

2020 - 2021

# Annual Report



**awabakal**  
OUR PEOPLE

# Contents

Awabakal acknowledges and pays respects to all our community people who have passed away. With permission from family, our front cover recognises Uncle Bill Smith.

Uncle Bill Smith moved to Newcastle through Maitland Telarah because of work on the railway. After the 1955 Maitland flood which caused major destruction to railway lines, work was abundant. Word was sent back to New England to the small town of Woolbrook to the Smith family to move down. After many years, the family had created their own Railway company called Smith General Contractors. From there, many Aboriginal families moved from the country to Newcastle to work on the railway through Smith General Contractors.

Years down the track and now well established, the families that worked for Smith General decided and dedicated \$2-5 a week from their wages to buy a small car and employ one person, George Griffiths to become Newcastle's first full-time Social Worker, an Aboriginal man employed by Aboriginal people.

George Griffiths' role was to advocate for our people and find funding or support for better housing, education, health, culture, and employment. Over the years more funding was granted for more roles till eventually in 1977, Newcastle Aboriginal Co-op was incorporated, which is now, Awabakal Ltd.

From a child to teenage years, Uncle Bill's stories and life consisted of breaking horses in, walking 5 miles barefoot in snow to school, doing crazy horse tricks as a kid like riding his horse and jumping from 20-foot-high banks straight into the cold waters of winter, ring barking, fencing, competing at bull riding, boxing, tent boxing to working on the railway. At an older age, politics, Aboriginal rights, Awabakal Ltd, community events, sport teams, smoking ceremonies, acknowledgments, M.C, special guest speaker, committees, countless cultural events. Uncle Bill did it all.

From really no education coming from a small bush town to standing on stage for major events, Community, school kids, politicians, tv, radio and to anyone who would listen addressing crowds from 10 people to 5000. Uncle Bill is one of those people who really made an impact on what we have here in Newcastle today.

Uncle Bill's legacy over his lifetime and passion of just wanting to make a better life for his family and his people, never stopped until the day he passed.

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# Acknowledgement of Country

**Awabakal Ltd.  
acknowledges that we  
*operate* and *function*  
on the lands of the  
Awabakal, Worimi,  
Mindaribba, Biraban,  
Bahtabah and  
Wonnarua people.**

We wish to acknowledge the custodians of these lands, the Elders and community past, present and future.

We acknowledge and pay respect to the ancestors that walked and managed these lands for many generations before us.

We acknowledge and pay respect to the fight and struggle our people dedicated towards our culture and the contribution they made and make to the life of this city and our regions.

We acknowledge and recognise all Aboriginal people who have come from their own Country and who have now come to call this Country their home.

We recognise and respect our cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, which continues to be important to our Aboriginal community living today.

We acknowledge our Elders – the knowledge holders and teachers.

We acknowledge our youth – our hope for a brighter and stronger future.

We acknowledge and pay our respect to our community members who have gone before us and recognise their contribution.



# Message from the Chairperson

To our members,

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we work, live, and raise our families on. I pay respects to our Elders past and present and thank them for providing us the opportunity to have what we have today.

This year has been a challenging year for the organisation. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented several interruptions to our business as usual and placed our community under enormous stress, particularly given the restrictions around gatherings, funerals, and major events.

We realise this is having a significant impact on all of us as a community, however I am proud of the way our organisation has been flexible in finding new ways to support our people through this pandemic.

The Board of Directors have taken these unprecedented times to review the current strategic plan and develop a new plan to lead us for the next three years. We have reflected on the position of Awabakal Ltd. to the ongoing sustainability of Aboriginal services in the Newcastle and surrounding areas.

We have taken a strategic approach to this and have structured the organisation to capitalise on the diversity of the organisation.

Awabakal Ltd. recently established a subsidiary company (Awabakal Enterprises) to focus on housing and commercial development. This will allow Awabakal to expand its community and social housing portfolio as well as be a stakeholder in the development space.

Awabakal Enterprises will also benefit the regional expansion of Health, Aged Care and Disability services to ensure the facilities we require to deliver are fit for purpose and close to where our people reside.

The Board also reviewed the organisation's constitution and workshopped with members some outstanding issues raised by members in the last two years. Although this review resulted in little change to the constitution, the Board are keen to continue to engage with members with matters of concern.

Our directors look forward to engaging with our members more proactively as we look for new ways to partner with our community, other providers and businesses. We believe this is the best way to provide and share benefits with all the Awabakal community.

**William Edward Smith**  
Chairperson

# Board of Directors



**Abie Wright**  
Director



**William (Edward) Smith**  
Chairperson



**Craig Hammond**  
Director



**Raymond Smith**  
Deputy Chairperson



**Stephen Griffen**  
Director



**Warwick (Wok) Wright**  
Treasurer



**Julie Rose**  
Secretary

# Message

## from the CEO

### Lead. Create. Connect

These are our new organisational values and we have certainly had to practise these during our COVID-19 response.

This year 2020 – 2021 has been one like no other. As an organisation we have had to rethink and reorganise how to continue to provide essential services during a pandemic. We have had to do this in a way that keeps everyone safe, both clinically and culturally.

This has not been easy, but I am proud of how our staff have lifted and come together to meet the COVID-19 challenge. In many ways we have led a response of which many other providers could learn from.

We have successfully completed several initiatives during this difficult period. One is the graduation of our Aboriginal Health Practitioners. We now have nine fully-qualified Practitioners working in our clinics. These are young Aboriginal community people who are passionate about providing appropriate care to our patients. We look forward to a celebration post COVID-19.

Awabakal is part of a group of local community-controlled organisations who have formed a collective to provide much needed support to our people during COVID-19. This group consists of Muloonbinba, Wandialyi, Justiz, We Care and Koiop. We are planning to continue this group beyond COVID-19 to make sure we are supporting each other where we can. It is so important to have the support of our other Aboriginal organisations. We are definitely stronger together.

The Regional expansion is working well as we engage many new Awabakal patients in all our regions. Our Regional Managers are busily implementing an Integrated model for Medical, Aged Care and Disability support. This has not been done by any other service and has its challenges that we are tackling along the way.

We believe this is the best way to provide people with the services they need in a way that is seamless for our clients.

Our Preschool Services are always looking at ways of improving and providing suitable early learning support to our kids in the community. We are working on a new model that allows us to expand our preschool placements and look forward to sharing with our families in the coming months.

We also have a new sponsorship program in partnership with nib. See our website for more details.

I encourage you all to continue to provide us with feedback on our services as we continue to grow. We want to try to always get it right.

Lastly, I would like to thank Awabakal staff for your commitment to working with our people.

Thank you also to our patients and clients for your loyalty and patience at times, to our members for keeping us accountable, and to our Board of Directors for your leadership and vision.

