



afford news

December 2022



The Australian Foundation for Disability acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community.

The Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford) provides essential services in accommodation, lifestyle and recreation, and employment for people who have a disability.

Afford's mission is to provide innovative, flexible and high-quality support to enhance lifestyle, learning and vocational opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers. Our vision is to be the partner of choice, supporting people with disability to shape their own lives.

Everything we do is underpinned by the values of integrity, cooperation, empathy, respect and excellence.

This magazine is published to tell stories of interest to our community, to share news and information, and to celebrate our people – including our clients, our clients' families and friends, and our employees.

If you have any questions or want to suggest a story, contact b&e@afford.com.au

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The winning design from the 2022 Afford Christmas Card Competition. Read our story on page 10 to learn more.

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From the CEO



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas – especially now that we can announce who won and were runners-up in our Christmas card competition. You'll need to read our news on page 10 for all the details, but I have to say it was such a pleasure to be on the judging panel for this wonderful competition.

Afford clients and supported employees are so creative. We received 73 Christmas card competition entries, all capturing the spirit of the festive season in their own unique way. Thank you to everyone who entered.

Afford community centres will be closed on the public holidays throughout the Christmas and New Year period but will reopen as usual otherwise. Our Supported Independent Living will operate as usual. We are looking forward to welcoming the clients who will be part of the Afford community in our short-term accommodation over the holidays, and we're looking forward to hearing from clients who are going away with family and friends when they come back.

As I write this introduction to our December edition of Afford News, our team has just returned from the Heroes With Ability gala event for the International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD). It was, on all accounts, a terrific day! Our clients were in action, participating in a variety of sports as part of Australia-wide celebrations of (IDPwD). I have really loved reading the ABC's live blog, sharing the experiences of people with lived experience. It was so insightful – you can [read it here](#).

We are coming to the close of a busy year at Afford, but everyone is energised and looking forward to 2023. As we close off the year, I would like to say to all our clients, families and carers, support workers, Allied Health partners, donors, community partners and of course, our team – have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jo Toohey

Chief Executive Officer



In depth with **Joseph Connellan**

In November 2022, Joseph Connellan was formally appointed as an Afford Board Director. Joseph, who has an acquired hearing disability, brings several decades of experience at the intersection of disability advocacy and housing to his role. Welcome, Joseph!

As with all members of the Afford Board of Directors, Joseph has a responsibility for setting and safeguarding the mission, vision, and values of our organisation.


Joseph's past roles include being CEO of disability advocacy agency Headway Victoria and managing the housing association Supported Housing. He has developed transitional housing and written strategic plans for the Victorian State Government. Today, he provides education and advocacy on housing for people with disability through his company, MC Two Pty Ltd.

"You can wait for government to improve things, or you can contribute yourself. I've been in the privileged position of being able to speak out and advocate for others," says Joseph.


"I frame myself as a practical advocate. It can be more complex to house people with disability than the run of the mill affordable housing. But if you can get somebody's housing right a whole lot of other things fall into place."

Joseph says a successful disability service provider is responsive to people with disability, has strong quality control in place, and is financially sustainable.

"Afford is experiencing an extraordinary period of renewal. It's immersed in an accelerated process of building what we need for the future. Because our role is to serve people with disability, it's important we put them and their families at the centre of what we do."



"If you can get somebody's housing right a whole lot of other things fall into place."

Read more about Afford's Board of Directors here at afford.com.au. 

Creating opportunities at Afford ADEs

Afford has recently expanded our contract with Coca Cola Europacific Partners (CCEP) to repackage soft drink products into mixed packs for sale through Aldi and Costco. The work will create ongoing employment and training opportunities for about 40 Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE) employees at our Minchinbury and Ingleburn facilities.

“As a result of our partnership with CCEP and the demonstrated quality services we provide, we are working with our Disability Employment Services (DES) to assist in filling six job vacancies within CCEP,” says Director of Employment and Commercial Services, Gordon Griff. “Three people have started their employment with CCEP and we are working with their recruitment team to complete compliance for the other roles. It’s a real vote of confidence in the work we do, and it demonstrates our capability compared to other commercial operations.”

