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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Cram Foundation acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future. We believe the richness of the stories of our First Nations people - the oldest known civilisation on earth - their connection to country and their strength and resilience in truth telling, enhance Australian culture now and into the future.

ACKNOWLEDGE SUPPORTERS AND DONORS

The Cram Foundation (Cram) wish to acknowledge the support and collaboration of our many partners, colleagues, volunteers, suppliers and fellow providers for working with us to achieve the best outcomes for our Participants. We thank the organisations shown below for the many ways in which they work alongside Cram to enable people with a disability to live their best life.

- ♥ Bluestone
- ♥ Business Illawarra
- ♥ Butler HR
- ♥ Community Industry Group
- ♥ Greenacres Disability Services
- ♥ Home in Place
- ♥ Illawarra Advocacy
- ♥ Illawarra Disability Alliance
- ♥ Illawarra Shoalhaven Health District
- ♥ Illawarra Women's Health Centre
- ♥ Illawarra Yes Program
- ♥ ONE DOOR Mental Health
- ♥ Purpose People Solutions
- ♥ Regional Development Australia
- ♥ RehabCo
- ♥ Riding for the Disabled
- ♥ Shellharbour City Council
- ♥ Shellharbour Medical Practice and Chemist
- ♥ Spark and Co
- ♥ Stanwell Park Sea Eels
- ♥ Stiletto Homes
- ♥ TAFE Illawarra
- ♥ The Disability Trust
- ♥ The Flagstaff Group
- ♥ The Wollongong Conservatorium of Music
- ♥ University of Wollongong
- ♥ Wests Illawarra
- ♥ Wollongong City Council



MISSION, VISION, VALUES, PERSON CENTRED PRINCIPLE, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

MISSION:

To provide allyship to people with disability that supports inclusion in their communities, and meaningful life experiences and relationships.

VISION:

A world where everybody has the opportunity to live the best version of their life.

CRAM VALUES:

- Respect** we respect each other and every person's human rights.
- Accountability** we take ownership over our actions and Cram's long-term future.
- Integrity** we recognise that the right thing to do isn't always the easiest. We are honest and transparent in our relationships.
- Empathy** we acknowledge that emotional health happens when we value each person's lived experience and perspective.

PERSON CENTRED PRINCIPLE:

At the core of Cram's values is a human rights-based approach. We place the lived experience of our Participants at the heart of everything we do. By empowering Participants to make informed decisions, have choice and active engagement in all aspects of their support, we ensure that the person-centred principle that drives all our decision making.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Purpose – Sustainable expansion of services through the provision of homes, meaningful experiences, enablement and community connection to people with diverse, individual needs through the Illawarra and beyond.

1. Certainty in Delivery – Quality & Compliance

Cram ensures quality of service delivery by challenging the status quo and embedding a strong quality framework. Through our commitment to continuous improvement, exploration of new initiatives and risk-based decision making, our actions are in line with the NDIS practice standards.

2. Sustainability & Influence

Cram ensures our financial viability and ability to influence through purpose-based decision making, strong fiscal management and putting the participant voice at the heart of everything we do. Investment in the participant experience and measurement of outcomes across our home and living services forms the backbone of Cram's sustainability and longevity.

3. Organisational Capability & Culture

Cram drives inclusion and empowerment for people with disabilities by reducing duplication, utilising technology and improving our methods for day-to-day service delivery. By living our values, building the capacity of our people through education, development and recognition we enhance our culture, grow our profession and make meaningful impact to the world at large.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Linda Wright
Chair – 2009

Linda joined the Cram Board in 2009 and in 2016 took on the role of Deputy Chair and became Chair in 2018. A lawyer specialising in Family Law, Linda was a partner of her law firm based in Wollongong. Linda has been on the management committee of the Illawarra Legal Centre for 23 years, is a Past President of the Wollongong and District Law Society and is involved with the Executive Committee of the Collaborative Family Lawyers Illawarra and Shoalhaven, as well as having held positions on two school P&C committees. Linda is the Chair of Cram's Quality, Safeguards and Clinical Governance committee.



William Dowson OAM
Deputy Chair – 2017

Bill joined the Board in 2017 and brings significant business and entrepreneurial experience, having both developed and acquired small businesses in the hardware, self-storage and document management sectors. Bill's community roles have included Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, Rotary, Illawarra Sports Stadium Trust, Illawarra basketball and Illawarra Academy of Sport. Bill is the Chair of Cram's Risk & Audit Board Committee.



Judy Mullan
Director – 2020

Judy Mullan is an Associate Professor within the University of Wollongong (UOW) School of Medicine. She is the Academic Director of the Centre for Health Research Illawarra Shoalhaven Population (CHRISP) and the Deputy Director of the Illawarra and Southern Practice Based Research Network (ISPRN) recognised as one of Australia's most successful primary care research networks. Judy holds bachelor's degrees in Pharmacy and the Arts, as well as a PhD in Public Health. She is a registered pharmacist and a fellow of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia. Judy has made significant professional and research contributions in the areas of health services research, chronic disease management, safe medication management, aged care research, multicultural health, patient education and health literacy. Judy is a member of Cram's Quality, Safeguards and Clinical Governance Board Committee.