Stay safe x

**Raylene Gordon**  
Awabakal CEO

### Congratulations to our 2020 Aboriginal Health Practitioner Graduates

Amani Ping	Olivia Smith
Eliza Gordon	Paula Lawrence
Kira Schubert	Peter Saunders
Lily Gordon	Raymond Steadman
Lindyn Rowland	

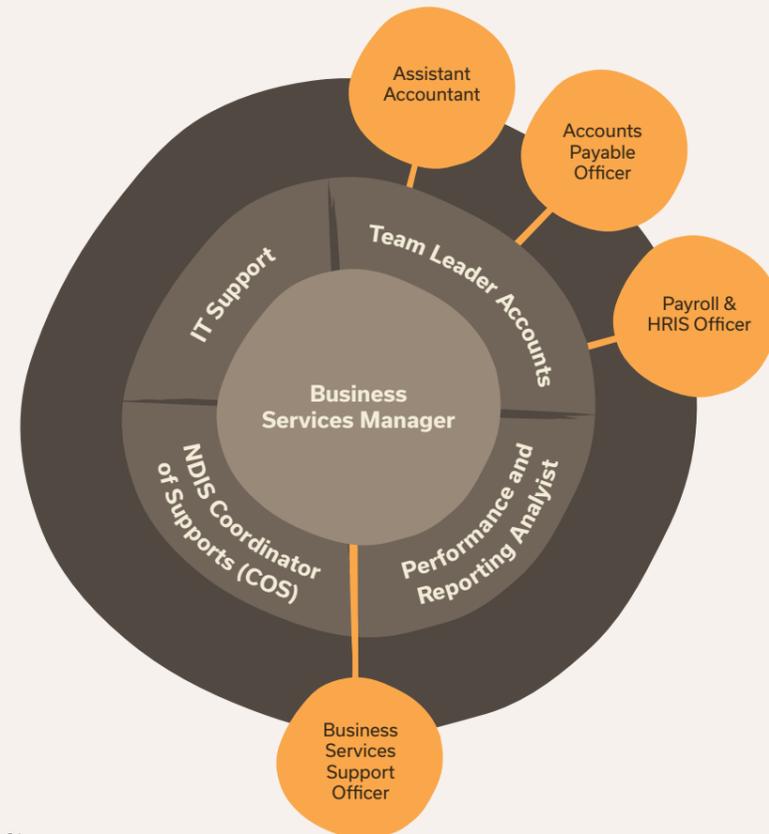
*“I encourage you all to continue to provide us with feedback on our services as we continue to grow. We want to try to always get it right.”*