To celebrate the partnership, an ADE team toured the CCEP factory in Northmead. The group were thrilled to see how one of the biggest brands in the world automates and manages their manufacturing process. 🦋



Celebrating IDPwD superheroes

People from all around the world come together to mark the International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) each year on 3 December. Afford partner, Heroes with Ability (HWA) celebrated IDPwD with a superhero-themed ‘grand final’ event that showcased the sporting achievements of almost 200 Afford clients. The event was held at the Michael Clarke Recreation Centre in NSW.

Special guests cheering for these superheroes included the Liverpool Deputy Mayor, Clr. Karress Rhodes, HWA Ambassador Sean Keppie of the Manly Sea Eagles, and Afford Chief Operating Officer Peter Orr. After exciting demonstrations that covered rugby league, basketball, AFL and soccer. The day concluded with presentations and a social BBQ kindly provided for free by the local Woolworths.

Read more about Heroes with Ability here at heroeswithability.com 🦋



5 things you need to know about...

Short Term Accommodation

Have you considered taking a break this Christmas and New Year's? Many Afford clients enjoy our Afford's Short Term Accommodation (STA) service. It's not too late to book!

Afford STAs emphasise enabling clients to have fun while receiving the support you need, so that your carers can rest and recharge. Think meals with friends, games, and concerts, in a vibrant and inclusive environment. It's a win-win for everyone! Here are the five things we think you need to know about our STAs across Australia.

1 STA is a home away from home

At an Afford STA, you can take a break from everyday life in a 'home away from home'. It's a comfortable and relaxing environment where you can stay for the weekend or even a few weeks. Lifestyle Assistants will be there to focus on supporting you to enjoy your stay, your way.

2 Rest and relax or gear up for adventure

Rest and relaxation, or fun and adventure – you can go at your own pace while building independence. Activities to enjoy in an STA home might include cooking, games, work outs, and art sessions. Day tripping is also on the cards. Depending on the location of your STA, you might get to visit a nature reserve, see some art, visit a zoo, or go cruising on a riverboat!

3 STA has important benefits for carers

Everybody needs a break now and then, and that includes carers. While you are enjoying your STA holiday, your support people can also take some 'me time' and maintain their own health and wellbeing. Over Christmas and New Year's, carers often take the opportunity to have a change of scenery and visit family and friends.

4 Everything is included – all you need to do is unpack!

Our STAs are kitted out with all the comforts of home. You'll have your own fully-furnished bedroom, and access to a well-stocked kitchen, laundry, bathroom, and linen cupboard. Depending on the location, there might be a weights room, games room or even a swimming pool!

5 NDIS support is available

The NDIA recognises the importance of clients, carers and families having access to respite services such as STA. If you are eligible for respite funding, it will include funding for accommodation in a group residence for a short period of time, along with support for self-care, food, and activities.

If you would like more information about Short Term Accommodation at Afford, call our Customer Care team on **1800 233 673**. 🐦



*Pictured: Daniel,
Afford client*

5 things we love about...

The holiday season!

Some folks are dreaming of a white Christmas. Others can't wait for summer fun in the Aussie holiday sun. The activities in our festive calendars might vary, but we all hold some common things close to our hearts. This is the time of year when we all hope to be with the people we love, share special moments, and spread kindness whenever we can.

In this special edition of our '5 things' story series, Afford people share what they love about the holiday season.

1 Daniel, Afford Client, Community Services

This is my favourite time of the year. I'll be staying at St Marys respite over the Christmas break and in between that I'll be spending time with my family and hanging out with a lot of my friends. My Christmas wish to send out to people at Afford is to stay true and be happy.

2 Katherine, Afford Employee, Learning & Development

I've got young kids now and I love that I'm reliving some of my own childhood Christmas memories and excitement by seeing it through their eyes. It is very special. My little girl has learned a new word, which is Santa, and she is saying it all the time. Anything Christmas-related, she calls Santa!

3 Arinze, Afford Employee, Service Delivery

What I love about the holiday period is spending time with my family. Christmas also gives me an opportunity to reflect on my spiritual life and appreciate God for his mercy. With so much going on at Afford, I am hoping to use this time to reboot my system and reflect on improvements for next year.

