

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022 - 2023

AMPARO Advocacy defends, protects and promotes  
the rights and interests of vulnerable people  
from a culturally and linguistically diverse  
background with disability



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## The Organisation

AMPARO Advocacy is a non-profit community organisation which provides independent individual and systemic advocacy with and on behalf of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with disability. AMPARO Advocacy is governed by a voluntary Management Committee, the majority of whom are people from a CALD background with disability. AMPARO's core advocacy funding is received from State Government Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

AMPARO Advocacy believes that people from a CALD background with disability have the same right to live valued inclusive lives that are comparable to other citizens, however societal responses to vulnerable people can be inadequate and harmful, making independent social advocacy on their behalf often needed.

**THIS ANNUAL REPORT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT FROM OCTOBER 2022 TO OCTOBER 2023.**

## Mission Statement

AMPARO Advocacy defends, protects, and promotes the rights and interests of vulnerable people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background with disability.

## Vision

AMPARO Advocacy's vision is for people from a CALD background with disability to be accepted and respected as part of the diversity of Australian society, with access to information, services, and benefits, so that they can be included, participate, and contribute to family and community life.

## The Objectives of AMPARO Advocacy Inc.

1. To provide individual advocacy for vulnerable people from a CALD background who have a disability to defend, protect and promote their rights and interests so that their fundamental needs are met.
2. To influence positive sustainable change to attitudes, policies, practices and resources within governments and communities.
3. To develop links with others who can strengthen our advocacy efforts.
4. To be an effective, accountable social advocacy organisation.
5. To undertake activities that further the objects of the Association and social advocacy.

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*Human rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible, and universal.  
They are the birthright of all people and cannot be lost or taken away.  
They are all of equal importance and apply to all people whatever,  
their race, gender, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion,  
national or social origin, age, property, or other status.  
(United Nations)*

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**AMPARO Advocacy believes:**

People from a CALD background with disability have a rightful place in community where they:

- are respected and valued
- can experience valued relationships with friends and family
- have access to qualified interpreters and information in their preferred language
- have supports and services provided in a culturally sensitive and responsive way
- have their gifts and strengths recognised
- have the natural authority to influence the direction of their own lives, or where they have limited capacity, that their family where possible retains this authority
- are welcomed and have opportunities to live an ordinary life
- are participating and contributing members in the social, economic, and political life of broader Australian society.

**AMPARO's Mandate**

AMPARO Advocacy takes our mandate from important United Nations declarations, Federal and State antidiscrimination laws and principles which promote the rights of all people as well as expectations for the lives of people from a CALD background with disability.

**Advocacy Principles**

Independent advocacy is provided in a way that respects and meets the language, cultural and religious needs of the person and group and is guided by a strong commitment to the following principles of:

- Human Rights
- Social Justice and
- Inclusive Living.

**Independent social advocacy:**

- Represents the rights and interests of people with disability who do not have a voice, or close family or friends who can support their aspirations or speak on their behalf.
- Addresses serious issues of discrimination, violence, abuse, and neglect of people with disability.
- Respectfully challenges poor approaches and responses from service systems.
- Enables individuals to access valuable information, services and supports so they are able to actively participate, engage and contribute to family and the broader community.
- Prevents an escalation of the person's issues and vulnerability and in the long term saves government and public resources.
- Builds the capacity of individuals with disability and their family members to understand their rights and to speak up about what is important to them.
- Seeks to build and repair close relationships around the person, an important safeguard for people with disability.
- Encourages services to meet their obligation under Federal and State Policy Frameworks and to work in ways that are culturally safe, competent, and responsive.

**Management Committee 2022 - 2023**

President	Shahram Jazan
Vice President/ Secretary	Julie King
Treasurer	Sean Gomes
Committee Member	James Nono
Committee Member	Andres Angulo
Committee Member	Masoumeh Ahmedi
Committee Member	Edwin Michael

**Advocacy Team 2022 - 2023**

Manager	Maureen Fordyce
Advocate	Liz Martyn-Johns
Advocate	Murka Smiechowski
Advocate	Keiko Omi
Administration Officer	Jo McCarthy
Bookkeeper	Lucia Forman / Lyn Ireland / Bill Kyle

**ILC – Individual Capacity Building Project Staff 2022 - 2023**

Multicultural Engagement Coordinator	Brisbane	Jenny Ryan
Multicultural Engagement Worker	Brisbane	Maree Anderson
Multicultural Engagement Workers	Logan	Venantie Niragira
Multicultural Engagement Worker	Cairns	Julie Dunn
Multicultural Engagement Worker	Townsville	Dianne Rogers
Multicultural Engagement Workers	Toowoomba	Sylvie Hayere
Administration Officer	Brisbane	Louisa Devadson
Project Consultant	Brisbane	Ingrid Boland

**Assertive Outreach 2023**

Project Officer	Ange Boyd
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**Capability Building 2023**

Project Officer	Jenny Ryan
Project worker	Nazim Ahmed
Project administration worker	Louisa Devadson

## President's Report



Good afternoon members and guests, thank you all for joining us today.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today, the Turrbal people, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. I also extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

AMPARO continues to see many positive changes in the lives of people from CALD backgrounds with disability and their families through the provision of independent individual advocacy and the delivery of other important programs.

I am pleased to advise members that this has been an exciting year for the organisation, with a number of changes that allows AMPARO to remain a strong, sustainable and independent advocacy organisation. For the first time in many years AMPARO, along with other state funded advocacy agencies, has secured a 3-and-a-half-year contract with the State Government to deliver individual advocacy.

Furthermore, I would like to thank our state funders for recognising the role AMPARO continues to play in highlighting the voices and concerns of people from CALD backgrounds with disability. Because of this we are pleased to advise that from the 1 September AMPARO has been funded as a **Peak and Representative body for people from CALD backgrounds with disability**.

I would like to thank **Speaking Up for You Inc.** for their strong commitment to ensuring that people from CALD backgrounds with disability have greater access to specialised independent advocacy from AMPARO. We are fortunate to have the collaboration of many allies and colleagues supporting the work of AMPARO over this past year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff of AMPARO, for their dedication and commitment to working alongside people with disability and their families, to protect their human rights, and wellbeing and to support their inclusion in family and community. AMPARO is fortunate to have such a great team.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank members of the management committee for their work during this year. Through your governance and stewardship AMPARO remains an effective, sustainable, and accountable advocacy organisation.

Thank you.

Shahram Jazan  
President.

## GOAL 1: Provide vigorous individual advocacy in the Brisbane area

AMPARO Advocacy undertakes independent social advocacy with and on behalf of vulnerable people from a CALD background with disability to defend, protect and promote their rights and interests, to address serious issues of social and economic isolation, unfair treatment, and discrimination.

Most individuals that AMPARO works with are from refugee backgrounds, experiencing multiple and complex layers of disadvantage, often isolated from their own communities, with limited English proficiency and not accessing mainstream services or specialist disability services, including the NDIS, to the levels they should be. Most require the engagement of qualified interpreters for effective communication.

AMPARO works with and represents those most at risk and least able to represent or defend their own rights and interests, so that their fundamental needs are met, and they can actively participate, engage, and contribute to family and community life. Independent advocacy respectfully challenges poor approaches and responses by service systems and recognises the importance of close personal relationships as a safeguard for vulnerable people with disability. AMPARO's 1.7 FTE advocacy positions are shared by 3 part-time, highly experienced, and culturally competent advocates Liz Martyn-Johns, Murka Smiechowski and Keiko Omi. As a result of independent, vigorous advocacy long term positive sustainable changes are made in people's lives and that of their families.

We have seen **two significant changes introduced by the Federal Government** that will make an enormous difference to the lives of many people with disability living in Australia who have not been able to access basic supports. In February this we saw the Albanese Government announce that it would **end the cruel and unnecessary policy of temporary protection**. This has meant that those who already had Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) are now eligible to apply for a permanent Resolution of Status (RoS) Visa. That means many people, including several that we are working with, will soon be eligible to apply for support through the NDIS.

Then in July this year the **Federal government made changes to citizenship laws for New Zealand citizens**. If New Zealand citizens have lived in Australia for 4 years or more, they can apply for Citizenship and will no longer need to first apply for and be granted a permanent visa. They will now be eligible for many benefits they have long missed out on, including being able to apply for support through the NDIS.

