

# Identikite

The official newsletter of Identitywa





## Our Vision

All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing.



## Our Mission

Identitywa works in partnership with individuals and families to build a community where people with disability enjoy a fulfilled life.

We support individuals to achieve their goals, whatever they may be. We offer families the support they need.



## Our Values

Above all else, we make a commitment to act.

We will look for the opportunities rather than seeing the barriers.

Our approach will be objective, transparent and fair. We will always be honest and open and no matter how challenging, we will endeavour to see it through to the end.

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*"All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth...to give life is to open (our) heart, and to care for life is to (give oneself) in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others. Caring for life from the beginning to the end. What a simple thing, what a beautiful thing...So, go forth and don't be discouraged.*

*Care for life. It's worth it."*

Cardinal Bergoglio (2005)  
(Pope Francis)



Cover photo: Award recipients  
Back Row: Geoff Maxwell, Susie Bradley, Andy Schelfout, Wendy Spicer, Emily Jones, Sandra Maughan  
Front Row: Mag Mitchell, Marie Corrigan, Marthina Marentek, Rosemary Couttie, Eugene Moyo and Tandy Dube





# CEO Report

**On Friday, 2 December, we were delighted to receive news that an agreement had been reached on the way forward for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in WA.**

The Commonwealth and Western Australian governments have agreed to commence the final negotiations, on a no prejudice basis, on a nationally consistent but State-run NDIS.

Identitywa welcomes the decision and looks forward to working with the WA State government on achieving great outcomes with Western Australians with disability.

We particularly acknowledge the strong leadership of Minister Farragher and Disability Services Commission and the significant planning which has commenced and will continue over the next months as we look forward to 2017. *More details from the joint media statement are included on page four.*

The last months have seen a number of events and celebrations within Identitywa which offer an opportunity to reflect on both our achievements and our challenges.

In August, we hosted the official opening of our new Cockburn Office. It was wonderful to have Archbishop Costelloe bless the new building, which now provides an important base for staff coordinating our services south of Perth.

As is noted within this edition of *Identikite*, we have acknowledged the excellent contribution of Identitywa staff both in terms of their valued service and their long term loyalty. We are blessed with a diverse workforce which reflects both the diversity of the wider community and of course the diversity of the people we support.

Those long standing members who were acknowledged with *Years of Service Awards* are critical to our solid foundation and ensure we keep our history and legacy of the founding families alive and at the forefront. This is complemented by the significant contribution of support workers who come to us as tertiary students who are keen to learn more about people with disability and are motivated to add to their professional skill set.

We understand that these employees can only commit to us for a limited time as they continue their journey to their chosen career. We view this as a *win-win* for Identitywa. We gain enthusiastic, dynamic and energetic workers whom we are pleased to invest in and, in return, we are confident that they are making a difference in the lives of the people they support.

The other great outcome is that these staff will be the teachers, therapists and nurses of the future. They will enter their chosen careers with excellent experience and a sound understanding of the impact of disability.

*Photo: Disability Support Worker, Marlene, Marina and Archbishop Costelloe pictured with Simon and Joshua (who live together in Identitywa shared accommodation) at the opening of the Cockburn Office.*

Our focus on diversity has been the driver for a number of initiatives to contribute to our continuing efforts to establish a harmonious and respectful workplace. Cultural awareness training and mental health awareness workshops have been well received by Identitywa employees as we all work together to create an accepting and supportive environment. These initiatives will continue in 2017 and be extended to all Identitywa staff.

I always appreciate hearing from individuals and families their stories and their experiences of how we continue to make a difference. In this edition of *Identikite* we share a number of these.

I am pleased that we have recently commenced a number of new projects aimed at service improvement which we believe will raise the bar even further. More details of these will follow in 2017 which promises to be a very significant year for Identitywa.

On behalf of the Board of Identitywa, I would like to wish the people we support, their families and Identitywa staff a safe and holy Christmas as we look forward to 2017.

