



# At the point of care

Annual  
Review 2017

**WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are warned that this document may contain the images and names of deceased persons.**



**We will work together and in partnership with others to be a leading provider of culturally responsive, quality aged, residential and community services in regional and remote Australia.**

# About Us

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) provides aged care and community services in the Northern Territory operating residential aged care facilities and community care programs located in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Mutitjulu and Kaltukatjara (Docker River). ARRCS also provides children's programs in Central Australia delivering support through the School Nutrition Program and Childcare services.

ARRCS is focussed on providing services that respond to the changing needs of the people and communities of the Northern Territory.

The ARRCS board approves the strategic direction and guides the management of ARRCS in achieving its strategic objectives and is responsible for good governance practice. The ARRCS board reports to the UnitingCare Queensland Board. ARRCS' annual accounts are audited by the UnitingCare Queensland auditors and consolidated in UnitingCare Queensland's annual accounts.

As an integral part of the community, ARRCS employs staff and volunteers from local areas and partners with other key stakeholders such as other community service providers, government departments and agencies, hospitals and General Practitioners to provide support to those who need it most.

# Message from the Chair and Executive Director

## **Welcome to the 'Annual Review' for Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS).**

During 2016/2017 year ARRCS has continued to reach out and provide residential and community aged care, disability and children's services across the Northern Territory. Many of these services are in some of the most remote communities of Australia which creates particular challenges and enormous opportunities.

ARRCS is pleased to continue to work collaboratively with local communities, other service providers, government agencies and the Northern Synod of the Uniting Church of Australia. We have continued to focus on delivering high quality services having met all standards, in all services across the Quality Agency audits. The ARRCS quality improvement journey is ongoing and this will continue to be a focus of our service delivery.

In addition to seven Residential Aged Care Facilities across Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs, ARRCS operates three Natsiflex facilities in Mutitjulu, Docker River and Tennant Creek. The range of community services continues to strengthen and includes two large community hubs in Alice Springs and Darwin, and an Early Childhood Service in Mutitjulu. Since its inception three years ago, ARRCS has achieved sound financial management. The financial sustainability and robust operational management will continue to be a focus for the future as we seek to increase our scope of services. We are now in a position to pursue additional and wider opportunities across the communities in which we work and in areas where we are well positioned to better support people in need.

In this review, we reflect on our actions and achievements against our strategic goals. Looking forward, we will continue to contribute to the delivery of quality aged care and community services that respond to people's needs in the Northern Territory. We also commit to working to strengthen our engagement and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



**Anne Cross**  
Chair



**Alan Wilson**  
Executive Director

# Our Values

ARRCS believes the following values are fundamental to the work we do.



## Compassion

Through our understanding and empathy for others we bring holistic care, hope and inspiration.



## Justice

We commit to focus on the needs of the people we serve and to work for a fair, just and sustainable society.



## Respect

We accept and honour diversity, uniqueness and the contribution of others.



## Working together

We value and appreciate the richness of individual contributors, partnerships and teamwork.



## Leading through learning

Our culture encourages innovation and supports learning.

# Key Statistics 2017



More than **2,900**  
people receiving care annually

ARRCS provides care and support to individuals, families, and communities by providing health and community care from the very young to the elderly.



Travelled more than  
**720,000**  
kilometres

A fleet of over 50 vehicles enabled travel across the Northern Territory to support people living in regional and remote communities.



Invested close to  
**\$7 million**  
in capital projects

Significant investment in our network is provided through capital grants to ensure we are able to continue our support of people living in remote communities across the Northern Territory.



**680** employees and **65**  
volunteers caring for Northern  
Territory communities

Providing support services for Northern Territorians and Northern Territory communities.



Over **240** occasions of service  
in remote Aboriginal and/or Torres  
Strait Islander communities.

Delivered responsive services to those living in the most far reaching areas of the Northern Territory.