4 Ros, Afford Employee, ADE Business Services

I like Christmas because it's fun and it brings people together. It's just magical how people get together. Christmas is nice and kind and so soft. The spirit of it makes me feel happy and warm.

5 Aby, Afford Employee, Safeguarding

I love spending time with family, that's the biggest thing. The kids opening their presents and just having fun. Oh, and quite a lot of food! We're a bunch of people with allergies in my house but we make sure there's always lots of yummy things for the feast. 🍷



Updated client service agreements

Afford has recently made big improvements to our NDIS Service Agreement and NDIS Accommodation Agreements. These changes mean our agreements are now easier to understand and have more focus on the rights of our clients.

There are six main improvements:

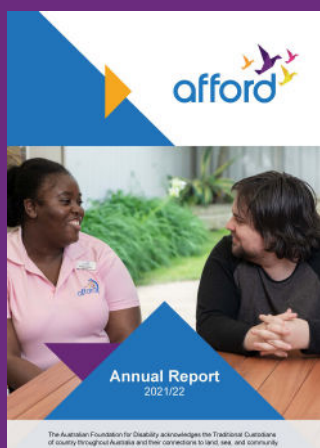
- 1 Simple formatting and plain language.
- 2 Streamlined consent for services and information-sharing now forms part of the Agreement.
- 3 Linkage between our Service Agreement and Accommodation Agreement (where applicable).
- 4 Removal of personal liability clause.

- 5 Client-friendly changes such as longer payment terms, and a section about Afford's responsibilities to each client.
- 6 Clear feedback and complaints section.

What do clients need to do now?

There is nothing our clients need to do. When your current NDIS Service Agreement and/or NDIS Accommodation Agreement is due to expire, a member of our Customer Care team will contact you and guide you to renew using the updated agreement.

We are happy to answer questions or provide support any time. Please feel free to email info@afford.com.au or call **1800 233 673.** ➤



Our 2021/22 Annual Report is live

The Afford 2021/22 Annual Report is now live on our website. The 26-page report delves into the ways Afford is changing for the better. It showcases how we are investing first and foremost in the quality, safety, and rights-led approach to the services we provide for our clients. We are doing this by building the right teams, systems, and processes to create the organisation that drives this commitment to our clients.

Read the Afford 2021/22 Annual Report here at afford.com.au ➤

Congratulations, Christmas artists!

Thank you to the creative clients and employees who entered our 2022 Christmas card design competition. The 70-plus entries were all wonderfully festive, and we had a hard time choosing the winners! Let's all congratulate overall winner, Seyed (ADE Employee), and runners-up Marcel (Client) and Elissa (ADE Employee).

Seyed's design features on the Afford 2022 Christmas Card. They have received a \$250 gift voucher and their artwork is being showcased across Afford. Marcel and Elissa each received a \$100 voucher, and their artwork also features on Christmas cards for Afford employees and clients. What a great way to celebrate the talent in our Afford community. Happy holidays! 🐦



Afford's approach to holiday services

Good news – Afford will continue to deliver all services during the holiday period. There will be no official 'shut down' except on public holidays (25 and 26 December 2022, and 1 January 2023). On these days, only our SIL and STA accommodation services will operate.

We know that many clients are away with family, so we expect services will be running at less capacity than usual. Our teams will focus on understanding and responding to client needs at this special time, for example by combining two nearby community programs if they both have less clients than usual.

Please speak to your Team Leader or email info@afford.com.au if you have any questions regarding Afford services during the Christmas holiday period. 🐦



NDIS Code of Conduct


Afford is committed to delivering our services and working with the community in accordance with the NDIS Code of Conduct. This commitment ensures we:

- > act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with relevant laws and conventions
- > respect the privacy of people with disability
- > provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner with care and skill
- > act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- > promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that might have an impact on the quality and safety of supports provided to people with disability
- > take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse of people with disability
- > take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

Feedback & Complaints

Afford is committed to continuous improvement and client-centred service, so we welcome open feedback and complaints. If you want to share your feedback with Afford, or you have a complaint, please visit our website or speak to our Service Delivery Directors in your region. afford.com.au/feedback/



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