

# LEAD

## SEASONAL NEWSLETTER



Ante is watering the tulips as part of the Floride initiative. We've been busy bringing life back to the planters at the National Film and Sound Archives, which had been empty for the past year. With some love and care, we're reviving the same tulip bulbs from last year, making sure they bloom beautifully and 'sing' once more. It's all about giving these flowers the attention they deserve and helping them put on their best display!

We're pleased to share that LEAD has received the Structural Adjustment Fund (SAF) grant from the Australian Government! This funding will strengthen our efforts to build meaningful employment pathways for individuals with intellectual disabilities and high support needs. With this support, we'll be enhancing our services to guide clients as they enter the open labour market.

A big welcome to the team to the below staff:

- ❖ Ben Deeks in Port Macquarie



Big baby news from the Gosford office – Jara and his partner, Vanessa, have welcomed their beautiful son, Jasiah Jara Millward, into the world! Born at 4:35 AM on September 24, 2024, Jasiah weighed in at 3.34 kg and measured 50 cm.

Both mum and baby are doing great, and they're expected to head home by the end of the week. Huge congratulations to Jara and Vanessa!



Jarrah is about to embark on a wild adventure! She's landed a volunteer role at a koala breeding center in Port Macquarie, where she'll be learning the ins and outs of caring for these incredible animals. This hands-on experience is the perfect chance for Jarrah to gain valuable skills and explore her passion for wildlife.

We're thrilled to see her take on this opportunity, and we can't wait to hear all about her time with the koalas!

Big news for Dustin in Maitland—he's just secured a job with BWS! After honing his pre-employment skills with his NDIS plan and earning his RSA, he's ready to hit the ground running in his new role.

With plenty of shifts coming his way, Dustin is feeling well-supported as he takes this exciting step forward. His smooth transition to DES shows how our services work hand-in-hand to support his journey. Well done, Dustin!

### Updates

We're currently making exciting updates to the LEAD website, expected to be finished by the end of the month. You'll soon find new resource team headshots, a new publications section and 'Our History' page, and a collection of new videos. Additionally, we're introducing a brand-new 'Careers with LEAD' section, where potential candidates can submit their interest in joining our team. Stay tuned for all the latest updates at [lead.asn.au](http://lead.asn.au).

In line with the NDIS price guide, we're making important updates to how we record Provider Travel and Admin Hours. These changes will ensure that any travel time and administrative duties are accurately reflected in our timesheets. This will help us maintain clarity in scheduling and resource allocation for our clients and streamline the invoicing process. Additionally, we're updating the term "Rostered Client Hrs" to "Direct Support Hrs" to provide clearer guidance on the hours dedicated specifically to client support. Please note that any time recorded for provider travel and admin hours will be charged to clients.

After 26 years with LEAD, we bid farewell to Dan, who has been an invaluable member of our team, primarily in commercial cleaning and horticulture. As he embarks on a new challenge, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for his dedication and hard work over the years.

Dan, your contributions have made a lasting impact, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Thank you for being a vital part of our community!

Picture: Dan giving the Sportsgrounds a polish





Spring is in the air at Bruce Hospital, thanks to the hard work of Jess! As part of our latest community project, Jess helped plant over 40 new plants, preparing the soil, clearing land, and ensuring everything is well-watered. Her dedication is a wonderful example of how our clients make a positive impact on the environment and local spaces



Congratulations to Shaun on his recent job placement at National Mailing and Marketing! Taking on the role of an all-round cleaner, he has shown incredible determination and skill in securing this opportunity. We're proud to support his journey and can't wait to see him thrive in his new role!





Ante and Stephen providing careful nurturing to the tulips. We're ensuring these vibrant blooms are ready to stand tall in all their glory, making the most of spring's arrival!





Frank loading buckets of soil at Yarralumla nursesey



Birthday joy for Bee's birthday

Picture: Pete, Bee & Keryl





Celebratory cake for Katie in Maitland's birthday - yum!



Bobbi at a Careers Expo in Canberra

## Jerrabomberra Crew Updates

The Jerra Crew is transitioning from the winter to summer schedule, and they've hit the ground running. The team has been working seamlessly together, and it's been a great start to the season.

