



**ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**



**WE KNOW NEURO**





# ABOUT MSWA

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MSWA provides vital support and services to people in Western Australia living with a neurological condition. This includes people living with multiple sclerosis, stroke, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, motor neurone disease, and acquired brain injury, to name a few.

MSWA was formed nearly 50 years ago by a group of people with MS committed to helping others access information and support. Today, MSWA has a team of over 1000 staff who work passionately to provide the best possible care to those we serve, right across the metropolitan area and regional centres of Western Australia.

We offer the person immediate support from the time of diagnosis, for the entirety of their journey.

Our support falls under three main categories:

- / **Services** – we provide education and information for the newly diagnosed, through to specialist nursing, physiotherapy, counselling, occupational therapy, welfare assistance and in-home support.
- / **Accommodation** – we operate High-Support Accommodation Facilities with 24-hour care in Butler, Fern River, Hamilton Hill and Treendale, as well as Respite Facilities in City Beach and Treendale, with plans to expand further.
- / **Neurological research** – MSWA is proud to be Western Australia's leading contributor to neurological research. This year we have contributed a record-breaking \$4 million to research, which we believe has lead us closer to finding the cause, better treatments, and hopefully one day a cure for many neurological conditions.

All of this would not be possible without the help of our loyal supporters.

We hope this Report will provide valuable insight into our current activities, and our plans to provide a brighter future for Western Australians living with a neurological condition.

# MSWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## ROS HARMAN

President  
Ex Officio of All Committees



## BILL HASSELL AM JP

Senior Vice President  
Chair of Corporate Governance  
Committee  
Committee Member: Finance  
Property & Investment, Research



## HORST BEMMERL

Vice President  
Chair of Research Committee  
Committee Member:  
Finance Property & Investment,  
Corporate Governance, Audit & Risk



## BHAVESH MORAR

Treasurer  
Chair of Finance Property  
& Investment Committee  
Committee Member:  
Audit & Risk



## DR GREG BROTHERSON (VALE)

Chair of Editorial Committee  
Committee Member:  
Finance Property & Investment,  
Member Services, Audit & Risk,  
Research



## LIAM ROCHE

Chair of Audit & Risk Committee  
Committee Member:  
Finance Property & Investment,  
Corporate Governance



## MICHAEL FAY

Chair of Member Services  
Committee  
Committee Member:  
Fundraising, Research



## PROF. BILL CARROLL AM

Medical Advisor  
Committee Member:  
Editorial



## DAVID JONES

Committee Member:  
Member Services,  
Corporate Governance



## MICHAEL LINTO

Committee Member:  
Finance Property & Investment,  
Member Services, Fundraising,  
Research



## JASON JORDAN

Committee Member:  
Member Services, Fundraising,  
Editorial, Research



## ANDREW STRELEIN

Committee Member:  
Audit & Risk



## JESSICA O'NEIL

Committee Member:  
Corporate Governance



## JASON BROTHERSON

Chair of Fundraising Committee  
Committee Member:  
Finance Property & Investment



## GREG BRINDLE

Retired March 2021

## NEBO FRANICH

Retired December 2020



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**ROS HARMAN**

2021 has been a challenging year in many ways, but nevertheless a successful one for MSWA.

COVID-19 had an impact on our face-to-face events, but I am happy to report that we were able to provide a record number of Member and Client services. Throughout 2020/2021, we provided 876,848 hours of service to people with neurological conditions. These services are the key to Clients' wellbeing and range from physiotherapy, occupational therapy and nursing advice to counselling and outreach activities. We were also able to continue to provide in-home care such as cleaning, social support and nursing.

Our accommodation facilities have all been functioning well and have been full on many occasions. We are in the process of building a new high-support accommodation facility in Albany, which will also include a Services Centre for Clients in the Great Southern region. We are also finalising plans for a new facility in Shenton Park and, further down the line, one in the southern metropolitan area.

We have continued to provide services to people with NDIS plans, and have seen 335 newly-funded Clients coming to us for services in the past year. People with NDIS plans are increasingly choosing MSWA to provide their services, which is a pleasing validation of the good work we do.

The total number of Clients, from all funding types, coming to us for services and support this year is 2,403.







We posted a record revenue of \$112,459,567 for the year. It is humbling to realise that despite the COVID-19 restrictions, our supporters continued to fundraise and buy raffle tickets or Mega Home Lottery tickets in large numbers, providing us with a substantial income which we can use to serve our Clients.

Off the back of our 2020/2021 success, we have been able to make a record-breaking commitment to neurological research of \$10 million for the coming year, the largest contribution to neurological research by a non-government organisation in Australia. This contribution will go to researchers in Western Australia, and to MS Research Australia, which will distribute to researchers around the nation, and internationally for vital research into progressive MS. We are very proud of our work on the research front, and hope it will lead to improved treatments and ultimately a cure for these conditions.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors and our CEO for their hard work in keeping our organisation running well.

We look forward to continuing this success in coming years, both in provision of services and contribution to vital neurological research.

**AT MSWA, WE ARE READY. AT MSWA, WE KNOW NEURO.**



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

**MARCUS STAFFORD AM**

As the outgoing CEO, it is beyond pleasing that MSWA has delivered a record year against all measures. Record revenues, net profit/surplus, assets and net assets decorate the organisation's financial statements and balance sheet. But they are the enabler. They are not the purpose. We hold our heads up high after delivering record results in all aspects of service delivery and research for people with neurological conditions.

The focus of the broader team has been unflinching. In a world full of peripheral noise, not least of which has been the impact of COVID-19, managers and staff have remained determined to deliver on our core charter.

The key aspects of that charter are simple. The delivery of Client services, the provision of respite and accommodation, and the funding of research. Yet behind those simple objectives lies a complicated structure that requires both the dedication and professionalism of our staff to deliver.