# Organisational structure

## Leadership Team



## Business Services



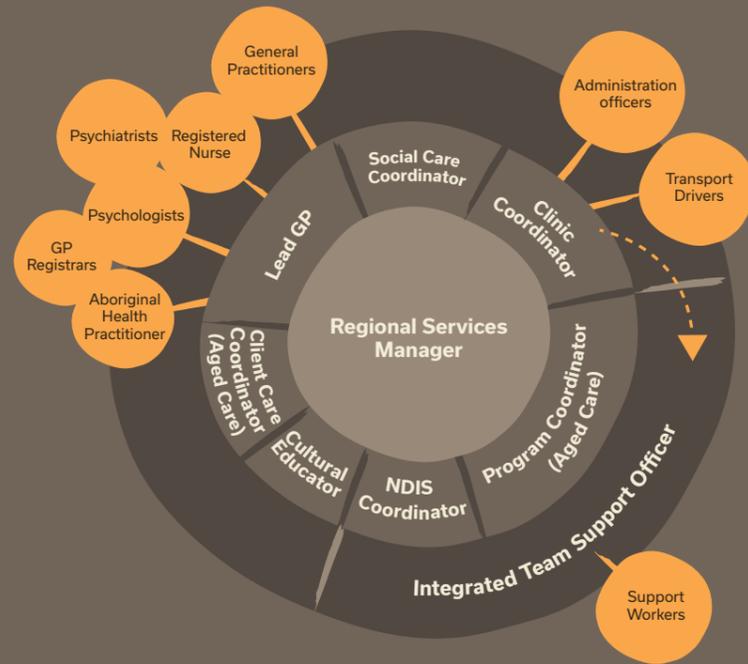
## Clinical Governance Team



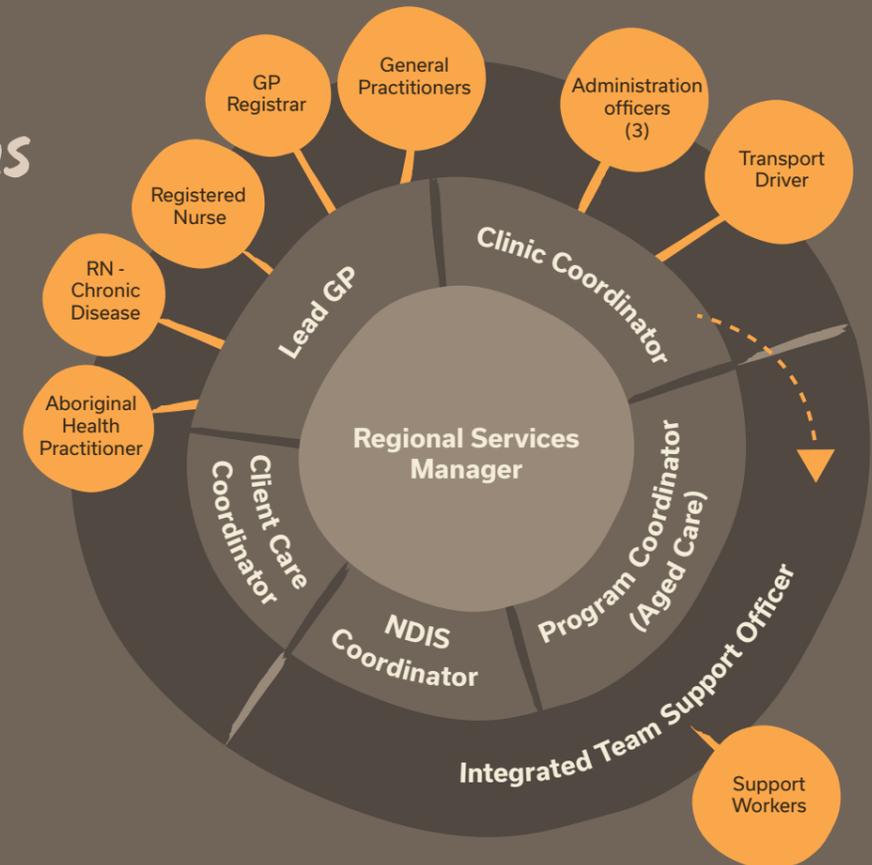
## Education & Early learning



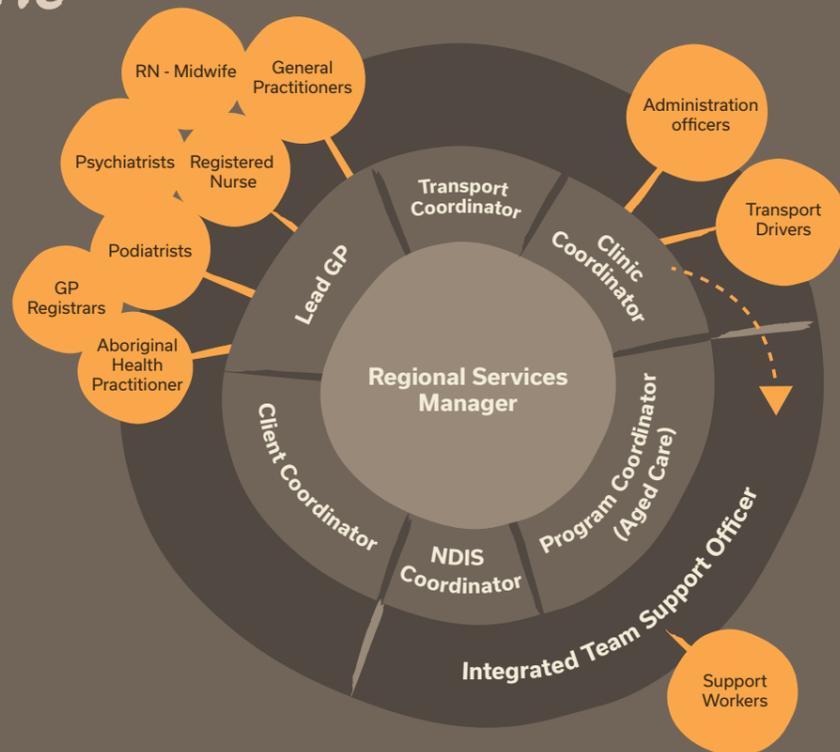
# Newcastle Clinic



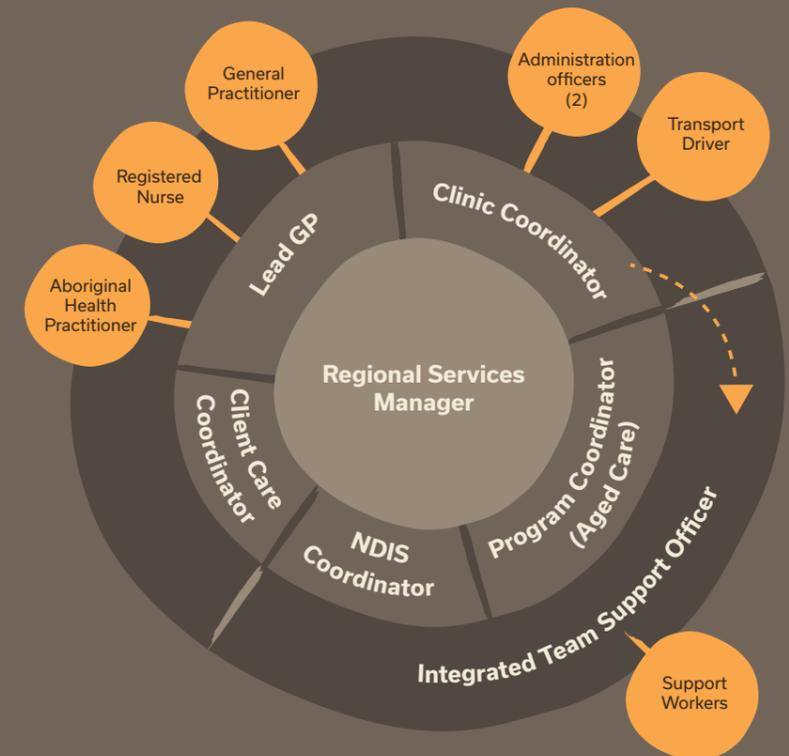
# Port Stephens Clinic



# Lake Macquarie Clinic



# Maitland Clinic





# Business services

## What did we achieve?

The Business Services team administrates the financial management of the Awabakal organisation and supports strategic development allowing the rest of the business to focus on serving the community. This year was a very challenging year, with business services working hard to ensure the organisation remained sustainable with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Business services has shifted shape as the organisation continues on its journey of continuous growth. Staff numbers have increased 15% to 167 and the organisation now operates three integrated services, Medical, Aged Care and NDIS across four regions, Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Raymond Terrace and Maitland.

Best practice structure, secure systems, processes, data management and information technology have been successfully implemented to support the regional expansion model. This includes, but isn't limited to, 100% cloud based paperless applications across all regions, all accounting and administration functions now centralised, creation of an analyst and reporting role and the creation of an internal HR role complimented by external HR partners.

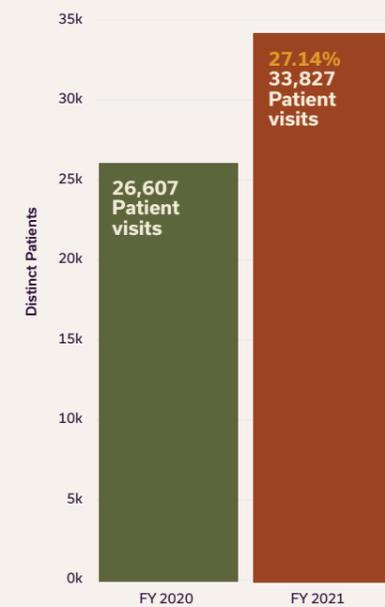
Fee for service income has grown by almost \$2million from the prior year due to the successful strategy of growing service delivery. From the prior year Medicare income, NDIS income and Aged Care income has improved by 39%, 127% and 11% respectively.

## Medicare

Medicare Revenue

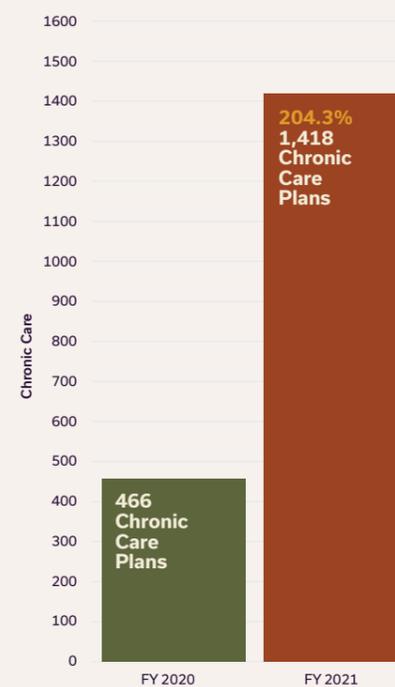


No. of Patient Visits



## Health Assessments & Chronic Care

No. of Chronic Care Plans



## NDIS

No. of NDIS Participants



This year saw a continuation of reinvestment of prior year and current year surpluses on infrastructure at sites, upskilling existing staff and an increase in clinical staff to facilitate the regional expansion strategy, meeting the demand for Awabakal's essential health services, resulting in a deficit of \$1.3million.