They've welcomed their newest crew member, Anthony, who has settled in perfectly. Alongside him, Karl from QPRC is also working with them, providing training and ensuring they meet council expectations.





## Disability Employment Services Update

Our CEO Keryl was recently featured in an ABC News article -

Since its launch in 2010, the federal government's \$1.2 billion disability employment program has faced criticism for its focus on compliance. However, recent budget announcements signal change, with funding increasing to \$5.4 billion over five years and a commitment to prioritise people and quality.

Keryl Neville, CEO of LEAD, highlighted that mandatory requirements, such as regular job provider attendance, are not beneficial for clients. She stated, "My preference would be to work purely with people around their employment goals."

The government also allocated \$23.3 million to establish a Disability Employment Centre of Excellence to foster training and best practices in the sector. Ms. Neville emphasised the need for collaboration over competition, noting, "We were a much better sector when we worked in a more collaborative process."

These changes represent a positive shift towards enhancing support in disability employment services.

**Read more here:**

[Federal government looks to regain trust in Disability Employment Services with sweeping overhaul after years of criticism - ABC News](#)



## Staff Satisfaction Survey Results

We are pleased to share the results of our recent staff satisfaction survey, which reflect the positive culture at LEAD:

- **90%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor or someone at work cares about them as a person.
- **95%** felt that the vision and values of LEAD make their job feel important.
- **100%** affirmed LEAD's commitment to diversity and inclusion, supported by our leadership.
- **100%** agreed that individuals from all cultures and backgrounds are respected and valued in our organisation.
- **84%** indicated they have the materials and equipment needed to do their work effectively.

To enhance this further, we're excited to announce the rollout of real-time Teams support from our IT department, which will help resolve issues more quickly

Thank you to all staff for your valuable feedback – we appreciate your contributions to making LEAD a great place to work!

## Client Feedback from Our NDIS Audit

We are proud to share the positive feedback from our participants during the recent NDIS audit. Many clients expressed how LEAD has been instrumental in their personal and professional growth. Here are some highlights:

- Long-term clients praised the support they've received over the years, with some being with LEAD for over a decade
- Clients highlighted the benefits of their NDIS plans, from improved mental health to better living arrangements, like being part of a Supported Independent Living (SIL) house
- Many participants shared their satisfaction with the employment opportunities provided, including jobs in areas like gardening, nurseries, hospitality, and retail
- Building friendships at work, gaining new skills (like handling cash and EFTPOS), and feeling part of the community were key themes in the feedback
- Clients expressed gratitude for LEAD's ongoing support in achieving employment goals, attending interviews, and furthering education through courses like RSA training
- Participants also appreciated the personalised support from LEAD staff, who have made a lasting impact on their lives

This feedback reaffirms our commitment to making a difference in the lives of those we support. We're honored to be part of their journeys toward meaningful employment and community integration.

## Cultural Experience at Yurauna

Nick recently attended the Yurauna on Country cultural experience at the Yurauna Centre, located within the Canberra Institute of Technology, which supports First Nations education. Yurauna has received federal grants to develop this cultural exchange, and Nick was fortunate to be invited to participate in the pilot program.

The aim of this three-day experience was to gain practical cultural knowledge through a connection to Country with Ngunnawal and neighboring First Nations peoples. It provided a valuable opportunity for non-Indigenous Australians to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities and cultures.

This experience was not only enriching but also a significant step towards fostering understanding and respect for our First Nations communities.



Spring brings growth in so many forms here at LEAD. Whether it's tulips blooming again, clients finding new opportunities, or connections deepening, there's a shared sense of nurturing and renewal in everything we do.

Our community thrives on support, and just like tending to a garden, we're helping dreams and goals take root and flourish. As we embrace change and welcome new experiences, let's keep fostering the growth around us—because together, we're creating something truly special.

