



Royal Rehab

The Rehabilitation & Disability  
Support Network

2017-2018

# Annual Report

Royal Rehab

 Royal Rehab  
The Rehabilitation & Disability  
Support Institute

RESEARCH





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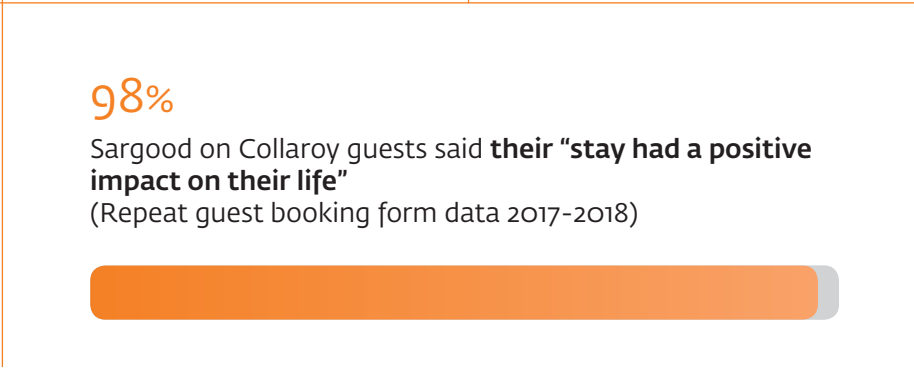
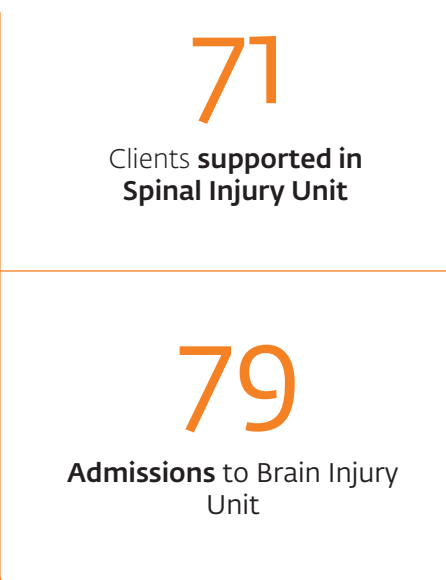
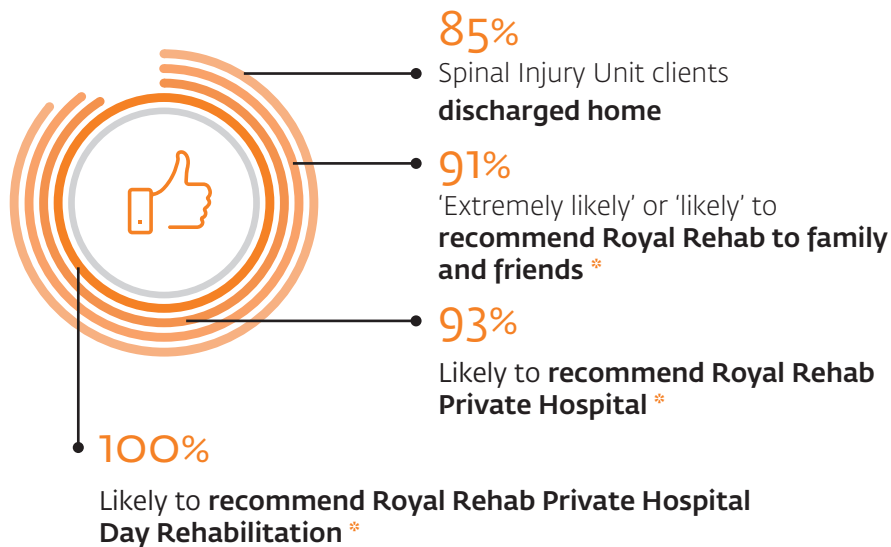
Thank You

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# At a Glance



\*Client Exit Survey results 2017/2018

**Who we are**  
 Founded in 1899, Royal Rehab is a not-for-profit charity which provides specialist brain and spinal cord injury rehabilitation, supported accommodation, a private hospital, community services and a purpose-built resort for people with spinal cord injury.

**What we do**  
 We empower people to achieve as much independence and quality of life as possible through our innovative evidence-based programs and services, commitment to clinical excellence, and person-centred care.



**91%**  
 'Extremely likely'  
 or 'likely' to  
**recommend**  
**Royal Rehab**  
**to family and**  
**friends**



L to R: Tony Staveley, Chairman, and  
Matthew Mackay, CEO

## Message from our Chairman and CEO

Welcome to the Royal Rehab Annual Report for 2017/18. In this joint Chairman and CEO message, we reflect on the opportunities and challenges of the past year and look to the future with confidence.

It is humbling to think that 119 years ago Royal Rehab began as a concept to provide support for those dealing with enormous challenges resulting from serious injury and debilitating illness. More than a century later, through our passionate staff and generous supporters, we remain committed to empowering people to achieve as much independence and quality of life as possible.

Over recent years, the changing disability and healthcare landscapes have significantly altered the environment in which Royal Rehab operates. These are exciting times driven by consumer choice and competition. And now more than ever we need to be agile and market focused in our approach.

Laying the foundations so we can continue our purpose for the long term has been our priority throughout 2017/18.

## The year's highlights include:

- New management was introduced and our divisions were reorganised to bring together the most appropriate structure and skill sets to ensure the successful future of Royal Rehab.
- Stephen Lowndes was farewelled as CEO and Matthew Mackay was honoured to step into the role. We are grateful to our departing directors: David Piper OAM; Professor Richard Madden; John Cullity and Professor Catherine Dean. We welcomed new director Marilyn Speiser and welcomed back director Pamela Grant.
- Acknowledgement goes to long-term staff members Elizabeth Drolz, Director of Nursing, Director Inpatient and Specialty Services; Delia Gray, Director of Allied Health, General Manager of Community Services, General Manager Sargood on Collaroy; and Dianne Newey, Rehabilitation Operations Manager and Deputy Director of Nursing, for their significant contributions to Royal Rehab.
- In an exciting announcement, education and research were elevated as priority objectives. While these areas have played an important role in Royal Rehab's work for decades, they will now be given a renewed focus through a dedicated centre — the Ducati Owners Club of NSW Education and Research Hub — which is named after our generous supporter.
- Our services have been successfully adapting to the new environment brought about by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and its transformation of disability service provision. Much effort was directed towards supporting our Lifestyle Support clients' move to the NDIS, with 100 per cent of clients successfully transitioning by the end of 2017/18. Changes were made to our largest residence, Weemala, which have ensured we continue to deliver the most appropriate care and support to suit our residents.
- Royal Rehab Private Hospital continued to perform strongly, operating at close to full capacity and achieving outstanding patient feedback.
- In its first full financial year of operation, Sargood on Collaroy has delivered on its promise as a purpose-built resort for people with spinal cord injury, boasting an impressive 68 per cent repeat business rate. New activities and educational courses were added, and marketing ramped up with the implementation of an integrated plan.
- The Royal Rehab Foundation Committee was reinvigorated, and we welcomed new members. Generous support continued from our long-term donors including the Ducati Owners Club of NSW, Robert Ingham AO, local Rotarians and other community groups and individuals. We extend our appreciation to The White Knight Foundation for funding the new outdoor gym equipment for clients in our Brain and Spinal Injury Units. We look forward to the development and execution of a strategic fundraising plan in 2018/19.
- Another uplifting Wall of Fame ceremony was held in 2017 where we showcased the rehabilitation journeys of Brain Injury Unit clients and celebrated the commitment of our dedicated staff. Thanks goes to Peter Overton for his fifth year of voluntarily donating his time as Master of Ceremonies.
- Whilst we achieved our financial expectations this year, our focus has sharpened towards strengthening our operating performance and we remain committed to strong financial stewardship.
- A volunteer appreciation reception was hosted by our Patron His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales and Mrs Hurley at Government House. We are sincerely thankful for the ongoing support from our Patron and our volunteers.


We express our gratitude to The Honourable John Alexander OAM, MP and The Honourable Victor Dominello, MP for their ongoing support and guidance. We are also sincerely thankful to our Board of Directors, Executive and Senior Management teams and our passionate staff members.

