

2020

ANNUAL REPORT





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VISION

An Australian community free of the stigma and restrictions of incontinence.



Introduction

The Continence Foundation of Australia, established in 1989, is a not-for-profit organisation and the national peak body for incontinence management, education, awareness, information and advocacy. The Continence Foundation has representation in each Australian state and territory.

The Foundation is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health under the National Continence Program and Health Peak and Advisory Bodies Program. We also rely on the generous support of our Members and partners to carry out our work.

Mission

To represent and advocate for Australians affected by, or at risk of, bladder and bowel control problems and pelvic floor dysfunction. To serve all Australians by promoting bladder and bowel health. This will be achieved by:

- working with consumers, professionals, industry and government
- facilitating access to continence support services through advocacy
- providing evidence-based information and advice
- building the capacity and capability of the workforce, and
- supporting research to achieve the Foundation's objectives.

Principles

- Enable through information
- Leadership
- Partnership and collaboration
- Capacity building
- Integrity and accountability
- Best practice

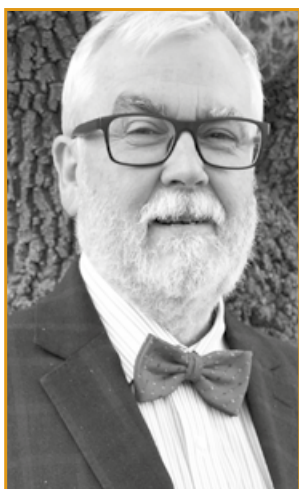
Objectives

- Increase community awareness
- Further develop policy and leadership
- Strengthen partnerships
- Educate the workforce
- Support and grow research
- Build a sustainable future

Our Work

AWARENESS Increase community awareness	National Continence Helpline	Social media	Events & activities
	Media	Publications	Health promotion
	Websites	Resources	Awareness campaigns
POLICY & LEADERSHIP Further develop policy and leadership	Advocacy	Committee representation	Memberships
	Consultation	Submissions	
PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION Strengthen partnerships	Corporate	Consumer advocacy partnerships	
	Community	Health professional associations	
WORKFORCE Building capacity and capability	Online learning	State conferences	Scholarships
	Face-to-face education	National conference	
RESEARCH Support and grow research	Australian Bladder Foundation	Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal	
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE Build a sustainable future	Financial responsibility	Strategic planning	Governance

President's Report



Welcome to the Continenence Foundation of Australia's 2020 Annual Report – a snapshot of our work across the past year.

This year has been an exceptional one as it has seen unexpected challenges in the world, and brought about an unprecedented time of change.

COVID-19 continues to force us to reinvent ourselves and the way we live personally and interact with the world. As practitioners, we have found a way to continue to care for our community, as parents and family members we have slowed our lives down and attempted to survive, and dare I say thrive, in isolation.

This is a time of enormous creative thinking and reinvention, but also a reflection on the world we have built and how we support and respect others. We continue to be challenged by both the when and the how we will continue after this pandemic peak slowly mitigates.

Over the past 12 months the Continenence Foundation of Australia, along with all the State Branches, have been exploring a future where we unify to become a single, national organisation. We believe bringing the Foundation into one organisation will future proof it, allowing us the best opportunity for continuing, even expanding, our work. It will enable us to achieve our mission, serve our Members and strengthen our capacity to put the Foundation's message on the agenda.

As one organisation, we will advocate for policy change, educate both practitioners and consumers, and run projects and programs that make life easier for the one in four Australians who need our help.

While COVID-19 has affected our delivery and to some extent results, we have been able to report the following:

- Over 25,000 enquiries to the National Continenence Helpline were responded to with expert and confidential information, advice and support. A Helpline caller survey delivered a 92 per cent satisfaction rate – proof of the valued work of our experienced Helpline staff.
- World Continenence Week was conducted to an audience of over 8 million people, and held completely online utilising platforms such as Youtube, Facebook and Zoom.
- The BINS4Blokes campaign had a soft launch giving it a profile and starting the initial conversation, engaging the community to get behind this unique program.
- The Foundation also partnered with the Department of Health to complete the transfer of the 1-17 booklets into a new National Continenence Program design.
- The National Media Program reached an audience of 16 million Australians.

The Foundation further established itself as a leading voice in policy and guided policymakers to consider people affected by incontinence particularly in relation to the impact on COVID-19 on the Australian community and the challenges of transitioning continence services to accommodate the pandemic restrictions.

Thank you to our Members, and particularly the Staff, Volunteers and Board Members (State and National), whose contribution is invaluable in amplifying our messaging, contributing to our publications, providing us with feedback and being the Foundation's public face. You are the heart of the industry and the generosity in giving your time is greatly appreciated.