-Liz Koch, Editor in Chief



**Mission**

**LEAD's mission is to provide and support opportunities that enable people to build an inclusive and diverse community.**

*Guiding Framework for Accomplishment*

- *Sharing Places.* Assisting people to share places in the community
- *Making Choices.* Giving information and assistance for people to make informed choices
- *Contributing.* Increasing opportunities for people to contribute to the community
- *Dignity.* Assisting people in a way that enhances their dignity
- *Relationships.* Assisting people to have ongoing relationships in the community

*Guiding Principles*

- *Our Clients:* LEAD will maximise opportunities for its clients and connect them with the local community by providing individualised services.
- *Our Communities:* Community and business development will be fostered by LEAD including: employer engagement, inclusive practices, community education and awareness.
- *Our People:* LEAD will continue to grow an inspired, diverse and productive workforce who can deliver on the organisation's vision and strategic objectives.
- *Our Services:* LEAD will strive to grow its service offering and achieve a continually improving service culture within a financially viable organisation.
- *Our Environment:* LEAD will endeavour to minimise the service's impact on the environment and promote the same message to other LEAD stakeholders.








**Vision**

**LEAD's vision is equity, inclusion and sustainability for all.**

We want people to:

- LIVE the life they choose
- EXPERIENCE success and be allowed to fail
- ACCESS all the community has to offer
- DEVELOP to become the greatest version of themselves

**Values**

 Be bold	 Be resilient	 Be honest
 Be collaborative	 Be respectful	 Be professional
 Be innovative		

## Workplace Health and Safety:



With the change in season, it's that time of year again when snakes are becoming more active. As they transition out of hibernation, snakes are on the lookout for warmth, food, and a mate. This can make them more bold than usual, so it's important that we're all aware and prepared, especially since we've had several reports of snake sightings recently.

Here are a few quick tips on what to do if you see a snake:

- **Stay calm and back up slowly.** Don't yell or make sudden movements. Snakes are generally more afraid of us than we are of them, but they can strike if they feel threatened.
- **Don't take your eyes off it.** Keep an eye on the snake to monitor where it goes, but don't approach it. This helps ensure you stay safe and know if it's moving away or lingering nearby.
- **Watch your step.** Be extra cautious when walking through long grass, near water, or around rocks where snakes may be sunning themselves.
- **Wait it out.** If the snake is in a work area or near clients, move everyone to a safer spot and wait until it has left. They usually don't hang around long once they sense people nearby.
- **Remember, it's illegal to harm or kill snakes in Australia.** They are a protected species. We don't suggest calling a licensed snake catcher to relocate the snake, follow the above instructions. Statistically most bites occur when an individual tries to kill the snake.

Other things to keep in mind:

- **Wear appropriate clothing.** Long pants and boots are great protection if you're working in areas where snakes might be lurking.
- **First Aid.** In the rare case of a bite, stay calm and call emergency services immediately. Do not move the affected limb more than necessary, apply a pressure bandage to slow the spread of venom, and let your Operations Manager know as soon as possible.

Lastly, this is an important topic to include in Toolbox talks, so please make time to discuss snake awareness with your crews / clients and ensure everyone knows what to do in case of an encounter.

## Employee Assistance Program

EAP Assist, established in 2008, provides confidential phone counselling and digital support for employees in Australia and overseas. The services are designed to address both workplace and personal concerns quickly, with a focus on solution-oriented counselling. This support is available to all employees.

EAP Assist tackles common issues such as workplace conflict, stress, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and more.

### Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

EAPs support employees with both work-related and personal issues. These programs offer employer-funded confidential counselling and support for employees and their families, and consultative support for managers.

Staff are entitled to three free, confidential sessions per year. To start the process, get in touch with EAP Assist directly and let them know you are from LEAD.

#### Contact details:

[EAP - Employee Assistance Program Services \(eapassist.com.au\)](https://eapassist.com.au)

Email: [support@eapassist.com.au](mailto:support@eapassist.com.au)

## Managing sickness in the workplace

To protect yourself and our clients, we encourage everyone to take the following precautions:

- Wear a mask in vehicles when with clients (masks are available at the office if you need one)
- Maintain distance from others whenever possible
- Sanitize your hands regularly
- Prioritise your well-being

If you are feeling unwell, we recommend that you stay home to recover. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to discuss them with your manager or myself.