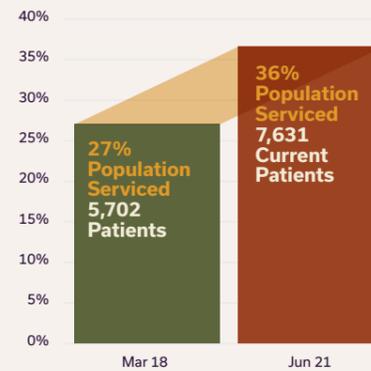
Awabakal continues to reach more and more community with its critical services. In prior years Awabakal delivered services to 27% of the local Aboriginal community and today proudly services 36% of the local Aboriginal community, delivering 27% more patient visits, 52% more Health Assessments and 204% more Chronic Care Plans than last year. Today Awabakal is well placed to reach a far greater number of local Aboriginal people for health care due to this reinvestment.

### Sustainability

Awabakal owns property assets that have increased in value over time. These assets were revalued this financial year improving the asset value by \$16 million. Net assets are typically considered the financial value of the organisation and high value net assets are essential for a sustainable organisation. Due to prior years robust performance and the property revaluation Awabakal now has net assets of \$30 million.

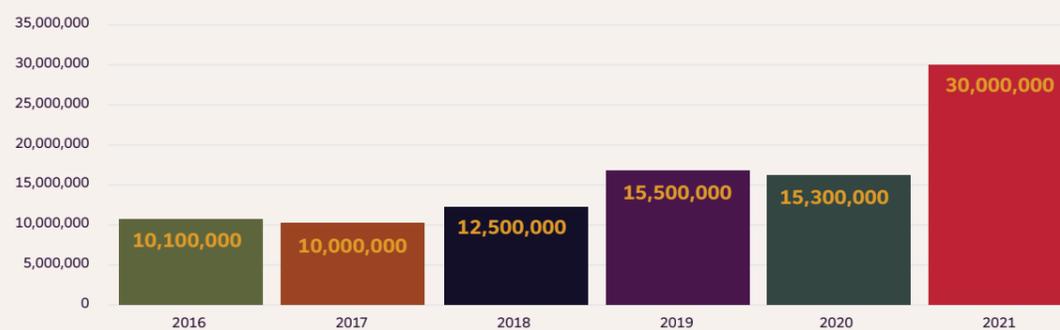
Awabakal has a high performing cash investment of \$2million with the IBA but the majority of Awabakal's assets is in land and buildings.

Awabakal Population Served



A new entity has been created, called Awabakal Enterprises, a wholly owned subsidiary of Awabakal Ltd. This entity will do very important work protecting, managing and developing Awabakal's precious property assets to achieve the best possible financial and social outcome for Awabakal and its community ensuring long term future sustainability.

Net Assets



# Newcastle Clinic



2020 saw the new regional structure change. We have introduced Aged Care and NDIS to work within our medical clinic to provide a more holistic approach to health care in all sectors. With added attention to Chronic health care initiatives with a boost to offering and updating all registered patients' 715 Health assessments and Health care plans (GPMPs)

We also worked on and passed accreditation for Hamilton clinic and will be due again in 2024.

The pandemic continued to bring up new obstacles and we dealt with them as they arose. We also started COVID-19 vaccination clinics from April 2021 with Astra Zeneca and have just moved to the addition of Pfizer vaccinations more recently.

Through COVID-19 we continued health care with phone consultations where possible, and are now moving to the introduction of more video consulting.

Childhood Vaccines are currently being carried out at Wickham due to current circumstances.

We have moved to trialling new transportation plans for the Newcastle region via taxi and Uber services.

## Aged Care

Newcastle has 69 Aged Care Consumers, an increase on the last financial year. COVID-19 has created challenges and changes as we adapt to the restrictions imposed on our area. Our goal has been to support independent living and help our elders maintain positive health outcomes through Allied Health, Social connection, and wrap around care in conjunction with Awabakal Medical and NDIS.

We were lucky to get in a last minute Christmas party at the end of 2020 at Yamuloong, with a delicious hot lunch, some live music and we even got a dance floor going.

We were so happy to recommence the Women's elders group during a window in COVID-19 restrictions. We had yarns, morning tea, crafts and are planning on starting some outings in the future.

We have supported our elders with assistive technology during this pandemic and support

workers to help keep all our mob in touch, but are looking forward to seeing the community face to face again soon.

## NDIS

NDIS Newcastle now employs 14 Disability Support Workers with 2 of the workers on a 12-month traineeship. We are also aligned with Newcastle TAFE as a Training Facility and have mentored 4 people to achieve their accreditation in Certificate IV in Mental Health.

Newcastle NDIS has doubled in size and are now providing support to people with Disabilities 7 days per week.

Our Newcastle Community Connector has assisted over 40 people to apply for the NDIS and receive supports.

NDIS Newcastle has been running programs in Crafts, Computer Literacy, Cooking, Men's Group, Health and Fitness and Community Murals around Newcastle. We have employed local artists and trainers to mentor and encourage people to participate and achieve their goals.

Awabakal NDIS joined forces with the Newcastle City Council and featured in the Count Us In Festival which promotes inclusive Disability organisations and their people.

The NDIS Arts and Crafts Program was approached by the NSW TAFE to be involved in an initiative to promote Aboriginal Artists and 3 of our people had their artwork purchased. We now have a career pathway opening up for these people.





# Lake Macquarie Clinic



2020 saw the official opening of the new, 'big Cardiff' clinic in the old cardiac hospital building. Our team has grown to 48 staff across all departments.

There has been a focus on getting local specialists, and this year we added a number of allied health professionals covering specialties including obstetrics, gynaecology, psychology, speech pathology, podiatry and in-house pathology.

In particular there has been a big need for psychology services. We have 3 psychiatrists and 2 psychologists and the waitlists are always huge. Our team however do a great job and the community appreciates their services.

COVID-19 has still been the main focus for our clinics and the reliance on our wonderful nurses has been huge.

Since May we have been providing COVID-19 vaccinations, however, with only AstraZeneca vaccines available at first, uptake was slow. Even with our doctors encouraging clients, there was a lot of hesitancy around the vaccine.

When we got the Pfizer vaccine, the demand ballooned and we had a waitlist of over 500 people. On average clients had a two-week wait. During the week we held three clinics with a single nurse, but added Saturday clinics to help alleviate the backlog. We get three to four nurses administering vaccines back-to-back and give them a day off during the week.