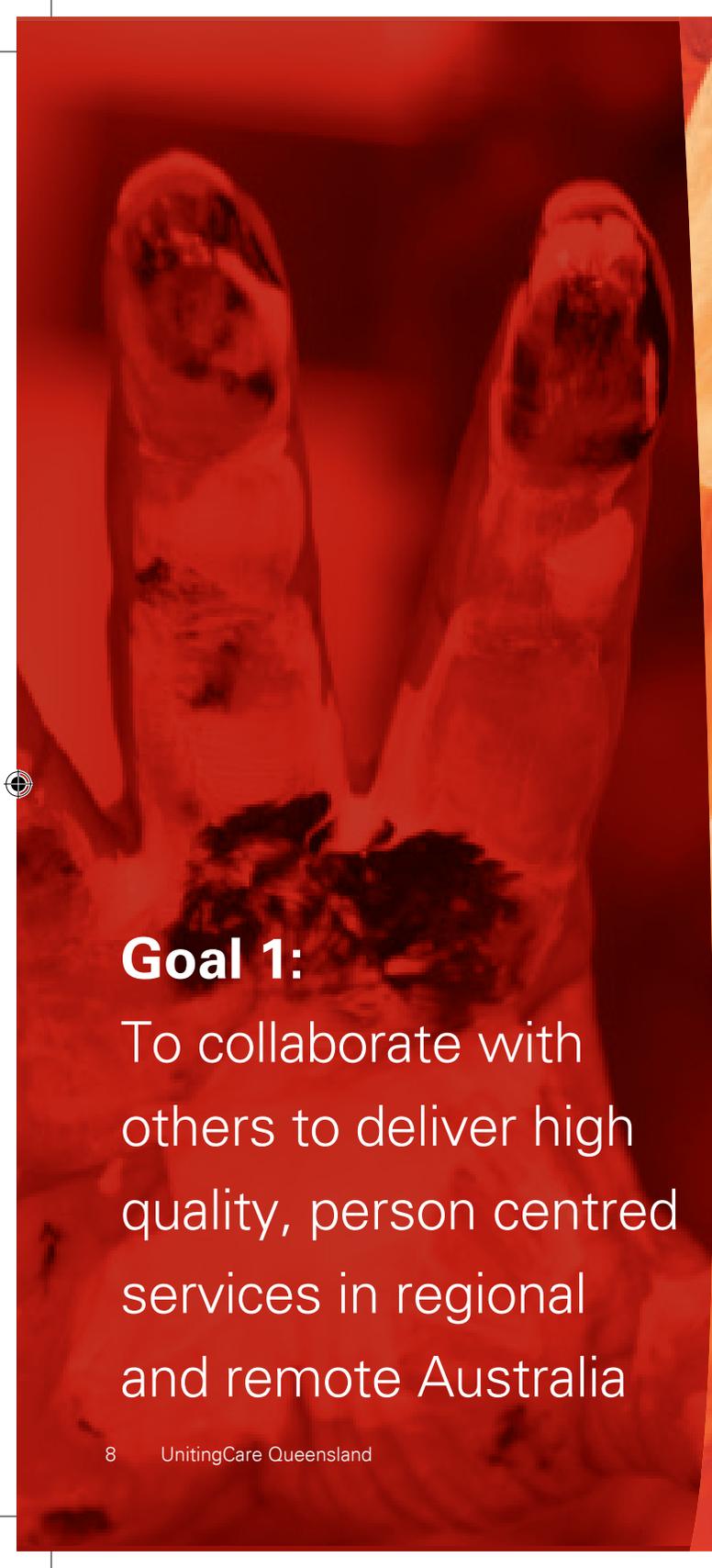
Providing **350** meals per  
day to children at Alice Springs,  
Mutitjulu and Ntaria

ARRCS' School Nutrition Program is funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy providing access for children to nutritional meals.