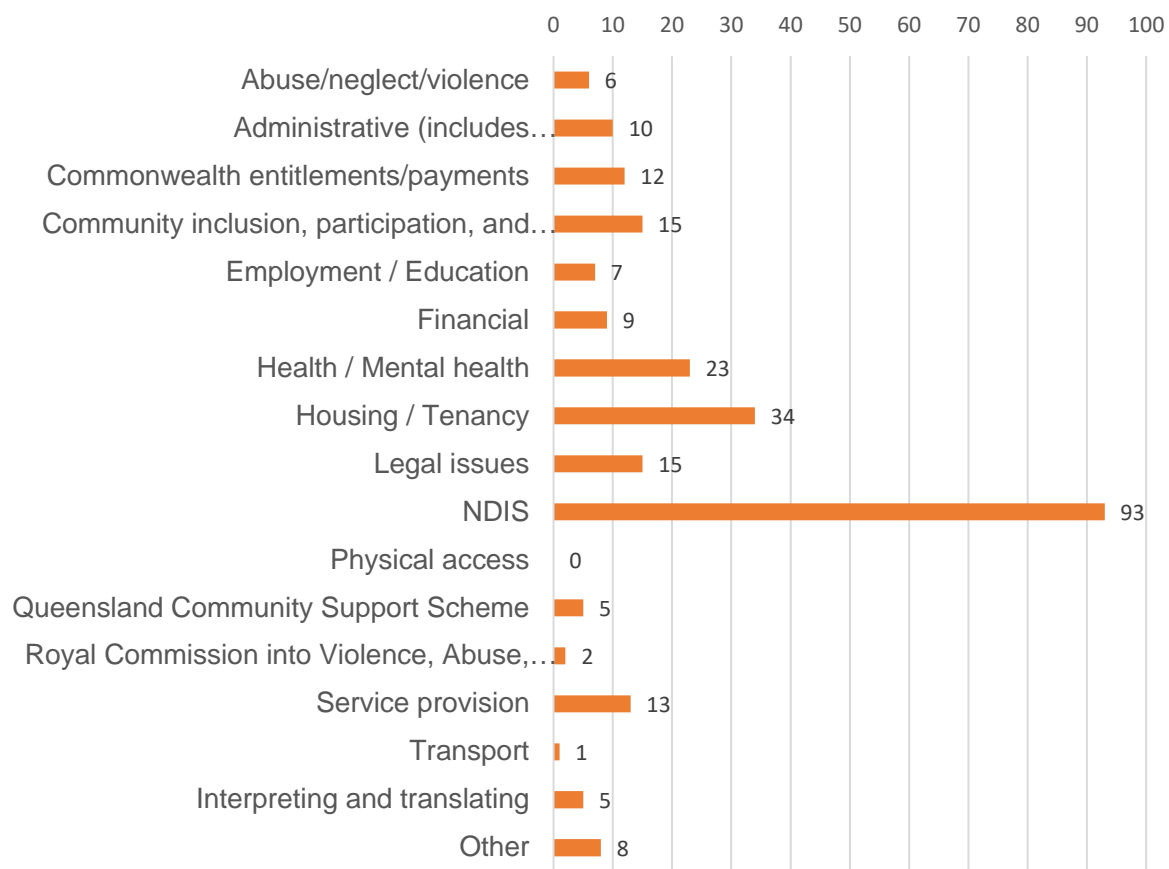
These positive changes in policy have also contributed to an increase in requests for individual advocacy with demand for advocacy far outstripping AMPARO's capacity. As a result:

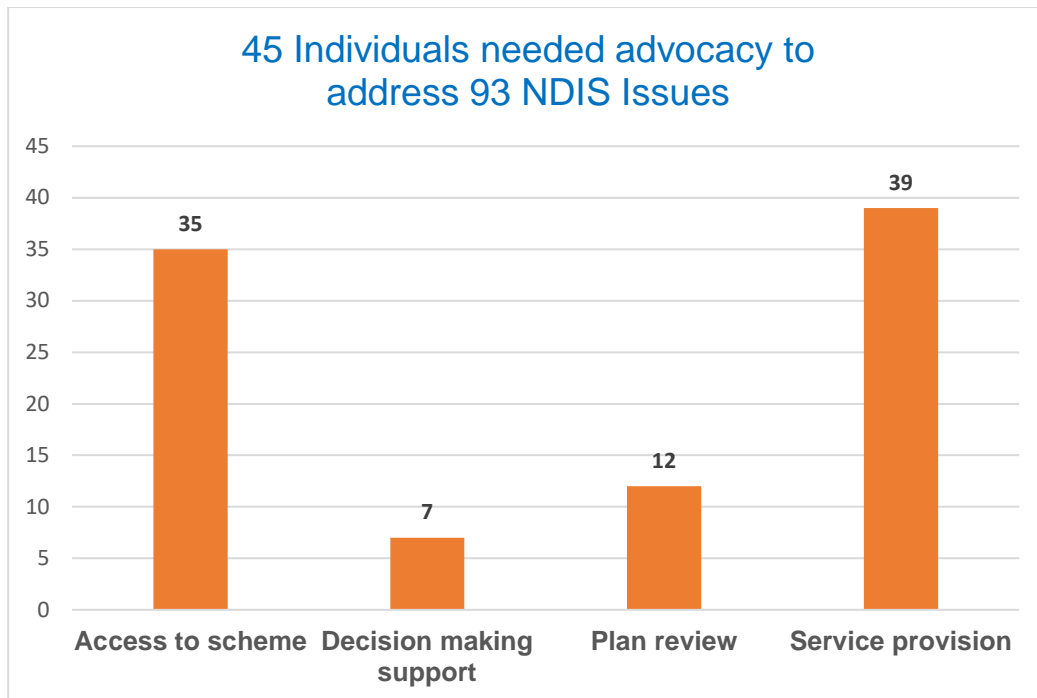
- **58%** of people referred to AMPARO had to be referred to an external organisation.
- **31%** were able to be internally referred to the ILC or Assertive Outreach Project.



This year **AMPARO** advocated for **66** people from **CALD backgrounds with disability**, whose fundamental needs were not being met. **Individuals had a total of 258 complex issues**, with most having **three or four serious issues** that required intensive advocacy support over several months.

**66 Individuals requested independent advocacy to address 258 complex issues.**





Overall, 38.5% of the 258 advocacy issues were related to the NDIS. Of these

- **36% required advocacy to navigate and successfully access the NDIS.**

The NDIS remains a complex service system that is extremely difficult to navigate. AMPARO often advocates for individuals who have had their NDIS applications rejected not because they do not meet the eligibility criteria, but because they do not have adequate “evidence of disability, and the impact of impairment and that it was likely to be permanent.”

Other individuals have simply not had access to the level of specialised support that is needed to make a successful NDIS Access Request. Without this support many people have tried to access the NDIS and been rejected multiple times. A parent of a child with Autism, who attended AMPARO’s NDIS Community Conversation, reported her experience in trying to get NDIS access for her child:

***“I had to apply three times until I was approved. Twice I have been rejected. They kept asking for more evidence, more reports, more paperwork; and it took me more than two years, until I was approved.”***

- **40 % required advocacy to resolve issues related to poor service provision.**

Unfortunately, there are many NDIS providers that are not culturally competent nor responsive to the language, cultural and disability needs of people from CALD backgrounds with disability. Many services are delivering poor quality services that increase the vulnerability of individuals, and some are engaging in unethical practices. Advocacy is often needed to assist individuals to change service providers, with the added complexity of a reluctance by some to change providers for fear of offending those

that are from their own communities, even though they are unhappy with the services they receive.

- **12% required advocacy to assist with internal NDIS reviews to increase core supports and or levels of support coordination.**

Too many NDIS Participants from CALD backgrounds, particularly those from refugee backgrounds who may have limited English proficiency, are not having funds for Support Coordination included in their NDIS plans. As a result, many Participants, including many children, are missing out on critical supports in their plans.

AMPARO finds that many Participants we work with require Plan Reviews to secure adequate levels of core support and Support Coordination. However, without access to advocacy or other programs that can assist with Plan Reviews, CALD Participants continue to struggle with inadequate or poor NDIS supports. The need for these reviews would not be necessary if the NDIS undertook culturally appropriate planning with CALD Participants.

### **Housing and tenancy issues was the second major issue that required individual advocacy.**

Access to safe and affordable housing continues to be a major issue for many people that received advocacy during 2022-2023, with key barriers including:

- Many landlords refusing tenants' requests to renew their leases, citing the need for renovations and then increasing rents substantially.
- The income threshold with the Department of Housing has not kept up with inflation and there is little consideration for the high cost of private rental accommodation when assessing eligibility.
- The refusal of real estate agents to consider applicants when the cost of rental is more than 30% of their income. Consequently, people with disability who receive the Disability Support Pension are usually ineligible for private rental, unless they live with family members who are earning a wage.
- Failure by the Department of Housing to engage interpreters when communicating concerns with prospective tenants.

Despite these barriers advocates were successful in securing public and social housing for several individuals and families who otherwise were experiencing homelessness or facing imminent eviction. Others were able to be listed with the Department of housing with their circumstances and urgency for housing registered; some had their housing applications back dated or reinstated due to failures by the Department to effectively communicate with individuals with limited English proficiency.

### **Supported Decision Making**

AMPARO Advocacy believes that children, young people and adults have the natural authority to influence the direction of their own lives, or where they have limited capacity that their family, where possible, retains this authority. AMPARO will always seek to

understand the *will and preferences* of the child, young person, or adult with whom we are working.

Advocates are diligent in ensuring people with disability, their families and support networks are provided information in a culturally appropriate form through the provision of qualified interpreters and translated information in their preferred language. This requires that advocates meet face to face with the person with disability and family members in their own homes with the assistance of onsite interpreters where possible. This is essential to ensure people with disability can:

- Understand information.
- Communicate their needs, will and preferences.
- Make informed decisions.

Supporting informed decision making with individuals and families with language and cultural differences, takes significant time and requires that a high level of trust has been developed between all parties. As this approach is central to the work of the advocates, it is often not listed as a separate advocacy issue. As a result, data reported here does not reflect the current work being undertaken. AMPARO is working on developing a Supported Decision-Making policy framework, which will inform all our work with individuals and future data that is collected and reported.

## Stories of Individual Advocacy Work

The following individual advocacy stories provide insight into some of the complex issues experienced by people from a CALD background with disability. Real names have not been used and details that may identify the individual have been changed.