There is much to be done in 2018/19 to consolidate and strengthen our organisation. We are confident that we will be ready for the challenges, and we look forward to continuing the important role we play re-engineering our organisation to ensure it is flourishing in another century and delivering on its purpose.

**Tony Staveley**  
Chairman



**Matthew Mackay**  
CEO



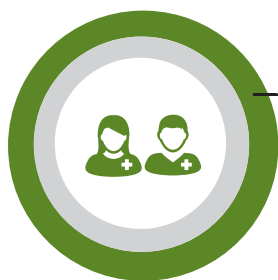
# Education and Research

In an exciting new strategic announcement made during the year, education and research have been elevated as priority objectives for Royal Rehab. While these areas have underpinned our work for decades, efforts will now be consolidated and given renewed status through a dedicated centre – the Ducati Owners Club of NSW Education and Research Hub.



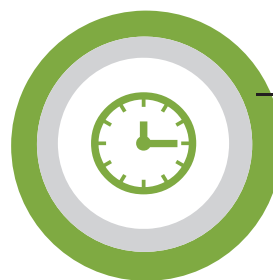
Named after our long-term supporter, the Hub is set to harness strengths, test new ideas and push the boundaries in a broad range of multidisciplinary clinical research. The Hub will be a centre for teaching excellence and represents our ongoing commitment to the education of staff and students. Education and research goals will be established throughout 2018 and 2019, and are expected to increase in terms of their scale and the impact they have. Our ultimate aim is the improvement and advancement of rehabilitation and disability services.

## Commitment to Education



257

Nursing and allied health students completed placements



Over 5,000

Hours of training and development leave were approved

We are proud to have a culture of continuous learning at Royal Rehab where we share our knowledge and research, support the ongoing education of our staff and provide training for external clinicians and the next generation of health professionals.

### Educating medical trainees

Royal Rehab trains undergraduate students from the University of Sydney School of Medicine. Our facility is also a teaching hospital for the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine registrars. We welcome international physicians to study at Royal Rehab and during 2018, two Clinical Fellows visited from Saudi Arabia to study brain and spinal injury rehabilitation.

### Renowned student training

Royal Rehab nursing and allied health clinicians contribute significantly to student training each year. In 2017/18, a total of 257 students completed placements under our clinicians' supervision. Of special mention

this year is our Speech Pathology department which won the 2017 Deirdre Russell Award for Service from the University of Sydney. This award recognises teams that provide sustained and substantial contribution to research, teaching or clinical training of students.

### Macquarie University and Royal Rehab Speech Pathology Student Unit

We expanded our speech pathology student placement partnership with Macquarie University at the beginning of 2018. Master of Speech and Language Pathology degree students now train in our Brain Injury Speech Pathology Student Unit under the dedicated direction of a Royal Rehab speech pathology clinical educator. Funded by Macquarie University, the partnership is proving to be successful with evaluation of the first placement rounds reporting very positive feedback.



## Inaugural Alex Ommanney Social Work Student Prize

Australian College of Applied Psychology social work student Emily James was announced as the winner of Royal Rehab's inaugural Alex Ommanney Prize. Dedicated to the memory of social worker Alex Ommanney, the prize aims to contribute to the development of the next generation of social workers and is open to students in the final two years of a Bachelor of Social Work or Masters (Qualifying) course.

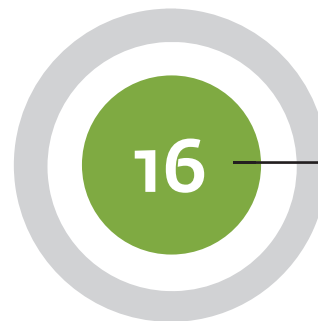
## Leaders in their fields

Our staff continue to be recognised as leaders in their fields and present at clinical conferences. This year's highlights include:

- Occupational therapist Christian Minett presented at the Australia and New Zealand Spinal Cord Society annual conference on Comparing the Spinal Cord Independence Measure (SCIM) with the Functional Independence Measure (FIM) in an Australian Inpatient Rehabilitation Setting: A Feasibility Project for the Implementation of the SCIM.
- Clinical Associate Prof. Julie Pryor, Associate Professor Murray Fisher and Dr Denise Haylen presented at the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses' Association National Conference on Problems Accessing Help with Bowel Care Practices following Spinal Cord Injury: a Qualitative Study.
- Vocational Consultant Rachel Harper presented NDIS and Vocational Rehabilitation (Challenges and Opportunities) at the Australia and New Zealand Spinal Cord Society annual conference.

## Leading Research

Royal Rehab's research covers many domains including spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury and rehabilitation practice. We have a long history of leading research projects and collaborating with other researchers to enable the knowledge base in our research areas to grow.



**Total number  
of research  
publications**



## Research highlights

### Duncan McKechnie – PhD and award-winning research

Duncan McKechnie, Clinical Nurse Consultant at the Brain Injury Unit, undertook four years of research and completed a PhD from the University of Sydney in 2017. This work resulted in the development of a falls risk screening tool for the traumatic brain injury population. Duncan's research has been published in peer-reviewed journals and won him the Nursing Research Prize for his presentation of this work at the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses' Association national conference in Adelaide in October 2017.

L to R: Clinical Associate Prof. Julie Pryor; Dr Duncan McKechnie, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Brain Injury Unit; Associate Prof. Murray Fisher, Susan Wakil School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Sydney, and Nursing Scholar in Residence Royal Rehab.

### Dr Joan Leung – leading world-first research

For people who have suffered severe brain injury, ankle contracture is a common problem which can prevent mobility and be associated with increased care needs and poor outcomes. Dr Joan Leung, Senior Physiotherapist at the Brain Injury Unit, is leading Dr Clayton King, Director of Medical Services, and Sarah Fereday, Professional Leader – Physiotherapy, in a randomised controlled trial to evaluate the combination of serial casting and botulinum toxin in the management of ankle contractures. This study is a first in clearly showing substantial benefits in the long-term use of such treatments using a rigorous study methodology.



L to R: Sarah Fereday, Professional Leader – Physiotherapy; Dr Joan Leung, Senior Physiotherapist Brain Injury Unit; and Dr Clayton King, Director of Medical Services.

### Priya Iyer – PhD findings go international

Priya Iyer, Dietetics Professional Leader, represented Royal Rehab in 2018 at the 10th World Congress for Neurorehabilitation in Mumbai, India, where she presented the findings from her world-first research project undertaken as part of her PhD: 'Exploring Food and Nutrition Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviours of Spinal Patients in Specialist Rehabilitation'. The study explored nutrition knowledge among spinal patients in light of the increased prevalence of risk factors of cardiovascular disease in people with spinal cord injury, and highlights knowledge gaps that influence food choices to examine the need for targeted intervention.



### Kate Jones – PhD and ongoing research

Social worker Kate Jones contributed to the development of the Strength2Strength program for families of individuals with traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury. During 2017, Kate completed a PhD through Griffith University on the contribution spirituality plays in building family resilience after spinal cord injury and her work has been widely published. Kate's research has shown that although spirituality is an important component of adjustment after traumatic injury, it is not well incorporated into rehabilitation processes. Kate is currently working on a research project funded by the Community of Christ which will develop and trial a training program focussed on building staff knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to spiritual care.



## Some of the research projects of 2017/2018

1

Bowel Care for People with Spinal Cord Injury — in collaboration with the University of Sydney and University of Technology Sydney.

2

Development of a Falls Risk Screening Tool in a Traumatic Brain Injury Population: a Two-Phase Study — in collaboration with the University of Sydney.

3

An Exploration of the Nature and Extent of Patient Dependence in Relation to Urinary Elimination in Inpatient Rehabilitation in Australia — in collaboration with the University of Sydney and the University of Wollongong.

4

The changing face of Rehabilitation in Australia — in collaboration with the University of Sydney and the University of Wollongong.

5

Deteriorating Patients in Rehabilitation — in collaboration with the University of Sydney.

6

Improving Diagnosis of Verbosity following Traumatic Brain Injury: A descriptive study — in collaboration with Macquarie University.

7

Exploring Food and Nutrition Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviours of Spinal Patients in Specialist Rehabilitation — in collaboration with the University of Wollongong.

8

Factors Influencing the Overall Satisfaction in Patients with Severe Brain Injury with Physiotherapy Services during Inpatient Rehabilitation.

9

App Based Exercise Rehabilitation Outcomes (AERO) — in collaboration with Macquarie University.