Ben Twyford
Director – 2020

Ben is a qualified Chartered Accountant working in the Illawarra for the past 20 years. As a practising accountant he has had exposure to many industries and various local businesses, from which he has developed a broad range of accounting and auditing skills. He is a member of the Illawarra branch of the Salvation Army local business advisory Board. Ben is a member of Cram's Risk and Audit Board Committee.



James Robins
Director – 2020

James was appointed as a director of The Cram Foundation in December 2020. Having formerly resided in the Illawarra for over 15 years, James brings a broad range of experience in leadership, risk management, strategy, information technology and cyber security. Formerly the Chief Information and Digital Officer at Peoplecare Health, James is currently the Chief Executive Officer of HAMBS and is based in Adelaide, SA. He is a graduate of the AICD Company Directors Course and has completed a Bachelor of Science (Computer Science), a Bachelor of Commerce (Management), a Master of Information Science and a Certificate of Executive Leadership. James is a member of Cram's Risk and Audit Board Committee.



Elena Beleska
Director – 2022

Elena joined our Board of Directors in 2022 and brings a wealth of experience to Cram. Elena currently works locally in the Property Development space at IRT. Her professional experience also includes architectural firm work, property development and eight years working at UOW in both the Planning and the Capital Works teams. Elena has degrees in Engineering, Architectural Technology, Construction Management and a Master of Business Administration. She is also a member of numerous professional organisations including the National Association of Women in Construction, Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Property Council. Elena is on Cram’s People and Culture and Remuneration Board Committee.



Michael McGrath
Director – 2023

Michael is a lawyer with over forty years’ experience in private practice and in the university sector; most of which was as a partner in Wollongong’s largest law firm. His predominate areas of practice were litigation and mediation, often involving workplace injuries, employment disputes and acting for persons with a disability. Michael holds bachelor’s degrees in Commerce and Law together with an Executive Master of Business Administration. He is a past director of several community sporting organisations and is currently the Chair of the Illawarra Legal Centre at Warrawong. Michael is a member of Cram’s People and Culture and Remuneration Board Committee.



Kimberlee Brooker
Director – 2023

Kimberlee is an accomplished solicitor currently working at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. She is a passionate advocate for people with disabilities and has brought her lived experience of disability as a person who is vision impaired to the Cram Board. She is an active member on the Guide Dogs Disability Inclusion Action Plan Steering Committee along with being a member of the NSW Law Society Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Disability Sub-committee.



Karen Burdett – 2018
CEO and Company Secretary

Karen became CEO in July 2018 and brings over 15 years’ experience in senior roles working with Australia, Asia and New Zealand across a range of industries. Karen’s expertise is Strategic Planning, Innovation, Business Growth, Marketing and Communications within Corporate and Not for Profit sectors. Karen is passionate about delivering excellence in client service and collaboration across community, government, and industry. She holds a Master of Business Administration with Sydney Business School, a Graduate Certificate in Marketing and is a current member of the Illawarra Business Chamber Regional Advisory Committee.



FAREWELL TO
Richard Walsh – 2017

Richard joined the Board in December 2017, bringing with him a wealth of experience in human resources and industrial relations across several industries. Richard is the Head of People & Culture Operations for a large, aged care and seniors living organisation (IRT Group) and is also a member of the University of Wollongong HRM Advisory committee. Richard has previously been a director on the board of IRT and he is the Chair of Cram’s People and Culture and Remuneration Board Committee. The Board thanks Richard for his contribution to Cram and wishes him all the best for his future endeavours.



CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Linda Wright

As I reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud of Cram. It has been a year defined by growth, transformation and resilience. As Chairperson, it is my honour to have chaired the Cram Board through such a pivotal period in Cram's journey, where we have not only expanded our services but also laid the groundwork for continued excellence in our mission to empower people with disabilities to live independent lives.

This year, one of our most significant strategic priorities has been to strengthen our internal infrastructure. As Cram has grown, so too have the demands on our systems and it became essential to address key operational challenges. The implementation of a new payroll and time management system and the completion of our payroll remediation have been a focus for the Board and both were critical investments. These investments are not only a win for our employees, who now experience smoother payroll processes, but also enhance the overall operational integrity of Cram. Moving forward, we are confident that these upgrades will continue to serve our growing workforce and streamline our service delivery.

On the operational front, we have seen significant expansion in our accommodation services.

One of the standout moments of the last 12 months has been the delivery of services within two new properties in Dapto. These purpose-built homes represent the future of disability accommodation, designed to meet the diverse and complex needs of our Participants. Ensuring the safety of both staff and Participants has been a top priority and I am pleased to announce that, with the generous support of a grant from Wests Illawarra, we now have the means to install security cameras across all of Cram's properties. This is part of a broader effort to enhance safety across all of Cram's sites. In addition to the security cameras, we have also introduced the Lone Worker app, which offers

real-time safety monitoring for staff working alone. These efforts reflect our commitment to creating a safe and secure environment for all members of the Cram community.