### A lack of support for informal decision making

Aline is a young woman who came to Australia 10 years ago under the *Humanitarian Program of Assistance for refugees*. Aline has an intellectual disability, and experiences chronic pain due to a medical condition and is a NDIS Participant. Aline lives with her mother, who had a severe stroke several years ago, which resulted in her requiring a high level of care. Aline has no other informal supports and provides a significant level of care for her mother.

Aline was unsure why she was not receiving adequate supports and how her NDIS funding was being spent. She was not happy with the level and quality of support she received from her NDIS service provider; however, she was struggling with the idea of changing providers. This was in part due to her need for supported decision-making around complex decisions and her lack of informal supports and relationships in her life that could assist her with important decisions. However just as significant was her cultural connections and allegiance to the provider and workers who were from her own community.

Aline's strong connection with members from her community and the close bonds she had formed with her support workers, made changing providers extremely difficult. Aline

was concerned that she would upset them, and she raised her concern with the advocate that they would ‘miss out on income.’ She also feared losing her relationships and connection to them, given her already limited network and social connections.

The advocate worked closely with Aline with the assistance of an onsite interpreter, to provide information about her rights to receive appropriate and transparent service provision, and to change the service providers if she was unhappy with their supports, or if they were unable to meet her needs. Aline’s service provider had total control over her NDIS package and was providing Support Coordination, Plan management, and Core supports.

Aline asked the advocate to find out from the service provider how her funds had been utilised and to obtain a breakdown of the costs of services she had received, to help her decide whether to change providers. The advocate requested this information from the service provider; however, they were not able to provide detailed financial statements and a breakdown of how Aline’s NDIS funds had been spent, including how two years of Support Coordination was spent in 12 months.

Aline had raised several issues with her advocate including that:

- she felt her provider was not including her in making decisions about how and what supports she received.
- workers sometimes cancelled shifts or finished earlier, as they would say they had ‘another appointment.’
- workers ‘*sit around and do nothing*’ and ‘*wait for time to leave.*’

AMPARO raised our serious concerns about service provision and a significant conflict of interest from the service provider to the NDIS Quality Safeguards Commission. They became involved and initiated an investigation of the Service. As a result of this investigation the Commission requested the NDIS assist Aline to change services. This included organising separate services to deliver Support Coordination, Core Support, Plan Management and Allied Health services.

The Quality Safeguards Commission recognised Aline’s vulnerability and importance of having separate agencies delivering her supports, particularly a Support Coordinator, which was a safeguard for Aline. Aline has been happy with this change, to have an experienced and knowledgeable Support Coordinator alongside of her, who linked Aline with much needed services and supports, which she had missed out on before the change.

Strong cultural norms and connections often play a significant role in many communities. AMPARO’s advocates understand and are sensitive to the cultural values, norms and connections in people’s lives. They support individuals with disability to understand their rights, express their will and preferences and make informed decisions about service providers, while ensuring safeguards are in place. Advocates engage qualified interpreters to ensure accurate information is provided and they have a clear understanding of the person’s will and preferences and decisions. Every NDIS participant should have access to quality and transparent services, delivered by skilled workers of

their choice. Quality and transparent support services have resulted in bringing a positive change and impact to Aline's life.

### **Individual advocacy for more than one family member.**

Last year AMPARO commenced advocating on behalf of Adem, a young man from a Bosnian background with intellectual and physical disabilities. Initially, AMPARO received a referral from Adem's service provider about the need for advocacy to assist Adem to access the Disability Support Pension (DSP) through Centrelink, as he and his family were experiencing financial hardship. At the time of the referral, Adem was a year 12 student, and was in the process of transitioning into the school leaver's day program.

Whilst assisting Adem to apply for the DSP, the advocate became aware of significant difficulties being experienced by another member of his family. As a result of a recent accident, Adem's mother been left with an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). The accident left her with physical and cognitive impairments, resulting in reduced functional capacity including mobility, communication, learning and social interaction.

Before the accident Adem's mother had been his primary support person and he was fully dependent on her assistance. Unfortunately, her cognitive and physical impairments meant she was unable to provide the level of support Adem required. She was also unable to work or drive, and experienced difficulties in managing her home, doing her shopping, and accessing and engaging in the community. Consequently, Adem's father became the sole support person for both his son and his partner and the sole income earner. He has been under a lot of stress working full time, taking over all domestic duties and supporting his loved ones. The family also experienced substantial loss of income due to Adem's mother not being able to work, which resulted in a significant financial hardship. Furthermore, the family had limited proficiency in English, and despite Adem being a NDIS Participant they had little understanding of the NDIS and service systems generally.

AMPARO believes the person with disability has the natural authority to influence the direction of their own lives and will always seek to understand the *will and preferences* of the child, young person, or adult with whom we are working. If the person cannot actively participate or communicate their will and preferences, the advocate will engage with the closest family member to seek input from the family member to provide the best interpretation of the person's will and preferences and participate in determining and directing the advocacy goals and priorities.

In speaking with Adem, and his family, the advocate identified that the most critical unmet need was Adem's mother's need for immediate support and assistance through the NDIS. Fortunately, the allied health practitioners from outpatient rehabilitation team had assisted Adem's mother to gain access to the NDIS, but they were unable to assist her any further.

The advocate worked with Adem's mother to prepare the necessary information and reports for the NDIS planning session, and provided the required advocacy to ensure the plan would meet Adem's mother's specific support needs, including crucial and sufficient funding for therapeutic assistance and support coordination. While advocating for

appropriate NDIS plan for Adem's mother, the advocate ensured that Adem's DSP application was completed, lodged, and prioritised by Centrelink. Acknowledging the family's lack of knowledge about the NDIS and service available under the scheme meant that the advocate worked hard to build their understanding of, their NDIS Plans, their rights in relation to the NDIS, and the roles and responsibilities of service providers, support coordinators and allied health practitioners.

During the advocacy efforts, the advocate became aware that Adem had never been provided with assistance to develop effective communication with members of his family. The family reported that they often struggled to connect with Adem and to understand his emotions and his needs. Communication is a fundamental human right (UNCRPD 2006) and a person's ability to communicate effectively can impact on their ability to build relationships, make choices, and participate in everyday life. Adem's inability to effectively communicate with his family was a significant issue for Adem and his family. Therefore, the advocate sought the involvement of the school speech therapist to provide information regarding the importance of effective communication and the alternative methods of communication in the family's first language. With the parents' involvement, the therapist developed an action plan to facilitate and develop effective communication between Adem and his family.

As a result of the advocacy efforts Adem and his mother's quality of life has vastly improved with the following outcomes:

- Adem's mother secured a NDIS plan with levels of funding that would meet her needs for daily support and therapy assistance and an appropriate level of support coordination to ensure she would have access to the quality services and supports she requires.
- Connected Adem's mother to an efficient support coordinator, who ensured that she receives appropriate therapies and support with household duties, enabling her to establish links within community and participate in different community activities.
- Adem and his mother were granted the Disability Support Pension, and Adem's father was granted Carers Allowance.
- The Occupational and Speech Therapists are currently working alongside Adem and his family to improve their communication skills.
- The intense involvement of speech therapist and the use of appropriate communication methods allowed Adem the opportunity to express his views on the supports he was receiving. Adem expressed he was unhappy with the day program he was attending and was supported to explore other options for support. Adem with the support of his family chose to change services providers.

Individual advocacy has brought positive changes in Adem's, his mother's and his family's life and has given them new opportunities to build positive relationship based on the effective communication, participate and engage in the community, improve their financial situation, build their physical strengths, and gain control over their own lives.

## Vulnerability of non-permanent visa holders, with disability.

Permanent residency is a pre-requisite for most disability related supports available to people living in Australia. Access to the NDIS, a Centrelink pension and public or community housing are all dependent on people either being a permanent resident or citizen of Australia. But sadly, there are many people with disability living long term in Australia who are unable to access much needed supports and therapies for themselves and or their children with disability.

**Disability Supports:** The only option for paid supports for many in this situation is to apply for funding through the State funded Queensland Community Support Scheme, which purports to provide funding for up to five hours per week for in-home and community access support. But, due to the high demand for this program, wait times are exceptionally long and funding is often limited to providing the very basics, with often only 1 or 2 hours per week of support funded despite much higher care needs. Not surprisingly, a recent review found that most beneficiaries of this scheme are highly socially isolated, as the limited support hours are used for essential self-care and in-home supports, with insufficient hours left to support community participation.

Only when someone has clear evidence that they are at risk of entering a nursing home can additional supports be sourced through the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services or early access to the Aged Care system. However, many families from a CALD background with whom we work see caring for a family member with disability as their responsibility and would not consider a nursing home for their family member, however difficult their circumstances. Without confirmation that the family member is at risk of entering a nursing home they will be ineligible for higher levels of support and remain dependent on family members and minimal support through the QCSS.

**Therapies for Children:** Several young children, without permanent residency, have been referred to AMPARO Advocacy when they have been unable to access the early intervention therapies and supports through the NDIS. Such interventions are often essential to addressing developmental delays at an early age and may assist in limiting the progression of more significant disabilities later in life. Children without residency have very limited access to allied health therapy sessions, which can be at considerable cost to the family. Those requiring disability related equipment are reliant on community donations of second-hand equipment such as wheelchairs, which may not be the correct size or have the right supports. A 6-year-old child with a formal diagnosis of Autism Level 2, who was born in Australia, was referred to AMPARO for assistance with accessing the NDIS. Sadly, due to his single mother being on a Temporary Protection Visa, he was found to be ineligible for any Early Childhood Early Intervention funding and denied access to essential therapies.