We hope you enjoy reading about the work of the Foundation contained in this Annual Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Murray'.

Associate Professor Michael Murray AM
PRESIDENT

Board of Directors

We thank our Board of Directors who voluntarily provide their services.



Associate Professor Michael Murray AM

PRESIDENT

As the Divisional Medical Director of Continued Care, Head of Geriatric Medicine and Medical Lead of Patient Flow at Austin Health, Associate Professor Michael Murray AM brings extensive experience in the health, education and the aged care industry.

With nearly 30 years involvement in geriatric care, Michael's career highlights include extensive work in continence, public health and public policy, as well as working in education and service development. In 2019 Michael was appointed as the interim Chief Clinical Advisor to the first Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner. Michael holds several board and committee positions with a variety of health and educational institutions. Michael has been the National Chairperson of the Continence Foundation of Australia for several years, prior to which he was the Victorian State President. Michael is the president of the National Ageing Research Institute. Michael was recently appointed as the Geriatrician Lead to the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre (VACRC) for Covid-19.



Dr Ian Tucker

VICE PRESIDENT

Dr Ian Tucker has been an active member of the Continence Foundation since its inception. Ian has been a pioneer in the field of sacral nerve neuromodulation for disturbances of bladder and bowel function, and has chaired sessions and lectured nationally and internationally at major conferences.



Professor Rosemary Calder AM

DIRECTOR

A founding member of the Continence Foundation, Professor Rosemary Calder has worked in health and aged care policy and services in the non-government sector and held senior executive roles in both Victorian and Commonwealth health departments. She is Professor of Health Policy and the Director of the Australian Health Policy Collaboration at the Mitchell Institute, an education and health policy think tank established by Victoria University.



Dr Janet Chase

DIRECTOR

Dr Janet Chase is a founding member of the Continence Foundation and a physiotherapist whose chosen area of practice is the treatment of incontinence and pelvic floor dysfunction in women, men and children. She has a strong interest in continence education and her published papers include research on adults and children. Janet was the past chair of the Foundation's Paediatric Advisory Committee and a former board member of the International Children's Continence Society.

**Karen Allingham***DIRECTOR*

Karen Allingham developed an interest in the specialty of continence in 1992 and undertook her first continence advisor role in 2000, working in the community with residential care facilities. In 2002, Karen returned to the acute hospital environment, beginning work the following year in the continence service at Royal Perth Hospital. She gained her current position of clinical nurse consultant in 2007 and successfully achieved her Masters of Nursing in 2012.

**Jacinta Crickmore***DIRECTOR*

Jacinta Crickmore first gained valuable insights on incontinence issues faced by consumers from her work in healthcare sales with SCA Hygiene. She became the company's QLD representative and an active member of the Continence Foundation's QLD Branch, of which she was secretary for five years and is the current treasurer. In 2014, Jacinta became a member of the Foundation's Consumer Advisory Committee, which she currently chairs. In 2015, she was appointed as a consumer representative on the Board and the Bladder Bowel Collaborative Steering Committee.

**Claire Richards***DIRECTOR*

Claire Richards is a Partner at KPMG with a broad range of risk, governance, compliance, assurance and audit experience. Finding her passion to be in healthcare and government, Claire provides advice to organisations operating in the health, ageing, disability, human services, justice and higher education sectors, focusing on safeguarding integrity and the community's trust in the outcomes that these organisations deliver.

**Lesley Barton***DIRECTOR*

Lesley Barton has always had a passion for effective and preventative continence management and has been actively involved over the years in state-based Continence Foundation committees in a variety of roles. Lesley has worked as workplace assessor, gained qualifications in quality management, auditing and risk assessment, Education, Program Design and Governance within Aged Care. Lesley remains committed to the future growth and further development of the Continence Foundation of Australia.




GIVING A VOICE TO INCONTINENCE

MATT'S STORY

"Incontinence is certainly something that makes people uncomfortable. I have anxiety and depression and I speak freely about my mental health. But when you mention wetting the bed, people get this 'look' – almost like they must react that way so everybody can see they don't have incontinence.

I've found that telling others about my incontinence can make a difference. I was working with a woman and after I was honest with her about my bedwetting, she actually told me that she had the same issue. I was one of the first people that she told. I really want to be a person that people can trust to confide in. That's a good way to see yourself.

I'm choosing to share my story with anybody who wants to read it. Anyone who is going through the same thing will understand on a totally different level. My message to you is to keep calm and carry on. You're a soldier. The people who judge have no idea what you go through daily." Matt, story from *Bridge*, Feb 2020

A black and white photograph of a person's legs and feet walking through a snowy forest. The person is wearing dark pants and boots. The background shows a dense forest of trees covered in snow.