Our brand refresh is another significant initiative about which I am particularly excited. This is more than just a visual change; it is about realigning our external identity with the exceptional work happening within Cram every day. As Cram has grown and evolved, it became clear that our brand needed to reflect who we are today - an innovative, modern, and forward-thinking organisation that stays true to its core values. The refreshed brand will help us communicate more effectively with our Participants, families, and the broader community,

ensuring that we remain a trusted leader in the disability sector. I am confident that this refresh, undertaken in consultation with Participants, families, staff and the Board, will further solidify our position as a forward-focused organisation committed to the highest quality of care.

Another major focus this year has been on staff engagement and development. We conducted an all-staff survey to gather feedback on areas such as wellbeing, diversity, inclusion and leadership. This survey provided valuable insights into how we can continue to support our growing workforce, which is now

the largest it has ever been. Furthermore, we have rolled out leadership development programs designed to support our team leaders and managers as they navigate the growing demands of their roles. Our staff are at the heart of everything we do and investing in their development remains a top priority. It was a pleasure to attend the Staff Recognition Event this year to assist in presenting the awards to so many of our deserving staff.

Financially, whilst posting a small budgeted loss, Cram has navigated a challenging economic environment with rising operational costs,

It has been a privilege to serve in this role, and I leave knowing that Cram is on a strong path forward.



Thank you for your
dedication and care, Linda.
From the Participants, families,
and staff of Cram.



particularly in the face of inflation and labour market pressures. However, through careful financial management and strategic planning, we have maintained a strong financial position. Our continued focus on cost efficiency has allowed us to make critical investments in new infrastructure, technology and staff wellbeing initiatives while remaining financially sustainable.

Looking ahead, we are focused on the future of the NDIS and the evolving landscape of the disability sector. The Board and Executive staff participated in a two-day educational and strategic planning session in April to set longer-term goals. With the growing demand for services and the complexities of NDIS funding, we anticipate both challenges and opportunities. Our strategic focus will remain on delivering person-centred care, expanding our accommodation and community services, while advocating for NDIS reforms that support a sustainable and equitable system for both service providers and Participants.

As I prepare to step down as both Chairperson and a Director of The Cram Foundation in November 2024, I am confident that the foundations we have laid will ensure continued success and innovation. It has been a privilege to serve in this role and I leave knowing that Cram is on a strong path forward. I am excited to see how Cram continues to evolve and grow under new leadership. I thank not only all current Directors but also those who have served in the past and have given their time, energy and expertise freely to ensure the proper governance of Cram.

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to our CEO, Karen Burdett, who will also be leaving her position in the coming months. Karen has led Cram with vision, passion and an unwavering dedication to our Participants and staff. Her leadership over the past six and a half years has been instrumental in driving the growth and transformation of the organisation. We wish her nothing but the best in her next endeavour and thank her for her incredible contributions to Cram. Her influence will be long felt.

I would also like to thank our Executive Leadership Team, the Board and all staff for their ongoing commitment to Cram's mission. The past year has been a time of growth and innovation. Together, we are building a future where Cram continues to lead the way in delivering high-quality, person-centred care. As a Life Member I will continue to be invested in Cram and I look forward to seeing Cram's continued success in the years to come.

Linda Wright
Chairperson
The Cram Foundation



CEO REPORT

Karen Burdett

Reflecting on the past 12 months at Cram fills me with pride as I consider the journey we've been on together. This year has been one of significant growth, transformation and strengthening the foundations of the organisation. As we continue to support our Participants and empower them to live a life of their choosing, the focus on building internal infrastructure, expanding our services and ensuring the wellbeing of our staff has been paramount.

From a regulatory and policy perspective, like many for-purpose organisations operating in this sector, Cram has adapted to a highly changeable environment as recommendations from the NDIS Review and Disability Royal Commission were communicated.

As an organisation that strongly supports a human rights-based approach, we have been proactively preparing for the recommended changes and opportunities to evolve our services. Whilst the funding environment has been challenging due to well publicised concerns regarding the adequacy of NDIS pricing, along with disparity for some Participants and families surrounding their plans, Cram has taken a leadership approach in its advocacy for continuity in decision making and the need for a sustainable scheme and sector. Throughout the year, I have been proud to represent our organisation and sector alongside my fellow for-purpose colleagues in working closely with State and Federal Government Ministers regarding the imperatives of adequate funding that accommodates high levels of quality and recognises the costs and benefits of registration for Home and Living providers.

Investment in our people, quality and education have been the key areas of focus throughout the year, leading to a review of our training and professional development program for staff to enhance and recognise the professionalism of our work. Active support has featured heavily alongside targeted programs that aim to equip our teams with the requisite skills and knowledge for personalised care.