## **CLIENT SERVICES**

Client services range from counselling, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, nursing, care support and all points in between. Straightforward in itself, yet for a growing part of that service provision, falling under the mantle of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The Scheme remains the greatest social reform in the history of our nation, but carries complications that require the careful navigation of our highly trained and qualified specialists. Against that backdrop, services delivered were the highest in MSWA's history, with 8% growth year on year.



## RESPIRE AND ACCOMMODATION

Respite, either in-home or within an MSWA facility, is the glue that can hold it all together. If we think that an able-bodied life today is more complicated, imagine the challenges of leading a full life with a disability. In addition to in-home respite, our facilities at City Beach and Treendale were well occupied and provided the break that is so deserved and needed.

The accommodation footprint continues to grow, with further developments planned for both the Perth metropolitan and rural areas. The facilities are beyond comparison in Western Australia, and feedback from Clients and government signal our leadership role in shaping disability accommodation for all within our state.

## THE FUNDING OF RESEARCH

Dedicated sections of this Annual Report will provide appropriate levels of detail on our contribution to research. As the outgoing CEO, can I just say how proud I am to be a part of an organisation that has made a record-breaking contribution to vital research. This contribution makes us both the leader in our state and also 'number one' throughout the nation today and indeed, in the history of Australia.

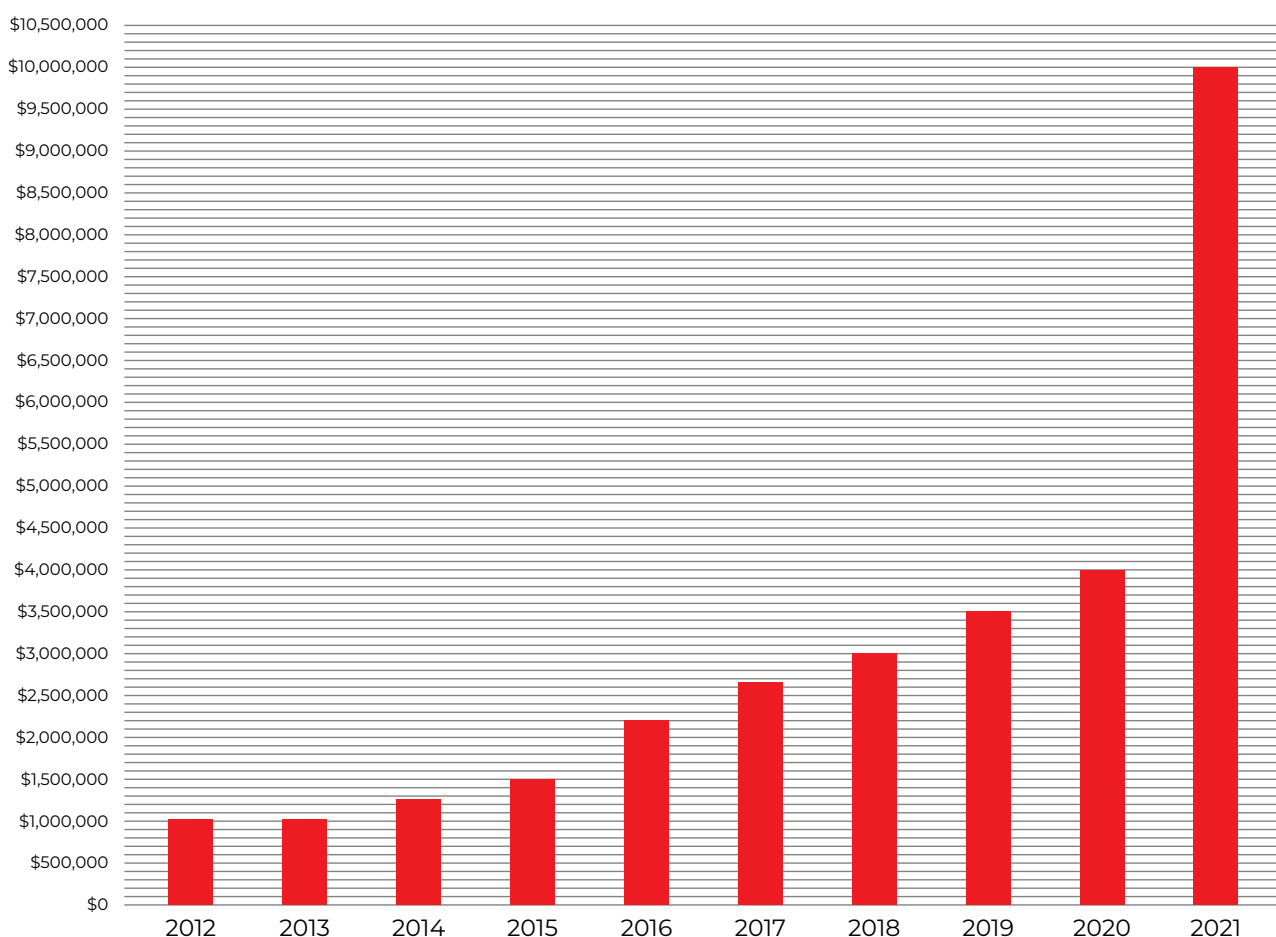
People with neurological conditions provide the inspiration for our work. They are also a poignant reminder of how important our work is. However, good intentions or the opinions of the CEO alone won't get us where we need to be.

## MSWA's outstanding year stems from the broad team effort.

My thanks go to our Board of Directors, management, staff and volunteers for their dedication and hard work. To our commercial, government and research partners for the important part that they play in the broader scheme of things. And to people with neurological conditions who we serve. The challenge of 'bringing home' record results is there, but is nothing compared with the challenges that people with neurological conditions face on a daily basis. Sometimes obvious. Sometimes hidden. Always there. They are the team's inspiration.

As we roll into the years ahead, there will be a new CEO at the helm. I am confident that they will take MSWA from strength to strength. I hope that I've done my bit to help lay secure foundations.

## RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS







# MEMBER & CLIENT SERVICES REPORT

**MICHAEL FAY**

In my first term as Chair of the Member and Client Services Committee I am pleased to report 2020-2021 has been another exceptional year for MSWA. Record revenue enabled MSWA to boost investment in Client services, clinical research, and capital works for people living with neurological conditions. This outcome has been achieved in a year still severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It goes without saying that effective service delivery in the disability care sector relies heavily on a well-trained and motivated workforce. COVID-19 and an aging population have combined to create a very challenging recruitment market, particularly in the home support services area. To strengthen MSWA's status as an employer of choice, several recruitment and retention initiatives have been put in place in areas of employee benefits, training and workplace flexibility.

MSWA is developing new information and communications technology platforms to better integrate and streamline communication between managers, coordinators and Client support workers. For support workers these systems will be based around the use of smart phones and tablet apps, enabling improved communication whilst in the field. Managers and coordinators will also benefit from an improved ability to consolidate and analyse activity data, providing MSWA with the information to improve the delivery of supports and service needs of all Clients.

Service hours increased by 8% this year, reaching a total of 876,848 hours delivered. Another remarkable achievement, given shutdowns still occurred in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions.







Our annual Client Satisfaction Survey returned results of 90% of respondents satisfied with MSWA. A pleasing result given current circumstances. The organisation continues to review and address Client concerns identified in the survey.

MSWA has seen a steady increase in the take-up of Clients with new and existing National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plans. Retention rates for Clients with existing plans remain high. As of July 2021, MSWA had 1,125 plans signed up, 335 of which were activated in the past year. MSWA continued to provide expert assistance to Clients navigating the NDIS application process.

Whilst the Western Australian component of the NDIS roll out has been substantially completed, issues associated with retaining the Scheme's stated aims of providing choice and flexibility in accessing disability support remain. MSWA maintained a leadership role in ensuring the voices of Clients were heard by government. In a recent example, MSWA was involved in the successful sector-wide pushback on the proposed NDIS plan assessment process. The National Disability Insurance Agency is now reviewing its position on Scheme reforms designed to address Federal Government concerns that projected cost will become unsustainable. MSWA will continue to advocate for the best interest of Clients.

We have also been growing our service delivery across our Home Care Packages (HCP) for people over 65 living with a neurological condition.

The organisation continued to grow its built asset portfolio. Major projects in construction or early planning stages are:

- / The Albany 10-bed High-Support Accommodation and Services Centre which is nearing completion. This Facility is scheduled to be operating by March 2022.
- / The Shenton Park (Montario Quarter) 20-unit High-Support Accommodation facility is in early design development stage with a current construction start scheduled for mid-2022.

Both projects will provide quality care accommodation for Clients living with neurological conditions. The Albany facility will also incorporate a Services Centre, enabling MSWA to enhance care and support services for Clients living in the Great Southern region.

A Rockingham/Mandurah Services and Accommodation Facility is anticipated as the next project to enter a formal acquisition process, with a provisional completion date in early 2024.

My thanks go to Nicola Washington, our General Manager Member and Client Services, and Sue Shapland, General Manager of Strategic Supports and Residential Options, and their teams for their continued exceptional efforts in another challenging year. I would also like to thank Ros Harman for her efforts in chairing the Member and Client Services Committee. Ros stepped down during the year to concentrate on her MSWA presidential commitments.

My thanks go to the all MSWA staff whose great work is key to providing the care that people with neurological conditions need to live the best life possible.



# BRAND, MARKETING & SALES REPORT

**JASON BROTHERSON**

Whether it's buying a ticket, participating in an event or making a donation, supporting MSWA's fundraising efforts enables us to be ready to make a meaningful difference to the lives of Western Australians living with neurological conditions.

I am pleased to report this year's result of \$58.9m in total fundraising revenue. This is an increase of 33% from the previous year and the largest fundraising result on record for the organisation. This is a strong result, achieved in the face of increasing competition not just locally, but from interstate and online lotteries and fundraising events entering our state.

## LOTTERIES & RAFFLES CONTINUE TO GROW

Here in Western Australia, all *Multi-Choice Raffle*, *Luxury Lottery* and *Mega Home Lottery* campaigns sold out early. It is pleasing to see the efforts to continually improve and add value to each lottery met so positively by our supporters.

This year MSWA extended its lottery support to add Queensland to what we already do in South Australia and Victoria – conducting lotteries on behalf of people living with MS in those states. These markets continue to be heavily contested, leading to mixed results across the home and car lotteries we manage with not all lotteries selling out. Importantly, all lotteries were profitable and delivered a net contribution to continue supporting Queenslanders, South Australians and Victorians living with MS.





## A STRONG RETURN OF OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS

COVID-19 continued to impact our events calendar this financial year, noted by the cancellation of our 2020 Annual Dinner Auction and rescheduling of events in Albany. Agile management combined with the strong reputation of our events delivered some great results for MSWA.

Participation in our *MSWA Ocean Ride 2020* increased by 59% from the previous year, with over 2,300 riders taking part. Fundraising for the event increased year-on-year by an astounding 70%, highlighting the impact COVID-19 had on last year's event. Our other signature event *Step Up for MSWA*, cancelled last year due to COVID-19, ran successfully in June 2021 and helped us end the year with a record-setting 1,300 steppers supporting MSWA.

As MSWA continues to strengthen its presence in Albany, it was pleasing to see the local community respond so positively to our *Albany Swim* and *Albany Ride* events in the city.

MSWA again extended the invitation for Western Australians to take part in the national *MS Readathon*. Nationally, this online challenge raised \$3.2m for people living with MS. And here in Western Australia we saw an increase of over 200% from last year in families participating and fundraising.