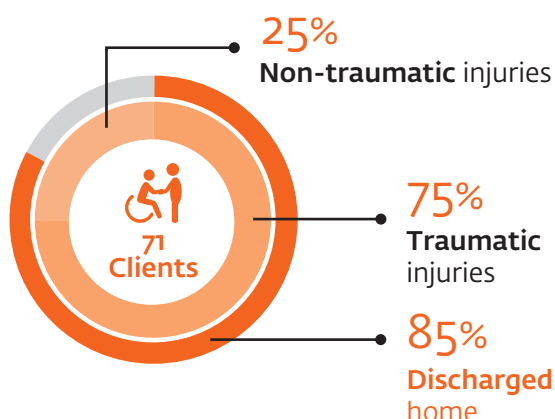
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The Significance of Resilience on the Longer-term Wellbeing of Family Caregivers, Service Utilisation and Client Community Participation: 3 year follow up — Royal Rehab participated in this research with the Ingham Research Institute, Liverpool Brain Injury Research Group.

# Spinal Injury Unit



**Motor vehicle and motor bike** accidents remain the most common cause of traumatic injuries



**Younger clients** are more likely to have experienced a traumatic injury



**Bicycle and pedestrian** incidents on the increase



Causes of non-traumatic injuries include **infection and inflammation, spinal vascular disorder and post-operative spinal cord injury**

**+65**

Almost all the non-traumatic injuries are experienced by clients **aged 65 and over**

Sustaining a Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) is a traumatic and life-changing event which can lead to long-term disabilities. Rehabilitation plays a vital role in supporting people with SCI to adjust, be as independent as possible and go on to live full and rewarding lives.

## Specialist rehabilitation

The Royal Rehab Spinal Injury Unit is one of only two units in New South Wales dedicated to providing rehabilitation to those who have sustained a traumatic SCI. This specialist service, for which Royal Rehab is renowned, is delivered through a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals including rehabilitation doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, recreation therapists, dietitians, social workers, speech pathologists, clinical psychologists and vocational consultants. Located in a purpose-built facility which includes a gymnasium and an on-site hydrotherapy pool, the service integrates seamlessly into the local community enabling rehabilitation programs to incorporate everyday activities such as visits to the local shops, cafes and parklands.

## Demographics and trends

Over the past 12 months, the Spinal Injury Unit has worked with 71 clients, 85 per cent of whom have been discharged home. The over 65 age group continues to grow year on year contributing to an increased mean age of 53 years. With age comes additional challenges of co-morbidities and funding, and we are experiencing an increasing number of clients being discharged to continuing care. In these instances, the SIU team provides transition support via staff training and care plans.

## NDIS update

The NDIS has now been rolled out to most areas served by the Spinal Injury Unit. Delays waiting for approval of home modifications and locating suitable accommodation has had an impact on length of stay for inpatients, however the appointment of an NDIS Coordinator at Royal Rehab has had a positive impact.

## Specialist support services


Connecting with other people living with SCI who are further along on their journeys can provide a great source of comfort and hope to inpatients. Clients learn in a peer supported environment at our 'Learning Together' sessions run in conjunction with Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCIA). SCIA remains an important part of the program as does the one-on-one mentoring program they provide. Royal Rehab's vocational support service, In-Voc (funded by icare), continues to assist our clients to explore work, study and volunteering pathways. Our recreational therapy service works with clients to reconnect them with leisure activities in the community, often utilising our range of adaptive equipment.

During their stay, inpatients are encouraged to take a break with friends and family at the world-first resort for people with SCI, Sargood on Collaroy, which is proudly operated by Royal Rehab. Upon discharge, our NSW Spinal Outreach Service (SOS) supports people with SCI, their carers and local clinicians across New South Wales.



# Spinal Injury

71 clients, 85 per cent of whom  
have been discharged home.



Sarah, Occupational Therapist, worked with Stephen to optimise his upper limb range and function.

## Getting back to the farm

It was a day like any other on the cattle farm for Stephen Wood. He set out early on his tractor to spread fertilizer across his property in Macksville, a small town in northern New South Wales. Things quickly took a dramatic turn however when Stephen's tractor hit some branches and he was thrown off.

"I couldn't feel anything and knew I had broken my neck," Stephen recalls.

Thanks to the quick actions of his neighbour, Stephen was transferred to Royal North Shore Hospital for acute care. Here he was diagnosed with a C4 ASIA C spinal cord injury meaning he has partial motor and sensory paralysis of his upper limbs, trunk and lower limbs. After medical stabilisation, Stephen was admitted to Royal Rehab for ongoing rehabilitation.

The multidisciplinary team of health professionals developed a goal-based rehab program designed to help Stephen increase his independence and adapt to his changed abilities.

"I wanted to walk, to increase my independence in feeding, and to get back to the farm and the mechanical workshop which I have run with my wife for over thirty years," said Stephen.

Daily occupational therapy progressed from upper limb strengthening exercises to focus on self-care tasks. Through physiotherapy, Stephen is now able to walk independently for short distances.

Part of Stephen's rehabilitation journey involved exploring returning to work through In-Voc; a vocational support service

operated by Royal Rehab.

"As work played a significant part in Stephen's life pre-injury, we explored ways that he could stay connected and a customer service role in the mechanic workshop was identified as a realistic option," explained Jane Allen, In-Voc Vocational Counsellor.

In-Voc facilitated a submission to the Job Access Employee Assistance Fund (EAF) scheme which is set to conduct a workplace assessment with a view to providing access to adapted equipment.

"I feel physically and mentally ready to return to the farm and the workshop. It's been a long journey but I am thrilled with my progress," said Stephen.

Stephen walking laps of the ward  
with physiotherapist Amy.



***“The staff are exceptional. They spent untold hours working with me. It was intense, but I felt supported the whole way.”***

***– Stephen Wood, client Spinal Injury Unit.***

# Brain Injury Unit



Average length of stay  
**60 days**



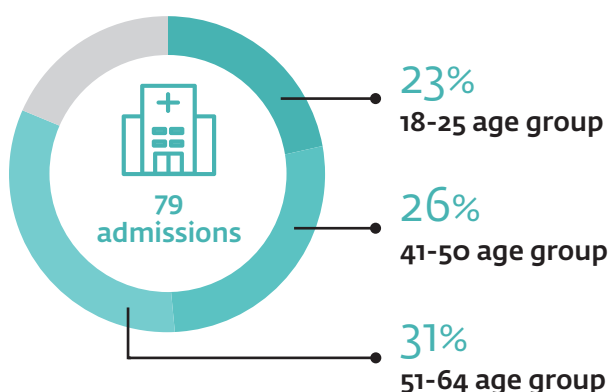
Median age for BIU clients  
**44 years old**



**Motor vehicle incidents** were the main cause of TBI at **44%**



**Falls** are the second most common TBI presentation at **27%**



**22%**  
had multiple trauma in addition to TBI

Life-changing, complex and not easily resolved, traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a major cause of lifelong disability which can impact on a person's physical, cognitive and behavioural functioning. Specialist rehabilitation is vital to support patients to relearn basic skills and regain as much function and independence as possible.

## Highly specialised statewide service

Royal Rehab's Brain Injury Unit provides specialised adult inpatient TBI rehabilitation. Care is delivered through a dedicated multidisciplinary team including rehabilitation physicians, nurses and allied health professionals across a range of disciplines. Tailored goal-based rehabilitation programs are established for each patient and can incorporate an array of on-site resources such as the gymnasium, hydrotherapy pool, productive garden and adaptive exercise equipment.

## Demographics

During the year, there were 79 admissions in the Brain Injury Unit. Clients remained as inpatients for 60 days on average. The most common cause of admission was incidents involving motor vehicles followed by falls. The medium age was 44 years with the age band 51-64 years topping the list, followed by the 41-50 age group and the 18-25 age group.