For me, both professionally and personally the roll out of the "Workplaces for Change" Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Training has been a real highlight. After two years of collaboration and

planning, we were proud to be the strategic partner chosen by the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to initiate this groundbreaking training for Cram. The program reflects our commitment to the holistic wellbeing of both our Participants and staff, addressing the mental health challenges associated with domestic and family violence. This initiative doesn't just raise awareness; it equips our teams with the tools they need to support colleagues and Participants who may be experiencing violence. It's part of a broader effort to create a workplace culture rooted in safety, respect, and mental health awareness. Our leadership in this space, especially in the disability sector, is something I am particularly proud of.



This year also saw the completion of our Music Therapy Program, in partnership with the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music. This program has been transformative for many of our Participants, providing an outlet for creativity, self-expression and emotional support. It's one of the ways we continue to expand the breadth of services Cram offer, ensuring that we are not only meeting the physical needs of our Participants but also addressing their mental and emotional wellbeing.

On the operational front, we have been proud to be part of a research trial of a groundbreaking new Smart Mattress Trial Program, providing our Participants with the opportunity to test specialised mattresses designed to monitor fall risk and pressure care monitoring. Feedback from this trial will be invaluable in determining future accommodation improvements and in assisting to provide greater independence for our Participants. This initiative reflects our commitment to innovation in improving the daily living conditions of those we support.

Furthermore, we continue to explore and integrate Assistive Technology solutions that allow our Participants to live with greater independence. These technologies are being trialled and rolled out across various homes, helping us deliver on our promise to enable Participants to live their lives to the fullest. The focus on technology and innovation has allowed Cram to remain at the cutting edge and forefront of disability support services.

In terms of operational growth, this year has been pivotal, especially with the opening of our three new properties made possible through our collaboration with SDA development partnerships. These purpose-built homes have expanded our capacity to meet the diverse and bespoke needs of our Participants. Beautifully appointed, the homes have enabled tailored living environments for the individuals who reside there.

One of the key achievements of this year was the significant work undertaken in new technology and in particular the successful implementation of a new payroll and time management systems. This has been a significant investment in ensuring operational integrity, fairness and transparency. Looking ahead, this system will continue to support our growing workforce, allowing us to maintain a high standard of service delivery across all Cram properties. New systems that create greater efficiencies have featured heavily in the past year with Cram also implementing new billing and expense management systems, along with an update to our incident management system.

Our brand refresh is another exciting development that I believe will modernise how we communicate the organisation, both externally and internally and how we engage with our Participants, families and the broader community. This important update will enable Cram to reflect the incredible work that happens every day. As we continue to grow and evolve as an organisation, aligning our external image with our internal values of respect, inclusion and innovation, will solidify Cram's position as a leader in the disability sector.

Staff engagement and development has been another major focus this year. Our all-staff survey provided invaluable insights into how we could better support our workforce and I'm pleased to say, the results were exceptional. I'm thrilled to announce that Cram's efforts have been recognised with the 2024 Xref Engage Award for Change Champions, an award that celebrates exceptional improvements in work practices and employee engagement. Receiving this award is a testament to our commitment to creating a supportive and empowering environment for our staff. With Cram's largest-ever workforce, it's essential that we

support our team with the tools, training and leadership development they need to succeed. Our staff are the heartbeat of Cram, and their growth and wellbeing remain top priorities as we move forward.

From a financial perspective, the past year has not been without its challenges. Rising operational costs and labour market pressures have tested our resilience, but I'm pleased to report that Cram remains on solid financial footing. Careful management and strategic decision-making has allowed us to maintain a strong position, enabling us to invest in critical infrastructure and programs while continuing to deliver high-quality care.

As we look towards the future of the NDIS, we anticipate both challenges and opportunities. The evolving landscape of disability services means that our strategic focus must remain on delivering person-centred care and advocating for reforms that support sustainable service delivery. I am confident that Cram's commitment to innovation and advocacy will help us navigate these changes while continuing to provide the best possible care for our Participants.

On a personal note, after six and a half years of leading Cram through this incredible period of growth and transformation, I have made the difficult decision to step down as CEO. It has been an honour to serve alongside such a dedicated and talented team and a privilege to support Cram's Participants and families. I thank them for the trust they have invested in me through the years. While I am excited about the next chapter in my professional journey, leaving an organisation I care so deeply about is never easy. However, I believe that now is the right time for new leadership and I would like to congratulate incoming CEO Alisha Musker who was successful in securing the role. Alisha has been a core part of the Executive

Management team over the last four and a half years and in line with Cram's commitment to professional development and enhancing the careers and capacity of our people, I am delighted she will now take the reins and lead Cram into its next phase of success.

In closing, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Board of Directors whom I have had the great fortune to work for and alongside. In particular, I would like to say a special thank you and recognise the unwavering support of Deputy Chair Bill Dowson and Board Chair Linda Wright. Linda, who will also be stepping down in November, has been a steady source of leadership and encouragement, guiding Cram through some of its most transformative years. Together, with the Executive Leadership Team, the Board and our incredible staff, I believe we have continued to build upon Cram's remarkable legacy. I am confident that Cram will continue to flourish and lead the way in delivering high-quality, person-centred care. I wish everyone at Cram all the best in the future and look forward to watching the organisation continue to thrive.