For COVID19 information for the ACT - <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/>

For COVID19 information for NSW - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

## Incident / Near Miss / Hazards Reporting

Your vigilance is key to our safety. Remember to promptly report any incidents, near misses, or hazards you observe. By doing so, you help us prevent accidents, improve our processes, and maintain compliance with safety regulations.

Reporting is easy -

**Immediate Action:** Report incidents, near misses and hazards immediately to your Operations Manager / Resource Team and fill out an Incident / Near Miss Report the day of the incident. Send this Incident / Near Miss Report to your manager and Operations Manager Liz Koch [ekoch@lead.asn.au](mailto:ekoch@lead.asn.au).

**Details Matter:** Provide clear details including date, time, location, a description of the event, and any circumstances leading up to the event.

Together, we can create a safer workplace. Thank you for your commitment to safety.

Incident Reports / Near Miss Reports can be found here: [Staff forms](#)



Resiliency is the ability to adapt to change, adjust to challenges and continue to remain positive in any situation. In today's demanding workplace, however, it can be hard to bounce back from the many setbacks and difficulties we face.

By incorporating the strategies below into your daily routine, you can strengthen your resilience and better navigate the challenges that arise in the workplace:

**Develop a Growth Mindset:** Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth rather than seeing them as threats. Cultivate a belief that your abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work.

**Set Realistic Goals:** Break down your larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks. This not only makes them less overwhelming but also allows you to experience a sense of achievement as you complete each task.

**Build Strong Relationships:** Foster positive relationships with colleagues and management. Having a support network at work can provide emotional support during tough times and help you brainstorm solutions to problems.

**Practice Self-Care:** Take care of your physical and mental well-being. This includes getting enough sleep, eating healthily, exercising regularly and engaging in activities you enjoy outside of work.

**Develop Problem-Solving Skills:** Enhance your ability to solve problems by breaking them down into smaller components, considering various solutions and seeking input from others when necessary.

**Cultivate Flexibility:** Be open to change and adaptable in different situations. Recognise that unexpected events and changes are a normal part of work life and focus on finding ways to adapt and move forward.

**Manage Stress Effectively:** Learn techniques for managing stress, such as deep breathing, mindfulness meditation or taking short breaks throughout the day. Find strategies that work best for you and integrate them into your daily routine.



**Maintain Perspective:** Keep challenging situations in perspective by considering the bigger picture. Remind yourself of past successes and the lessons you've learned from previous experiences.

**Seek Feedback and Learn from Failures:** View feedback as an opportunity for growth rather than criticism. Reflect on both successes and failures to identify areas for improvement and adjust your approach accordingly.

**Practice Gratitude:** Focus on the positive aspects of your work and express gratitude for the opportunities and resources available to you. This can help shift your mindset toward optimism and resilience.

**Develop Time Management Skills:** Prioritise tasks effectively and manage your time efficiently to minimise feelings of being overwhelmed. Break tasks into smaller, manageable chunks and allocate time for each one.

**Seek Support When Needed:** Don't hesitate to reach out for support from colleagues, management, or mental health professionals if you're struggling to cope with stress or adversity.

## Pets of LEAD

Hello to Felicia's 3-year-old Kelpie, Koda!



**How would you describe your perfect day?** To have the ball thrown so I can run in the backyard and catch it with my mouth as I am very skilled with moving fast while the ball is in the air.

**What is the best thing your owner does?** Give me scratches on the head and a big cuddle.

**What is your favourite toy?** Stuffed teddy that doesn't have any stuffing in it as I chewed it all up.

**Who is your best friend?** My family - I never know who to run up to.

**Can you do any tricks?** I can sit, shake hands, lay, and twirl around.

**What is your favourite food?** Peanut butter is where I really DROOL! YUM!

**What are your favourite things to do?** Going for runs and doing zoomies in the yard.

**Are there any qualities about yourself you are trying to improve?** Listening (I like testing the family's boundaries all the time).

**Who do you look up to?** My Daddy.

**Lastly, what is your life motto?** To live life to the fullest with no regrets.