## Continuity of care

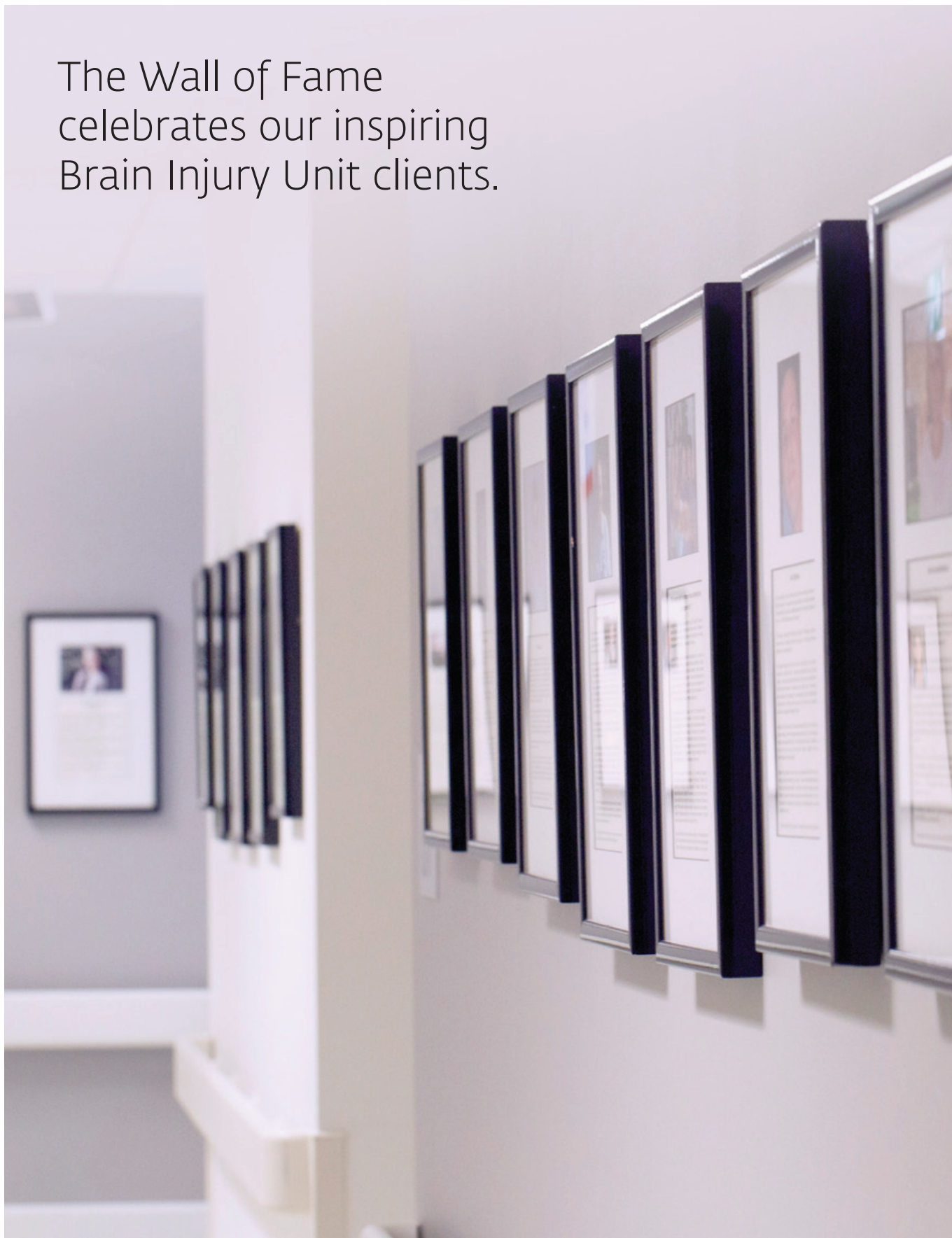
Upon discharge, patients from the Brain Injury Unit requiring ongoing rehabilitation, who live in the catchment area covering one third of metropolitan Sydney, are connected with Royal Rehab's Brain Injury Community Rehabilitation Team (BICRT). This important service provides ongoing support, education and resources to help clients and their families transition from hospital to their home and communities.




## Wall of Fame

The achievements of some of our Brain Injury Unit clients were celebrated during the year at the annual Wall of Fame event. It was a full house as new Wall of Fame ambassadors shared the highs and lows of their journeys in a moving and inspiring ceremony.

The Wall of Fame celebrates our inspiring Brain Injury Unit clients.





Working with children was always Brooke's dream - in her role as an Early Childhood Educator at a local preschool.

*"The staff supported me emotionally as well as physically. They were extremely kind and patient and helped me to stay positive and keep working towards my goals."*

**Brooke Jennings, Brain Injury Unit client.**



## Restoring sport and study dreams

In 2007, Brooke was focused on completing Year 12 and playing competitive sport when a car accident turned the 17-year-old's prospects from bright to bleak. After 22 days in a coma, she awoke to discover she was paralysed down one side, unable to speak or think clearly. Weeks later, she was transferred to Royal Rehab's Brain Injury Unit, where she was expected to spend 12 months.

"I didn't understand the consequences of what had happened to me and it took a while to come to terms with the fact that things wouldn't be the same again. Instead of being able to return to school, now my focus would be on working hard to get my life back," explained Brooke.

Physiotherapy, occupational therapy and hydrotherapy helped her gain strength and function. Brooke relearned everyday skills such as how to brush her teeth, shower and walk.

"Cleaning your teeth is such a simple task, but it was very satisfying when I could do it for myself again," she said.

Brooke astonished everyone by going home after two months, with ongoing staff visits and day rehabilitation sessions provided through Royal Rehab's Brain Injury Community Rehabilitation Team. Over time, her goals progressed to include returning to study, sport, and driving.

Royal Rehab's Return2Driving program consolidated Brooke's independence, and visits with her neuropsychologist helped her complete studies in early childhood education. Speech therapy has given her on the job confidence.

"The speech therapy techniques have been really helpful. I was finding it difficult to be heard over the children, so as well as helping me to increase the volume in my voice, the therapist provided me with other strategies for getting the children's attention," Brooke said.

In 2016, Brooke married long-term sweetheart Dan. The happy couple look forward to starting a family in the future.

# Community Services

Life after medical illness or injury can often mean facing a whole new set of challenges and ongoing health issues. Physical, cognitive and psychological changes can make everyday tasks difficult and the thought of returning to normal life can be daunting.

Royal Rehab is passionate about helping people to build happy and independent lives following the onset of illness, traumatic brain and spinal injury, orthopaedic conditions, stroke, cardiac conditions and surgery. Through a range of community services and a team of skilled and dedicated allied health professionals, we assist clients to adjust to changed abilities, relearn skills and gain new ones, and facilitate reintegration back home and into community life.

## Community Rehabilitation Service

The Community Rehabilitation Service (CRS) provides rehabilitation and a range of therapeutic programs in clients' homes, around the community and at our Ryde facility.

### Community Therapy

- ✓ 113 clients received individual therapy or group therapy
- ✓ 14,296 kms travelled by staff

Community Therapy is experiencing growth since opening the service up to a broader market and adding new services over the past year. Previously only available to Royal Rehab Lifestyle Support clients, Community Therapy welcomed all community members requiring specialist disability therapy. Recreational therapy and complex home modifications were also added to the multidisciplinary allied health service offering. The service will continue to expand the social and community participation groups such as a gardening program in 2018/19.

### Return2Sport

- ✓ 144 cycling HUB sessions
- ✓ 278 hours of group therapy

Return2Sport encompasses a range of innovative recreational therapy activities providing opportunities for people living with disability to participate in sport, recreation and leisure pursuits. During the year, the service continued to offer a variety of individual and group sessions facilitated by a team of recreational therapists and recreational therapy assistants, with many participants continuing with activities which were previously commenced while inpatients at Royal Rehab. Sessions included two snow camps, tennis, beach access and rock climbing. The most popular activity was the weekly group cycling sessions which use a variety of adapted cycles at hubs based in Newington and St Ives in partnership with Fresh Tracks.

## Return2Driving

- ✓ 155 assessments completed
- ✓ Team of qualified therapists and rehab driving instructors

Return2Driving is run by specially qualified occupational therapists and driving instructors who assess, advise and support people to be independent drivers using modified vehicles. During the year, there was an increase in new learners accessing the program due to the roll out of the NDIS. Assessments to recommend and prescribe vehicle modifications were added to the Return2Driving service offering this year. The team demonstrated their commitment to professional development with regular attendance at the Occupational Therapy Association NSW Driver Interest Group and the Vehicle Modifications Conference in October 2017.