## DELIVERING GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE

Our 40-seat contact centre provides important services across the organisation – from fundraising to managing our NDIS enquiry line. Over 1.7 million inbound and outbound calls were handled over the year by the centre. The strength of our contact centre's capabilities was proven with MSWA winning the Western Australian Government's competitive tender for providing Telephone Assisted Voting services for the 2021 state election. The successful delivery of this contract is expected to support further 'fee for service' use of our contact centre services.

## STRENGTHENING MSWA'S BRAND REPUTATION

Our iconic *We are ready. We know neuro.* campaign again helped connect our brand with the general public, raising awareness of our organisation and what we do and the impact we make. Key metrics of awareness (both general brand and as a disability service provider) and understanding (supporting all neurological conditions) saw increases from previous year.

We acknowledged the 'World Days' for MS, Parkinson's, Huntington's, MND and stroke to bring further attention of these neurological conditions to the WA public. This continues to support our strategy for arresting the decline in donations and bequests, by engaging new supporters.



## WE ARE READY FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

As the newly appointed Chair of the MSWA Fundraising Committee, I present this report on behalf of the previous Chair, Greg Brindle, who retired from the MSWA Board during this year. I thank him for his longstanding commitment to MSWA and for being a guiding force to the fundraising efforts at MSWA.

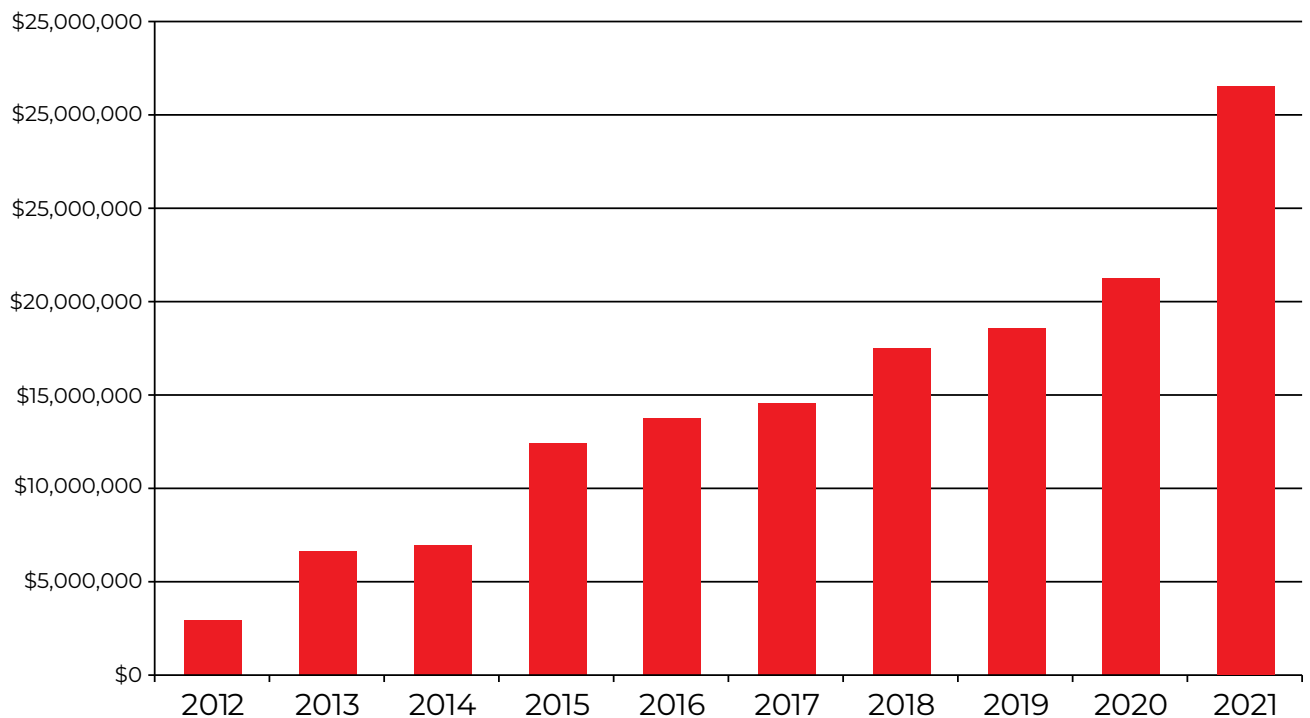
I would also like to acknowledge the MSWA Board and the members of our Fundraising Committee for their support of Greg, and the Brand, Marketing & Sales team over the year.

I extend my thanks to every member of the Brand, Marketing & Sales team, led by General Manager Paul Cavanagh. There is a tremendous amount of expertise, professionalism, dedication and sheer hard work that goes into each and every campaign, project and event in order to achieve results such as these.

Thank you also to all our incredible volunteers, businesses and community organisations who support us in so many ways throughout the year.

And finally, thank you to our loyal fundraising community. We remain extremely appreciative of all your ongoing support, and would like to especially acknowledge Kim & Anna Brotherson, Maria Fazio, the Luca Family, Pharmacy 777, the Ruggiero Foundation, Vera Reeve, Mitchell Cera, Aaron Treadwell, Reaghan Thorne and Shane Elton.

## NET FUNDRAISING INCOME







## ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR LUCINDA BLACK

*"The people with MS I've met are so enthusiastic about making positive changes in their lives. And, as a researcher, that's really inspiring for me as well."*

Lucinda Black is a nutrition researcher at Curtin University and MSWA has been investing in her vital neurological research since 2016.

Lucinda is currently leading a research program in diet and MS, here in WA. She explains that the program has two areas of focus: "One is to help strengthen the evidence we have around diet and MS so that we can better understand what diets, foods or nutrients might be beneficial for people. The second focus is sharing the information in a clear and accessible way.

"What's really exciting," says Lucinda, "is that people with MS in WA have been so keen to be involved in research. They are volunteering their time, they have experience, they have knowledge and ideas. Without that input, we wouldn't be producing such high quality research."