**School Leavers:** For those children with disability who may have been well supported throughout their school life, the transition to post school life can be exceedingly difficult and highly isolating, when they are not a permanent resident. A young man with autism, who was referred to AMPARO, had watched as his cohort left school for further education



or employment, or received NDIS funding to access School Leaver Employment Supports and social programs. Without capacity to apply for TAFE or university or to work without support, this young man was left highly isolated at home with no support whatsoever, including that needed to access training or employment.

**New Zealanders:** AMPARO has had many people with disability referred to us over the years who have entered Australia on a New Zealand passport. Many did not know that although they were able to reside in Australia long term, they and their children would not be eligible for any disability related support. Following significant advocacy from AMPARO, in 2019 the Department of Disability Services reversed its decision to make changes to this program that would have prevented New Zealand Citizens accessing QCSS funded supports.

Thankfully, a significant change in legislation earlier this year, now allows New Zealand citizens holding a Special Category Visa (SCV) to be considered permanent residents for citizenship purposes. Once granted Australia citizenship, the process can begin of applying to the NDIS for much needed disability related support, to Centrelink for a Disability Support Pension and to the Department of Housing for accessible housing should this be required.

**Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) Holders:** Another vulnerable cohort who are regularly referred to AMPARO for advocacy are those with disability who are living in Australia on TPV or SHEV visas. Whilst unable to return to their home country due to war, political unrest, or risk of persecution, they have not been granted permanent residency in Australia. Those who have family or community members who can provide some assistance, must rely on them for supports beyond that which the QCSS can provide. Only those who are deemed **'at risk of entering a nursing home'** can apply through Ability First for funded supports from My Aged Care or Department Disability Services to allow them to continue to live independently within the community. However, many of those without family in Australia, and with more complex support needs, continue to live in aged care homes at a young age. And, without access to funding for disability related equipment or for community access they can become highly isolated from the wider community. This is the situation for two young people for whom AMPARO continues to advocate.

This year, AMPARO welcomed the Albanese Government's decision to provide pathways for TPV / SHEV holders and TPV / SHEV applicants to be assessed for permanent Resolution of Status (RoS) visas. Those granted a RoS visa are allowed to live, work and study in Australia, access government services such as Medicare, Centrelink, and the NDIS.

But others have not been so fortunate. Many, including people seeking asylum who arrived by plane, refugees who were transferred from Nauru or PNG to Australia for medical treatment, and people whose permanent protection visas or humanitarian visas have been refused or cancelled, remain on temporary visas and unable to access the disability supports and therapies they urgently need.

**Fixed Term Visa Holders:** Another highly vulnerable group are those who acquire a disability while in Australia on work or study visas, such as the young man referred to AMPARO who came to Australia from Turkey on a working holiday visa. Whilst he had been enjoying travelling and working in Australia, 10 months after he arrived, he slipped and fell from a cliff. The resulting Acquired Brain Injury led to cognitive and physical impairment and the need for months of hospitalisation and intensive rehabilitation. Two years on, his travel insurance has expired, and he relies on pro bono therapies and donations from community members and organisations to house him and pay his bills. As in-home QCSS funded support is limited to two hours per week, he has had to rely on community members to assist him with all other supports. He is now on a Bridging visa awaiting the outcome a Permanent Protection Visa application, in the hope that he will be able to live in Australia permanently and receive the substantial disability supports that he will continue to need for his lifetime. With no family to support him in Australia and at risk of entering a nursing home, AMPARO has successfully advocated for him to receive disability related support funding from Disability Services through Ability First. We are also advocating for him to receive financial assistance through the Status Resolution Support Service, whilst the outcome of his visa application is determined. Until then he is dependent on donations of food and money from community members and organisations.

AMPARO very much welcomes the granting of permanent residence to New Zealanders holding SCVs, and the granting of permanent RoS visas to those on TPVs and SHEVs, who are eligible. This in turn will allow those with significant disability, from both cohorts, to access the NDIS. For many others who remain on temporary visas, access to disability related therapies and supports remains extremely limited. There is an urgent need to increase funding for supports for those with disabilities who are not permanent residents, through the QCSS or a similar program. Likewise, increased access to low-cost therapies to address developmental delays and improve or maintain function is vital.

## GOAL 2: Engage in strategic systemic advocacy

AMPARO's direct work with individuals and their families, through the individual advocacy, ILC and other project work, continues to inform our understanding of the systemic failures that disadvantage and marginalise people from CALD background with disability.

AMPARO has a strong history of contributing to positive sustainable changes to legislation, policies, practices, and approaches that contribute to issues of inequality. Whilst AMPARO over the past 18 months has not had funding to undertake systemic advocacy, the organisation continues to be called on to participate in consultations, advisory bodies and reference groups to share our understanding of the additional systemic barriers that people from CALD backgrounds face.

This has meant prioritising systemic advocacy efforts has been crucial, with many requests for AMPARO's involvement being declined.

**Key systemic advocacy work undertaken this year, often with the support of allies, includes:**

### The National Disability Insurance Scheme

Over the past 18 months the NDIA has been working to develop a new CALD Strategy and Action Plan for 2023 – 2027 and has implemented a range of engagement strategies with people with disabilities, their families, advocates, and other stakeholders. These included focus groups, conversations with the community, public information sessions, online surveys, and written submissions. AMPARO was invited to be a member of the External Advisory Group to the NDIA Team responsible for developing the strategy.

During this period AMPARO has provided detailed and extensive feedback, raised concerns, and made suggestions for improvements to the NDIA, through a range of processes which have included:

- Attending NDIS CALD Strategy Summit in February 2023 to provide feedback on the update of the new CALD Strategy and proposed actions.
- Participating in several online focus groups
- Organising a Community Conversation with people with disability and family members from the Arabic speaking communities in Logan / Brisbane and supporting a Community Conversation in Toowoomba with the Kurdish Kurmanji
- Encouraging allies across the sector to attend and participate in the NDIS focus groups.
- Supporting members of AMPARO to participate in NDIS Focus Groups and community conversations.
- Providing written feedback on several drafts of the Strategy and Action Plan
- Participating in the endorsement meeting on 2 August 2023
- Providing feedback on communication materials
- Sharing relevant submissions previously provided to the NDIA and the DRC

## NDIS Community Conversation

In February this year, with funding from the NDIS, AMPARO organised a Community Conversation with Arabic speaking NDIS Participants and family members living in Brisbane /Logan, to hear about their experiences in accessing and participating in the NDIS. Feedback from this engagement was provided to the NDIA, to incorporate key learnings into the development of a new CALD Strategy for 2023 – 2027.

This conversation highlighted many difficulties that people from CALD backgrounds continue to experience when navigating this complex service system. Unfortunately access to qualified interpreters continues to be a significant issue for many and we heard on the day that many were not aware they could ask for an interpreter when engaging with the NDIS, Partners in the Community (PITC) and registered providers:

*“I had no idea I was entitled to have an interpreter. A lot of time I wouldn’t understand half of what they said, but I never knew that I could ask for an interpreter.”*

*“I have never, ever heard that they are actually allowed to bring interpreters.”*  
(Regarding Allied Health practitioners visiting the home).

*“For the whole year, I didn’t know I was entitled to ask for any interpreter.”*

Many other issues raised in this Community Conversation were reported in AMPARO’s submission to the NDIS Review which is available on our website: [www.amparo.org.au](http://www.amparo.org.au)

AMPARO is hopeful that the new CALD Strategy for 2023 – 2027 will address the significant limitations and systemic barriers within the scheme, that mean people from a CALD background do not have equitable access and participation in the NDIS. Evidence of the continued inequity is seen in the continued, much lower than expected CALD participation rates:

### Across Australia

- 27.7% of people were born overseas and
- 22.3% spoke a language other than English at home. (ABS Census,2021)
- However only 9.1% of NDIS participants are from a CALD background. The NDIS expects this figure should be closer to 20%. (*June 2023\_NDIS Quarterly Report*)

### In Queensland

- 22.7% of people were born overseas and
- 13.2% spoke a language other than English at home. (ABS, Census 2021)
- However only 5.3% of NDIS participants are from a CALD background. This figure should be closer to 12-15%. (*June 2023\_NDIS Quarterly Report*)

## The National Disability Insurance Scheme Review

In October last year, the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, announced a review of the NDIS. The purpose of the review was to examine the design, operations and sustainability of the NDIS and ways to make the market and workforce more responsive, supportive, and sustainable.

AMPARO was able to attend a round table discussion with members of the Independent Review Panel and provided a submission to the Review. We hope to see current inequities in the Scheme addressed and practices dismantled, that make it too easy for unethical providers to profit off the needs of people with disability. There is much riding on this review, with NDIS participants across Australia waiting to see if their needs will continue to be met through the scheme. We eagerly await the release of the Report in December.

## Disability Royal Commission into the Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability.

The release of the Final Reports by the Disability Royal Commission into the Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability have been long awaited. The Reports articulated an important vision of a future where people with and without disability:

- Live, learn, work and play, create and engage together in safe and diverse communities.
- Have the power of choice, independence and the dignity to take risks.
- Make significant contributions to communities that value their presence and treat them with respect.