# Strategic Goals

ARRCS has made significant progress to achieve its mission during financial year 2016-17, guided by four strategic goals:

- 1** To collaborate with others to deliver high quality, person-centred services in regional and remote Australia
- 2** To be a leading sustainable organisation
- 3** To have a skilled reliable workforce
- 4** To work in partnership with Indigenous Australians towards closing the gap



## Goal 1:

To collaborate with others to deliver high quality, person centred services in regional and remote Australia

### Delivered quality, collaborative dementia support to regional and remote communities

In partnership with HammondCare and Dementia Support Australia, ARRCs delivered high quality dementia support services in the Northern Territory and parts of Northern Australia that extend from the west to the east coast. Co-ordinated from the ARRCs regional office in Darwin, a team of clinicians with a diverse range of expertise undertake thorough individual assessment and create care plans, to support carers providing care to people living with dementia. The service also facilitates client referrals to other community providers across the Northern Territory.

### Respite centre converted to a 'Community Place' in Mutitjulu

In partnership with the Mutitjulu Foundation and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, ARRCs has converted an old community respite centre into the 'Mutitjulu Community Place' a localised central hub that provides services such as allied health, counselling and emergency accommodation. The project has created employment and training opportunities for local community members.

### 350 meals a day provided to school children across the Northern Territory

ARRCS provides 350 meals a day to support children attending schools across three locations in the Northern Territory. The program is funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and is aimed at supporting students to improve learning and school participation by providing nutritious meals.

## All ARRCs residential aged care services received full regulatory accreditation of services

In 2016/2017 ARRCs achieved full accreditation by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency across all aged care facilities through meeting all standards and expected outcomes at surveys. ARRCs is committed to achieving and maintaining preferred provider status as it focuses on continued improvement of service delivery while moving toward becoming a leading sustainable organisation.

## Secured Approved Provider Status under the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Following the Northern Territory Government's recommendation, ARRCs has achieved approved provider status to be a provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This provides increased options for ARRCs to support people with a disability to access services across the Northern Territory.