Lucinda explains that there's a really positive feeling amongst herself and other WA-based neurological researchers because of MSWA's support.

"Because of the high level of funding, we're able to start research here in WA and that's a real benefit for people living with neurological conditions here.

"MSWA has funded my research for the past six years and they've just announced a huge commitment of \$10m to neurological research in WA for this coming year. I'm absolutely delighted to be part of this funding. It couldn't be a better time to be a researcher for neurological conditions in WA."

Lucinda will use the funding to continue to grow a strong team here in WA who are working to answer the many unanswered questions people have about the role of diet in the onset and progression of MS.

# TEEING UP FOR A NEW LIFE IN ALBANY

"I'd raced motocross for 11 years, had a state title for BMX, I played off a 4 handicap at golf. I was very sporty," recalls Kim Graham. "So to suddenly discover I had this thing called MS was a kick in the guts."

Kim lives in the small wheatbelt town of Kondinin and has been living with multiple sclerosis since 2001. He was initially diagnosed when pins and needles started to spread through his legs. These days, he's lost use of his legs completely and relies on a wheelchair to get around. Kim is keen to point out that – being a devoted Fremantle Dockers fan – his wheelchair is purple.

A country boy through-and-through, Kim spent most of his days working on farms. He now lives in the local retirement village, with a care worker who comes in to help him dress, shower and do chores.

Now in his fifties, Kim's trademark good-humour and charisma are still going strong. He is a popular and regular visitor to MSWA's Margaret Doody Respite House in City Beach.

On his last visit to Margaret Doody House, MSWA staff arranged for him to try the ParaGolfer chair at Wembley Golf Course. Kim explains how it felt to swing a golf stick for the first time in 20 years. "It felt wicked," he says with a grin. "I had tears in my eyes."

"I've still got my old golf sticks in the living room. I clean them regularly, and I'll look at them and say 'one day I'll get to swing you again'."

However, Kim is realistic about the future. "The MS is getting worse. It's harder and harder to live by myself. I find it harder every day to do things. It's gonna happen," he says, speaking about the possibility of supported accommodation.

Kim's sister lives on a farm near Bluff Knoll, so when she heard that MSWA was building a new \$7m residential facility in Albany for people living with neurological conditions, she began making enquiries about getting Kim on the waitlist for one of the 10 high-support accommodation units that will be available in 2022.

Pending NDIS approval, Kim could soon move into his own unit, with access to onsite 24/7 support, as well being next door to MSWA's newest state-of-the-art Services Centre. The thought of such easy access to physiotherapy, the Outreach group, nursing and occupational therapy is comforting to Kim. "You don't get nothing like that in the bush," he explains.

The milder Albany summers and being closer to his sister and her family are also a draw for him.

Whilst Kim is saddened by the thought of leaving his close-knit community, he is grateful that a move to high-support accommodation in Albany might be possible, and that MSWA can continue to support him in the years to come. He winks as he says, "Tell 'em to paint one room purple and I'll have that one!"



# FOCUSING ON LIFE'S LITTLE VICTORIES

"It's a bit of a mystery how Steve got it," remarks Ann Wyatt, speaking of her husband Stephen's Huntington's disease diagnosis.

Huntington's disease is a genetic condition, in which an elongated Huntingtin gene is passed down from a parent. In Steve's case, he is the first in his family to have been diagnosed with the condition.

The couple suspect that Steve's dad passed the gene on to him. However, Steve's dad lived until he was 91, which would be unusual for someone with Huntington's disease, adding to the puzzle.

"His neurologist has concluded Steve just developed it. It's still a mystery," explains Ann.

Steve is thankful that the other members of his family, including his brother and three daughters, have all tested negative. The gene will stop with him.

Steve and Ann raised their daughters in their gorgeous family home of 30 years in Bull Creek. Over the years, Steve's work as a Certified Practicing Accountant in the offshore energy industry gave the family the opportunity to live and travel all over the world.

It was in his early 50s that Steve started experiencing a twitching in his eyes, then some involuntary arm movements. Investigations by the GP and various psychiatrists put it down to stress. Due to the lack of family history, no one picked up that it might be the result of an underlying neurological condition.

It was six years later that Steve was finally diagnosed with Huntington's, aged 58. His speech had begun to slur, which prompted a visit to a neurologist and a DNA blood test. Neither Ann nor Steven had ever heard of Huntington's disease – or 'Huntington's chorea', as it used to be known.

"We got in touch with MSWA straight away," says Ann. "I looked into the management of Huntington's disease and MSWA offered the most specialised help. The physios, OTs and speech therapists all know how to treat neurological conditions."

"They're excellent," adds Steve, who attends the MSWA Services Centre in Wilson. His NDIS plan covers his services and support needs, something the couple are grateful for.

Steve and Ann say they intentionally choose to look at the positive side of Steve's condition and the changes it has brought.

"We were actually quite lucky not knowing for so long," says Ann. "We might have been reluctant to do all the things we've done."

"Every day's a victory," declares Steve.



