

2019-2020

CEO Report

Our Mission is to support people to live a healthy life, in a safe and affordable home, with income to support their needs and the opportunity to realise their potential.

This year we worked with more than 56,000 people in the areas of Home, Learning, Working, Justice, and Health and Disability.

We are a national team, with some 550 staff spread across more than 50 locations and 4 states.

The year in review

In any year, SYC is an organisation that knows how important it is for people to have access to quality, timely and appropriate supports.

This year we have all been reminded of the absolute necessity of a safe and appropriate home. Many people now have a new appreciation for how easy it is for anyone to find themselves out of work – and that getting back into work may not be so easy. We need to ensure that these are lessons not soon forgotten.

Our data reflects that COVID-19 increased demand for our employment services and housing support. We also saw an increase in people seeking our support for the first time.

The profile of those who need our support also continues to change. Our client base is getting older, more culturally diverse and more likely to be female.

NDIS Registration

For much of our history, we have worked with people with disability or mental ill-health. Today, around a fifth of all our clients have disability and a further 10% report a mental illness. We are pleased to now be working with clients as a registered NDIS provider. In this first year we have been primarily supporting people to learn about the NDIS, become registered themselves and get the most out of their plans. We have found significant need among young people who are also experiencing homelessness and other forms of crisis or instability in their life. We are fortunate to be in a position to support and empower this particularly vulnerable group, through our integrated services.

Our Voice

We have continued to champion and shape the conversation around how more people in Australia can experience stability and prosperity in their lives.

During the year in review, we reconvened our My First Job Working Groups, with new members from a range of impressive organisations. Long-term youth unemployment was unacceptably high, even before the current pandemic. The group of business leaders aims to assess the core drivers of this trend and promote sustainable practices that advantage young employees into the future. The Working Group findings are set to be released in the 2020-21 reporting year.

We have also worked hard to advocate for young people throughout the reform of the homelessness sector. Our 62 years of experience makes us sure that people under 25 require a response that is more intensive and age-appropriate, in order to avoid a cycle of homelessness and instability for the rest of their life.

Performance

We have seen a return to surplus, allowing SYC to sustain its investment in resources to advantage the people we serve. Some of these investments include the purchase of our own Head Office at Kent Town and our facilitation of the My First Job Working Group. By the time of this report being published, we will have also bought a new home for our Adelaide CBD youth services and committed to another round of the Sticking Together Project in Logan, Queensland.

We also continue to invest in data and insights across our organisation, to inform and improve our own services, as well as contributing to policy and sector changes.

Community Benefit Value

SYC is intentional about the impact it has on the world and we are very clear on what we are trying to do. We ensure our activities link to the outputs achieved by the people we support, which then leads to meaningful outcomes that create lasting impact.

Above and beyond our financial performance, we work hard to make sure that what we do is empirically effective at fostering wellbeing, independence and opportunity for all Australians. We measure our work and we use our data and insights to design and develop better services.

For every dollar of funding that the government invests in SYC programs, we calculate the expected benefit that we generate for the community.

To calculate this return on investment, we focus on the outcomes that are known to be strong indicators of long-term independence.

We can determine the financial value of these outcomes by both avoided costs and future savings.

For example, we know that when we can help someone find a safe place to live, they are less likely to need the health care system and our community saves money.

When we help someone find a job, they will need less welfare support and can also go on to create more value and income for the community.

This approach allows us to effectively improve people's quality of life, and the productivity of the community. It also shows how SYC is an excellent use of Australia's resources because our work delivers substantial social, economic and environmental value.

Our Strategy

We have come to the end of the Show Your Colours era of our strategic plan. As a Board and Executive team, we are now working to clarifying SYC's value proposition in a changing world.

The timeframe for our new strategic outlook will be to 2030. It is important for us to have an eye to the future as to how services are designed, contracted and delivered. We aspire to have the people we support experience long-term wellbeing and independence. Our community deserves organisations who are brave enough to think beyond budget and contract cycles to achieve the best outcomes.

Only two years from the end of this reporting period, the current jobactive contract will end. We have tendered successfully for employment services several times now and will be preparing to do so again. We know it will be important for organisations like ours to truly understand and engage with data, insights and the digital transformation of our sector.

Behind the scenes, our support teams are focused on the continual improvement of our internal management and governance structures. Considerable work has already been done to implement a fit-for-purpose Integrated Management System, along with the upgrade of our Human Resources and Payroll systems.

Thank you

I would like to sincerely thank every person who works at SYC, helping Australians lead better lives.

SYC is a great place to work. We recently surveyed our staff and heard that 76% would rather be working for SYC than any other organisation. This is a great testament to the quality of our teams and leadership at all levels.

I would like to thank our Chair, David Hallett, for his leadership, his friendship, his counsel and his unwavering support for me in my role. Thank you as well to our Board Members who have given generously of their time and expertise, particularly in shaping the future strategy.

Paul Edginton
CEO