## Expansion in Community Services

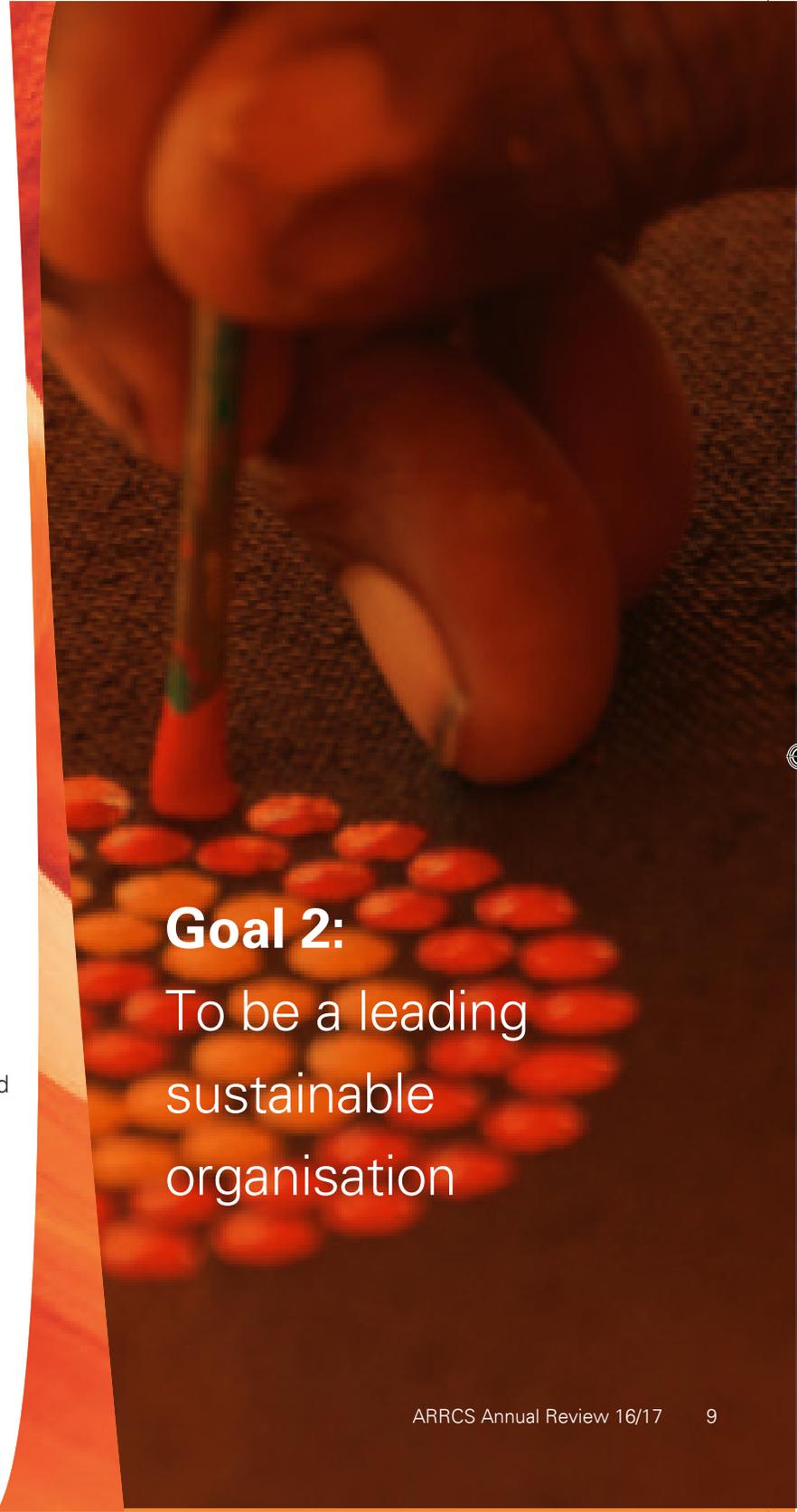
Community Services provided by ARRCs continued to expand this year with over 2500 clients being supported through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme - an increase of 300 clients over the previous year. Development of consistent systems and processes has allowed ARRCs to optimise opportunities to deliver responsive care in a rural and remote setting.