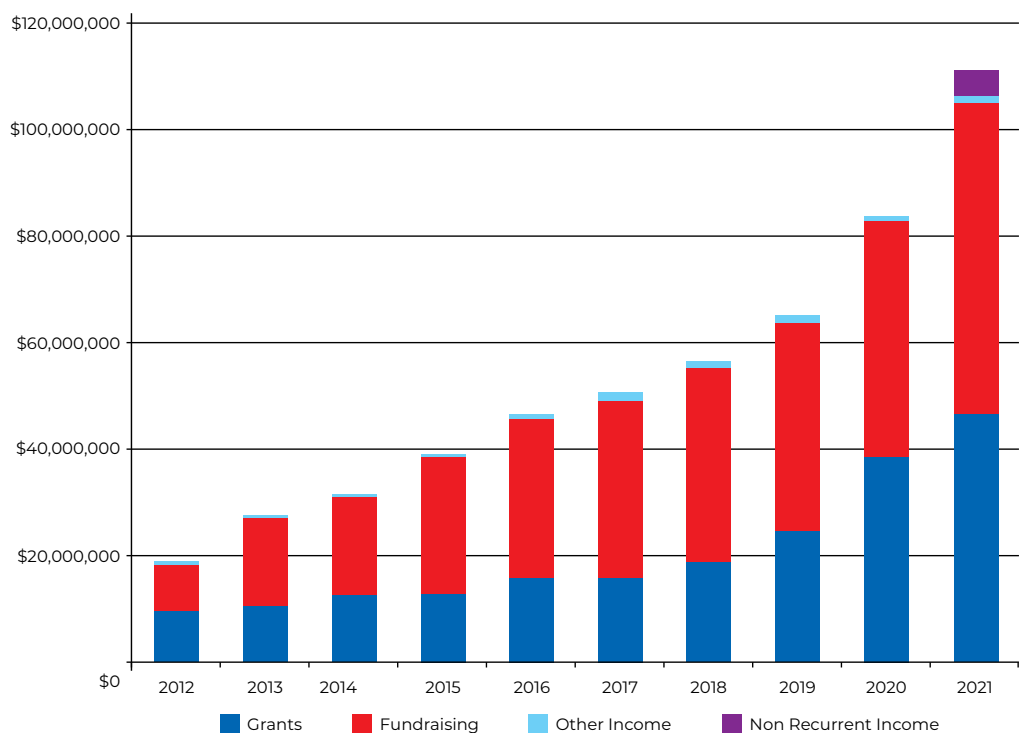
# TREASURER'S REPORT

## BHAVESH MORAR

It has been another successful year for MSWA, and it is with great pleasure that I present the Treasurer's Report together with the financial results for the year ended 30 June 2021.

Once again, MSWA delivered excellent financial results, supported by both the fundraising campaigns and the provision of NDIS services, resulting in the posting of a surplus for the year of \$26,557,020 and achieving record revenue of \$112,459,567. The total income from fundraising activities was \$58,897,676. Expenditure on services to neurological Clients was \$56,446,939.

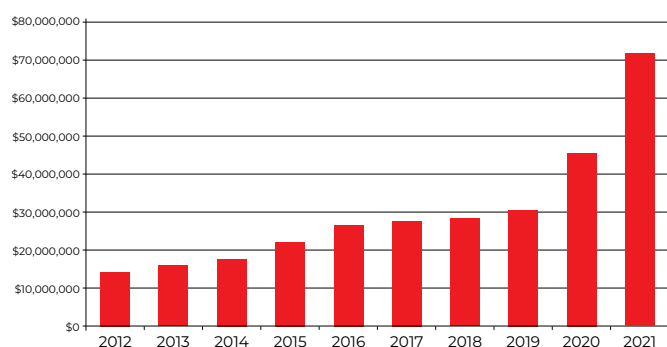
## TOTAL INCOME



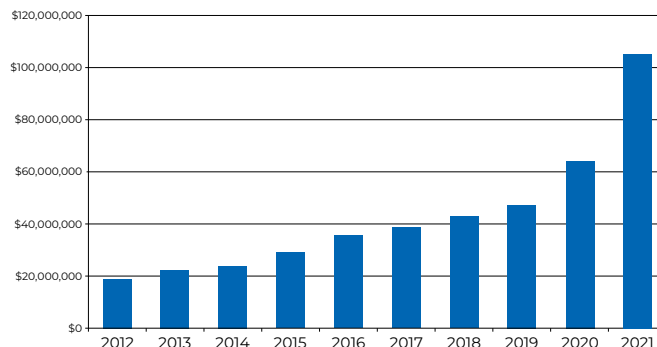
The MSWA balance sheet reflects a healthy increase in net assets to \$72,291,027 with total assets increasing to \$104,649,095. At MSWA we seek to establish guidelines and procedures to manage our assets in a way which creates long-term value. Our financial strength has been achieved through strategic planning, risk management, and budgetary and cost control.



## NET ASSETS



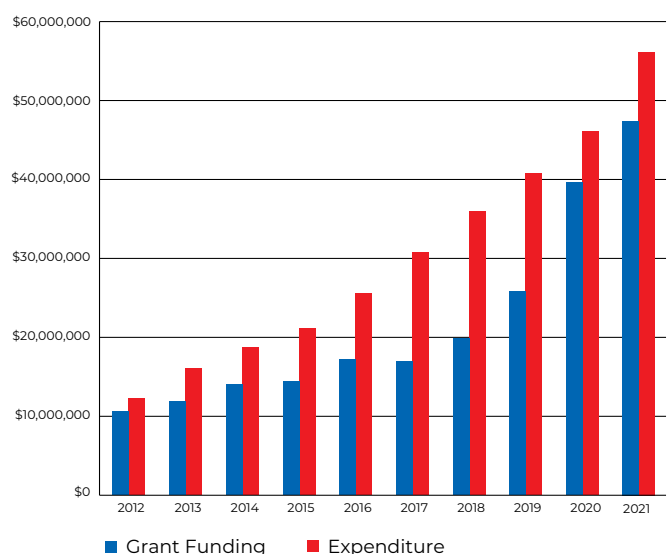
## TOTAL ASSETS



Our fundraising activities saw an increase in net surplus of 49% year on year. This result was achieved with the continuous improvements in our Multi-Choice Raffle and outstanding results achieved from the Mega Home Lottery and Luxury Lottery.

The net cost of services provided in community care increased by \$1,944,633 (10%), allied health services increased by \$1,404,905 (17%) and the accommodation centre services increased by \$493,199 (6%) due to increased demand. Through the success of the fundraising activities and the growth of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) income, we were able to increase services provided across the board, especially to community care and high-support accommodation. The following chart highlights how fundraising is used to supplement the cost of providing services for Client care.

