs are," he says. "There is also stigma and shame still associated with mental illness in the community. Admitting you have a problem and then seeking help can be difficult."

What is depression?

Depression is a medical condition that is best described as having a persistent low mood, which interferes with your daily life and makes it difficult to cope. There are many different ways to treat depression and it's important to recognise the signs so that you can get help early to feel better.

Causes of depression

While it's still not known exactly what causes depression there are a number of factors that may contribute to it, particularly if several of those listed below occur together. These factors may include:

- life events such as work stress, trauma, relationship breakdown, divorce, unemployment, isolation and loneliness, death of a loved one
- family history, genetics or brain chemistry
- personality types such as worriers or perfectionists
- serious medical illness
- chronic pain

- drug and alcohol use
- medication.

Types of depression

According to the Black Dog Institute, the five main types of depression in Australia include:

- major depressive disorder
- major depressive disorder (with melancholia)
- psychotic depression
- persistent depressive disorder (or dysthymic disorder)
- perinatal depression (also called antenatal and postnatal depression).

Michael says that high-functioning depression, also known as persistent depressive disorder or dysthymia, is becoming more recognised today. "High-functioning depression is when an individual may appear fine on the outside when at work or around others, they have a good job and social networks, they may even be a high-achiever, but behind closed doors they are gripped by depression," says Michael.

Signs of depression

The signs of depression can be emotional or physical. If you recognise these signs in yourself, or someone you know, for more than two weeks and it is affecting your daily life, see your GP to discuss treatment options.

Emotional

The emotional symptoms of depression may include:

- loss of enjoyment and pleasure in activities or hobbies
- withdrawal from socialising with friends and family
- irritable, sad, anxious or suicidal thoughts
- hopelessness or feeling bad about yourself
- feeling guilty, angry or isolated.

Physical

Depression doesn't just affect the mind, but also the body. Some of the physical symptoms of depression may include:

- loss of or increase in appetite
- irregular sleep habits
- muscle aches and pains, headache and back pain
- difficulties in remembering things or concentrating
- drinking alcohol or the use of drugs
- fatigue and exhaustion.

So, what can you do if you think someone is experiencing depression?

It may be hard to tell if someone is experiencing depression unless they tell you how they have been feeling. But if you notice a friend or family member has lost interest in the things they would normally like doing or if they are acting out of character, it's a good idea to ask if they are doing okay. Encourage them to see their doctor if depression is affecting their quality of life and check in with them regularly to provide additional support.

Where to get help?

If you are experiencing the signs of depression, seek advice and support as early as possible from your GP. Your doctor will advise you on the best treatments available, which can be tailored to your needs and preferences. This may include one or a combination of treatments such as lifestyle changes, counselling, psychological or social

supports, and medical therapies.

Moreover, there are additional resources, information and free assessments available online for depression at:

- Beyond Blue - beyondblue.org.au
- Black Dog Institute - blackdoginstitute.org.au
- MindSpot - mindspot.org.au

With the right supports and treatment, we can beat depression and get back to enjoying a full life. For more information about Achieve's My Wellbeing services, visit achieveaustralia.org.au/my-wellbeing





Summer Hill House Opening, 31 March

On Sunday, 31 March we were proud to officially open Summer Hill House. This peaceful, leafy property is now home to Achieve's short term disability accommodation and respite services. Clients, families, supporters and staff turned out for a fun-filled day with a range of activities for everyone including a petting zoo, face painting, balloon twisting and a barbeque lunch. Pictured above: Allegra enjoys a cuddle with a rabbit at the opening event.

South West Disability Expo, 5 - 6 April

Achieve was excited to be a Silver Sponsor at the South West Disability Expo, which was held from 5 - 6 April at the Whitlam Leisure Centre, Liverpool. The expo featured more than 100 stands presenting the latest information, technology, products and services on offer in the disability sector.



The Sewing Basket, Balmain Pop-up

As The Sewing Basket continues to grow, a new pop-up shop has now opened in Sydney's Inner West in Balmain. On Friday, 12 April a special sale was held to celebrate the opening of the new shop, which is located on the bustling shopping strip of Darling Street. We are thrilled that the Balmain Pop-up has become a new favourite among local enthusiasts and the community and we thank everyone for their continued support.