Our region was the first to change the aged-care model. Using existing staff we have been trialing a more health-focused approach. There are currently 109 aged-care patients, plus a growing waitlist, showing a big demand for our services. COVID-19 restricted home visits, which meant we moved to regularly calling people, as well as visiting each new person to develop care plans.

Doctors are doing tele consults and video conferencing consults where possible in the current COVID-19 environment, but can still offer face to face appointments if required.

This year we were also fortunate to source more PPE, which was a welcome change from last year.

The clinic has been even busier than usual, with ever-changing processes to adapt to health advice. We've had to think of new ways to do things in lockdown to keep our people healthy.

Cardiff hired a new NDIS coordinator, Steve Hudson.



# Maitland Clinic

Awabakal have two sites in Maitland, one on 1/1a Johnson St and the other at 599 High St. Johnson St is our main clinic and High St is used for Allied Health services. Maitland is open five days per week now and can provide medical care, including immunisations and COVID vaccinations, Aged Care and NDIS, with access to Allied Health.

Awabakal Maitland has formed partnerships with other Aboriginal organisations and health providers in the area, such as Mindarriba LALC partnering to improve health access to Aboriginal people in the lower Hunter region. A list of our partners is included below:

## Wiyiliin Ta Counselling

It provides culturally appropriate assessment and treatment of high school age students, who are experiencing difficulties related to mental health, emotional or behavioural issues. Outreach services are available. There are Aboriginal counsellors and psychologists on staff.

## Family Planning NSW

FPNSW is the State's leading provider of reproductive and sexual health services. They are experts in contraception, pregnancy options, sexually transmissible infections (STIs), sexuality and sexual function, menstruation etc. They also provide information and health promotion activities, as well as education and training for health professionals, including teachers and welfare professionals.

## Wellbeing and Health In-reach Nurse (WHIN) HNE LHD

Monday to Friday, on-site nurse service between Rutherford and Telarah Primary School and Rutherford High School. The service provides health assessments and referrals to other medical and support services for child /family.

## New Street HNE

An early intervention program for young people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours. Providing counselling and support to families, safety planning and community education.

## Go4fun HNE

A fun and interactive 10-week program that helps children aged 7-13 years who are above a healthy weight, and their families, adopt a long-lasting healthy lifestyle. The program runs once a week for two hours and a parent or carer is required to attend each session. They run weekly games and activities for children, fun and interactive discussions to teach you easy ways to improve your child's diet, physical activity and self-esteem.

Our plan for the year ahead is to have more GPs and clinical staff and expand our Allied Health services so our people don't have to travel to access these.





## Raymond Terrace Clinic



Matt Schumacher officially stepped into the role of Regional Manager at the end of the financial year, after being Clinic Coordinator, taking over from Deb who did a wonderful job overseeing Maitland and Port Stephens.

Over the last 12 months the Raymond Terrace clinic has grown, including the addition of Doctor Michael, 2 registrars, 2 nurses, 2 AHWs who are studying to become practitioners, and the new Aged Care and NDIS teams.

We now have a social worker on site two days a week in partnership with Warlga Ngurra. We've never had

one but the demand is there. They're dealing with a lot of socio-economic issues and have been a great inclusion to the team.

We have 46 active Aged Care clients and 17 NDIS clients that we're currently working with.

During the year we had a partnership with Family Planning NSW. A nurse and doctor would visit the clinic once a fortnight to support the GPs, with a focus largely on women's reproductive health. This was paused due to COVID-19 but will continue in the future.



We operated a mobile truck clinic in the Karuah community as part of an outreach service, two days a week. We provided both GP services and Aged Care/NDIS in the community. This also had to be paused due to COVID-19.

Deb Massie set up a partnership with the Karuah Land Council to provide lawn mowing and cleaning services to Awabakal clients in Port Stephens. This is a great example of how we can hire local community members to support employment.

COVID-19 has been a challenge but the clinic and community have adapted. We largely moved



to providing tele-health appointments and also incorporating video link-ups.

The first COVID-19 vaccine we received was AstraZeneca and the Elders were prioritised to get it. When we received Pfizer we opened vaccination bookings up and have seen a large demand, with a constant waitlist.

Partnerships with the community, including Karuah LALC, PCYC Raymond Terrace, Windale, Worimi LALC and Port Stephens Council, have helped our vaccine outreach.



# Mental health

In the past 12 months we moved to regional centres and have had both provisional psychologists complete internships so they are now fully registered.

We welcomed Kyla from Hunter Primary Care, Dr Michael Breakspear and Lily Gordon who has completed her Aboriginal Health Practitioner traineeship and is helping to coordinate psychiatry bookings and follow up in Lake Macquarie. Unfortunately Sarah Nesbitt moved to another position and Jenny Evans retired.

We were successful in applying for a funding grant to help with psychology in Raymond Terrace where there remains a need for mental health support.

We can now offer psychiatry in Newcastle (Dr Michael Breakspear) and Lake Macquarie (Dr Joy Herron, Dr Lawrence Dadd), and a new partnership with the Lake Macquarie Mental Health Team for more acute patients in the Lake Macquarie LGA.

**“Maitland is still an area of need for mental health clinicians and will be a focus for the year ahead.”**

We have had to adapt to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 but this has also created new opportunities for us all to learn to work via telehealth.

# Housing

Awabakal Ltd. have carried out asset management plans on all properties in the development of the Strategic Property Asset Plan.

The Plan identified the opportunity to remove restrictive caveats on title of properties. This will allow Awabakal Ltd. to identify properties suited for further development.

Awabakal Ltd. commercial properties is continuing to expand and grow in the Cardiff area with the purchase of a development site that adjoined our existing Cardiff property. We are working on identifying the best future use of the site.

We were successful gaining funding through a submission with Aboriginal Housing Office to carry out capital works to the housing portfolio. This enabled all scope of works to be carried out.

Awabakal Ltd. and Biraban LALC have signed a MOU to work together to develop an aged care facility in the future.

Working in partnership with the AHO, Awabakal's Housing Portfolio has increased from 46 to 55 houses, gaining management of 9 properties for the AHO. We are working with the AHO to continue to gain management of more properties.





# Early Learning

## Early Learning and Education Services

Awabakal Early Learning and Education Services provide a culturally-appropriate and supportive learning environment for children and families 0-6 years. Early Learning and Education focuses on providing children and families with an excellent early childhood education in our preschools and playgroups.

Early Learning and Education Preschool Vision is to enable and support:

- Our Children – to be capable, competent, inquisitive learners who are unique individuals with their own culture, stories, interests and strengths, to ensure children grow in a safe and nurturing environment while supported to discover and learn.