**Marina Re, CEO**

## Governments agree on the way forward for NDIS in WA

**In the joint media statement released on 2 December from the Minister for Social Services, Christian Porter, and WA Minister for Disability Services, Donna Faragher, it was announced that there has been an agreement for the future of the NDIS in WA.**

**"Today's announcement provides a firm basis for further negotiations toward a final bilateral agreement on a WA-delivered NDIS model which would meet Commonwealth conditions for national consistency, with the NDIS transition to begin on 1 July 2017," said Minister Porter.**

**"While it remains the Commonwealth's strong preference for WA to join the NDIS on a similar basis to other states and territories, I acknowledge WA's firm commitment to a WA-delivered model that builds on WA's existing disability service system," Mr Porter said.**

**Minister Donna Faragher, said both governments were committed to the well-being of people with disability and were working closely to finalise the full scheme model.**

**"The lives of people with disability, their families and carers, are being changed for the better by the NDIS," Minister Faragher said.**

**"The Western Australian Government is strongly committed to the NDIS and is clear that eligibility criteria, the provision of reasonable and necessary supports and, most importantly, choice and control for people with disability in WA will be the same as in all other States - facilitating a fully portable national system.**

**"We have a strong existing disability sector in Western Australia and we want to build on this with the delivery of a State-run NDIS which is nationally consistent.**

**"WA is vast and unique in geography and diversity and the NDIS we roll out here must meet the needs of all West Australians no matter where they live. I look forward to finalising the details in partnership with Minister Porter."**

# New Cockburn Office opens

**On Friday, 19 August, Identitywa opened its new office located in the City of Cockburn.**

Representatives from Lotterywest, Disability Service Commission, Fremantle Family Support Network and other WA disability agencies joined families supported by Identitywa, Identitywa Board members and staff for the opening which was held at the new office located on Tamara Drive, Cockburn Central.

Nyungar Elder, Marie Taylor, commenced the proceedings when she gave a 'Welcome to Country' which was followed by a blessing of the building by the Catholic Archbishop of Perth, the Most Reverend Timothy Costelloe SDB.

Archbishop Costelloe acknowledged the generous bequest by a parishioner of the Spearwood Catholic Parish who had made an idea of CEO, Marina Re, into a reality with the additional support of Lotterywest and the Archdiocese' funding agency, Lifelink.

"The decision to locate a branch of Identitywa to serve the suburbs of the southern part of our diocese and of our city and State, is really very important," said Archbishop Costelloe.

"It is not just symbolic, but a practical expression to be on the ground, reaching out to people where they live.

"I am proud to be the Archbishop of a diocese which has, not just in words, but actually in practical, day-by-day, concrete actions demonstrated such a strong and enduring commitment to people who live with a disability and to their families and all those who support them."

A commemorative plaque was unveiled by Archbishop Costelloe and Identitywa's Board Chair, Graeme Mander, after the building was blessed.

Marina thanked the Archbishop for his kind words. She also acknowledged the contribution of key staff to the establishment of the office.

"The Cockburn office provides a point of contact for the families and the individuals we support and enables our staff to be more closely involved in the local community. This is critical in building connections and offering more responsive and flexible supports," said Marina.



1. Board Chair, Graeme Mander and Archbishop Costelloe reflect as Nyungar Elder, Marie Taylor, gives the 'Welcome to Country' at the Opening.
2. Marina Re and Archbishop Costelloe.
3. Architect, Eamon Broderick with Board Member, Levy Mpofu.
4. Manager Corporate Services, Chris Glasson, Archdiocese CEO, Greg Russo with Board Members, Nathan Ebbs and Jenny Drury.





## Awarding outstanding achievements

^ Graeme Mander, Board Chair, with Years of Service award recipients  
FR: Lou McGuire, Emma Ferguson, Kerrie Pelham, Roberta Collister, Shirley Olivari, Lurlyne Ferraz  
BR: Jenny Toland, Graeme Mander, Esmee Pudney, Gavin Slater, Greg Smith.