"I've found that telling others about my incontinence can make a difference."

A PARENT'S STORY

"You can't go to the pool. You've got to have activities close to home. When you're at home, all you seem to be dealing with is poo. It's just a never-ending cycle.

We always have buckets soaking and every weekend I'm washing out what looks like sticky, horrible, smelly peanut butter.

You see your other friends out and about with their kids. You hear about their kids who are toilet trained in a week. It isn't something I can speak about with my friends, because it's hard for them to understand if they're not in the same boat. The conversation will go: "We've had another poo-nami," and they laugh. Well no, it's not really funny, because I've been dealing with that every week for six years."

Parent's story, *Bridge*, September 2019



ANJA'S STORY

"I was lucky to have the support of my family and my friends, especially my mother and my godmother as I was growing up.

They didn't smother me in sympathy nor let me feel sorry for myself for long. When we would discuss my condition, they always said, "it doesn't matter", "it doesn't have to define who you are" and "it doesn't have to have an impact on your quality of life and the dreams that you can achieve". I grew up with the belief that I could do whatever I set my mind to, despite my congenital condition.

As difficult as it may at times seem, stay positive and be confident. If you feel comfortable, be open about your condition so other people are aware and can support you when needed. Don't let incontinence define you. Don't let it stop you from doing what you want to do. Don't let it cause you to isolate yourself and not leave the house. Be brave. There is always a way to better manage incontinence. Seek help to find that way!" -

Anja Christofferson, From catwalk model to role model, *Bridge*, September 2018

Sub-Committees to the Board

Our current active committees are:

State Presidents Committee

Michael Murray AM (Chair)
Rowan Cockerell (CEO)
Jennifer King OAM (NSW)
Allison Bryant (QLD - Retired October 2019)
Hannah Krause (QLD - Appointed October 2019)
Ashani Fernando (SA)
Peta Titter (TAS)
Michael Croker (VIC)
Karen Allingham (WA)

Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee

Jacinta Crickmore (Chair)
Claire Richards
Michael Corry (Company Secretary)

Australian & New Zealand Continence Journal Committee

Margaret Sherburn (Chair and Editor until November 2019)
Jenny Kruger (Chair and Editor appointed November 2019)
Jacinta Miller (Managing Editor)
Rowan Cockerell (Continence Foundation)
Louise Judd (NZCA)
Wendy Bower
Christian Moro
Oliver Daly
Anna Lawrence
Joan Ostaszkiewicz
Debbie Rigby
Vivien Wong
Louise Mills (resigned May 2019)
Vincent Tse
Kate Moore
Elizabeth Watt

Bladder Bowel Collaborative Steering Committee (BBC)

Rowan Cockerell (Continence Foundation)
Steve Webster (Chair, Continence Foundation)
Margaret Sherburn
Liza Lau
Janie Thompson
Jacinta Crickmore
Donna Heggie
Bev Hamming (DoH)

Consumer Advisory Committee

Jacinta Crickmore (Chair)
Anja Christoffersen
Bethia Wilson AM
Keith Davies
Frank Ritchie
Greg Ryan
Alan White
Rowan Cockerell (Continence Foundation)

28th National Conference on Incontinence 2019

Scientific Committee

Janie Thompson (Co-Chair)
Johan Gani (Co-Chair)
Chamara Basnayake
Janet Chase
Joan Ostaszkiewicz
Joanne Dean
Oliver Daly
Sally Mastwyk
Sue Hookey
Tee Juan Ong
Wendy Bower

Local Organising Committee

Rowan Cockerell
Rosa Siderelis
Bronwyn Robinson

Patron

Bethia Wilson AM

Chief Executive Officer

Rowan Cockerell

Company Secretary

Michael Corry

Solicitors

JRT Partnership Pty Ltd

Auditor

Walker Wayland Advantage (Appointed Nov 2019)

Federal Government Programs



National Continence Program

Established in 2010, the National Continence Program encompasses a range of targeted activities promoting preventative health messages and supporting the provision of information, resources and continence education. The program builds on the substantial achievements of the National Continence Management Strategy.

Completed at the end of the financial year, the Continence Foundation of Australia has delivered a key initiative of the Program, the Bladder Bowel Collaborative.