## Transitional Aged Care Program, Home Based Rehab Service and Outpatient Program

- ✓ 561 clients seen within Transitional Aged Care Programs
- ✓ 159 clients accessed the Home Based Rehab Service and Outpatient Program
- ✓ More than 80% of clients achieved or partially achieved their rehab goals

In 2017/2018, the CRS team continued to work in partnership with Northern Sydney Local Health District to provide these publically funded therapy services. The Northern Sydney Transitional Aged Care Program (NS TACP) is a goal-based multidisciplinary program delivering therapy, equipment and care services to clients aged 65 years and older following injury or illness. This program enabled 77 per cent of clients to continue to live in their own homes after discharge from hospital. The Home Based Rehab and Outpatient services also provide multidisciplinary goal-based rehab and are the two longest running programs within CRS. The programs are highly effective in facilitating people to achieve independence and enable their participation in the community.

## Stepping On

- ✓ 91 groups provided
- ✓ 1,016 participants
- ✓ 16 Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups

Stepping On is an internationally recognised evidence-based falls prevention program designed to assist older people to reduce their risk of falling. Royal Rehab CRS administers and coordinates the program on behalf of the Northern Sydney Local Health District Health Promotion Division. The Northern Sydney Primary Health network also selected Royal Rehab to receive additional funding to provide Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Stepping On groups which proved to be popular.

Therapies in Royal Rehab's Productive Garden provide social, mental and physical benefits.

***"You need to be responsible for your own recovery but you don't have to be alone. Royal Rehab is there to help you rebuild your strength, confidence and abilities."***

***Bill Gooley, Community Rehabilitation Service client.***

## Community programs get Bill's wheels back on track

Three days before Christmas in 2014, Bill Gooley was gardening when his left arm started tingling and he felt unwell. After the ambulance ride, he remembers nothing until Australia Day. A stroke had left Bill unconscious for over a month and paralysed down his left side.

He spent over three months in hospital and rehabilitation before

going home. In April, Bill started receiving a range of therapies through Royal Rehab's Community Rehabilitation Service (CRS), which continue to play a significant role in his journey back to independence.

Bill received visits from physiotherapists and occupational therapists as part of the Northern Sydney Transitional Aged Care Program. These one-on-one

sessions focused on supporting Bill to relearn essential skills.

"I worked on things like dexterity in my arm and hand, my walking, my balance, and my overall level of fitness," he said.

Next, Bill progressed into Public Outpatients where he participated in upper limb therapy groups. Later he joined the Empower Me group

Bill with Physiotherapist Victoria who helped him to manage walking. Today he takes great pride in his Fitbit scores... "I think the biggest day was 18,000 steps!"



which provides peer support for stroke survivors with a focus on self-management techniques. Bill was so impressed he became a co-facilitator of the program.

Bill also joined the Return2Sport program where he received recreational therapy and access to a variety of adapted cycles. Now, Bill rides a recumbent cycle with a cycling group which is delivering him fun and friendship, in addition to the physical benefits.

In February 2018, Bill started the Return2Driving program. He practised with an occupational

therapist, then took driving lessons and was subsequently awarded his full license.

“After 3½ years without it, this was a massive boost to my independence and confidence,” explained Bill.

Through involvement with Royal Rehab’s Productive Garden program, Bill has renewed his love of gardening. This initiative enables clients to work on therapeutic goals whilst gardening, and consequently obtain the psychological and physiological benefits. Bill went on to establish a home garden — complete with chickens and raised

vegetable beds.

Bill’s current goal is to get back into bodysurfing with regular sessions in the pool assisted by physiotherapists in the Community Therapy program.

“Through the Community Rehabilitation Service, I’m rediscovering things I enjoyed in the past. Royal Rehab has opened up opportunities and helped me every step of the way,” Bill said.



Return2Sport has renewed Bill's love of cycling.



Back on the road thanks to Return2Driving





# NSW Spinal Outreach Service

98

clients referred to the  
**metro service**



**117 clients** seen in the  
**rural service**



**201 health professionals**  
educated in nine rural towns



Rural service covers six local health districts and provides **phone support to the Far West Local Health District**



Main education body for **spinal education in rural NSW**

For those who experience the life-changing impact of a spinal cord injury (SCI) and the long journey through acute care and rehabilitation hospitals, the transition home can be confronting. Despite the best of care in inpatient settings, where multidisciplinary teams support clients to adjust to their changed abilities and learn new skills, the reality is that there is only so much of the client's home that can be replicated in a hospital environment.

The NSW Spinal Outreach Service (SOS) is a statewide specialty service which provides supports for people with SCI upon discharge from hospital. Through a skilled team of specialist rehabilitation doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, SOS aims to keep people well and informed about their health, and to build the capacity of local clinicians so they can provide the best possible care to clients in their communities. The SOS service models vary according to the location of the client.

## Metropolitan Spinal Outreach Service

The metropolitan service provides specialist multidisciplinary support, education and clinical interventions for up to 12 months post discharge from the Spinal Injury Units at Royal Rehab, Royal North Shore and Prince of Wales Hospitals. During the year, 98 clients were referred to the metro service. Through this service, clients were supported with activities such as Nordic walking, as well as individualised skill and exercise programs that assist clients to achieve goals such as transferring into a vehicle or returning to work or study. The team partners with clients, their families and carers to build resilience through counselling and advocacy. The service continued to support many clients in nursing homes through the upskilling of staff, clients and their families.

## Rural Spinal Cord Injury Service

The rural service links regional and rural NSW with the Sydney-based spinal cord injury units post discharge, by offering rural clients access to a specialist medical and multidisciplinary review close to where they live. The rural service has an extensive reach, visiting locations across six local health districts as well as providing follow-up phone and in-person support by the Rural Spinal Cord Injury Coordinators across NSW. SOS provides important spinal education across rural NSW which is delivered via workshops at the rural clinics. In 2017/18, the SOS team assessed 117 clients but also provided education to 201 health professionals in nine different locations across NSW, covering topics such as general health maintenance, skin, pain, sexuality and fertility and upper limb management.

## In-Voc Vocational Rehabilitation Service

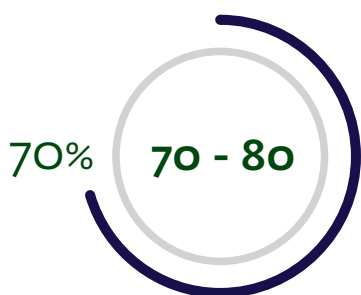


- ✓ 82 clients
- ✓ Service expanded to those living in the community

In-Voc is a vocational rehabilitation service dedicated to working with clients who have sustained a SCI to explore the potential of returning to work, study or volunteering. Operated by Royal Rehab and funded by icare, In-Voc is staffed by specialist vocational consultants who assist with career exploration and planning, skill and knowledge development, return to work supports, assistive technology options and job-seeking skills.

During the year, In-Voc expanded its offering to those living in the community as well as clients in inpatient settings. The team co-facilitated a vocational workshop and launched new client journey videos at the Australian and New Zealand Spinal Cord Society Meeting (ANZSCOS) in Brisbane. A successful three-day Working and Studying with SCI career development workshop was delivered to guests staying at Sargood on Collaroy with 100 per cent of delegates rating the event as either 'very good' or 'excellent'.

## Brain Injury Community Rehabilitation Team



**70-80 clients** on average

**70% of discharges** had functional improvement as measured by the Mayo-Portland Adaptability Inventory (MPAI)

The Brain Injury Community Rehab Team (BICRT) is part of the NSW State-wide Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program and aims to provide interdisciplinary brain injury rehabilitation for people who have sustained a brain injury as a result of trauma. Programs are customised for clients and are aimed at maximising an individual's independence within the community.

The program also provides education and resources to support clients, their families and other support networks when transitioning from hospital back

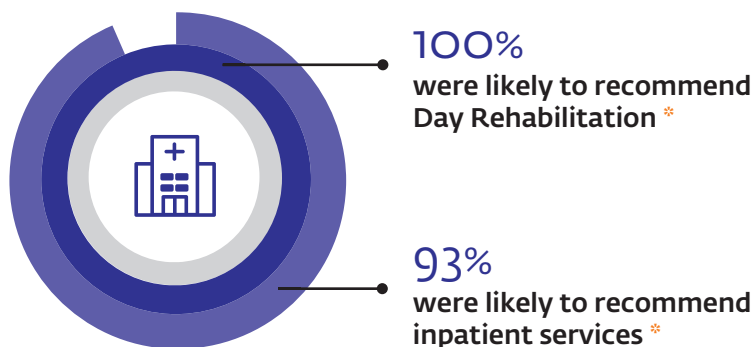
to their home and life roles post-injury. During the 2017/2018, BICRT commenced a major Model of Care review including a focus on our goal attainment hierarchies, prioritisation criteria, length of stay and future development of a centre-based brain injury outpatient program.