## TOTAL SERVICES GRANT FUNDING & EXPENDITURE



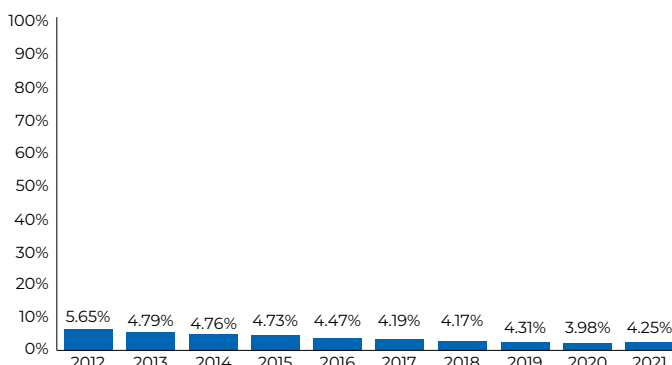
## HOW MEMBER AND CLIENT SERVICES COSTS ARE ALLOCATED

36% Community support (in-home care)	2% Counselling
15% High-support accommodation	1% Speech
17% Research	2% Social work and support work
5% Physiotherapy and massage	3% Admin and Information services
3% Occupational therapy	4% Client engagement
3% Respite	1% Community centre support
5% Facilities	1% Staff development
2% Nursing	

## ADMINISTRATION EXPENSE

The following chart shows the percentage of administration and centre costs (excluding corporate, non-cash and abnormal items). This is an excellent result, showing that MSAWA has maintained these costs consistently below 5% over the last nine years, reflecting prudent cost management and the benefits of increased scale.

Based on the consistent performance of MSAWA, our earnings and financial position are reflective of disciplined operations and prudent financial management.



NB: The administration cost excludes internal management charges



# AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT

**LIAM ROCHE**

I am pleased to have this opportunity as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee to present this report to Clients and stakeholders. I would also like to thank and acknowledge my fellow committee members for their significant contributions.

The role of the Audit & Risk Committee is to assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities in overseeing the organisation's financial reporting, internal control system, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, assessing risk parameters, and oversight of the risk management and control framework. The Committee is responsible for the external and internal audit programs and reviews the annual financial statements prior to their consideration by the Board.

During the year, the Audit & Risk Committee addressed the following key areas:

## **REVIEW OF THE CLINICAL GOVERNANCE RESIDENTIAL & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

The Committee engaged William Buck Consulting (WA) Pty Ltd to conduct an internal audit of MSWA's clinical governance and compliance processes for residential and respite care facilities. The objective of the audit was to assess MSWA's controls over clinical governance activities to determine whether these are effective for ensuring clear accountability and ownership; effective planning and resourcing; strong leadership, safety and excellence in residents' care.

The scope of the audit included the assessment of the following controls over clinical governance activities:

- / Staff members at the facilities and in the community have sufficient, relevant training and competencies
- / Documentation relating to medication, clinical and care requirements of the residents is recorded
- / Client wellbeing is proactively monitored
- / Universal precautions in place
- / Equipment usage and maintenance
- / Work Health & Safety procedures are followed, eg, evacuation practices and incident and plans are appropriately managed

It was pleasing to note that the final report had a number of positive findings, and that the low to medium level findings and recommendations have all been actioned by management.

## **REVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL**

The Committee engaged William Buck Consulting (WA) Pty Ltd to conduct an internal audit of MSWA's Human Resource and Payroll processes. The objective of the internal audit was to assess MSWA's controls over HR and payroll activities and processes to ensure employees are paid at the correct rate, hours paid reflect hours worked, accurate records of leave accruals and leave taken are maintained and that payroll is properly reviewed and approved before being processed. The final report was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee, and it was very pleasing to note many positive findings detailed during the review and that the low to medium level findings and recommendations have all been actioned by management.



## REVIEW OF THE FOUR LINES OF DEFENCE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE - WA AUDITOR GENERAL

In the pursuit of best practice and good governance the Committee noted the four lines of defence against fraud and corruption recommended by the WA Auditor General:

1. Internal control measures, such as good recordkeeping, segregation of duties and compliance with policy
2. Internal oversight and monitoring of internal controls, which are reported on
3. Internal audit and review
4. External audit, investigations and reviews

A review of the processes and procedures at MSWA confirmed that MSWA has robust internal controls with appropriate segregation of duties, financial delegation, approvals with reconciliations in place.

William Buck Accountants & Advisors conduct our internal audits, and the external audit is conducted by RSM Australia Pty Ltd. These organisations provide the independent, objective assurance that adds value to MSWA.

## COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE - GOVERNANCE

MSWA is committed to the achievement of compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. To assist with the ongoing monitoring a Compliance Schedule is reviewed at every Audit & Risk Committee Meeting. This document provides a high-level dashboard view of the status of all tasks associated with achieving compliance with the legislative, regulatory and quality standards that MSWA is obligated to uphold to be considered a best practice organisation. The Compliance Schedule includes indicators for legislation, regulations, governance, quality assurance, licences, insurances, and audits. The Compliance Schedule utilises a 'by exception' approach where traffic light dashboard indicators are used, and issues of material importance have detailed commentary.

## INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM

Internal audit is a key element of governance in any organisation and a valuable tool to manage risk effectively. The Internal Audit Program provides the Audit & Risk Committee, Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, senior executives and stakeholders with an independent view on whether an organisation has an appropriate risk and control environment.



The Committee has put in place a risk-based rolling plan of internal audit engagements that reflects a program of audits over a 3-year period. This approach is designed to allow flexibility to meet the needs of the organisation and ensures continuity of the internal audit function on an ongoing basis. The plan will maintain a mix of financial reporting control audits and those of an operational or strategic nature.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Committee has reviewed the annual financial statements with management and the external auditors. The Committee has discussed the application of the company's accounting policies, major transactions and any accounting issues with the external auditors. The Committee is satisfied as to the appropriateness of the policies adopted, the materiality of the judgments used and that they have been applied accurately. The Committee is pleased to advise that there were no matters to report to the Board in relation to MSWA's internal controls.