- Our Community – who are acknowledged and appreciated for the culture that is brought to our service. Our Community holds the knowledge and culture that underpins our service values.
- Our Families – who are experts on their child. Families can trust that educators will build on children's experiences in a safe emotional and physical space. Educators will prepare our children to embrace learning in kindergarten and beyond.
- Our Educators - who are committed to providing a supportive, high quality, equitable learning experiences for all our children by encouraging curiosity, agency, independence, investigation and safe risk taking.

## Awabakal Supported Playgroup

2021 saw the growth of the established Awabakal Supported Playgroup. The playgroup is run through our partnership between Awabakal Early Learning and FirstChance. The Playgroup includes a team of Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and Early Childhood Educators which operates Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday at the Cardiff Medical Centre location (52 Pendlebury Road). All families with children aged 0-5 years are welcome to attend.

Awabakal Supported Playgroup vision is to;

- Provide a safe space culturally, emotionally, socially and physically.
- Share knowledge and information of children's development, educational milestones, communication, play skills, life skills and regulation.
- Build relationships and make connections with community and culture
- Provide pathways to a range of services including support services, early intervention, preschool, NDIS, medical and dental.
- Support positive child/care giver relationships.





### Educator Hellos and Goodbyes

Awabakal Early Learning & Education welcomed some new educators and saw several educators finish their time at Preschool moving onto different opportunities.

Early Learning thank Kirra Coote, Dakota Stone, Nikitta Hoskins-Caldwell and Jess Lennox for their valued service, gifts and skills and wish them all the best in their new adventures. They will be missed.

We welcome Bethany Wright, Trainee, Brittani Carroll, Teacher, Carly Magnisalis, Early Intervention Educator, and Dion Clemente, Educator at playgroup. We look forward to all the unique contributions they will bring to our services. We congratulate Raymond Steadman for his completion of his AHP (Aboriginal Health Practitioner) qualification and look forward to utilising his new skills in supporting our children and families.

We welcome back Aunty Bella from maternity leave after the birth of Baby Leo. Leo was born 1st May and we look forward to watching him grow.

Awabakal Early Learning & Education continue to support Aboriginal Students studying through TAFE NSW and completing their Cert III and workplace experience within the Preschools.

### Partnerships with other organisations

Awabakal continue to develop partnerships and connections with other organisations to enhance our relationships and resources. This growth enables Early Learning to support families within and beyond our current services.

Some of these partnerships include:

- Hats and Plums program with Wollotuka University of Newcastle and Australian Hearing. The partnership and research is aimed at closing the hearing health gap in our children.
- Firstchance Inc Early Intervention Services, this partnership is aimed and upskilling educators at supporting children and families with additional needs.

### COVID-19 2021

During the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic we saw our Early Learning services shut down to ensure we kept our families and community safe. During this time, our educators focused on delivering online activities and learning for our children at home. Educators have had the opportunity to upskill through professional development, with several staff participating in the 3-day online ECA (Early Childhood Australia) conference.

### Celebrations

Mother's Day, NAIDOC, Christmas, Graduations.





# Community partnerships



During the last year we have negotiated some fantastic partnerships that have eventuated in great opportunities for the local community! We have had an exciting year working collaboratively with the Newcastle Knights, West Tigers and our local teams, the Awabakal Eagles and Northern Hawks who have assisted in communicating important messages and encouraging healthy life choices through the Wakool Strong Initiative.

HNEH Birra Li Infant and Maternal Health Unit continue to work collaboratively with Awabakal ensuring our new mums and babies are supported at the start of their life journey. NSW Family Planning have been working with our Raymond Terrace and Maitland clinics on a weekly basis.

Awabakal and Birabahn LALC have committed to provide a culturally appropriate aged care facility.

We have had an overwhelming response from local businesses in support of our NAIDOC Celebrations and in providing community with COVID responsiveness and support that we would not have been able to do on our own. We are grateful to those organisations, including Orica, ANZ, Port of Newcastle and the many others who generously came on board to help! Awabakal hope to continue to build on these partnerships in the future as we grow and work together towards a healthy and happy community.

# Community sponsorships



## Nib Awabakal Community Sponsorship

2021 provided the opportunity for Awabakal to partner with nib Foundation to establish the nib Awabakal Community Sponsorship Program.

This partnership provides two rounds of funding each financial year, in April and August. Individuals and teams can request sponsorship to assist them with the costs in attending sporting, educational, cultural and leadership events.

Nib Foundation saw a great diversity of applications from across our regions, and across the category areas and we are proud to have been selected among them.

Nib Awabakal Community Sponsorship has been generously supported for another year, we could not be happier with our collaborative efforts to assist our local people in attaining their dreams and goals.



Amy Tribe, nib Foundation Executive Officer, said:

*“Awabakal’s Community Sponsorship program is a fantastic initiative that we’re proud to be supporting. Our funding will assist Awabakal to continue this important work with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, enabling participation, building self-confidence, developing role models and celebrating achievements in a variety of fields.”*





## Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS)

Awabakal's TIS program has faced a few challenges during the past year due to the COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns that we have had to navigate recently. This forced us to find alternative ways to do things in our new 'normal' so we could keep providing our services to community.

We have had a strong online campaign during this period that was well received by our community and stakeholders. We have continued as an organisation to focus on providing educational and thought-provoking content to inspire and support those on their quitting journey. Our TIS ambassadors and staff continue to raise awareness in all of our interactions to encourage smoking cessation for the many health and financial benefits it brings!

Our staff and community partners have joined us for brief intervention training and NRT education sessions on three occasions this year. This will enable them to join us in educating their own organisations, staff and clients to extend the reach of our program and messages in the community.

We thank AHMRC and St Vincent's Hospital for sharing the wonderful knowledge of psychologist James McLennan, State-Wide Smoking Cessation Training Co-ordinator. James provided a great insight into addiction and how to have difficult conversations.

We have shared some fantastic outcomes, like Nat Smith and her partner Mitch, who have quit their smoking habit and continue to encourage others to tackle that smoking monster and use the available support to help beat it!



# Communication team

This last year was a big year for Marketing and Communications. With Australia locked down due to COVID-19 and panic within community, M&C were on top, with strong directional support and information from our CEO, Raylene Gordon, and GPs. With weekly updated COVID-19 information, Awabakal was able to give clear, week to week, informative reports to our community through these trying times.

With things slowly getting back to normal for the exception of large community events, Awabakal's M&C team put what tools they had to great use, looking after, educating, and entertaining community with various videos, posts, and links.