Warm regards

Karen Burdett
CEO
The Cram Foundation





PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHTS

Our Participants have set and smashed their personal goals this year and we've loved supporting them in doing this. Some of their key achievements are listed below, Congratulations!

- ♥ Cheryl had a massive year related to her family - becoming a grandmother for the first time and celebrating the engagement of her daughter! Congratulations to her son and partner and daughter on these wonderful milestones.
- ♥ Elisa finally received her powered wheelchair and has been able to start heading out into the community again. She has attended some family weddings and made it to the Matchbox 20 concert in Sydney.
- ♥ Krissy and Richard performed at the Music Therapy program's final presentation, performing an original song as well as a Grease medley complete with matching T-bird jackets. Side note - Richard then went on an Elvis cruise (he took the T-Bird jacket)
- ♥ Sharon continued her event management experience by planning the 10 Chaplin first anniversary event, along with numerous other internal events for Cram staff and Participants.
- ♥ Lisa has taken self-care to the next level attending spas, swimming and hydrotherapy every fortnight.
- ♥ Chris H has been learning sign language.
- ♥ Ashley has started saying 'I love you' and 'hello'



PARTICIPANT FOCUS

Julian Griffiths

Over the past 12 months, Julian Griffiths has experienced tremendous growth in both his wellbeing and confidence. Julian has truly come into his own, taking on new challenges and embracing opportunities that have helped him flourish.

Julian's confidence has soared this year, highlighted by his starring role in an internal communications campaign for Cram staff around our new finance system. He also played a pivotal role at the Cram staff inductions, where he shared his personal experiences working with Disability Support Workers.

Additionally, Julian made his radio debut, co-hosting a one-hour live program with Ability Matters, where he promoted Cram's Men's Group. His involvement doesn't stop there – Julian has become a regular at the Bunnings BBQs, managing the cash register, taking orders, and handling money. His dedication and enthusiasm have made him a valuable part of the Cram community.

Julian's growing self-awareness and comfort in social situations has been remarkable. He's become more involved in Participant and Family committees within Cram and is keen to take part in even more activities than ever before. His journey over the past year has seen him open up to all possibilities and live life the way he wants to.



Jennifer Smith

Jennifer Smith, or Jen as she's known at Cram, is a long-time Participant at Cram who has embraced a new chapter in her life after retiring from her job at Greenacres, where she worked for an impressive 21 years.

Her journey at Greenacres began with a two-year transition program from school to work, followed by 19 years working, where she undertook a variety of tasks with dedication and care. One of her jobs during her time there was sorting screws—a task she approached with focus and diligence. On her last day at work, her colleagues surprised her with a heartfelt gift, and she was honoured in front of 300 people at the Greenacres picnic day, where she received an award. "It was crazy!" she recalled with excitement.

Now enjoying her well-deserved retirement, Jen has taken up a new routine filled with activities she loves. She's made new friendships and engages in fun group activities such as bowling on Mondays, movie

watching, and cooking. Her passion for creativity shines through during her Wednesday evening Arts and Crafts sessions in Kiama.

Jen continues to maintain close connections with her friends from work. She keeps in touch via messenger and enjoys seeing them at local discos. Outside of her busy social calendar, Jen spends quality time with her parents on Sundays and goes out on Tuesdays "with the girls" – her flatmates.

Retirement has allowed Jennifer to continue living a full and active life, with a perfect balance of old connections and new adventures. Congratulations, Jen!

YEAR IN REVIEW

2023

JULY



1st anniversary of Chaplin site

AUGUST



Cram radio campaign, featuring staff launched across Illawarra and Shoalhaven
Sea Eels Cram Staff Appreciation Day - \$3000 donation

SEPTEMBER



R U OK? Day
Shoalhaven Disability Expo
Cram Participants hosted a Barbie morning tea to raise awareness of women with disabilities

2024

JANUARY



Sponsorship of Accessible viewing platform for 26th January, Wollongong Council

FEBRUARY



Staff recognition event
Board Strategic Planning Day

MARCH



Conclusion of year long Music Therapy Program with Wollongong Conservatorium of Music.
Launched 'The Voice', Employee Survey

2023

OCTOBER



Winner! 2023 Illawarra Business Awards – Outstanding Employee for Christine Cross
 Huntington’s Walk 4 Hope Fundraiser
 One Door Mental Health Lunch – Cram Sponsorship
 Men’s Group Bunnings BBQ
 Launch of Coffee with Cram Parents’ group
 Red Lunch fundraiser

NOVEMBER



New Payroll and Time In Attendance software
 Agents for Change podcast launch featuring CEO and Executive Manager, Marketing and Communications

DECEMBER



Participant and Family Christmas party
 International Day of People with a Disability
 Sponsorship of Accessible viewing platform for New Year’s Eve, Wollongong Council

2024

APRIL



Cram Men’s Group Bunnings BBQs
 Easter celebrations
 Board and Executive Strategic Planning Days - offsite

MAY



Practice Leadership launch

JUNE



Tully Disco
 Staff team building resumes again!
 NDIS and ACIS Major Recertification Audit achieved with zero non-conformance.