Responsibilities included:

- Management of the National Continence Helpline **1800 33 00 66**
- Online and face-to-face education courses and professional development for specialist and non-specialist health professionals
- Consumer forums delivered by state-based health promotion officers, supported by state branches and continence resource centres

- Resources for target groups, including specialised tools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care workers and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Coordination of public awareness campaigns, National World Continence Week activities, media coverage and social media platforms
- Distribution of information and resources through websites, the National Continence Helpline and other communication channels
- Quarterly publishing of the peer-reviewed Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal (for health professionals) and Bridge magazine for consumers

The Foundation also promotes the Australian Government's National Public Toilet Map toiletmap.gov.au and bladder and bowel health information health.gov.au/bladder-bowel



Australian Government
Department of Health



Health Peak and Advisory Bodies Program

As the national peak body, the Continence Foundation contributes to public debate and community consultation, providing advocacy for its members and stakeholders. Activities under these objectives are supported with funding under the Australian Government's Health Peak and Advisory Bodies Program.



Transforming the Way We Do Business, the COVID-19 Response

A once in a lifetime event, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a game changer for the world, let alone the continence industry. Being faced with uncertainty, restriction of movement and operations, and a virus that we knew little about has tested us all. And the repercussions continue.

With so many restrictions in place we have had to adapt the Foundation's operational model. The National Continence Helpline has been reworked to enable our staff to continue to answer calls and provide the service remotely. Like many other organisations the Foundation staff are all working from home. This is unprecedented for the Foundation and not without its challenges. It was achieved in record time to the credit of all staff involved.

Utilising the most current digital technology our teams are focusing on remote education and delivery of health messaging, allowing us to get the message out regardless of the environmental circumstances. This is an exciting development as it increases access to remote communities for us to deliver our messages more effectively.

Our 29th National Conference on Incontinence (NCOI), originally scheduled for November 2020, was announced earlier this year before the full impact of COVID-19 became apparent. Rather than cancelling the event, the Foundation has reimagined NCOI 2020 as a fully online digital experience presented over 6 days in October. We knew that would ensure our key event went ahead regardless of how long it took to get through the pandemic.

During this time we have also used our resources to be at the forefront of the effect COVID-19 had on product and service supply. Actively working with the Continence Industry and the National Continence Helpline, we gathered valuable information for consumers and Government on product availability and access, the impact on continence service operations and any other developments that could potentially affect Members and our community. The National Continence Helpline has remained open throughout the pandemic, and we continue to monitor calls to ensure any issues are identified early and acted on in a timely way.



#BRAVEMUMMA

"For a long time, I suffered in silence," Stephanie Thompson says. While she now speaks openly and frankly about her experience, it was quite a journey to get here.

A couple of weeks after giving birth to her first child, a daughter in 2015, Stephanie was in the shower and started panicking. She noticed something "hanging out" of her vaginal opening and the haze of new-parent sleep deprivation had her jumping to conclusions.

"At first, when I had no idea, it looked like a baby's head," Stephanie says.

Finally, Stephanie was told "that one side of the pelvic floor muscle is torn off the bone, and then the other side is partially torn, with some damage to the anal sphincter."

While this was all extremely tough, Stephanie was then told that in her case, the chance of the prolapse recurring again after surgery was extremely high (90 per cent within two years). No operation could help.

Stephanie made a decision to write about her experience. Writing her book was very cathartic, and Stephanie describes writing about her experience as the best thing she's ever done.

While writing the book, Stephanie started the Bravemumma online community with a Facebook group to support other women with similar experiences of prolapse and pelvic health issues.

Stephanie made a decision to write about her experience. Writing her book was very cathartic, and Stephanie describes writing about her experience as the best thing she's ever done. "Once those words were out on paper, I could then tell anybody... initially, it was really hard to talk to anybody."

While writing the book, Stephanie started the Bravemumma online community with a Facebook group to support other women with similar experiences of prolapse and pelvic health issues.

She started sharing her 'workarounds' like robot vacuums, steam mops and slow cookers – things that made living with prolapse a little easier. "I just started sharing some of the tips that I was using. Like we have a robot vacuum because any kind of downward pressure using a vacuum, it makes my prolapse more symptomatic," Stephanie says.

While her condition is a hidden one, Stephanie is desperate to open up the conversation about it. Her frustration lies with the way topics like prolapse and faecal incontinence are considered 'taboo'.

"Incontinence and prolapse, no one talks about it."

With her book, website, online community and upcoming podcast, Stephanie Thompson is making sure that people around the world feel confident in bringing up stigmatised topics, like prolapse and incontinence.

"I'm hoping that women carry the conversation on the topics that we talk about within their trusted circles."

"Incontinence and prolapse, no one talks about it."

"I'm hoping that women carry the conversation on the topics that we talk about within their trusted circles."



Image credit
Lollie Claire Photography.

Awareness

Key to helping reduce the stigma associated with incontinence is opening up the conversation around bladder and bowel control problems. Throughout the year we held these conversations through our National Continence Helpline, websites, social media channels, media stories and national awareness raising campaigns.