## Ongoing Improvements in Financial and Operational Management

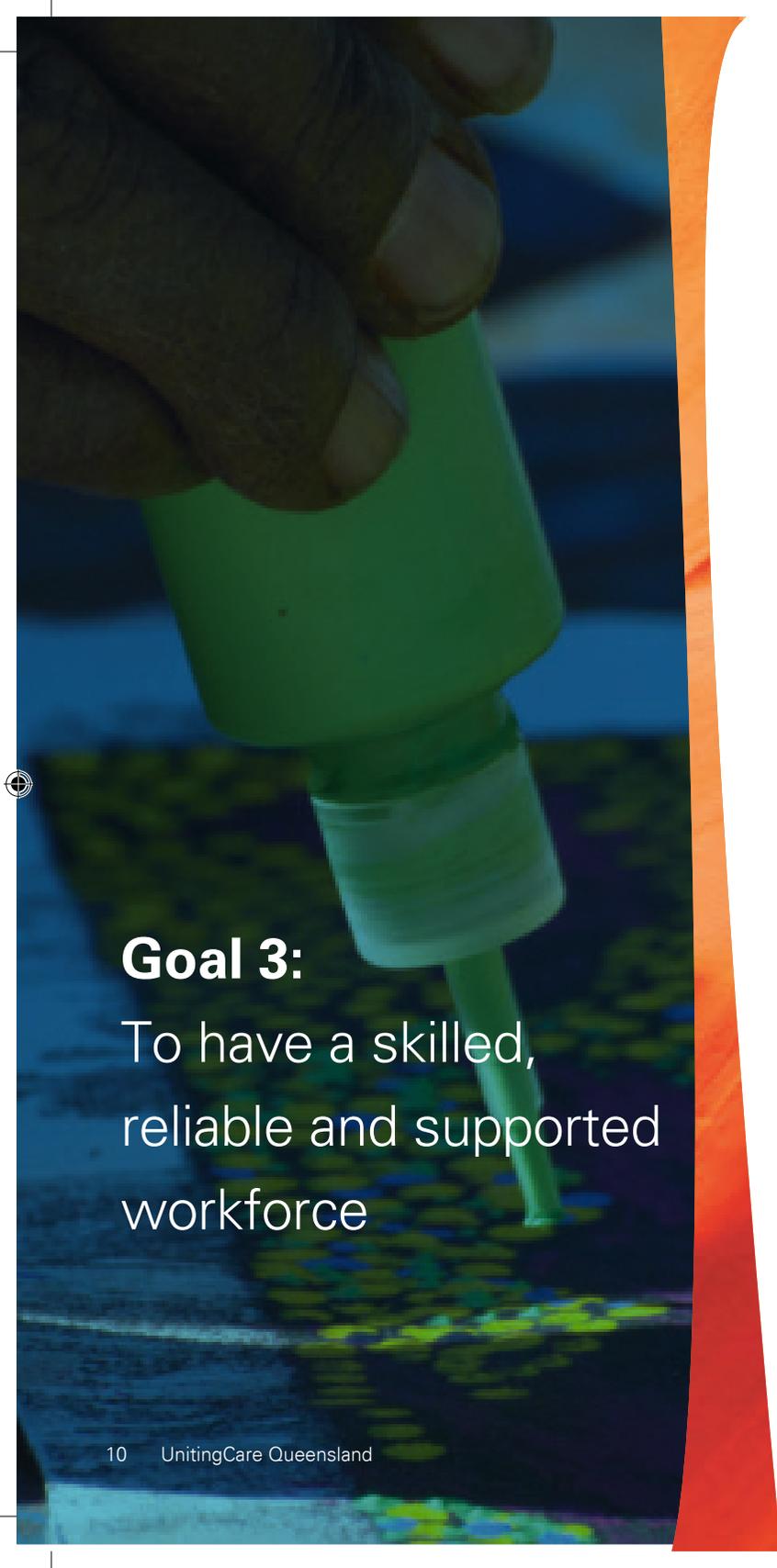
Each year, ARRCs continues to improve financial and operational management capability, capacity and performance. Robust business practices continue to be a focus to ensure sustainability of services and finances for the future so that ARRCs can continue to provide services that respond to the changing needs of the people and communities of the Northern Territory.

## Capital Investment

With capital grants, ARRCs has continued to achieve investment in facilities to ensure that they meet the requirements for the provision of modern, culturally appropriate care for the people that it serves. In financial year 2016-17, close to \$7m was invested in developments in Yulara and Tennant Creek with developments in the residential aged care facilities in Alice Springs (Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged), and Darwin (Terrace Gardens) underway and due for completion in mid-2018.

A large, vertical graphic on the right side of the page. It features a close-up of a hand holding a pen, positioned as if about to write on a surface. The surface is covered with a grid of small, glowing orange dots. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by oranges and browns.

**Goal 2:**  
To be a leading  
sustainable  
organisation



## Goal 3:

To have a skilled,  
reliable and supported  
workforce

### ARRCS Leaders emerge through training

Implementing an emerging leaders program, ARRCS supported ten team members across the organisation to undertake a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management, with participants attending 12 sessions with an independent training provider. The program is focused on learning and development and investing in retention strategies.

### First Workplace Gender Equality Report submitted

ARRCS submitted its first Workplace Gender Equality Report in line with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012. As part of its commitment of respect and equality among team members, ARRCS has committed to upholding the principles of the act in improving gender equality, promoting the elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender and fostering workplace consultations on issues concerning gender equality.

### Focussed on capability development for our workforce

ARRCS has a focus on the development of key competencies and capabilities with the workforce. In addition to core learning and development activities, this has most recently included: the first ARRCS employee completing a Certificate IV in Aboriginal Health, the engagement of an expert consultant to assist Community Service Managers with implementation of the Department of Health CHSP wellness, reablement and restorative approach; and implementation of a mentoring program.