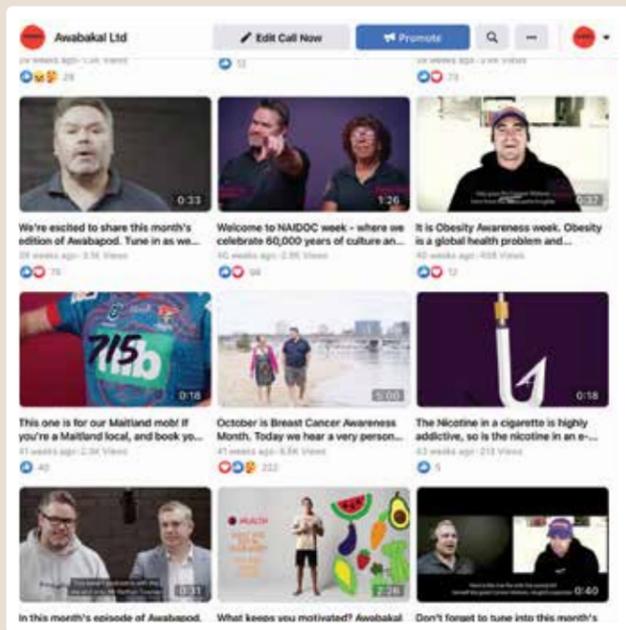
In the past year, M&C developed new and old programs, like Awabapod, Wakool Strong, updating branding, website, NAIDOC, community video health messages and building relationships with our partners.

With Awabakal building partnerships, resources to promote health messages were in quantity, with such people speaking as national TV, film, music and theatre comedian Steven Oliver. Steven Oliver did numerous unorthodox, educating, humorous and insightful health skits.



Other guests who showed their acting skills were:

- Edrick Lee, Connor Watson and Gehamat Shibasaki, from the Newcastle Knights
- Ronald Griffiths Assistant Coach, Michael McGuire Coach, Timana Tahu, Dane Laurie & James Roberts from the West Tigers
- Gema Simon, Newcastle Jets W-League
- Louise Campbell
- Evis Heath
- Indigenous Liaison Officer Matts Roberts, Sargent Grant Biles from RAAF Base Williamtown



awabapod

Episode  
Black Lives Matter

And, you know, even though I'd  
beard my Aboriginal family.

Season 2 Episode 6

Matthew Roberts - Indigenous Liaison Officer  
Sargeant Grant Biles, RAAF Williamtown

Mob Flying high in the RAAF

to go apologize to the  
person who assaulted them?

And we want the truth  
taught, not as guilt.

telling stories  
from our people

we already lose two Aboriginal man a day  
to suicide.

We were able to get  
community members and elders

Season 2 - Episode 4  
Gema Simon  
Australian Soccer Player

frustration because that's going to  
catapult me tenfold yash into the future

we're both going to make it so dad had to choose  
and he chose mum so but lucky we both survived



awabakal  
OUR PEOPLE

# Awabakal Strong

You Me Community awabakal  
2021 HEALTH CALENDAR OUR PEOPLE

JANUARY

## Strong Health

New Year's Resolutions  
Back to School

FEBRUARY

## Strong Self

Heart Health Month  
Skin Checks  
11th - 17th Sexual Health Week  
13th Apology Day

MARCH

## Strong Community

1st - 7th Hearing Awareness Week  
18th Closing the Gap Day  
20th World Oral Health Day

APRIL

## Strong Youth

16th - 24th Youth Week  
20th - 25th World Immunisation Week  
Elders Olympics

MAY

## Strong Hearts

Heart Week  
3/5th World No Tobacco Day  
27th - 3rd June National Reconciliation Week

JUNE

## Strong Elders

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month  
3rd Mabo Day

JULY

## Strong Culture

JULIEYE  
4 - 11 NAIDOC Week

AUGUST

## Strong Children

1st - 7th World Breastfeeding Week  
3rd - 9th Dental Health Week  
4th National ATSI Children's Day  
12th International Youth Day  
Awabakal Baby Welcome Ceremony

SEPTEMBER

## Strong Mind

1st - 7th Asthma Week  
9th RUOK Day  
6th - 10th Women's Health Week

OCTOBER

## Strong Future

Mental Health Month  
Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
10th - 17th World Mental Health Week

NOVEMBER

## Strong Body

Obesity Awareness Week  
Diabetes Awareness Week

DECEMBER

## Strong Family

3rd International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
Children's Christmas Party  
Elders Christmas Party  
Staff Christmas Party



Awabakal launched Wakool Strong. Wakool meaning ONE. One Strong healthy community. The launch for Wakool Strong went in partnership with the Indigenous NRL round at the Newcastle Knights game. The launch was a successful day considering the freezing cold weather. Wakool Strong's first health promotion was Awabakal's I'm Quitting, Tackling Indigenous Smoking program. We were able to gather much needed data and community got to wear a cool Wakool Strong shirt. We had many high-profile community people come through and help promote our very successful cold day.



# Cultural events



Culture is not just a word to us but a part of who we are, as people we live and breathe it every day. For Awabakal, culture is the heart of our organisation, and a major influence in everything we do and plan for in the future.

We have continued on our cultural education journey ensuring, it is included in the daily running of our clinics and services at every opportunity. Debbie Swan leads the way for Awabakal in this space, sharing her knowledge to deliver cultural competency training and mentoring for our GPs and clinic staff on an ongoing basis.

This has been a great support for our non-Indigenous staff, who understand that healthcare services have not always been able to build trust in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community. Respect is always demonstrated, patients who feel their healthcare providers respect their beliefs, customs, values, language, and traditions are more likely to communicate freely and honestly, which can, in turn, reduce disparities in healthcare and improve patient outcomes.

Debbie also uses her skills and knowledge as an advocate for families in need of support when dealing with the child safety system and its complicated policies. Her work with GMAR (Grandmothers against removal) has been a major factor in changes to policies for removing Aboriginal children from family and community, resulting in the implementation of guiding principles and legislative changes through the Minister due to her hard work and resilience. Awabakal is proud of these achievements, and many families are grateful for her knowledge and

support in this area.

Along with cultural mentoring, Debbie works alongside our Non - Indigenous Stakeholders and our community partners providing cultural awareness sessions to increase knowledge and awareness for their staff when working collaboratively with Awabakal. Organisations such as nib and Headjam, not only do they learn, but know how to work with our community successfully and with cultural understanding.



Welcome to NAIDOC week - where we celebrate 60,000 years of culture an...

42 weeks ago · 2.9K Views



This Reconciliation Week we have the privilege of yarning with Donna...

13 weeks ago · 5.4K Views



# NAIDOC events

Although NAIDOC was cancelled, Awabakal was still able to bring high quality recorded videos of Indigenous artists from NSW. Great performances came from locals Uncle John Ridgeway, Wakukalung, Nu Roads, Ray Kelly & Adam Manning, Jacob Ridgeway, and Sharnee Fenwick, with Rod Smith as MC. Amazing visiting performers and groups were Bow & Arrow, Electrifying Dobby, Microwave Jenny and Murringaahddi. A very hot night both with regard to performances and temperature!