National Continence Helpline 1800 33 00 66

The National Continence Helpline provides free, confidential information and advice from Nurse Continence Specialists. It operates 8am – 8pm (AEST) Monday to Friday.

The range of topics the Helpline can advise on includes:

- Prevention of bladder and/or bowel problems
- Pregnancy, prolapse, menopause
- Prostate, after-dribble
- Children – toilet training, bedwetting, day wetting, soiling
- Chronic conditions such as diabetes, MS and Parkinson's
- State and federal funding schemes including the NDIS
- Incontinence product advice.

Feedback from Helpline callers

"I'm crying with joy that I found your phone number as we did not know you existed and my husband has been incontinent for over 20 years. We did not know there was a nurse such as a CNA that will help us. Thank you."
- 84 y/o carer.

"You have been a wealth of information & made have it very clear & I understand it now thank you.... you are doing a great job!" – Primary Health Care Nurse.

"Do you know that's the best help I have ever had since all this started? That's the most I've talked about incontinence with anybody. That has been absolutely wonderful...most enlightening...thank you for being so helpful it was just lovely to talk to someone about it " – 83 y/o caller.

Who contacted the NCHL in 2018-19?

- 43% Called for themselves
- 33% Caring for someone with incontinence
- 22% Health and other professionals
- 2% Not disclosed

As a result of contacting the Helpline:

- 91% of carers and people living with incontinence took or intended to take further action to improve their problem



Resources

We managed and distributed a broad range of continence information resources directly to the general public and to health and other professionals caring for people at risk of or living with incontinence. Our online and printed resources are tailored to support the diverse range of people affected by incontinence, including antenatal and postnatal women, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with low literacy and people who read in languages other than English. The Foundation has resources available in 30 community languages.

600,735

Health information resources distributed

Community forums

Our health promotion officers deliver community presentations in every state and territory, with the support of Foundation Members, State Branches and Continence Resource Centres. The presentations promote healthy bladder and bowel habits and are often tailored for groups with specific age, community, cultural or chronic condition needs.

7,143 Attendees

331 Community forums

95 of these were in regional or remote areas.

After attending
a community forum:

FOUR OUT
OF FIVE

people surveyed said they took
positive action to improve their
continence health



Conferences and expos

We exhibited and presented at a number of consumer and health professional conferences and expos.

38 CONFERENCES AND EXPOS

Community Grants

Funding is available yearly for community organisations to run bladder and bowel health promotion activities and events in their local community. We have been pleased to be able to support the following organisations:

1. Southern Cross Care (SA & NT)
2. Sutherland Shire Carer Support Service
3. WILMA Women's Health Centre
4. Older Women's Network
5. Sunshine 60 & Better Group
6. Nintirri Centre
7. Mallee Track Health & Community Service
8. Kalaya Children's Centre
9. SCOPE QLD
10. Diversicare
11. Central West Women's Health Centre
12. Greek Orthodox Community
13. Chrisalis Foundation
14. Cystic Fibrosis QLD
15. Western Radio Broadcasters
16. Greater Shepparton City Council
17. WA Country Health Service -
Pingelly Health Centre
18. Fleurieu Aquatic Centre

Media

This year the Foundation utilised a full range of media informing, raising awareness, educating, and getting incontinence on the agenda. Media such as magazines and newspapers, radio and television to name a few. In total there were:

654 MEDIA STORIES GENERATED
WITH A REACH OF 457 Million

World Continence Week

The *Invest in Continence* campaign targeted older Australians with a prevention message. The five healthy habits were communicated as the key to keeping incontinence at bay in later life.

REACH OF 8.4 Million



Websites

Our primary website continence.org.au was relaunched with a clean and simplified design and easy to use navigation. Bringing together the functionality from the Continence Exchange, as well as streamlining the resource ordering system, this new site offers an improved user experience.

Site visits continued to grow this year with users and page views increasing by 18%.

The site still attracts a strong global audience as it is one of the most comprehensive websites in the world providing information, advice and support for people at risk of, or experiencing incontinence.

We also manage a suite of websites developed to meet the varied needs of professionals and consumers.

Across all our websites:

Up ▲ 18% OVER 2.78 Million TOTAL SITE VISITS

4.18 Million WEB PAGE VIEWS



continence.org.au



pelvicfloorfirst.org.au



inconfidence.org.au



laughwithoutleaking.com.au



continencelearning.com



ncoi.org.au



bins4blokes.org.au

Social Media

We continued to grow our reach across a range of social media channels, helping us share engaging health information and Foundation updates with the public.

5.6 million reach/impressions
across all social media platforms.

Up ▲19%

Bridge Magazine

Bridge magazine is the Foundation's free magazine for consumers. *Bridge* features a combination of personal stories, informative articles, and news about bladder, bowel and pelvic health - all packaged in an easy-reading format.