### Prioritising team engagement

ARRCS continues to actively engage and support team members, in its commitment to building a skilled and reliable workforce. Strategies implemented have included the roll-out of a People Survey, designed to gain valuable insights from employees, which was positively received by team members. In addition, regular team briefings and improved communication through the introduction of an E-newsletter provides an opportunity for our people to learn, engage and share experiences with their colleagues.

### Investment in Information Technology driven solutions

Continued investment in information technology has created innovative solution to enhance operational efficiencies in administration to enable the ARRCS team to provide greater flexibility and support in service delivery. To support the development of systems and processes that contribute to ongoing financial sustainability, investments in Procura, technology that offer operational and financial solutions for aged care service and the SABA Learning Management system were identified and implemented.

## Expansion into East Arnhem Land

A continued strategic focus on expansion of services to improve health outcomes for Northern Territory communities has created an opportunity for ARRCs to expand its service delivery into East Arnhem Land. Discussions have commenced with the Commonwealth Government for ARRCs to be the provider of choice to deliver aged care services through a multi-service hub in East Arnhem Land.

## Collaborative relationships with Aboriginal Liaison Officers to promote continuity of care

As a major strategic priority, ARRCs is partnering with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mentors and support workers in the community to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. ARRCs' collaborative relationship with Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO) provides a seamless transition between acute hospital setting and residential or community care. ALOs also support the ARRCs team in the delivery of the School Nutrition Program.

## Relationship with Congress Primary Health Care in Mutitjulu provides holistic care

ARRCS has worked together with Congress Primary Health Care to provide residents and community clients with tailored support by engaging respected professionals to assist in improving culturally appropriate services. Services carried out include fortnightly visits by general practitioners where full Aboriginal Health Checks are conducted, allied health visits such as dental, occupational therapy, speech pathology, dietary and podiatry as well as some specialist appointments and onsite out of hours clinical support and guidance.

## Creating safe and supporting environments with Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjarra Yankunytjarra (NPY) Women's Council

In collaboration with the NPY Women's Council, ARRCs is working to enhance the social services collective impact model in regional and remote Australia. Using the Mutitjulu Community Place, ARRCs and NPY provide domestic violence training and support for Anangu women. As well as providing one-on-one counselling services, ARRCs also facilitates 'Kunga' nights—an opportunity for women from the community to congregate over a meal and spend time together discussing women's issues in the community.

### Goal 4:

To work in partnership with Indigenous Australians towards closing the gap

# Working with the community



## Delivering engagement through nutrition

The ARRCs School Nutrition Program provides 350 nutritious meals per day to school children across three locations in the Northern Territory; Mutitjulu, Ntaria and Alice Springs. A partnership between the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and ARRCs, the program aims to improve school attendance and provide a rich environment for learning by providing nutritious meals.



## Collingwood Football Club visits Pulkapulka Kari

ARRCS employees at the Pulkapulka Kari Aged Care facility at Tennant Creek worked together with Collingwood Football Club to coordinate a visit of the team's superstars to the service. The residents were thrilled by the visit and took great pride in sharing stories of their family and the history of Tennant Creek and swapping footy stories with the famous visitors, including Coach Nathan Buckley.



## Community Place benefits Mutitjulu

ARRCS partnered with Mutitjulu Foundation, Anangu Jobs and Higgins Coatings to re-purpose a former respite centre into a new shared space, the Mutitjulu Community Place. The project has created short term employment and training opportunities for local community members, who were able to contribute and connect with the new community space and is now used as a shared space for community and service providers visiting the region.



## Artwork symbolises reconciliation

Residents at Alice Springs created a mural of handprints as part of NAIDOC Week celebrations. The creation of the mural provided an opportunity for residents to engage in an important cultural activity and demonstrate ARRCS' commitment to reconciliation.