Staff have been actively involved in state-wide working parties and program development for vocational services, models of care, pain management and peer-support consultations.

A man named Brad is sitting in a wheelchair outdoors. He is wearing a grey flat cap, a white long-sleeved shirt, a dark grey vest, a red and black striped tie, and dark trousers. He is smiling at the camera. The wheelchair is black with orange accents on the front casters. The background features a black wrought-iron fence, a wooden bench, and a large metal tub. The ground is paved with cobblestones and covered with fallen leaves. A white text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

***Brad was supported through In-Voc and now enjoys employment as a Visitor and Interpretation Officer, at Elizabeth Farm and Rouse Hill House and Farm, Sydney Living Museums.***

# Royal Rehab Private Hospital



RRP performs better than 33% of like facilities when comparing average length of stay and improved Functional Index Measure (FIM) scores\*



98.1% of all admissions to RRP were discharged to the pre-admission accommodation\*

Royal Rehab Private Hospital (RRP) provides orthopaedic, neurological and reconditioning inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services to support recovery following surgery, trauma or illness. For those needing post-operative care and reconditioning or rehab for debilitating neurological conditions such as stroke, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's Disease, RRP provides innovative evidence-based programs that are individually tailored and based on mutually agreed and meaningful goals.

The highest standard of care is delivered through a multidisciplinary team of health professionals under the supervision of rehabilitation specialists. During the year, RRP performed better than 33 per cent of like facilities when comparing average length of stay and improved FIM scores (AROC Report 2016-2017). An impressive 93 per cent said they would recommend RRP inpatient services and 100 per cent of clients said they would recommend Day Rehabilitation\*.

## Back in the game

Returning clients to their lives with renewed confidence and independence underpins all Royal Rehab's work and it is certainly the case in RRP during 2017-2018. RRP patients report a 38 per cent higher Functional Index Measure (FIM) compared with like facilities during the same financial year. Of all admissions, 98.1 per cent were discharged to their pre-admission accommodation.\*

## New programs and treatments

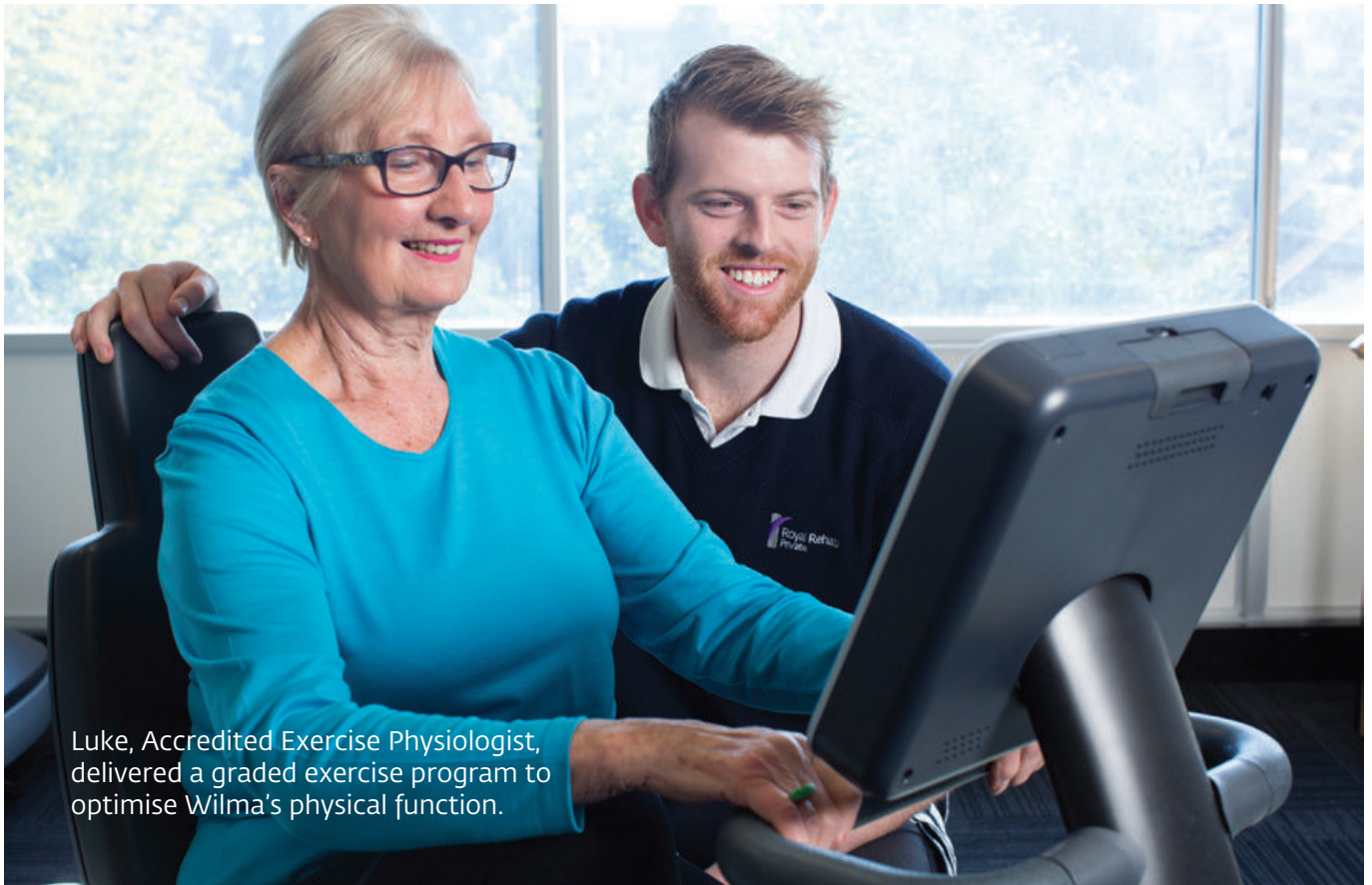
During the year, three new programs were developed which focussed on cardiac, oncology and Parkinson's Disease rehabilitation. In recognition of the wealth of experience in neurological rehabilitation at RRP, the hospital was selected to run the internationally renowned exercise program, PD Warrior, which is designed to help slow the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease. The program is set to be offered through Day Rehabilitation in 2018.

RRP's commitment to best practice was demonstrated in 2017 when the team commenced the review of our stroke program to deliver clinical care based on the Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Management 2017, revised by the National Stroke Foundation and the Department of Health. RRP has been quick to respond with the Quality team modifying all disciplines to meet the latest in international benchmarks

\*Client Exit Survey results 2017/2018

\*Australasian Rehabilitation Outcomes Centre report 2017/2018)





Luke, Accredited Exercise Physiologist, delivered a graded exercise program to optimise Wilma's physical function.

## Rehab reignites adventure

Passionate world traveller, Wilma Pannikote, was busy packing her bags for a European holiday when she started having difficulty walking. It was a viral infection of the spine that led Wilma to hospital and then onto Royal Rehab Private Hospital (RRP) for rehabilitation.

"I was suddenly confined to a wheelchair and my biggest fear was that I wouldn't be able to walk properly ever again. My husband and I had a wonderful active life and I was anxious to get back to it," explained Wilma.

Wilma stayed at RRP for seven weeks of intensive therapy. Upon discharge, she went onto the Day Rehabilitation program for another four months where she attended twice weekly sessions in the hydrotherapy pool and sessions with the physiotherapist

and exercise physiologist.

Wilma's rehabilitation focussed on lower limb strength, endurance and increasing her walking tolerance. This included reconditioning exercises, balance exercises and cardiovascular endurance such as cycling, swimming and walking.

A diagnosis of inflammatory lumbar plexopathy temporarily set Wilma back in her progress but she remained determined.

"There were times when I felt really down but I had so much support from the health professionals at Royal Rehab that I kept motivated. Nothing will beat the moment I was able to walk into my neurologist's office."

Wilma and her husband have since cruised to New Zealand, taken the Indian Pacific from Adelaide to

Sydney, and travelled throughout Italy... with many more adventures still to come.