The Committee is satisfied that an ethical culture exists throughout the organisation, internal controls have been operating as designed, the Company's assets have been adequately safeguarded and that the internal and external auditors have been effective and independent throughout the period. The Committee is supportive of a Whistleblower Policy as an important component of good corporate governance. MSWA is committed to the highest standards of conduct in all our activities and supports a culture of honest and ethical behaviour.



# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

**BILL HASSELL AM JP**

The Board of MSWA has for many years appointed annually a Corporate Governance Committee and relied on that Committee for guidance and input in several areas.

The Board places importance on the operations of the Committee in seeking to ensure that MSWA operates within 'best practice' principles in its own Board and in the governance of MSWA.

The Charter of the Corporate Governance Committee is as follows:

## **CHARTER - CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

1. To review/revise Board and Committee Charters to ensure they are appropriate for the good governance of MSWA and to meet organisational objectives.
2. To consider and review organisational policies and receive reports on the policies operating in MSWA, and to recommend policies to the Board for adoption.
3. To provide relevant advice and recommendations to the Board on the Constitution.
4. Determine the independence of Directors and monitor the ongoing status of such Directors.
5. Consider questions of possible conflict of interest arising for Directors, review existing behaviour and ethical guidelines for Directors and recommend changes for adoption by the Board.
6. Oversee the process for the annual review by the Board of the Chief Executive Officer.
7. To keep abreast of developments in the corporate governance field and annually review/assess the corporate governance practices of the Board, recommending any proposed changes to the Board for approval.

With a number of complex issues confronted by MSWA it has been necessary and appropriate for MSWA's CEO to seek advice, guidance and input from MSWA's solicitors and in such cases the Committee is reassured in its assessments and advice to the Board.

The Committee meets from time to time as required. It also conducts its business electronically when appropriate or required by circumstances (eg, COVID-19 lockdown).

In 2020/2021, the Committee dealt with and advised the Board on the following matters:

- / A review of new policies. NOTE: Before being presented to the Committee, all policies (new and those for review) presented to the Committee are:
  - i. Prepared by senior managers of MSWA,
  - ii. Reviewed internally, and
  - iii. Reviewed by MSWA's lawyers.
- / A matter of the publicly expressed views of a Board member.
- / A matter of possible conflict of interest in a Board member holding an external position.
- / A review of the constitution proposed for MS Australia, the national body of MS Societies in Australia of which MSWA is a constituent part, and input was made.
- / A review of a substantial body of policies due for review under MSWA guidelines. Input was made from Committee members.

The Committee is always mindful that its role is to advise the Board.



# RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

**HORST BEMMERL**

I was pleased and excited to take up the role of Chairman of the Research Committee for MSWA. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the former Chair, Ros Harman, for her committed effort in the role over the past few years.

Funding quality research is a vital part of MSWA's vision and purpose and has become a key priority. It has been pleasing that MSWA has reported record contributions to research each year in the published Annual Reports. We were proud that in 2020/2021 MSWA contributed a record-breaking \$4 million to fund research into multiple sclerosis (MS) and other neurological conditions.

Such is our commitment that in the financial year ahead MSWA is able to break a new record by committing \$10 million to neurological research. The research funding allocation will be split with \$7.4 million allocated to research for multiple sclerosis and \$2.6 million allocated to research for other neurological conditions.

These contributions to research make MSWA the largest non-government funder of neurological research in Australia.

We have continued to fund a number of key Western Australian research projects, several of which are already established, but we are also funding new studies and trials that have exciting implications for neurological research and those affected; and being in WA, the community has opportunities to participate. Our WA research institutions include:

- / The Perron Institute
- / Curtin University (including CHIRI)
- / Edith Cowan University
- / Telethon Kids Institute

Elsewhere, our partnership with Multiple Sclerosis Australia (MSA) continues to strengthen, with them allocating funding through 'gold standard' processes for research projects around Australia. For this reason, we have increased our annual allocation for Australian projects and designated \$1 million of this to the International Progressive MS Alliance.

Our ongoing significant contributions to research, particularly for the coming year, will assist in supercharging MS research in Australia and enable researchers to identify new treatments for people living with MS, in particular those with progressive forms of the disease. It will also allow researchers to investigate ways to enhance the brain's defences against MS and the repair of damaged myelin.

Our funding also helps researchers to better understand what causes some diseases, how they progress, and to find and evaluate novel treatments for people living with a range of neurological conditions. This directly benefits people in WA as they have the opportunity to participate in trials and benefit from the results.

MSWA's commitment to research helps us get one step closer to having a better understanding of the causes of neurological conditions, find new treatments, realise potential cures, and very importantly provide hope for those affected by neurological conditions.

My gratitude and thanks are extended to all those people who support MSWA through its many lotteries and events, or through donations and bequests. I would also like to thank the MSWA Research Committee Members and Board Directors for their support and efforts.



# SUPPORTERS

MSWA is able to better deliver our core purpose of supporting Western Australians living with neurological conditions, through our continued focus on working with research bodies, businesses and government. Whether supporting our fundraising initiatives or delivery of our disability services, we thank each and every one of these organisations for their direct financial or in-kind support.

## RESEARCH PARTNERS

We are committed to improving the lives of people with neurological conditions through continued neurological research both on a local, national and international level.



## KEY SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all these organisations, MSWA is extremely appreciative for the ongoing support you provide.



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Communities



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Health



**WE KNOW NEURO**

[mswa.org.au](http://mswa.org.au)

T: 08 6454 3222

# WE ARE READY

**WHATEVER YOUR NEURO,  
WHATEVER YOUR NEEDS.**



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