The magazine is distributed across Australia to physiotherapy, GP and continence clinics, fitness centres, pharmacies, schools, community groups, as well as individual subscribers.

136,927 BRIDGE MAGAZINES DISTRIBUTED



We were proud to deliver a variety of stories about bladder and bowel health, from the 30 year anniversary to consumer stories shining a light on their experience. Our Carer of the Year story was a heartfelt one highlighting the Fear family, and their care for their son Paul. Their journey, from 24 hour bedside watch, to being able to take a little time away from Paul's care, is a testament to their courage and love.

Policy and Leadership

Our work aims to influence policy by advocating to Government and industry on behalf of those affected by incontinence, their families and carers.

- **Older Australians**

We made an official representation to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety through our President, Assoc Prof Michael Murray AM, and Foundation Member, Dr Joan Ostaszewicz. The Royal Commission Interim Report also acknowledged poor continence management as a major quality and safety issue within the aged care sector.

Since then, we have also made a general submission on the Foundation's position on continence-related issues as well as a workforce-specific submission to the Royal Commission.

- **Workforce**

A submission was made to the Educating the Nurse of the Future consultation on the need for adequate educational preparation for nurses on continence care and management.

The final report reviewing the consultation stated that incontinence should be included in the nursing curriculum for enrolled and registered nurses.

The Foundation also made submissions to the following consultations:

- Severe (Third and Fourth Degree) Perineal Tears Clinical Care Standard 2019
- RACGP Standards for General Practice residential aged care 2019

- **Disability**

The Foundation has also sought to positively impact on the disability sector with:

- A joint submission with CoNSA on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Annual Price Review 2020-21.
- A response to the NDIS Workforce Plan Consultation survey on the challenges facing the NDIS workforce and how they can be addressed.



2020 National Consumer Survey

The Foundation conducted a new Nationally Representative Consumer Survey (2020 National Survey) this year to better understand the incidence, impact, management of and beliefs held about incontinence in Australia. There have been a number of important insights gained from the 2020 National Survey.

Incidence rates

- We found that 1 in 3 Australians report they currently or have previously experienced incontinence that was not a one-off. Of those who are currently incontinent, women make up 60% of the population. However, this has decreased from 74% in the 2017 National Survey.
- We found that the age groups most affected by incontinence in 2020 are 30-49 year olds who make up 48% of the incontinent population. In comparison, 40-59 year olds were most affected in 2017 at 52% of the incontinent population.

The risk of developing incontinence

- Even if they're not affected currently, 60% of Australians rate their risk of developing incontinence in the future as moderate or higher. Around half of Australians consider incontinence to be inevitable after ageing (48%) and childbirth (56%).

The impact of incontinence

- The impact of incontinence can be high. 1 in 3 (35%) Australians state that incontinence affects their relationship with family and friends. 1 in 2 (54%) say that incontinence severely impacts their life. There has also been an increase in the proportion of Australians saying incontinence affects their mental health and wellbeing with 42% agreeing with this statement in this year's survey compared to 32% in 2017.
- However, almost two-thirds (65%) who currently or have previously experienced incontinence have not contacted a health professional about the issue.

Membership

Our strong and active Membership represents the health professionals, consumers, service providers, industry and other key stakeholders in the continence sector. Members are vital to the Foundation's work in raising awareness and advocating on behalf of people with bladder and bowel control issues.

Membership by profession (where recorded) % of total



1,323 TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS

Unification: Planning the future for our Foundation

Our strategic view for some time now has been that we would be a more robust and sustainable organisation by unifying the State Branches and National Office.

Currently, there are seven separate legal entities promoting bladder and bowel control health – the Continence Foundation of Australia (National) and six State Branches (Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania).

The National and the State Branches have worked closely together for many years to support our Members and the broader Australian public. However, we believe that becoming one entity will enable us to better achieve our vision and serve our Members, strengthening our capacity to advocate nationally and within State and local communities, to do the most we can with the finite resources we have.

Stronger and Better Together

We believe a single, consolidated organisation working with State and Federal Government Departments, Health Funders and Industry will be streamlined and more effective. Our voice can become stronger as we lobby and advocate on health policy, develop education and resources for health professionals, and refine our services to members.

Benefits will flow to Australians by contributing to the knowledge base of our Members and other Health Professionals. This ultimately benefits their clients through:

1. Increasing expertise
2. High quality and consistent services and products
3. Integration of all offerings, saving time
4. Improved engagement, communication and information with Members
5. Strength of national profile and advocacy for the Foundation.