### Quality services, 'winning the work' and enhancing stakeholder engagement were the focus of Identitywa's 2016 Annual Review and Staff Awards Night held on Thursday, 20 October.

Board Chair, Graeme Mander, and Treasurer, Linda Walsh, addressed the gathering, delivering their reports for the 2015-2016 financial year.

Marina Re in her address spoke about how the organisation was well positioned in the current trials of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the WA NDIS.

"We are keen to move forward with clear direction from the Australian and Western Australian government on the roll-out and future of the NDIS in this State," said Marina.

"As active participants in the trials, we have been pleased to meet many new individuals and families who are now accessing our services. This includes new families from former Disability Service Commission transition houses as well as

others who are in receipt of individual plans and funding for the first time."

Marina also emphasised the importance of Identitywa partnering with other organisations such as the Fremantle Family Support Network led by St Patrick's Community Services, and Centacare Employment and Training WA, a not-for-profit, registered training organisation.

"Working collaboratively with other agencies and networking are important strategies in achieving good outcomes for vulnerable families," she said.

Marina concluded her presentation by thanking Catholic Super for generously sponsoring the event. She also acknowledged the support of the Archdiocese of Perth and Lotterywest and the dedication of Identitywa's staff.

"The commitment and enthusiasm of our staff have been instrumental in the significant growth of Identitywa over the past year. I am, as always, grateful for their total dedication to achieving the best outcomes for the people we support and their families," she said.



## 2016 Annual Review and Staff Awards Night proudly supported by

**catholic  
super**



Board members with Christina Camacho from Catholic Super  
L to R: Phil Scott, Marina Re, Jenny Drury, Christina Camacho, Graeme Mander, Linda Walsh, Terry Wilson, Tony Curry

## Congratulations to all the Award recipients!

"So happy to be awarded, it means so much in my 14 year career at Identitywa...thank you."  
Sandra Maughan

"Very excited to receive the acknowledgement. So glad Identitywa has these awards. What a fantastic mechanism for staff recognition."  
Andy Schelfout

"Really happy and excited to be recognised for my work. It is a great way to feel included and valued as an employee."  
Emily Jones

### 10 Years of Continuous Services

- Agata Monka – Yeeda Street
- Debra Montague – Rhine Crescent
- Esmae Pudney – Callison Way (A)
- Gavin Slater – Broadway
- Jennifer Toland – Callison Way (A)

### 15 Years of Continuous Services

- Roberta Collister – Callison Way (A)
- Emma Ferguson – Merian Close
- Lubica McGuire – Fisher Street
- Kelly Oram – Woodside Street
- Kerrie Pelham – Yeeda Street
- Greg Smith - Callison Way (A)

### 20 Years of Continuous Service

- Lurlyne Ferraz – Broadway
- Shirley Olivari – Broadway



## Archdiocese taking a leading role

**The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse continues its vital work of investigating this terrible scourge which is, to our great shame as a nation, far more widespread in institutional settings than any of us have previously realised.**

In our Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, we are fully committed to a number of key tasks and actions in response to this horrifying reality. We now have a well-resourced Professional Standards Office which seeks to respond as objectively, compassionately and justly as possible to anyone who comes forward with a complaint about sexual abuse.

Our Catholic schools have clear policies in relation to the well-being and protection of children under their care, and very clear protocols for dealing with complaints or concerns. All clergy and others in our Catholic Community who work with children are required to have a current *Working With Children Card*. This requirement is monitored both at the local level and by the central diocesan office, and is of course a requirement for employment in our schools.

We have established a Safeguarding Office which organises and conducts Professional Development programs for our clergy in the area of child protection and we have initiated a program of Safeguarding Officers in our parishes, whose responsibility it is to be an immediate point of contact for any child, young person or adult who has concerns about sexual abuse of minors.