## Daily 'Puna' carving connects culture and community

ARRCS' Tjilpi Pampaku Ngura Flexible Aged Care and Community Care residents can continue their way of life at the service by facilitating daily 'puna' (wood) carving activities for residents. The wood is collected and brought back to the facility to soften before patterns are burnt using hot wire. Residents are then able to exhibit and sell their work to community members.



## Dreamcatcher wins first prize at Tennant Creek Show

Staff at ARRCS' Barkly Community Care facility in Tennant Creek provided resources and support to enable clients to submit a creative entry to the Tennant Creek show. Clients created a dreamcatcher. Their hard work was recognised by the community, winning first prize for their work at the show.



# Shared stories

## Sisters reunited through ARRCS

Distance proved to be no barrier for two sisters who were both clients of Australian Regional & Rural Community Services (ARRCS).

After an ARRCS Community Care client expressed how much she missed her sister who was living in another region, her Support Worker began making enquiries to see how she could organise a reunion for the sisters and she soon discovered that her sister was an ARRCS Home Care Package client who lived on an outstation 25km from Alice Springs.

The ARRCS teams then worked together to organise a meeting of the sisters, with the reunion taking place at a location between their respective residences. Their first meeting was spent reminiscing about their childhood.

The sisters now meet on a regular basis with ARRCS team members providing transport each Friday so the sisters can visit each other and continue to grow their relationship and spend time together.

Alice Springs Community Care Manager, Bronwyne Arnold said that the weekly visit has made a considerable difference to the client who suffers dementia and normally keeps to herself.

## Person-centred care puts client back in touch

When the ARRCS team noticed, Jill, a cheerful Home Care Package client wasn't her normal self, they began to question if something had changed which had caused the change in her demeanour.

It was soon discovered that Jill was no longer going out on her normal outings due to increases in the cost of petrol that she was unable to afford. Jill was missing important social contact with family and friends and wouldn't take the car out more than once a fortnight and sometimes even a month.

On hearing this news, the team held a brainstorming session to discuss how the Home Care Package could be better utilised to assist Jill to meet her needs and fill up her car so she could continue her much needed social interaction.

As a result of ARRCS developing a service model that responded to Jill's individual aspirations, she now goes out weekly and has returned to her usual 'chatty' self during her weekly visits which is having an extremely positive impact on her life.

\*\*Real names have not been used in this story.

## Collaboration leads to improved quality of life

A client being cared for through the Mental Health Program was close to losing her home before the team from Australian Regional & Rural Community Services (ARRCS) stepped in.

After it was identified the client was struggling to keep the house in a reasonable state, an ARRCS Case Manager organised a meeting with key stakeholders to work through solutions to help the client retain her home.

Through a collaborative approach with other Mental Health Service Providers, plans were developed that included specialised training and education for the client's carer, review of medication plans and consultation with the carer and client to develop strategies that helped to improve conditions at the client's home.

A roster was also implemented for the team to assist with planned activities of daily living – cleaning, cooking and attending medical appointments.

The client is now participating in an exercise program at the local pool, which has had a positive impact on her health and overall quality of life.

\*\*Real names have not been used in this story.

# You can make all the difference

ARRCS delivers community, aged and children's services in some of the most remote and socially disadvantaged communities in Australia. We acknowledge that it is difficult for people to live and work in some of these locations, however you can still lend a hand.

Communities such as Mutijtulu, Kaltukatjara (Docker River) and Tennant Creek would greatly appreciate meaningful support by way of donations to ensure elders and traditional owners can stay on country and continue to receive a quality community service.

Your support will also ensure children in remote schools in central Australia receive healthy lunches through our nutrition program to ensure their learning and development potential is maximised.

**If you are passionate about the development and welfare for some of Australia's most vulnerable first nations people, please contact us at [www.arcs.org.au](http://www.arcs.org.au) to make a donation or confidentially discuss how your support can make a difference.**



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