Benefits at the same time are delivered with better governance, organisation operations and service. This results in:

1. A single Board and legal entity rationalising resources
2. Contemporary and integrated systems creating efficiencies
3. A platform for growth, development and partnerships, allowing for better funding arrangements
4. A successful and sustainable organisation, ensuring longevity
5. The ability to fund our future in a credible and sustainable way.





Partnerships and Collaboration

During the reporting period the Foundation has worked with a broad range of organisations to increase the reach and amplify the impact of the Bladder Bowel Collaborative. Some examples of partnerships and collaborations include:

Southern Cross Care (SCC) SA & NT, NSW & ACT and WA

A major non-profit provider of residential and community aged care around Australia. The relationship started with SCC SA receiving a Community Grant to develop and run workshops and has now grown from SCC SA&NT to include NSW&ACT and SCC WA. The Foundation provides support with resources, links to community health workers, talks, and activities regularly run by SCC for residents and staff.

Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, (Darwin NT)

A new relationship established in 2019, we worked with Larrakia to build their capacity to support people in their communities by conducting workshops with staff around bladder and bowel health. We also supported them in conducting bladder and bowel awareness sessions with the local Indigenous community.

Kincare

QLD-Kincare provide in-home care for older Australians and people with a disability. We have been working with Kincare Registered Nurses and care staff in the Brisbane region to increase their awareness of bladder and bowel health.

National Ageing Research Institute (NARI)

We are working with NARI to develop a practical and evidence based model of continence care for the residential aged care setting. It is anticipated the project will be completed by early 2021.

NAIDOC SA and WA regional committees

NAIDOC committees regularly invite us to participate in their events. This relationship has expanded our networks with Indigenous communities, such as the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, giving us greater reach into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Workforce Support

We take an integrated approach to the provision of education programs and professional development opportunities for the specialist and non-specialist continence workforce. The use of multiple online delivery options allows the workforce to access learning while working in-situ, as part of a more structured learning program and as a professional development opportunity. Research continues to be nurtured and disseminated via the annual national conference and the Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal.

3,268 learners were engaged across 29 separate digital and online learning opportunities we provided for the workforce during the year, with an additional 3,296 who accessed Just In Time learning from the Continence Support Web app. Over 1,000 health professionals also attended our aged care focused webinars which ran throughout the year.

We also launched our *Essentials of Continence* online course to help address the current lack of continence specific education at the foundational level in the education market.

The Essentials of Continence is specifically targeted to:

- Community-based aged care and disability support workers
- Residential aged care support workers
- Enrolled Nurses moving into the sector
- Registered Nurses moving into the sector





28th National Conference on Incontinence (NCOI)

The 2019 National Conference on Incontinence (NCOI) was held in Melbourne between 13 - 16 November 2019 and attracted 647 delegates from a broad range of health disciplines (see Figure 15). The conference included 26 Australian presenters and featured 15 abstract podium presentations, along with three expert international keynote speakers:

- **Dr John DeLancey (USA)** Norman F. Miller Professor of Gynaecology and Professor of Urology, University of Michigan
- **Professor Mandy Fader (UK)** Head of School, Health Sciences, Professor of Continence Technology at the University of Southampton
- **Associate Professor Cristiano Gomes (BRA)** Associate Professor of Urology at the University of Sao Paulo

We also held 10 pre-conference workshops that attracted 480 participants.

National Conference Scholarship recipients

- Rachel Andrew
- Renee Chettle
- Anna Ferrier
- Stephanie Hart
- Angela Hewitt
- Rebekah Lorimer
- Sarajane McLaren
- Stephanie Larkins
- Ann Packham
- Meredith Treloar

The top scholarship winner, Renee Chettle, from an RA5 area where she works extensively with Indigenous clients, accepted a placement at the Alfred Health Continence Service during her time in Melbourne.

Platinum Sponsor			
Gold Sponsors			
Silver Sponsor			
Bronze Sponsors			

28th National Conference on Incontinence

ncoi.org.au



28th National Conference on Incontinence





Research

Australian Bladder Foundation

The Australian Bladder Foundation (ABF) was established to promote the work of the Continence Foundation of Australia to build healthier communities. The aim of the ABF is to raise vital funds to ensure the continued development of research to assist people with bladder and bowel dysfunction and incontinence in Australasia. Grant recipients:

- *Lubricin: Innovative intravesical therapy for bladder dysfunction?* [Donna Sellers for the Richard Millard Award]
- *CO2 Surgical Laser for Treatment of Stress Urinary Incontinence in Women – a RCT study* [Lin Li Ow]

Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal

The quarterly *Australian and New Zealand Continence Journal* (ANZCJ) is a scientific, peer-reviewed journal produced under the auspice of the Continence Foundation of Australia and the New Zealand Continence Association. The ANZCJ is the only multidisciplinary journal dedicated to researching the diagnosis, treatment and management of incontinence.