The Safeguarding Officers also monitor, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Office, compliance with the policies and procedures adopted by the Archdiocese for the safety of all parishioners, and in particular children and young people.

And in all of this, we await the final recommendations of the Royal Commission and stand ready to change or augment our safeguarding policies and procedures where necessary.

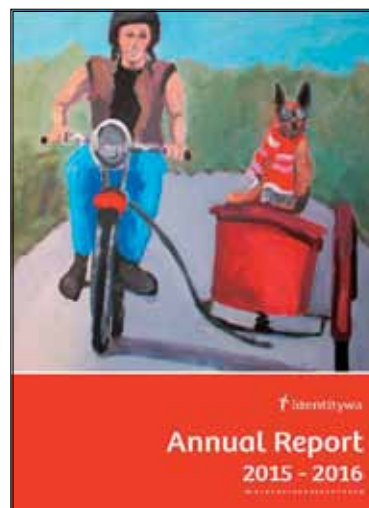
**Most Reverend Timothy Costelloe SDB  
Catholic Archbishop of Perth**

### **Holiday planning information for people supported by Identitywa.**

Work has been undertaken to clarify some of the issues regarding holiday planning for people living in Identitywa houses. Early in 2017, a Fact Sheet will be available to assist individuals and families to work with House Staff to ensure a great outcome for all concerned.

**Our Annual Report is now available on the Identitywa website.**

**To download just go to [www.identitywa.com.au](http://www.identitywa.com.au) then click on *About Us*, then *Publications*.**





## Identitywa participates in research study

Identitywa is currently participating in a research partnership which includes 12 other Australian disability organisations. The study is being facilitated by La Trobe University's *Living with Disability Research Centre* based in Melbourne.

The aim of the study, *Embedding Active Support & Practice Leadership*, is to improve and monitor Identitywa's success in providing Person Centred Active Support to people with disabilities.

Dannae Mead, Policy and Research Officer, is overseeing Identitywa's participation in the project. She attended the *Living with Disability Research Centre's Support for Decision Making Roundtable* hosted by La Trobe University in November.

The Roundtable brought together participants from Sweden, Scotland and Australia who have experience working in different systems with diverse groups of people, including people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and dementia.



^ Jennifer (Support Worker at Queen St) and Dannae with Rosie and Joanne who are participating in the La Trobe study.

### Dannae Mead reports:

*Person Centred Active Support is an evidence-based, best practice approach. It is hoped that our participation through this study will further improve our work practices and will therefore increase the positive impact on the quality of life for the people we support.*

*Participation in the study will contribute to our continued leadership in providing the highest quality of support to people with disabilities and complex health needs.*

*Representatives discussed and shared information about Australian and international developments that are assisting people with cognitive disabilities to exercise their rights to participate in decision making about their own lives.*

*Central to discussions was the importance of not 'foreclosing' on someone's capacity to participate in decision making - ensuring that support workers are working alongside individuals in building their capacity to make decisions.*

The Board and Management of Identitywa are confident participation in this important research project will have a very positive effect on the lives of people Identitywa supports and enable staff to develop high quality support and leadership in their various roles.

# Focus on Professional Development



*Increasing our understanding of what it means to be culturally competent and how the cultural experiences of others and ourselves contribute to our workplace is vital.*

< Identitywa staff with facilitator, Jan Mantell (far right).

## Being Culturally Aware

**Awareness, knowledge and the skill to work productively in an environment of diversity were at the centre of the Cultural Awareness workshops for staff.**

Some of the topics covered in the workshops were: *Gaining a deeper understanding of the concepts of culture and cultural awareness; The importance of cross-cultural communication skills; Encouraging our knowledge of cultural diversity within the workplace.*

"The workshops gave a valuable insight into some of the strategies we can implement to support people in a culturally appropriate manner," said Identitywa Planning Officer, Denise Marley.