GROWTH, INNOVATION, AND QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY: A YEAR IN REVIEW

The past year has been a time of growth, innovation and a strong commitment to maintaining high standards of service at Cram. Through strategic initiatives and a focus on continuous improvement, we have expanded our reach, refined our service delivery and laid the groundwork for an even brighter future.



Key Achievements in 2023/24

New Participants and Homes: During the year, Cram welcomes several new Participants into Supported Independent Living (SIL). In line with our commitment to providing contemporary accommodation options, we also onboarded three new homes designed to meet the unique needs of each Participant and demonstrate our dedication to a human rights-based approach. We also offboarded one home that no longer met our high standards for service delivery, ensuring that our Participants continue to receive the best possible care in environments that support their wellbeing.

Chaplin Development: Our newest site, Chaplin, celebrated its first anniversary this year. The modern facility has become a benchmark for future accommodation at Cram, setting a new standard in quality and Participant-focused living. We have also embarked on the development of the adjoining block, further enhancing our accommodation offerings. The project has been a collaborative effort, involving our current Participants through design workshops to ensure the layout and functionality align with their needs.

Training and Staff Development: We have continued to invest in the professional development of our team, introducing two new training modules - CPI training and Active Support training. These programs focus on equipping staff with skills in de-escalation, non-restrictive interventions and person-centred active support. The goal is to enhance our team's ability to create supportive environments that promote engagement and independence for our Participants.

Quality Indicator Audit: A new organisational-wide quality indicator audit has been implemented, providing a robust framework to benchmark our homes against key performance indicators. This initiative ensures that each of our properties meets the high standards that Cram is known for and allows us to continuously improve our service delivery.

Practice Leadership: To further enhance the quality in our homes, Cram introduced Senior Disability Support Worker roles focused on driving practice leadership. These roles help to embed active support principles within the day-to-day operations of our homes, ensuring that our approach remains person-centred and focused on empowering Participants.

High-Intensity Support: We have made significant strides in providing high-intensity support, with a comprehensive review and update of all Participant plans. This process ensures that each plan is grounded in a human rights approach and uses Participant-centred language, prioritising dignity, autonomy and individual needs.

Workplaces for Change - Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Training: CareSouth has worked with the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to develop and execute a all staff training program designed to equip workplaces with the tools and knowledge necessary to create safer, more supportive environments.

Cram Director Home Visits: The Cram Board has been visiting homes across our footprint to enhance our quality and increase our organisational governance. These visits also highlight our commitment to the person centred principle.



Focus on Sustainability

Looking ahead, sustainability will be a major focus as we continue to expand and adapt to changes in the sector. The next 12 months will see the completion of the development at Chaplin Place, with an emphasis on creating a space that is functional, modern and responsive to Participant feedback. Our project team, alongside our architect, is working closely with Participants to integrate their insights into the design process, ensuring that the new facilities truly reflect their needs and preferences.

Property Acquisition and Expansion

In addition to the Chaplin Place development, Cram is preparing to expand its services into another property in the Dapto/Horsley area, a key part of our ongoing 5-year Strategy. By building on our provision of service in new SDA properties, we are not only meeting the current needs of our Participants but also positioning ourselves for long-term success in our rapidly evolving sector. These efforts reflect our commitment to future-proofing Cram, ensuring that we can continue to deliver high-quality services for years to come.

Navigating the Future of the NDIS

As we plan for the year ahead, navigating the new NDIS changes and implementing these throughout our organisation. Our goal is to ensure that Cram is well-positioned to adapt to policy shifts while continuing to provide consistent, high-quality support throughout our organisation is a primary area of focus. This strategic focus will help us maintain our commitment to person-centred care, even as we adapt to an ever-changing landscape.



BY THE NUMBERS: A SNAPSHOT OF OUR YEAR



4 Exhibitor Expos



34 New Staff Members



3 new homes opened,
enhancing our
accommodation offerings



5 New Participants

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Over the past 12 months our People and Culture team has navigated a growing workforce, new payroll and time in attendance software and the constantly changing requirements of the disability sector. They welcomed a new People & Culture Business partner to reflect the growth of the organisation, implement new initiatives focusing on culture and maintained their business-as-usual efforts through it all.

Cram Committees

Cram operates staff committees to provide feedback and ideas across the organisation. Members of Cram's Board of Directors, support staff, team leaders, executive and leadership management and administrative team sit on these committees to ensure they are reflective of the diverse nature of our staff. Each committee member can then share this information back to their respective team.



Work Health and Safety Committee

Elections were held for new Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) to represent Cram staff on our Work Health and Safety Committee. Linda Pullen, Manager, Participant Experience is Chair of the committee and in partnership with our HSRs plays a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing our workplace safety standards. We look forward to their valuable contributions and collaboration in this important aspect of our company culture.