ATSA Independent Living Expo, 8 - 9 May

Achieve also featured at the ATSA Independent Living Expo at the Sydney Showground on 8 - 9 May alongside hundreds of other exhibitors. The expo brought together the leaders in assistive technology, disability services and support, plus much more.

Summer Hill House May Socials

Every month at Summer Hill House we launch a new calendar of activities and social events for the people we support. In May, we held an Indigenous cultural day, flower making workshop, movie nights, bubble storytelling show and a silent disco. Pictured below from left to right: Alissa, Walangari Karntawarra and Ashleigh at the Summer Hill House cultural day. To view the upcoming calendar, visit achieveaustralia.org.au/my-home/summer-hill-house



Casino Beef Week, 18-28 May

In a celebration of local industry and community, the Northern Rivers recently hosted the annual Casino Beef Week from 18 to 28 May. As a local sponsor, Achieve Australia hosted a sausage sizzle and set up creative displays of Mad Max, Priscilla Queen of the Dessert and Crocodile Dundee for the 'Australian Entertainment' theme. Participants also enjoyed the festivities by taking part in the local busking competition, helping with the barbeque, joining in the parade, and attending various local events.

EVENTS

GLOBAL AND LOCAL TALKS

In recent months, Global Talks were held in both Sydney and the Northern Rivers region. A key focus of these forums was to provide an opportunity to meet with families, introduce our Executive team and discuss organisational updates and industry news.

Several Local Talks were also held creating the opportunity for families to meet with Achieve's Operational team to discuss on site matters, ask questions or provide feedback.

The feedback and suggestions from these recent events has been extremely valuable in informing a number of new projects at Achieve, which are set to further improve and enhance our services in the near future.

Keep an eye out for more Global and Local Talks events throughout the second half of 2019.



UPCOMING EVENTS

19-23 June
Craft & Quilt Fair
The Sewing Basket
ICC, Sydney

13-14 September
Sydney Seniors &
Disability Expo
Sydney Olympic Park

1 November
Annual Achieve Golf
Tournament
Strathfield Golf Club



NEWS

Take a look at some of the latest news and highlights in the disability sector.



ABC News, 2 April
**ALBINISM NO BARRIER TO SUCCESS:
KIAMA MP GARETH WARD**

For Kiama MP Gareth Ward, albinism has been a part of his life that has only made him more determined to succeed. The genetic condition not only restricts the body's ability to produce melanin, but almost always affects one's eyesight.

The Canberra Times, 29 April
**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY NEED
GOOD TEAM**

Some schools welcome children with disability, but others fall short. Many parents fight for a place in a mainstream school; they want their child to be part of the community.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 8 May
**NSW TO APPOINT AGEING AND
DISABILITY COMMISSIONER**

The Premier says NSW will appoint its first independent commissioner for the elderly and disabled, with the role to have broad-ranging powers to conduct investigations into allegations of abuse and neglect.

Disability Support Guide, 8 May
**NDIS QUARTERLY REPORT SHOWS
IMPROVED PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE
BUT ISSUES REMAIN**

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quarterly Report has shown a record 32,000 participants entered the Scheme last quarter, exceeding its operational targets, however, issues remain.

ABC News, 13 May
**DISABILITY AND RELATIONSHIPS – WHEN
BOTH PARTNERS HAVE A DISABILITY**

When you're in a partnership with someone who also has a disability, does it make it more challenging? Or does the combined understanding and acceptance of each other make for a better relationship?

ABC Radio National Podcast
**DISABILITY AND RELATIONSHIPS –
LOOKING FOR LOVE**

Producer Eliza Hull, a person with a physical disability, 'Charcot Marie Tooth', explores what it's really like looking for love as a person with a disability. This is a three-part series on disability and relationships.



PLAY A DREAM ROUND OF GOLF

ANNUAL ACHIEVE GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2019

7am TO 3.30pm

STRATHFIELD GOLF CLUB

Join us at this year's Annual Achieve Golf Tournament where we will be raising funds for the new Achieve My Dream initiative to be launched soon. Achieve My Dream will make dreams come true by providing people with disability the chance to fulfil a life-long aspiration or wish that would otherwise not be possible.

The Golf Tournament will feature:

- 18-holes on a brand new course
- Entertainment and luncheon at the renovated clubhouse
- Live and silent auctions
- Player prizes
- Special guests

For more information and to secure your spot, visit achieveaustralia.org.au