"The opportunity to discuss and explore our own cultural biases and perspectives offered great insight into how important cultural awareness is."

Identitywa is committed to providing relevant training as part of its professional development program and encourages all staff to become involved in these beneficial training opportunities.

## Building on Mental Health knowledge

**There has also been a focus on mental health awareness for staff. Through a series of workshops, managers and support staff have been able to increase their knowledge of the often life-changing implications an individual and their family's experiences when faced with the challenges of mental health issues.**

Angela Bamford, Identitywa's Training Officer, is responsible for coordinating all training for Identitywa. Angela explains that there is a commitment to continue to offer Mental Health training to employees.

"We are very mindful of the importance supporting staff to achieve a healthy work-life balance," said Angela. "These workshops assist staff to understand, and be sensitive to, behaviours which might indicate potential mental health issues for themselves, or for their colleagues."

# Hands-on experience for Centacare students

The opportunity to access real experience in the work place has seen the collaboration between Identitywa and Centacare Employment and Training.

Identitywa's CEO, Marina Re, and Centacare's Executive Director, Lee-Anne Phillips, formalised the significant partnership when they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in March, 2016.

The purpose of the MOU is to facilitate and promote cooperation between the two agencies of the Catholic Archdiocese. It commits Centacare to providing training to Identitywa staff for a *Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability)*.

In return, Identitywa has agreed to provide work experience for Centacare students throughout the

year. Students are based at Head Office where they are rostered to work in a number of areas in order to expose them to a range of important business skills.

"We are very pleased to offer placement opportunities for Centacare students currently studying the *Certificate III in Business* and will offer additional placements in other certificate courses in the future," said Marina.



^ Lee-Anne Phillips, Executive Director, Centacare (left) and Daniel Neville, Program Manager, Centacare (right), meeting with Marina Re and Britta Meyer, Manager Operational Services, Identitywa.

## Vale

We recently farewelled Irma Erneste, Ruth Even, Debra Goulding and Greg Smith who lived in Identitywa Shared Living accommodation.

We are always saddened by the passing of people we have supported. They will be missed by all those who knew and loved them.



# Calling Identitywa home

**Identitywa continued with its commitment to transition Shared Living homes from the Disability Services Commission (DSC). In the later part of 2016, two homes located in Bentley and Redcliffe were transitioned. Lee-Anne Brensell, Manager Services, oversees the process of transitioning of the homes from DSC management to Identitywa.**

"Overseeing this process is a delight," said Lee-Anne. "Bringing together a new team whose sole purpose is to create a safe and happy environment for the people living in our homes is very rewarding."

"We greatly value the opportunity to meet with individuals and families in their homes to discuss their specific needs and hopes for their future. The transition process is always respectful and seamless."

"We start by working closely and shadowing DSC support workers, and progress to having total responsibility. Each of the homes we have transitioned has provided different learnings and a level of excitement for the organisation as we expand our outreach and support," said Lee-Anne.

"Identitywa staff who have been involved are elated to be part of something new with the opportunity to rise to the challenge. Our new families report to us that they are pleased to see such a positive outcome at the end of what is a rigorous and thorough process."



*^ Diane is always happy to welcome visitors to her home.*



**"Jenny is really happy living at Merian Close. We felt the transition from DSC's management to Identitywa was very smooth - they really got to know Jenny and our family." (Bev, Jenny's sister)**

# Community Connections

**17-year-old Rhys is someone who loves life and telling stories about his life experiences. Rhys has been accessing support from Identitywa since he was nine. Over the years his family have made the most of Identitywa's range of services; currently, Rhys and his support worker, George, spend time after school together each week.**

Rhys really enjoys his time with George. Both highly competitive, there is generally a fun goal set for all their activities which can include visits to the Gym where Rhys loves to lift weights. He particularly likes doing bicep curls, Ten Pin bowling, and regularly hiking in the bush south of Perth.