AMPARO was able to submit our fourth and final report to the DRC in December last year. Whilst we are still digesting the many recommendations across the 12 Reports, we were heartened to see many of our concerns reflected throughout the reports. Advocacy will be necessary to ensure the DRC recommendations are fully implemented. See website for reports: [www.amparo.org.au](http://www.amparo.org.au)

## Member of Queensland Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN)

AMPARO continued to be an active member of QIDAN throughout the year and attended monthly meetings with the Network, which included participating in meetings and discussions around systemic issues of concern. Additional systemic advocacy by QIDAN members focused on issues regarding the Office of the Adult Guardian and the Qld Community Support Scheme and AMPARO was able to provide written examples of concerns and participate in discussions with the Minister.

Early in 2023 AMPARO with other members of the Network met with local State and Federal members of Parliament to highlight the need for ongoing advocacy funding. Members of QIDAN also met with the Hon. Craig Crawford Minister for Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services to lobby for an ongoing commitment by the State Government for and an increase to funding for independent advocacy for Queenslanders

with Disability. The work of QIDAN members resulted in the State government offering new service agreements for individual advocacy from 1 June 2023 – 31 March 2027.

In June 2023 staff attended the 2-day Annual QIDAN Conference in Brisbane. This was a great opportunity to connect with advocates from around the State and to have speakers present on topics of interest, including a session by Professor Chritine Bigby on Diversity, Dignity, Equity and Best Practice: A Framework for Supported Decision Making.

### **Review of Queensland’s Community Support Scheme**

In December 2022 and again in July 2022 QIDAN raised concerns with the Minister and his Department about the limitations of the Queensland Community Support Scheme. AMPARO contributed to the report on these issues provided to the Department. This scheme offers the only direct support for people with disability who are deemed not eligible for the NDIS. Sometimes that is because they do not have adequate evidence including diagnosis and impact on their functional capacity. Many people still require significant support to access the NDIS, and do not have access to the specialized assistance they require. However, some individuals, for example asylum seekers who do not have permanent residency and those with medical issues, are not eligible for NDIS and for them QCSS is critical.

The support from QCSS whilst so important, has many limitations which include:

- Support is often not adequate to meet an individual's needs.
- Long delays once on a wait list for support, sometimes for several months.
- There are staff shortages and funding for the program is inadequate.

There has been an increase in requests for advocacy to access QCSS, as individuals must prove that all other supports will not meet their needs or that they are not eligible for other services, including the NDIS and before they can have an ACAT assessment to determine eligibility for My Age Care.

Pathways has received significant enquiries for assistance to make complaints about QCSS providers; however, advocacy agencies have found that QCSS is not always responsive to complaints being made. Gardening and maintenance services have been significantly impacted by COVID vaccination mandates with limited gardeners causing homes to be falling behind in maintenance causing safety issues.

### **GOAL 3: Undertake community development and engagement that supports social advocacy.**

This goal focuses on engaging and communicating with people from CALD backgrounds with disability, their families, and communities to understand the challenges and issues they experience that contribute to disadvantage, and to undertake activities to increase their capacity across a range of areas.

People from CALD backgrounds with disability and their families experience significant barriers to accessing essential information, identifying supports, understanding their rights, exercising choice and control, and speaking up and resolving issues. The following projects aim to address some of these longstanding barriers through culturally appropriate information, education, and targeted engagement.

#### **ILC Individual and Organisational Capacity Building Project February 2020 – February 2022**

##### **Individual Capacity Building**

As reported last year, AMPARO received an extension of 16 months on the three-year ILC Individual and Organisational Capacity Building Project that was due to be completed by February 2023, with a new finish date the 30 June 2024. Being able to continue this work with highly vulnerable individuals and their families is so important. AMPARO will continue to progressively evaluate the outcomes of the project and remain reflective in the way the capacity building activities are delivered.

The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) project which began at AMPARO in February 2020 continued to deliver positive outcomes for vulnerable individuals living with disability and their families/support persons throughout 2023. The project is being delivered on an ongoing basis by AMPARO's Multicultural Engagement workers (MEWs) located in Cairns, Toowoomba, Logan, and Brisbane. Unfortunately, a suitably experienced worker couldn't be recruited in Townsville this year, so we reallocated those funds to other regional areas more in need.

Since February 2020 the MEWs have worked with a total of 818 people from CALD backgrounds, including 277 individuals and 541 family members to increase their:

- Knowledge of disability in the Australian context
- Understanding the rights of persons with disability and how to exercise their rights
- Expectations for what a good life can look like for people with disability
- Awareness of mainstream and specialist disability services and what steps are needed to access these services, including the NDIS
- Capacity to exercise choice and control when engaging with services, including the NDIS
- Confidence to exercise their rights and voice their concerns
- Connections with their peers.

In addition, throughout this year AMPARO has held 7 group information sessions about *Understanding your Rights*, in Cairns, Toowoomba and Brisbane.

**A snapshot of the demographics of the supported individuals include:**

- 70% of participants are humanitarian entrants
- 75% of participants require an interpreter
- Most spoken languages are Kurdish Kurmanji, Arabic, Swahili, and Somali
- Most diagnosed disability domains are psychosocial followed by physical which is reflective of the refugee experience.

There is a wide range of positive outcomes for individuals and family members which include:

- Access to the NDIS and or effectively implementing NDIS supports was a frequent outcome.
- Improved community participation and access to important mainstream services including education, employment, housing and health services were common.
- Increased understanding of their rights and improved confidence to voice concerns with greater expectations for a good life.
- Increased expectations for a good life with expanded social networks.

*"I feel like I am less alone, and people care about my family"*

*"I feel more proud and I have started to study for my future career"*

*"I have accessed important services that have improved my physical and mental health."*

*"I sleep better now, not always worrying"*

*"I have gained confidence to navigate the system and speak for my daughter's needs."*

**Success factors which contributed to these outcomes include:**

- Collaboration between organisations like the Multicultural Mental Health Coordinator (MMHC) and the Refugee Health Network. When teams and individuals collaborate effectively, participants receive more holistic support.
- Skill of interpreters: Having skilled interpreters who can engage well with families is deemed essential.
- Experienced and knowledgeable support staff: A knowledgeable Support Coordinator is vital in ensuring NDIS Plans are appropriately implemented.
- Community connection: Having support workers from the same community or culturally responsive workers can help participants to feel less distress and foster a sense of belonging.
- Multicultural Engagement workers with the experience and skills to work in a trauma informed and culturally safe and responsive manner.



- Connections and referrals: Many participants benefitted from referrals to housing support services, domestic and family violence, Multicultural Services Officers at Services Australia and TAFE.

#### Common barriers experienced are:

- Implicit cultural taboos and social pressures play a significant role in decision-making. It can hinder individuals from seeking help when experiencing domestic violence or accessing specific services.
- Trauma: adverse childhood experiences and other pre-settlement trauma made it challenging for some participants to build relationships or accept support.
- Housing issues: Housing is a recurring concern, with some individuals becoming homeless or experiencing stress finding appropriate accommodation.
- Time constraints: Some participants juggle multiple responsibilities, making prioritising their or their family's needs difficult.
- Language and communication barriers: Engaging interpreters can be challenging, especially when supporting participants with complex mental health due to lack of skilled interpreters and concerns related to stigma.
- Misunderstandings about NDIS plans, other services and what they can provide.
- Challenges in accessing the NDIS due to complexities or lack of evidence were also cited.

#### Organisational Capacity Building

This year AMPARO's work to build the knowledge and leadership skills of a small group of emerging leaders continued. AMPARO has participated on a reference group for the Community Resource Unit's (CRU's) New Ways Project over the past 2 years and supported members of AMPARO to attend the Forum held on the 7 October 2022. Four people with disability and two family members attended this forum where they heard people with disability speaking about how they were living good lives in their communities with the support of informal and formal supports.

Emerging leaders and members of AMPARO heard what is possible and how people with disability can be creative with their NDIS supports.

- 2 people with disability and 1 family member were new to the leadership group
- People from the leadership group also saw that telling your story can inspire others.

On the 9 December AMPARO joined with the **Queensland Human Rights Commission** to celebrate Human Rights Week with a Community Conversation at Nundah Neighbourhood Centre. AMPARO helped to organise and promote this day and supported members of the management committee, staff and leadership group to attend.

- Five members of the leadership group, three staff and 1 management committee member attended the day.
- One new member of the leadership group said after attending this Conversation that they would like to tell their story at such an event in the future, showing increased confidence and willingness to share his experiences to benefit others.

### Annual Members Morning Tea

On the 30 August 2023 AMPARO held our **Annual Members Morning Tea** with 32 individuals' attendance, 12 of whom were people from CALD backgrounds with disability or family members. Elizabeth Watson Brown, our local Greens MP for the seat of Ryan also attended to support this event and two officers from the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, were also able to attend.

These events are a great opportunity for current members, new members, and friends of AMPARO to connect with each and to hear more about the work of AMPARO. Four people from CALD backgrounds with disability, shared their personal stories of the positive difference AMPARO's work has made in their lives, either through Individual Advocacy or the Individual Capacity Building Project. This is a great way for new members to learn about and understand the work of AMPARO.

AMPARO also launched to 2 new videos about **Why AMPARO's Advocacy Matters**, that were developed as part of the Organisational Capacity Building work. Many of those present were involved in the development of these videos and it was an opportunity to thank them.

Several members present have participated in the Leadership Group over the 3 years of the ILC Project. They were able to hear firsthand about the work of AMPARO from people who have benefited from this work and to connect with management committee members and other members of the leadership group on the day. Two of these individuals with disability who have only recently become members of AMPARO, were able to share their stories at this event and one member provided the Acknowledgement to Country.



## Other Project Work

This year AMPARO was approached by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Service to undertake 2 short term projects.