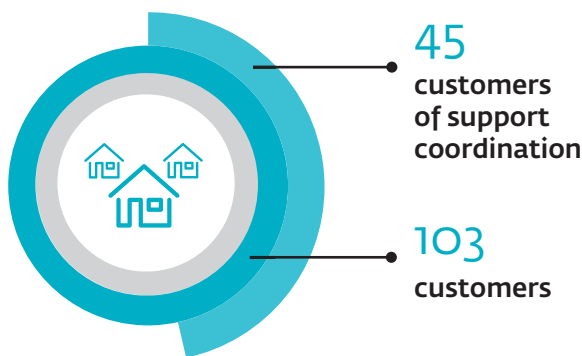
***“The staff members are exceptionally gifted at rehab and so motivating. I felt encouraged and supported the whole way. The modern facilities and hydro pool are fantastic!”***

***- Wilma Pannikote,  
Royal Rehab Private patient.***

Physiotherapist Jeremy worked closely with Wilma successfully retraining her to walk again.

# Lifestyle Support

33 homes across Sydney



**Successfully** completed Third Party Verification against the Disability Services Standards



**Successfully** completed a surveillance audit against the Attendant Care Industry Association Standards

**We all need a place to call home. For people with disability, finding suitable accommodation that is not only secure but comfortable and meets their individual support needs can present a whole new set of considerations.**

Royal Rehab's Lifestyle Support service is dedicated to supporting people with a disability to live independently and have the lifestyle they choose. We welcome people with a range of disabilities including those with brain injury, spinal injury, developmental disabilities and other degenerative neurological conditions. Lifestyle Support also caters for people with complex and changing healthcare needs and psychiatric conditions.

During 2017/18, Lifestyle Support successfully completed Third Party Verification against the NSW Disability Services Standards. This compliance demonstrates that our Lifestyle Support service embraces a culture of continuous improvement and self-review of performance that considers feedback from the people we support, their families and our support staff. In conjunction with this audit, Lifestyle Support also successfully completed a surveillance audit against the Attendant Care Industry Association Standards as part of continuing certification.



Much effort was directed towards supporting our clients' transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with 100 per cent successfully transitioning by the end of 2017/18. Focus continued in response to the NDIS and its transformation of

disability service provision. This included changes to our largest residence, Weemala, which have ensured we continue to deliver the most appropriate care and support to suit our residents.

The NDIS has given participants choice and control over service providers and Lifestyle Support has responded by packaging our offerings to make it easy for our customers to evaluate and make decisions based on their needs. Our products include:

- **Lifestyle Support – Home:**

- Your-Home Drop-in Support where support workers provide in-home support to individuals in their own home.
- Shared In-Home Supported Living where people share a house staffed by support workers.

Supports include: personal care, mealtime assistance and assistance with mobility with a focus on increasing individuals' independence.

- **Lifestyle Support – Support Coordination** which provides expertise in navigating the NDIS to empower participants to connect with providers and achieve their plan goals.

Customer service was the focus of structural changes within Lifestyle Services during the year, designed to deliver the best experience to our customers. A new role of Account Manager was created specifically to assist our customers understand and access the services, and to manage the Service Agreement contracting process in line with their NDIS Plan funded goals. Additionally, three new accommodation managers were appointed from within the service to increase frontline customer service management in the Lifestyle Support – Home Service. Investment in our frontline workforce continued to be a priority throughout the year with the support worker team all engaged in obtaining the Certificate III qualification.



# Bringing families together

Three years ago, life for Andrew, Lailah and daughter Sophie was just like any other young family. However, everything changed overnight when Lailah experienced complications during surgery which left her with an acquired brain injury. After more than seven months in hospital and four months of rehabilitation at Royal Rehab as an inpatient, it was clear that Lailah would need supported accommodation.

“There are not many options for a 42 year old woman. An aged care facility just didn’t seem like the right place,” says Andrew. “We are very thankful to Royal Rehab.”

A resident of Charles Street Villas, Ryde, Lailah receives assistance with daily living care 24 hours a

day seven days a week funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This includes help preparing and planning all meals, washing, housework, personal hygiene and assistance attending medical appointments.

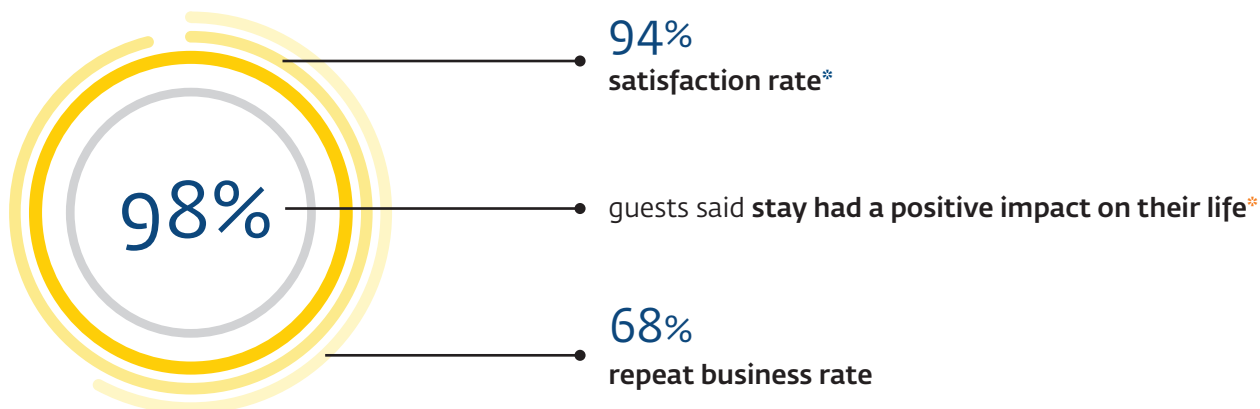
Andrew says, “Royal Rehab is doing a really good job of championing the NDIS philosophy of person-centred care. We have a villa in a purpose-built facility where Lailah has opportunities and we have privacy to be a family. Our daughter loves coming here. She loves seeing Mummy, going to feed the ducks at a nearby park and going to the local cafés... I cannot speak highly enough of the staff. The people here really care.”



***“This is a wonderful facility. The staff should be commended for their emotional intelligence in what are very difficult situations. It’s all about the clients at Royal Rehab.”***

***- Andrew, husband of Lailah, Lifestyle Support client.***

# Sargood on Collaroy



Taking that well-earned break is something everyone deserves but for those living with spinal cord injury (SCI), travel can often be all too hard. Sargood on Collaroy, launched in December 2016, is a resort purpose-built for people living with SCI, their families and carers, that aims to address this gap and put the fun back into travel. In its first full financial year of operation, this resort has delivered on its promise, boasting an impressive 94 per cent satisfaction rate and 68 per cent repeat business rate. Guests travelled across the country and from as far afield as Canada, New Zealand and Norway — some guests even stayed up to sixteen times!

## Putting the fun back into travel

Operated by Royal Rehab and located at Collaroy on Sydney's Northern Beaches, Sargood on Collaroy is a collaboration between The Sargood Foundation, icare and a private benefactor. Sargood on Collaroy offers spacious and beautifully appointed apartments featuring modern amenities and advanced home automation technology to deliver a stress-free holiday experience. A wide range of accessible recreation and leisure activities and a state-of-the-art gym complete the resort experience. Specialist staff are on hand to provide support including occupational therapists, recreational therapists, vocational consultants, an exercise physiologist, a clinical nurse educator and guest attendants.

## A place of learning

Sargood on Collaroy was designed to be a place of learning where guests can gain the confidence and skills that empower them to live full and rewarding lives. During the year, the resort ran a peer to peer mentoring course; a return to work and study course with In-Voc (Royal Rehab's vocational support service); a number of intensive exercise courses and an adaptive water skiing course.

## New range of recreational and leisure activities

A wide range of group recreation and leisure activities was launched in December 2017. These proved to be very popular among guests with 91 per cent taking packages where they could partake in such activities. On offer throughout the year was surfing, beach access, cycling, golf, gym classes, kayaking, bush push, ceramics classes, farmers' market visits, sailing, whale watching, rock climbing and much more.

The skills gained through these activities appear to be having positive benefits long after the holiday is over. 45 per cent of guests indicated that they continued the recreation and leisure activities after returning home\*.