Rhys has recently returned with 'high tech walking sticks' from a five-week trip to Canada with his family which included a visit to Disneyland in Hong Kong on the way over.

"It was an awesome experience," says Rhys. "I even got the chance to see bears in the wild while we were hiking through the mountains, but I have to say going on a Zip-line over the forest was my absolute favourite thing I did on the trip even though it was really scary!"

It is a highlight in George's week to spend time with Rhys too. "Supporting Rhys has allowed me to understand him better as a person and as a friend," said George.

"Rhys is a talented and entertaining storyteller who has something insightful to say during every visit. He is a caring person with a fun personality, and he is a pleasure to be around. His love for nature has given me a greater appreciation for our environment."

Whilst Rhys really likes school, particularly his Maths classes, he is looking forward to his next adventure when he leaves at the end of this year. No doubt it will add to his substantial story telling repertoire!



**It's Rhys' storytelling that George likes best...**





## Michelle volunteers to ‘give back’

**For 32-year-old Michelle, the opportunity to return to the place she spent a significant amount of her childhood was something she had long wanted. Whilst she had worked in a number of office environments, she really wanted to volunteer her time to work with the children who stay at Identitywa’s children’s house in Riverton.**

Michelle, who is supported by Identitywa, accessed services at the house from the age of five to 18 years of age and wanted to give something back to the place she fondly remembers.

To qualify as a volunteer, people are required to apply online and to obtain clearances and other statutory documents. Michelle did all of this, including an interview with Identitywa’s Engagement Leader, Ed Mayvis, who oversees Identitywa’s Volunteer Program.

She was both delighted and proud that she was successful at all levels of her application and achieved 100% for her online induction.

“I am a people person,” said Michelle. “I help out once a week and love my time with the children. We do all sorts of activities including listening and dancing to music, spending time outside on the play equipment or playing fun games on my iPad.”

Michelle says she is always sad to leave and definitely looks forward to returning.

House Senior, Danica, says having Michelle help out is wonderful.

“The children love her and she loves them! There are always lots more smiles when Michelle is here,” she says.

*Photo: Michelle playing games with Alyda at Riverton Children’s House.*



## Andrew is living a fulfilled life

**“Andrew is a fantastic asset to our organisation with his positive, bubbly and caring attitude. He is a volunteer any organisation would love to have as part of their team.”**

**Stacey Dowding, Coordinator, Dale Cottages.**

Delivering the local community newspaper around his suburb and volunteering at Dale Cottages, an aged care facility located in Armadale, are just some of the jobs that Andrew and his Identitywa support worker, Kayla, do together each week.

Andrew has taken on a number of different jobs over the years, including washing rubbish bins and cleaning buses. He definitely likes his current jobs better!

“I like meeting people,” says Andrew. “It is fun to be independent and do things away from home.”

He and Kayla spend time folding the Comment Newspaper before they walk the streets to deliver it. They then travel to Dale Cottages where they distribute Meals on Wheels to the residents.

Andrew’s mum, Liz, is very happy with the way Andrew’s confidence has grown since being supported by Identitywa.



*^ Andrew serving the very popular weekly roast dinner to Dale Cottage resident, Campbell McPhee.*

“Identitywa has opened new and interesting opportunities for Andrew including the chance to contribute to the local community,” says Liz. “The support staff are exceptional. Every interaction we have had with Identitywa has been with friendly people who are eager to help Andrew reach his individual and unique goals.”

For Andrew, life is good. In addition to spending fun times with his niece and nephew, interacting with other people and earning money from his paper delivery are a real bonus.





**A Catholic outreach supporting people  
with disability and their families.**

We welcome contributions  
to Identikite from people we support,  
their families and staff.

Articles can be emailed to the Editor  
[Michelle.ebbs@identitywa.com.au](mailto:Michelle.ebbs@identitywa.com.au)

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