Sustainable Future



The Continence Foundation of Australia Ltd's Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2020 showed a surplus of \$115,244 (2018/2019: \$967,094).

The total revenue for the 2019/2020 financial year was \$5,156,589 (2018/2019: \$6,123,946).

The main decrease in revenue for the year was due to investment income of (\$312,744) as investments were a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The statement of financial position at 30 June 2020 showed the organisation in a strong financial position with members' equity of \$10,324,316.

The following charts provide a snapshot of the Continence Foundation's income and expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Income breakdown 2019-20	
Conference and seminars	\$663,552
Interest	\$75,907
Investment Income/(loss)	(\$312,744)
Membership fees	\$71,134
Government funding (Bladder Bowel Collaborative)	\$3,751,317
Government funding (Peak Body)	\$375,000
Other income	\$532,423

The analysis of income generated for the year showed government funding accounted for 80% of the total revenue, investment income (6%) and conference and seminars for 13%. Interest 1%, membership fees 1%, and other income comprising education income, royalties, donations, short term projects accounted for the balance.

Expenditure breakdown 2019-20	
Conference and seminars	\$517,787
Peak Body	\$757,237
Programs - Bladder Bowel Collaborative	\$3,766,321

Analysis of expenditure for the year showed 75% was spent on Bladder Bowel Collaborative activities to support the community (including the National Continence Helpline, health promotion, education, marketing and communication, partnerships). The remaining 10% was spent on conferences and seminars and 15% on Peak Body activities.

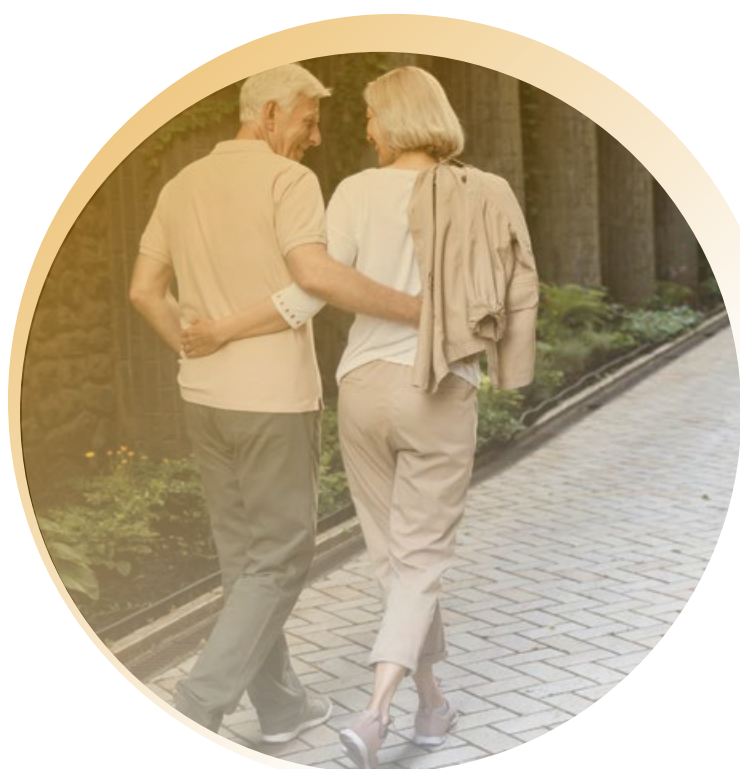
The following charts summarise the financial position of the Continenence Foundation as at 30 June 2020

Asset breakdown	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$5,108,953
Investments	\$6,044,643
Trade and other receivables	\$84,673
Prepayments	\$73,255
Property, plant and equipment	\$190,302
Security deposit	\$30,023

Analysis of assets as at 30 June 2019 showed: cash and cash equivalents made up 44%; investments 52%; property, plant and equipment 2%; trade and other receivables 1%; other assets, prepayments and security deposit 1%.

Liability breakdown	
Trade and other payables	\$772,875
Employee benefits - current	\$122,953
Income received in advance	\$74,616
Lease liabilities - current	\$113,846
Employee benefits - non-current	\$123,243

Analysis of liabilities showed trade and other payables comprised 64%, income received in advance 6%, employee benefits (current) 10%, lease liabilities 10% and employee benefits (non-current) 10%.



*The Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 30 June 2020 have been audited by Walker Wayland Advantage and authorised by the directors of the company. The complete Financial Statements for the Continenence Foundation of Australia Ltd along with the auditor's and directors' reports are available on our website at **continenence.org.au** and from the Continenence Foundation of Australia Ltd, Suite 1, 407 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills, VIC 3127.*

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