### Building the Cultural Capability of State Funded Advocacy Agencies.

The purpose of this work was to increase the skills and knowledge and capability of State Funded Advocacy Agencies to deliver face to face advocacy for people from CALD backgrounds with disability.

Six members of QLD Independent Disability Advocacy Network (QIDAN) participated in either an online or face to face workshop along with follow up meetings with each agency to support a self-review and provide information for improvements in cultural capability. One QDAP provider participated in an online discussion regarding their cultural capability. They were also invited to attend the online workshop with TASC but unfortunately did not have capacity to do so, due to their limited human resources. A total of **56** individuals attended the workshops.

This project was unexpected and had to be delivered in a short time frame. We appreciated the willingness of agencies to understand the limitations of this work, and thank those agencies we worked with, for their extremely positive feedback.

### Assertive Outreach Project

The second project was the Assertive Outreach Work which was funded in March this year for 3 months, with permission granted to carry over unspent funding to 30 September. The project was limited in funding and scope. However, AMPARO provided support to **30 children and young people aged 7 to 25 years from CALD backgrounds with disability (or suspected disability)** with additional assistance to access the NDIS.

AMPARO provided support with accessing the NDIS, in **Brisbane, Logan and Ipswich**, including:

- Sharing information about the NDIS
- Helping to gather evidence of a person's disability and how this affects their daily life
- Warm referrals to the **Assessment and Referral Team (ART)** for further help with NDIS access.

**ART** (within Queensland Government) provided **free** additional support to access the NDIS, such as assistance with **functional impact assessments**.

### How we delivered our work?

The Assertive Outreach worker undertook:

- Engagement with leaders from a variety of cultural organisations and organisations providing disability specific supports.

- Direct community engagement through outreach activities, including face-to-face meetings with individuals with disability, their families, key stakeholders and interpreters.
- Provision of intensive work with individuals and their families to:
  - explain and breakdown the complexity of the NDIS
  - provide information about disability to increase understanding
  - gather evidence of disability and impact of impairment on their lives to support NDIS access
  - liaising with multiple stakeholders in the person's lives.
  - support them to connect with the State Government's Assessment and Referral Team for further help to access the NDIS.

### **What have we provided?**

Of the 30 referrals:

- 18 were referred to ART with 13 accepted for follow-up assessments, and five not accepted as the disability conditions would not meet NDIS access. Of the 13 accepted:
  - Five have so far met NDIS Access
  - Two have had NDIS Access requests submitted to the NDIA
  - Two are awaiting the submission of their NDIS access requests
  - Four are awaiting ART appointments/assessments
  - One is awaiting further assessment information from an external provider before the NDIS Access request can be submitted.

### **Conclusion**

- This short-term project was successful in assisting individuals and families from CALD backgrounds through their NDIS journey.
- Access to diagnosis and evidence of impact of impairment on the person's functional capacity continues to be a major barrier to successful NDIS access.
- CALD participation in NDIS remains less than expected and there is an ongoing need for targeted outreach to support access to the NDIS.
- Post-project, there's concern that many in the CALD community won't receive the intensive, culturally responsive support vital for NDIS access and as such many will miss out on gaining the support that they need.

Whilst ART will continue their work with children and young people until December 2024, AMPARO's role is now finished. We are concerned that many people will not receive the intensive, culturally appropriate support they need to gather evidence and be connected to ART. Short term projects with limited funding, cannot not address the disparities that are built into these significant and important programs.

## **GOAL 4: Be an effective, sustainable, and independent social advocacy organisation**

This goal focuses on ensuring AMPARO operates as an effective, accountable, publicly funded independent advocacy organisation that complies with legislative, constitutional, funding, and industrial requirements.

AMPARO Advocacy is governed by a voluntary Management Committee, the majority of whom are people from a CALD background with disability. This is key requirement of AMPARO's constitution and ensures the organisation is led by people with a lived experience of disability and an understanding of the additional barriers that come with being new to Australia with language and cultural differences.

The effective governance and stewardship of the management Committee has ensured AMPARO remains an effective, sustainable, and accountable advocacy organisation, upholding the Constitution, mission, vision, and objectives of the organisation.

- Holding four Management Committee meetings during 2022 - 2023.
- Holding 1 reflection meeting to discuss the individual advocacy work in greater depth to develop a collective understanding of the challenges and experiences of people from a CALD background with disability.
- Mentoring and supporting new management committee members
- Participating in the Annual Planning and induction for all members of the management committee on the 11 March 2023.
- Attending training workshops
- Ensuring the strategic direction of the organisation as per the Strategic Plan 2020-2023.

### **Staff recruitment, training, and development**

All staff underwent induction and training, professional development planning and had access to training opportunities, with only two new staff persons engaged during this year. This year however saw AMPARO's bookkeeper of 15years, Lucia Forman, retire. Lucia had provided professional and excellent service to AMPARO Advocacy and the broader community sector and was a much-valued member of the AMPARO team. New staff members included Ange Boyd who was employed to work on the Assertive Outreach Project and Janine Nyguen the new finance officer.

### **Ensuring compliance with legislative, constitutional, funding, and industrial requirements by:**

#### **Implementing efficient and effective systems to manage finances, assets, and risk.**

- Ensuring information data systems are maintained so that records of individual advocacy are available and included in monthly reporting through P2i.
- Continuous improvement across administrative and financial systems
- Engaging Jason O'Connor Registered Company Auditor to conduct an independent financial audit of AMPARO Advocacy financial position as of the 30 June 2022 and provided copies of the financial statements to all members of the Association and our funding bodies.

**Implementing an effective Human Services Quality Framework**

AMPARO Advocacy implements a quality management system which strengthens the work of the organisation through continuous improvement processes and by maintaining accreditation under the Human Services Quality Framework. This year AMPARO undertook a full review of all policies and procedures to ensure they complied with the **National Principles of Child Safe Organisations**. AMPARO was grateful to have Fran Stowers assistance with this major piece of work.

In August, this year AMPARO successfully completed a maintenance audit under the Human Service Quality Standards, receiving extremely positive feedback from the auditors.

**Reporting to funding bodies including Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services and Department of Social Services**

- Monthly reporting via P2i
- Audited Financial Reports 2022/2023
- Annual Acquittals
- Criminal History checks for all staff/volunteers

**Meeting Industrial Relations and other requirements**

- Monitored and implemented changes to awards and pay scales with support of Jobs Australia.
- Reviewed and updated all insurance policies, including Workcover.

## Treasurer's Report



As the Treasurer of AMPARO Advocacy, I am pleased to inform members that the Management Committee have acted to conduct the financial business of the organisation in accordance with the Association and Incorporation Act of 1981 and organisational policies. On behalf of the management committee, I am happy to present AMPARO Advocacy's Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023.

This year we said farewell to our previous Auditor Jason O'Connor and thanked him for his professional and generous support over the past 16 years. The management committee engaged Haywards Chartered Accountants to prepare an Independent Audit Report, and this includes the statement of the financial position of AMPARO Advocacy as at the 30 June 2022.

I can advise that the Audited Financial Statements for 2022 /2023 show a surplus of \$2,031 for the year and confirm that AMPARO has made full provision for all liabilities, including staff entitlements such as annual leave, personal leave, and long service leave.

I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank Lucia Forman, AMPARO's bookkeeper for 15 years, who retired earlier this year. AMPARO is grateful for the many years of exceptional service Lucia gave to the organisation and for her professionalism and strong commitment to the work of AMPARO during this time. Thank you, Lucia, we wish you all the very best.

In October we were incredibly pleased to employ Janine Nguyen as our new finance officer, welcome to AMPARO Janine. Fortunately, however, we had the assistance and expertise of Lyn Ireland and Bill Kyle who kept our reports and books in good order while we recruited Janine into the role, a very big thank you to you both.

On behalf of AMPARO, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following funding bodies who have supported the important work of AMPARO Advocacy over the past year. These include:

- The Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services: Specialist Independent Individual Advocacy; Capability Building and Assertive Outreach.
- The Department of Social Services: Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program: Individual and Organisational Capacity Building Project February 2020 – June 2024.
- The Disability Advocacy Network of Australia or DANA: Disability Royal Commission.
- Speaking Up for You Incorporated (SUFY): Individual Advocacy - Brisbane and Moreton Bay regions.

I would also like to thank our staff, who form the backbone of AMPARO, who work so incredibly hard to ensure that AMPARO continues to provide services to its members and who are often not recognised. As always, I wish to thank Maureen Fordyce, whose safe and confident leadership has ensured that AMPARO weather any and all challenges that come our way.

Finally, I would like to propose that the Audited 2022 / 2023 Balance Sheet and Annual Statement of Receipts and Expenditure be adopted, and the Auditors' Report be received.