Cram HSRs

- ♥ 33B – Michelle Spears
- ♥ 300 + 302 Dapto – Wendy Watson
- ♥ 12/12A Upland – Israel Nice
- ♥ 19DM – Susan Hambly
- ♥ 60W – Sharneice Taylor
- ♥ 3ML + CSP – Ashanti Afriyie
- ♥ 5G + 205 – Ann-Maree Howley
- ♥ Head Office – Linda Pullen
- ♥ 10C + 99B – Davey Mavundukure
- ♥ 3/5 Tully – Sarah Tiyce
- ♥ Nowra – Pramod Adhikari

Culture Committee

Our Cram Staff Culture Committee has had another successful year at Cram, again led by Cram's Chairperson, Linda Wright. This internal committee focusses on staff engagement and positive workplace culture, as well as activities and initiatives throughout the year. This committee was a key driver in the successful Harmony Week and R U OK Day? events that brought together Participants, staff and houses to celebrate our connections and provide support.

The Committee also provides valuable input on organisational policy, systems, new initiatives to enhance psychological safety at work, skills development for our staff, input to Cram's brand and our important leadership role in the community.

COVID-19 Management

Cram's dedicated COVID Management Plan aligned with Government and Public Health Orders, providing clear directives on compliance and regularly advising on updates and changes to advice. The plan is updated frequently to ensure the most current requirements are reflected and has served as the primary source of guidance for our COVID management throughout the pandemic. Cram continues to navigate the impact of COVID, implementing best practice to protect the health and safety of both Participants and staff. This includes maintaining rigorous hygiene protocols, adapting service delivery to ensure continuity of care, and providing ongoing support and communication to our Participants, families and staff during these challenging times. Our commitment remains steadfast in ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all.



Recruitment and Induction

The Cram Foundation held 64 interviews, ran four inductions and onboarded 34 new staff members including Disability Support Workers, administrative team members (Human Resources and Accounts) and Team Leaders. Cram has further developed its recruitment strategy and revisited in-person expos and job fair events to promote the benefits of working at Cram and gain access to active job seekers. The listings of jobs online, on the Cram, Seek and Indeed websites, as well as on local job boards has continued.

SURVEYS

Participant Survey

Cram conducted our regular Participant Feedback survey, ensuring that each Participant had the opportunity to voice their experiences and perspectives on the care and support they receive at Cram. Rooted in our human rights approach, this survey aimed to empower Participants to share their thoughts on Cram's services, facilities and overall support, reinforcing our commitment to placing their needs at the centre of everything we do.



Family and Carer Survey

Cram distributed our regular Family and Carer. Feedback survey requesting responses to a range of questions regarding Cram's service, facilities and customer service. Communication with Participants and families continued to be a key element of Cram's service strategy. The survey communications also invited family members to meet with Cram's CEO directly to discuss any feedback, further fostering the culture of open communication, trust, and continuous improvement.



Staff Survey

Cram staff again completed an all-staff survey in April 2024 covering a range of topics under three main banners being Engagement, Wellbeing and Progress. This year also saw the inclusion of psycho-social risks to our organisation as we double down on our commitment to an emotionally healthy workforce. The aim of the survey continues to be a benchmark for future surveys to champion progress. This year Cram were the proud winners of the 2024 Xref Engage Award for Change Champions, recognising a marked improvement in our work practices and employee engagement. We continue to move through our Action Plan and provide regular updates around milestones.

Awards

The Cram Foundation was a winner in the 2023 Business Illawarra 'Outstanding Employee Award' category for our Nightshift Coordinator Christine Cross. Christine impressed the judges with her commitment to Cram's Participants in a role she has been in for over fifteen years. This external recognition celebrates our staff's ongoing efforts and increases the positive brand recognition of Cram in our wider community. Cram was a finalist in the Community Industry Awards for our Music Therapy Program and recognised for our sponsorship of the Accessible Viewing Platform on New Year's Eve and Australia Day at the Lord Mayor's Recognition Event.

2024 Staff Recognition event

Cram's annual staff recognition awards looked different in 2024 with an evening event to highlight the achievements of staff and to mark staff milestones. There was dinner, dancing and a photobooth making this year's recognition event, held on International Employee Appreciation Day certainly one to remember. Congratulations to all our deserving winners!



2024 STAFF RECOGNITION AWARDS



Teamwork Award

- ♥ Winner - The 5G team, Team Leader, Tara Dingle
- ♥ Highly Commended – The Nowra team, Team Leader Michelle Spears



Outstanding Attitude

- ♥ Winner - Erika Covarubbias
- ♥ Highly Commended - Brenda Hughes



People's Choice

- ♥ Winner - Kevin Lee
- ♥ Highly Commended - Krissann Caines



Person Centred Award

- ♥ Winner - Jessica Sleiman
- ♥ Highly Commended - Sonya Zentveld Smith



Innovation

- ♥ Winner - Shannarra Sangricoli
- ♥ Highly commended - Nicole Mwangi and Kobi Street



WHS award

- ♥ Winner - Susan Hambly

TENURE MILESTONES

We are honouring 15 Cram staff members that have reached Tenure Milestone awards in the past 12 months. We are so fortunate to have such a high level of experience and knowledge at Cram.