# Financials

For the year ended 30 June 2021

## Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income

		2021	2020
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	2	14,788,586	14,365,813
Other income from ordinary activities	2	1,566,490	967,064
Other income from non-operating activities	2	-	100,000
Administration expenses		(3,432,118)	(2,229,660)
Depreciation and amortisation		(731,887)	(1,270,587)
Direct grant expenditure		(2,207,481)	(1,966,446)
Employee benefits expense		(10,184,579)	(8,773,080)
Occupancy expenses		(1,172,398)	(1,325,483)
Loss on sale of assets		(14,592)	(6,121)
Finance costs		(54,974)	(27,020)
Unrealised loss on financial asset investments		132,240	(48,229)
<b>Surplus / (deficit) before income tax</b>		<b>(1,310,713)</b>	<b>(213,749)</b>
Income tax expense	1(f)	-	-
<b>Surplus / (deficit) from ordinary activities after related income tax</b>		<b>(1,310,713)</b>	<b>(213,749)</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<b>(1,310,713)</b>	<b>(213,749)</b>

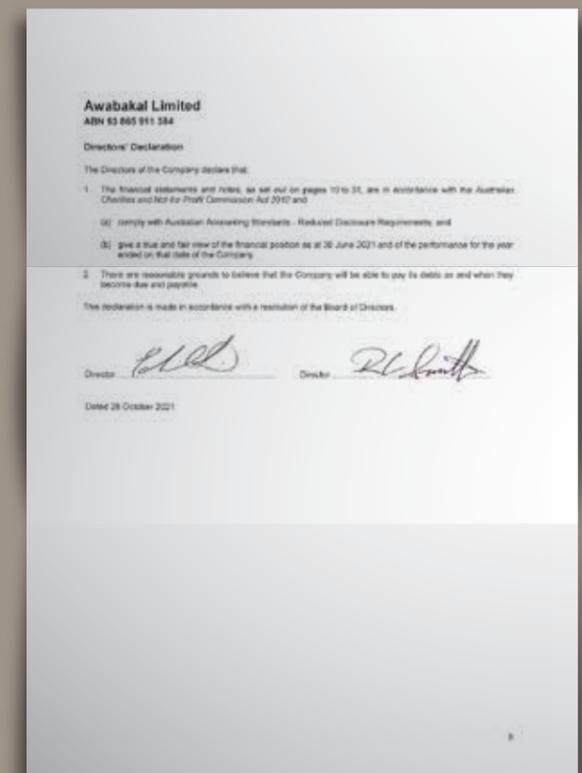
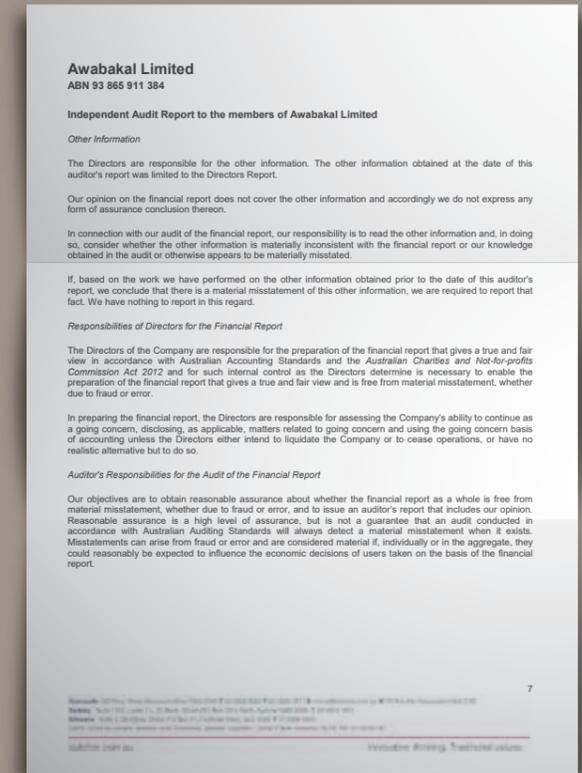
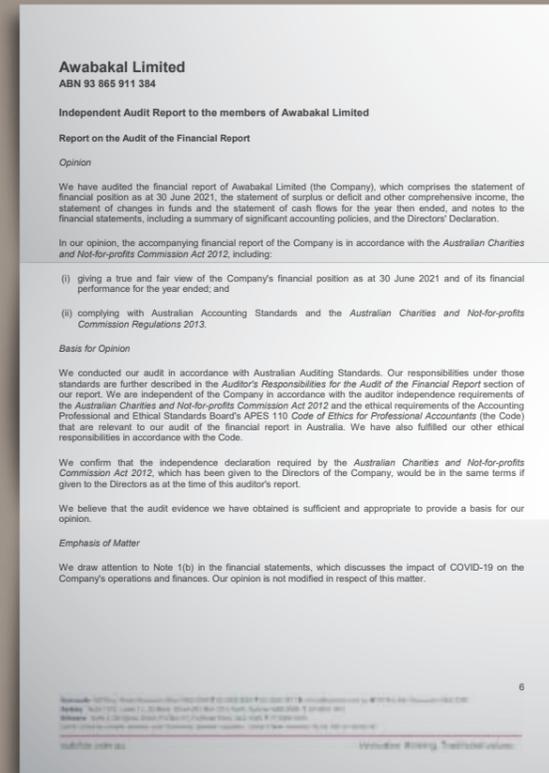
## Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2021

		2021	2020
	Note	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	6,134,771	6,225,950
Trade and other receivables	4	1,267,614	603,699
Other financial assets		2,080,392	1,948,152
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>9,482,777</b>	<b>8,777,801</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	6	29,731,009	12,375,760
Intangible assets	5	9,714	16,393
Right of use assets	7	190,092	244,271
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>29,930,815</b>	<b>12,636,424</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>39,413,592</b>	<b>21,414,225</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	8	750,102	1,129,378
Short-term borrowings		2,998,433	750,000
Provisions	9	494,276	406,978
Other liabilities	10	4,439,866	3,018,362
Lease liabilities		130,943	110,935
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>8,813,620</b>	<b>5,415,653</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Other liabilities	10	460,791	491,667
Provisions	9	136,975	94,308
Lease liabilities		62,359	135,968
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>660,125</b>	<b>721,943</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>9,473,745</b>	<b>6,137,596</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>29,939,847</b>	<b>15,276,629</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Accumulated surplus		13,884,010	15,214,523
Reserves		16,055,837	62,106
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>29,939,847</b>	<b>15,276,629</b>

# Directors Declaration

# Auditor's sign off



**awabakal**  
OUR PEOPLE