*Sean Gomes*

**Treasurer**



**AMPARO ADVOCACY INC.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30**

**JUNE 2023**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

	<b><u>Note</u></b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Revenue	2	1,166,167	1,197,598
Other Income	2	6,625	2,323
Employee Benefits Expense		(968,522)	(1,021,082)
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense		(4,340)	(3,401)
Insurance		(9,376)	(9,252)
Motor Vehicle & Travel Expenses		(37,040)	(27,282)
Property Expenses		(32,723)	(29,908)
Staff Training and Development Expenses		(4,041)	(2,944)
Audit, Legal and Consultancy Fees		(38,783)	(64,008)
Language Services Expenses		(38,476)	(14,355)
Other Operating Costs		(37,460)	(42,731)
<b>Current year surplus/(deficit) before income tax</b>		2,031	(15,042)
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>Net current year surplus/(deficit) Other comprehensive income</b>		2,031	(15,042)
<b>comprehensive income</b>		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year</b>		\$2,031	(\$15,042)
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity</b>		\$2,031	(\$15,042)

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2023**

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank and On Hand	3	1,028,374	777,031
Debtors & Prepayments		4,015	23,058
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		1,032,389	800,089
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
	4	15,378	19,718
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>		15,378	19,718
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		\$1,047,767	\$819,807
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors & Accruals		97,854	43,288
Employee Provisions		106,171	108,718
Contract Liability	5	760,804	568,830
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		964,829	720,836
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Employee Provisions		28,492	42,612
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		28,492	42,612
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		993,321	763,448
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		\$54,446	\$56,359
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>			
Retained Surplus		54,446	56,359
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS</b>		\$54,446	\$56,359

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**AMPARO ADVOCACY INC.**  
**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

	<b><u>Retained</u></b> <b><u>Surplus</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>Balance at 1 July 2021</b>	\$71,401	\$71,401
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year attributable to members of the entity	(\$15,042)	(\$15,042)
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity</b>	(\$15,042)	(\$15,042)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2022</b>	\$56,359	\$56,359
<b>Balance at 1 July 2022</b>	\$56,359	\$56,359
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year attributable to members of the entity	\$2,031	\$2,031
Adjustment Prior Year	(\$3,944)	(\$3,944)
<b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to members of the entity</b>	(\$1,913)	(\$1,913)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>	\$54,446	\$54,446

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**AMPARO ADVOCACY INC. STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>		
Receipts from customers	1,376,332	1,268,002
Interest Received	4,284	1,676
<b>Payments</b>		
Wages & Salaries & Other Supplies	(1,129,273)	(1,532,834)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	\$251,343	(\$263,156)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payment for purchase of plant & equipment	-	(23,119)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	\$NIL	(\$23,119)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b>		
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	251,343	(286,275)
Cash at beginning of the reporting period	777,031	1,063,306
<b>Cash at end of the reporting period</b>	\$1,028,374	\$777,031
<b>Reconciliation of Net Surplus/Deficit to Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities</b>		
Operating Result	2,031	(15,042)
- Adjustment Prior Year	(3,944)	-
- Depreciation	4,340	3,401
- Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	54,566	(37,132)
- Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	(16,667)	5,283
- (Increase)/Decrease in Prepayments & Debtors	19,043	69,697
- Increase/(Decrease) in Contract Liability	191,974	(289,363)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	\$251,343	(\$263,156)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## **1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirement of the Associations Incorporated Act (Old) and Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The report is also prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

### **(a) Revenue and Other Income**

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

#### *Operating Grants, Donations and Bequests*

When the entity receives operating grant revenue, donations, or bequests, it assesses whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance to AASB 15.

When both these conditions are satisfied, the Entity:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to the grant
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations.

If a contract liability is recognised as a related amount above, the Entity recognises income in profit or loss when or as it satisfies its obligations under the contract.

#### *Capital Grant*

When the entity receives a capital grant, it recognises a liability for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the financial asset received over any related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue, or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer) recognised under other Australian Accounting Standards.

The entity recognises income in profit or loss when or as the entity satisfies its obligations under the terms of the grant.

#### *Interest Income*

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method. All

revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

**1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont'd)**

**(a) Revenue and Other Income (cont'd)**

*In the comparative period*

Non-reciprocal grant revenue was recognised in profit or loss when the Entity obtained control of the grant and it was probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant would flow to the Entity and the amount of the grant could be measured reliably.

If conditions were attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the Entity was eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue was deferred until those conditions were satisfied.

When grant revenue was received whereby the Entity incurred an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this was considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue was recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service had been delivered to the contributor; otherwise, the grant was recognised as income on receipt.

**(b) Property, Plant and Equipment**

Plant and Equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation is calculated on the prime cost basis and is brought to account over the estimated economic lives of all fixed assets commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used are as follows:

<u>Class of Fixed Assets</u>	<u>Depreciation Rate</u>
Plant and Equipment	20%

**(c) Impairment of Assets**

At the end of each reporting period, the committee reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over to recoverable amount is recognized in the income and expenditure statement.

**(d) Employee Provisions**

Provision is made for the Organisation's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee Provisions have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

**(e) Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

**1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont'd)**

**(f) Leases**

**The Entity as Lessee**

At inception of a contract, the entity assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the Entity where the Entity is a lessee. However, all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Initially the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the Entity uses the incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date;
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of purchase options if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options;
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease.

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest. Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Entity anticipates to exercise a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

**Concessionary Leases**

For leases that have significantly below-market terms and conditions principally to enable the Entity to further its objectives (commonly known as peppercorn/concessionary leases), the Entity has adopted the temporary relief under AASB 2018-8.



**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR**  
**ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

**1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont'd)**

**(g) Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses, and assets are recognized net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

**(h) Comparative Figures**

Comparative figures, where necessary, have been reclassified in order to comply with the presentation adopted in the figures reported for the current financial year.

**(i) Economic Dependence**

Amparo Advocacy Inc. is dependent on government funding to operate. As at the date of the report the committee has no reason to believe the government will not continue to support the organisation.

**(j) Significant Management Judgement in Applying Accounting Policies**

The directors evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the company.

AMPARO ADVOCACY INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<b>2. REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>		
<b>Revenue</b>		
<b>Revenue from Government Grants</b>		
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services	398,097	304,107
Department of Social Services	612,729	694,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,010,826	999,057
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
Non-Recurrent Funding	151,057	196,865
Interest	4,284	1,676
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	1,166,167	1,197,598
<b>Other Income</b>		
Donations	1,185	50
Sundry Income	5,440	2,273
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL OTHER INCOME</b>	6,625	2,323
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>	\$1,172,792	\$1,199,921
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>3. CASH AT BANK AND ON HAND</b>		
Operating Account	834,557	589,363
Donation Account	1,910	737
Debit Credit Card	3,468	2,211
Investment Account	188,439	184,720
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$1,028,374	\$777,031
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>4. FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Motor Vehicles - At Cost	23,119	23,119
Less Accumulated Depreciation	7,741	3,401
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,378	19,718
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$15,378	\$19,718
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>5. CONTRACT LIABILITY</b>		
Department of Social Services	701,723	551,141
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services	25,603	-
Other Grants	33,478	17,689
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$760,804	\$568,830
	<hr/>	<hr/>

## **6. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

### *Transactions with Related Parties*

There were no transactions with Related Parties during the current financial year.

There were no amounts receivable or payable to related parties at the current reporting date.

**AMPARO ADVOCACY INC.**

**STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial Statements.

1. In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 10 are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and:
  - (i) Comply with the Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the entity; and
  - (ii) Give a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Amparo Advocacy Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This Declaration is signed in accordance with Subs 60.15(2) of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Shahram  
Jazan

Digitally signed by Shahram Jazan  
DN: cn=Shahram Jazan, ou=Amparo Advocacy Inc., ou=Management  
Certificate email=Shahram.jazan@amparo.org.au, c=AU  
Date: 2023.11.13 15:16:02 +1100

President



Sean Gomes

Treasurer

13/11/2023

Date



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FACSIMILE: (07) 3357 9909

EMAIL: [admin@haywards.net.au](mailto:admin@haywards.net.au)

PARTNERS: GREG DORGE  
PETER GESCH  
PHIL ROBINSON

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF**

### **AMPARO ADVOCACY INC.**

#### **Report on the Audit of the Financial Report**

##### ***Opinion***

We have audited the financial report of Amparo Advocacy Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, the statement of profit & loss and other comprehensive income, statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Amparo Advocacy Inc. has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD).

- 1) Giving a true and fair view of the associations financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year then ended; and
- 2) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013.

##### ***Basis for Opinion***

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the Auditor Independence Requirements of the ACNC Act and ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES110: code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

##### ***Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting***

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

##### ***Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report***

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD), and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

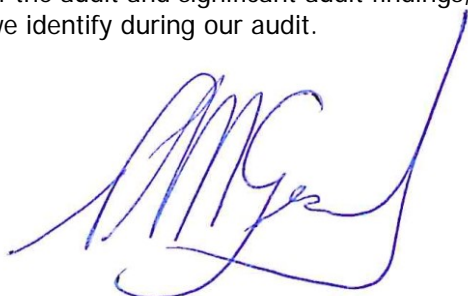
### ***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



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PETER GESCH  
HAYWARDS CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
Level 1 / 488 Lutwyche Road  
LUTWYCHE QLD 4030

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023

**AMPARO ADVOCACY INC**  
**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, 23 November 2022**

**Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians**

Abebe Fekadu delivered the acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Turrbal people.

**Welcome**

Abebe welcomed everyone to AMPARO's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Abebe apologised that Sharam Jazan our current President was unable to attend due to his late arrival back into the country and informed the attendees he would be chairing in his place.

**Present:** Mauricio Avila, Benita Berzynski, Bikash Chapagain, Indra De Joodt, Don Dias-Jayasinha, Ludmila Doneman, Sean Gomes, Julie King, Finn McQuoid, Edwin Michael, Bich Nguyen, James Nono, Heidi Woolveridge, Maree Anderson, Lucia Forman, Dennis Forman, Esperance Kalonji, Rosetta Pendo, Jo-Ann Cochran. Kelly Beckitt, Dr John Chesterman, Mandy Cox, Chelsea Henderling, Stephanie Long, Lisa Carvalho, Maureen Fordyce, Liz Martyn-Johns, Murka Smiechowski, Keiko Omi, Jenny Ryan and Jo McCarthy.