5 YEARS		10 YEARS	15 YEARS	20 YEARS
♥ Dorothy Hopa	♥ Ellen Green	♥ Valentina Stojanovska	♥ Sarah Tiyce	♥ Ann-Maree Howley
♥ Brenda Hughes	♥ Karen Burdett	♥ Natalie Rubbo	♥ Gail Giblett	
♥ Sonya Zentveld-Smith	♥ Melanie Lamont	♥ Leanne Gilbert		
♥ Alan Bunker	♥ Charissa Bennett			
♥ Chelcie Castro				



34 New Staff Hired



6 Induction Groups Held



64 Interviews Held



2212 Total hours of training delivered



313,204
Total Hours Worked



5 CEO Updates:



2660 Hours worked by our Health Support team during the period

CRAM TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Cram invests heavily in the Training and Development of its current and incoming staff. This links to our quality of service and the high level of professionalism for those who work for us.



Step-Up Program

A number of training opportunities were offered to Cram staff to upskill and expand their qualifications. Cram continued to offer the Cram Step Up Leadership Program, which provides access to mentors and exposure to many areas of the business, developing knowledge, experience and skills. This program is aimed at staff who have leadership aspirations and are looking for further career development opportunities. Cram's commitment to provide these opportunities to staff has made this program extremely successful.

Congratulations to the following Cram staff for successfully completing the 2023/24 Cram Step-Up Leadership Program:

- ♥ Davey Mavundukure
- ♥ David Mahony
- ♥ Rachel Burnett



Training Events and programs held in the past year

- ♥ High Intensity/ Emergency Evac Training & Bullying/ Harassment Training
- ♥ Health Safety Representative Training
- ♥ Accidental Counsellor
- ♥ Individual Support Plan Training
- ♥ Hydro Rescue
- ♥ Transition Plan Training
- ♥ Midazolam Training
- ♥ Active Support Training
- ♥ Gastro Training
- ♥ Vehicle Strapping
- ♥ Driving Assessment/Refresh
- ♥ Mealtime Management
- ♥ Complex Dysphagia
- ♥ Behaviour Support Training
- ♥ Enema Training
- ♥ Gastro Training
- ♥ Code of Conduct Training
- ♥ Personal Care
- ♥ Seizure Management
- ♥ Bespoke Participant Training
- ♥ Oral Suctioning
- ♥ Manual Handling
- ♥ Complex Bowel & Digestion
- ♥ Lunch and Learn
- ♥ Governance Training



Online Modules – Refresher Training

- ♥ Epilepsy Management
- ♥ Complaints Handling Process
- ♥ Cross Infection
- ♥ Covid-19 Update Training
- ♥ Documentation
- ♥ Skin Integrity
- ♥ Role of the OCV
- ♥ Restrictive Practices
- ♥ Participant Privacy and Dignity
- ♥ Outbreak Readiness
- ♥ On Call and After Hours
- ♥ NDIS Videos
- ♥ Medication Modules
- ♥ Human Rights Learning Module
- ♥ Human Resources Module



CRAM IN THE COMMUNITY

The Cram Foundation again advocated for people with a disability both in our local communities and on more of a national scale. Engaging with the government, politicians and other community organisations on all disability related issues. Cram continues to be part of the Illawarra Disability Alliance with CEO, Karen Burdett, regularly attending their meetings. This group of not-for-profit disability service providers work together to ensure better outcomes for people with a disability and the industry as a whole.

Cram continued its relationship with many business and community groups, attending industry events and maintaining key memberships.

- ♥ Business Illawarra
- ♥ Illawarra Disability Alliance
- ♥ Illawarra Women in Business
- ♥ The Illawarra Connection
- ♥ Attended the Illawarra Disability Options, School Careers Expos and Job Fairs
- ♥ Cram CEO, Karen Burdett remained in her role on the Illawarra Regional Advisory Committee of the NSW Business Chamber.
- ♥ Leadership Illawarra Program – for the sixth year, CEO Karen Burdett acted as a mentor on this program.
- ♥ Stanwell Park Sea Eels Swim Club – our relationship with this club continues to go from strength to strength. We are overwhelmed by their generosity.
- ♥ Wollongong Conservatorium of Music – we are so proud to be strengthening this partnership through our Music Therapy program.







FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial year end 2023 – 2024 produced an operating deficit of \$188,838.



Total income \$21,599,787

- NDIA
- Participant fees
- Intern earnings, donations, insurance payments and other



Total Expenditure \$21,788,625

- Employee expenses
- Operating expenses
- Depreciation and interest expenses



Total Assets

- \$12,579,615 of which \$6,495,989 were current assets, comprised primarily of cash reserves
- \$6,083,626 being non-current assets comprising of buildings, right of use assets, motor vehicles and furniture/equipment.
- Total liabilities were \$4,313,259 of which \$2,611,704 were current.
- Net Assets \$8,266,356





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FOUNDATION
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