\*Guest exit survey results 2017/2018

\*Repeat guest booking form results 2017/2018



# Holidaying on cloud nine

At just 19 years of age, Sam Bailey suffered a spinal cord injury (SCI) in a car accident while jackerooing in the Northern Territory. He became paralysed from the chest down with only limited use of his arms and hands and unable to regulate his body temperature. He lost bowel and bladder control and part of his lung capacity.

Through hard work and determination in the decades that followed, Sam has managed to build a “ripper of a life” for himself. Today he and wife Jenny, run a 1,250-hectare beef cattle property. Sam has learnt to fly an ultralight aircraft and his next goal is to become the first quadriplegic in the world to fly a helicopter.

Relaxing on holiday at Sargood on Collaroy, Sam reflected on his journey and the impact he foresees Sargood having on people with SCI.

“Sargood is ground breaking, a total game changer and a role model for what is possible. We were on cloud nine throughout our stay!”

Sam vividly recalls being “absolutely terrified” when he returned home from hospital following his accident and the hard times that followed.

“It’s the mental anguish that you are not prepared for. I was no longer ‘Sam the Gladiator’. I found myself in some dark places at times. It’s a massive readjustment not only for the individual but for the whole family.

“I wonder how things would have been different for myself and my parents if Sargood was around back then... a place that breaks the ice where everyone can relax and reconnect. Thank goodness it is here now,” said Sam. “I take my hat off to the people who are making Sargood happen.”

Sam and Jenny enjoying the fully accessible room with magnificent views out to the Pacific Ocean.



***“Hilton eat your heart out! This place is brilliant. My wife and I travel quite a bit and there is nothing like Sargood. It’s five stars from me!”***

***- Guest Sam Bailey.***

# Celebrating Our People



Our people are at the heart of everything we do. Working in our inpatient wards and day programs, in people's homes, in the community and at our resort facility, our highly skilled workforce is committed to delivering the very best for our clients, patients, residents and guests. Staff members come from a wide range of clinical and non-clinical backgrounds and we attract talented individuals whose values align with our own.

## Transforming our approach

With the changing disability and healthcare landscape bringing increased competition and consumer choice, it became paramount for our organisation to transform. The 2017/18 financial year brought with it a restructure of Royal Rehab's divisions, designed to create a more efficient and agile design ready to deliver on common goals. New executive and support service managers were introduced, and service lines were consolidated. During this period of change, we farewelled Stephen Lowndes as CEO after ten years of dedicated service and welcomed Matthew Mackay into the role. It is an exciting and significant time for Royal Rehab as we set about securing the future of the organisation for the long term.

## Leading the nursing team

The Royal Rehab Private Hospital nursing team has thrived under the effective management of Cassandra Medcalf, Clinical Operations Manager. Cassandra has focused on the professional development of her team including goal setting, skill enhancement and career progression. Many of the team members have stepped into more senior roles across our facility. According to Cassandra, "We have a passionate and dedicated team that takes great pride in delivering a high standard of care."



Above L to R: Christina, Nursing Unit Manager - Weemala; Cassandra, Clinical Operations Manager; Shiva, Registered Nurse; Michael, Registered Nurse; Romavilla, Registered Nurse.

## Dr Stuart Browne, Rehabilitation Medicine Physician, Brain Injury Community Rehabilitation Team

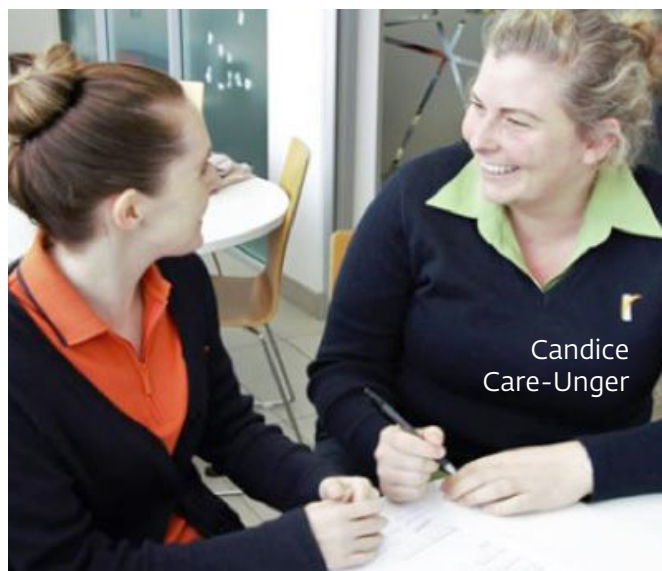
Dr Stuart Browne coordinates rehabilitation for people with brain injury living in the community. He is a clinical senior lecturer with the University of Sydney and a research supervisor of Doctor of Medicine Degree students. Under his tutelage, the students were awarded up to high distinction level for their brain injury research projects. As part of a program to expand rehab services to brain injury clients in the north coast of NSW, this year Dr Browne established outpatient clinics and education sessions in Coffs Harbour with the local community Brain Injury Rehab Service.



Dr Browne

## Candice Care-Unger, Social Work Professional Leader

Candice Care-Unger was one of only five social workers in the world selected to attend a prestigious leadership program in New York during the year - The Mount Sinai Hospital International Enhancement of Leadership Program. Chosen to represent Australia in 2018, Candice will spend six weeks exchanging ideas and honing her skills at one of the oldest and largest hospital social work departments in the United States.



Candice Care-Unger

## Paul Hurst, Occupational Therapist

In 2017, there were more than 475,000 people living with the effects of stroke. This figure is predicted to increase to one million by 2050. The Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Management 2017 identify self-management groups as a valuable resource for stroke survivors, however there were no such groups within the Northern Sydney Local Health District. Paul Hurst, Occupational Therapist at Royal Rehab, has changed that by developing the Empower Me program for which he was announced as the winner of the Royal Rehab Employee Recognition Award 2017. The program is based on social cognitive theory and runs as a six-week pilot course for people living in the community.



Paul Hurst

# Volunteer Services



**304**  
Volunteers  
engaged during  
the year



7000 + volunteer hours donated.



Corporate volunteers included **Boehringer Ingelheim, Roche, Novartis** and **InFlower**.

Royal Rehab is blessed with hundreds of volunteers who generously give of their time throughout our organisation. Whether providing practical assistance, companionship or sharing their talents, our volunteers' efforts are priceless.

During the year two outstanding volunteers were recognised in the Centre for Volunteering's Volunteer of the Year Awards: Arun Sharma, Youth Volunteer of the Year Award regional finalist and Len Gallo from InFlower, Corporate Individual Volunteer of the Year Award regional finalist.

*"I get more from volunteering than I give. I have learnt so much from Jamie particularly the value of patience. He never gives up, even when things are difficult. I forget my own disabilities when I am with him."*

- Edwin Ikwu, volunteer.



Volunteer,  
Edwin



Lifestyle Support  
client, Jamie



Our volunteers and select staff were honoured to attend a Volunteer Appreciation Reception at Government House with His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales and Mrs Linda Hurley.

# Royal Rehab Foundation

The Royal Rehab Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness and support for Royal Rehab's work through corporate, community and individual donors. The Foundation Committee was reinvigorated during the year and we welcomed new members.



**Matthew Mackay**

**Tony Staveley**

**Katrina Williams**

**Dr Clayton King**

**Cornelia Schulze**

**Merilyn Speiser**

**Clive Austin AM**

**Muriel Demarcus**

**Barbara Ward**

**Professor James Middleton**

**Matthew Dunn (Absent from photo)**

**Richard Wykes (Absent from photo)**



# Thank You

To our amazing donors and supporters – thank you. We couldn't do it without you!

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Robert Ingham AO

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The Fusion Foundation

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**Mrs Merilyn Speiser**  
Director

BEc(Acc) FCA CHAHRI



**Miss Pamela Grant**  
Director

BA BLegS DipSocSc



## Executive



### Above L to R:

Dr Clayton King, Director of Medical Services & Medical Director, Brain Injury Unit.

Jessica Taveira, General Manager Inpatient Services and Director of Nursing.

Shannah Baichoo, General Manager - Lifestyle Support, Disability Services.

Matthew Mackay, Chief Executive Officer.

Selina Rowe, General Manager Community Services - Director Allied Health & Clinical Informatics.

Wayne Wright, Chief Financial Officer.



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