**Guest Speaker**

Abebe welcomed Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM and thanked him for being the guest speaker for the evening.

Dr. Palipana, a lawyer, doctor, researcher, disability advocate, and recipient of the 2021 Queensland Australia of the year award for his work advocating for doctors with disabilities. Dr. Palipana shared his personal experiences as a person who experienced severe depression and as a physician with a disability and how he works to create more inclusive medical spaces and attitudes, in Australia.

**Housekeeping**

Julie King reminded attendees of the COVID Safe Practices and informed attendees of the location of emergency exits, assembly area and accessible bathrooms.

**Apologies**

Julie read out the twenty-nine names of those who were apologies including: Shahram Jazan (President), Andres Angulo, Masoumeh Ahmadi (Management Committee Member), Jennifer Barrkman, Wayne Briscoe – Dept Child Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, Christine Castley, (Multicultural Australia), Jim Duncan (NAATI), Anne Fraser, Julie Granger, Julie McDougall- Dept Child Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, Linda Mulally, Bobby Noone (Proxy), Lorella Piazzetta, Mahmoud Sabetiaghjeh, Shawn Phua (Proxy), Sam Takada, Elizabeth Watson-Brown MP

**Tabling of proxies**

Three Proxy Forms were received and tabled at the meeting. Julie informed the meeting Bobby Noone had appointed Shahram Jazan, Shawn Phua appointed Maureen Fordyce, Karin Swift appointed Shahram Jazan.

### **Approval of Minutes of the previous meeting (AGM 2021)**

It was proposed that the minutes of the 2021 AGM be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**PROPOSED:** Julie King                      **SECONDED:** Ludmilla Doneman                      **CARRIED**

### **Business arising from previous meeting**

No matters from the previous meeting were raised or discussed.

### **President's Report**

Abebe Fekadu presented the President's report outlining the organisation's successes. Abebe thanked the Management Committee members, staff, members, and guests of AMPARO for their continuing support of the organisation. See attached President's report.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ludmila Doneman read the Treasurer's Report and presented the financial report and thanked the Auditor, Jason O'Connor Pty Ltd. Ludmila proposed that the Audited 2021/2022 Balance Sheet and Annual Statement of Receipts and Expenditure be adopted, and the Auditors' Report be received.

**PROPOSED:** Ludmila Doneman                      **SECONDED:** Sean Gomes                      **CARRIED**

### **Report on the work by AMPARO over the past year**

Maureen delivered the Manager's report by commencing with the acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians and thanked members and guests for their attendance and support. The Manager's report is attached as an appendix.

### **Individual Capacity Building Project (ILC)**

Jenny Ryan, Project Officer delivered her report on the work undertaken during the past year on the individual capacity building project. The report is attached as an appendix.

### **Motion of thanks to the Management Committee Meeting.**

Abebe Fekadu moved a motion of thanks to members of the management committee for their dedication and effective governance of Amparo of the past year.

**PROPOSED:** Abebe Fekadu                      **SECONDED:** Sean Gomes                      **CARRIED**

Julie King read out a thank you to Abebe Fekadu acknowledging his significant service to Amparo Advocacy and the Management Committee. Abebe was presented with lifetime membership and a small gift. Speech Attached as an appendix.

Sean Gomes read out a thank you to Ludmila Doneman acknowledging her significant service to Amparo Advocacy Inc. and the Management Committee. Ludmila was presented with lifetime membership and a small gift. Speech Attached as an appendix.

### **Introduction of Returning Officer**

Abebe Fekadu introduced Stephanie Long of Queensland Program Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), as the Returning Officer and informed attendees that Stephanie would take over the formal proceedings of the annual general meeting.



### **Election of Management Committee Members for 2022/2023**

Stephanie Long asked Julie King to confirm that the meeting had sufficient numbers for a quorum. Julie King confirmed there were sufficient numbers for a quorum.

Stephanie Long declared all positions on the management committee vacant and informed the meeting that Abebe Fekadu and Ludmila Doneman were to step down and asked all other committee members to stay seated.

Stephanie Long announced that the Management Committee had asked that the number of members on the Management Committee remained at seven for 2022/2023.

Stephanie invited the members to move a motion to maintain the number of Committee members at seven.

**PROPOSED:** Julie King

**SECONDED:** Edwin Michael

**CARRIED**

### **Nominations Received**

Stephanie Long read out the list of nominations, which were received by the secretary prior to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022, and these nominations were posted on the noticeboard in the AMPARO Advocacy office from 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
<b>President</b>	Shahram Jazan
<b>Vice President</b>	Julie King
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sean Gomes
<b>Committee Members</b>	James Nono Masoumeh Ahmadi Andres Angulo Edwin Michael

Stephanie Long confirmed that AMPARO Advocacy received one completed nomination for each management committee position, so there was no need to take nominations from the floor.

Stephanie Long said she was pleased to introduce:

Shahram Jazan as the President of AMPARO Advocacy Inc. for 2022/2023

Julie King as the Vice-President of AMPARO Advocacy for 2022/2023

Sean Gomes as the Treasurer of AMPARO Advocacy 2022/2023

Masoumeh Ahmadi, James Nono, Edwin Michael, and Andres Angulo as Committee Members of AMPARO Advocacy for 2022/2023

**Stephanie Long handed the meeting back to the Treasurer Sean Gomes to chair.**

Sean thanked Stephanie for her kind support and Maureen Fordyce presented Stephanie with a gift.

**Committee Members** Sean welcomed Edwin Michael and Andres Angulo to the Management Committee as new committee members and thanked Abebe Fekadu and Ludmila Doneman for their significant contributions over a great many years.

Sean thanked Jason O'Connor Registered Company Auditor, for such professional and generous support over the past years and for the diligence in the preparation of the Independent Audit Report, for 2022.

#### **Appointment of the Auditor for 2022/2023**

Sean Gomes moved that Jason O'Connor from J O'Connor Pty Ltd, PO Box 5480, Brendale DC Qld 4500, be appointed as Auditors for 2020/2021.

**PROPOSED:** Sean Gomes

**SECONDED:** Julie King

**CARRIED**

#### **Confirmation of Public Liability Insurance**

Sean Gomes confirmed that AMPARO Advocacy has Public Liability Insurance cover for \$40 million this current year.

#### **General Business**

Sean Gomes enquired whether there was any other business.

Sean proposed a motion to recognise the contributions of the Amparo Advocacy staff over the past year.

**PROPOSED:** Sean Gomes

**SECONDED:** Ludmila Doneman

**CARRIED**

Maureen Fordyce thanked the Management Committee for their support of the staff over the past year and presented a gift to each Committee Member.

#### **Close of Meeting**

Sean thanked all members and guests for attending the meeting and supporting the work of AMPARO Advocacy over the past year and invited everyone remain for refreshments.

Meeting closed at 7:00pm.

## **Thanks to Abebe Fekadu**

Today Abebe is stepping down from the Management Committee of AMPARO Advocacy and we would like to say a few words of thanks to you Abebe and acknowledge your enormous contribution to AMPARO over many years.

In 2002 Abebe was one of the first people with disability to join the steering group that was tasked with developing an independent advocacy organisation that would protect the rights, interests, and well-being of people from non-English speaking background with disability.

In 2004 Abebe was elected at the inaugural Annual General Meeting to the management committee of AMPARO Advocacy. Since this time, Abebe has been a member of the management committee for a total of 12 years, filling the roles of secretary and committee member and as Vice President for the past 3 years.

On behalf of the management committee, I would like to acknowledge your significant contribution and longstanding stewardship of AMPARO Advocacy. AMPARO has benefitted enormously Abebe from your experiences, knowledge, and commitment to protecting the rights and wellbeing of people from CALD backgrounds with disability. Today we also thank you for your willingness over the years, to share in many forums to advocate for the difficulties and challenges people with disability who may be new to Australia, experience when trying to navigate systems and access supports.

We would also like to thank you Abebe for your friendship, insights, and wisdom that you have generously shared with us all.

It is with great pleasure that the management committee present you with an Honorary Life Membership of AMPARO and a small gift of thanks.

## **Farewell to Ludmila Doneman**

Ludmila Doneman has been a long term, much valued and committed member of the management committee for sixteen years, and deeply involved in the governance of AMPARO since 2006. However today Ludmila is also stepping down from the Management Committee of AMPARO Advocacy.

Over the past 16 years Ludmila has undertaken various roles on the management committee including Committee Member for one year, Secretary for six years, Vice-President for three and in her current role as Treasurer, for the past six years. Ludmila's contribution to the effective governance of AMPARO Advocacy has been outstanding.

Ludmila brought to AMPARO her experiences of migrating to Australia in her early life, being a parent of a child with disability and her strong commitment to the rights of persons with disability. Ludmila joined AMPARO at a critical time when the organisation was only new to delivering independent individual advocacy.

On behalf of the management committee, I would like to thank you Ludmila for your many years of service, you have been instrumental in ensuring AMPARO's work remains true to the vision, and mission and to upholding the human rights, and well-being of people from CALD backgrounds with disability.

We thank you Ludmila for sharing your wisdom, kindness, and laughter, it has been an absolute pleasure working alongside you. It is with much gratitude that we present you with an Honorary Life Membership and a gift that we hope you will enjoy.