



BURKE & BEYOND



Term 2 - 2026

WINTER

Newsletter

Term Holiday Dates

Friday 3 July

Quarter 2 Ends

Monday 6 July to Friday 10 July
(Service Closure)

Winter Break

Monday 13 July

Quarter 3 Starts

Friday 25 September

AFL Grand Final Eve (Public Holiday)

Friday 2 October

Last day of Quarter 3



Message from the CEO

Lisa Sawatzky

As we reach the middle of winter, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the year so far and share an update on what is happening across our sector and within our organisation.

The past few months have brought significant discussion and emerging detail regarding legislative changes to the NDIS. As outlined in the recent budget announcements the NDIS has an increasing focus on scheme sustainability, with proposed reforms shaping how access, eligibility, and funding decisions will be made into the future.

We are beginning to see clearer direction in several areas. These include tighter processes around plan reviews and reassessments, changes to how funding is determined, and new expectations around how and when claims are made. There are also proposed shifts in areas such as community participation supports, which may have a direct impact on the people we support and the services we deliver.

While there is still uncertainty as these reforms continue to unfold, what remains constant is our commitment to providing high-quality, person-centred services. Quality is not just about compliance; it is about the everyday experiences of the people we support, the relationships we build, and the outcomes we achieve together. In a changing environment, this focus becomes even more important.

The impact of these changes on our participants and families is significant, particularly where funding levels may be reduced. In these circumstances, our approach will be to work closely with participants and their families to understand what matters most to them. By identifying and prioritising individual goals, we can take a flexible approach to service delivery—this may include adjusting support ratios, exploring different ways of delivering supports, and ensuring resources are used in the most meaningful and effective way. Our focus remains on partnering with participants and their families to navigate these changes together and continue to achieve outcomes that are important to them.

To this end we are expanding our suite of services and are offering expanded In-Home Support including personal care support, Finding, and Keeping a Job support (Capacity Building) and flexible in-Home Respite and Recreational Support. If you are interested in any of these offerings, please call us on 9886 1111.

If you have received notification of a reduction in funding, please reach out to us so we can arrange a time to discuss the participant's needs, what is most important to maintain, and how we can best support you moving forward to ensure those needs are met. Our approach is to be flexible and focused on working with participants and families to ensure support is maintained, outcomes are met within the available resources.

I want to acknowledge the work happening across all teams. Maintaining consistency, responsiveness, and genuine care—particularly during times of change—is not easy. The strength of our services lies in the professionalism and dedication shown every day. Thank you for the role you play in supporting people to live meaningful and connected lives.

As we move through winter, it is also a timely reminder to look after yourselves and each other. This time of year can be demanding, and taking the opportunity to rest and recharge is essential. I encourage everyone to take a moment where possible to pause, reflect, and reset.

Thank you to our participants and families for your continued support.

Wishing you all a safe and restful winter break.

Kind regards,
Lisa Sawatzky
CEO



DANDENONG

Beyond Rhythm

Term 2 has been a fantastic and rewarding start for the Beyond Rhythm Band program, with participants showing strong teamwork and growing musicianship. Throughout the term, they confidently set up equipment, selected practice playlists, and built their skills through instrumental warm-ups before adding vocals.

With staff support, the group focused on rhythm, timing, and active listening, steadily building confidence in each rehearsal while also learning to adapt when band members were absent.

Operating in two groups, participants quickly developed their ability to collaborate, share feedback, and make musical decisions together. They enthusiastically explored new songs and worked hard to prepare for upcoming performances with the Council and Burke and Beyond. Each member also met with staff to set personal goals, further strengthening engagement in the program. Their dedication has already led to successful performances at the Balwyn campus and Springvale Park SDS, and the energy and creativity shown this term have laid a strong foundation for exciting opportunities ahead.

Chisholm - Work Education

This term, participants in the Chisholm TAFE Certificate I in Work Education program have been actively developing their work readiness skills through both classroom learning and hands-on work experience at Myuna Farm.

Throughout the term, participants focused on completing assessments, creating resumes, and exploring their future career pathways by identifying jobs and industries that interest them. They also researched different career categories, helping them gain a greater understanding of the wide range of employment opportunities available. A highlight of the term was an incursion from Victoria Police, where participants engaged positively with officers, asked questions, and learned about career opportunities and community roles within the police force.

At Myuna Farm, participants continued to build valuable workplace skills through practical tasks including collecting rubbish, cleaning horse paddocks, sweeping concrete areas, raking leaves, feeding animals, and caring for grass grown to feed the rabbits.

These activities provided meaningful opportunities to develop responsibility, independence, and a strong work ethic.

Participants have also enjoyed socialising with their peers and building friendships within the group. Through their experiences at TAFE and the farm, they have strengthened important employability skills such as teamwork, communication, time management, and hands-on learning, preparing them for future education and employment opportunities.



Cornerstone

Participants have the opportunity to build skills in independence, the workplace, social settings, and personal confidence by attending the Cornerstone group. The group is provided with a range of tasks where they are supportively challenged to try activities they may have limited experience with or may not have attempted before. Engaging in new tasks helps build confidence and reduces the pressure associated with trying new experiences in other programs.

Reflection time continues to provide valuable, positive, and constructive feedback to both participants and staff. This process strengthens relationships built on honesty, trust, and support. It also establishes a strong foundation, enabling participants to carry these skills into their home and personal lives, demonstrating their growth and the progress they have made.



BOX HILL

Overview

Semester 1 at Burke and Beyond has been a fantastic and rewarding experience for everyone involved. It has been wonderful to watch participants grow in confidence, develop new skills and challenge themselves across a wide range of activities and programs.

Since the beginning of the semester, participants have shown a strong commitment to learning and personal growth. Through community access, travel training, daily living skills, teamwork activities and vocational learning opportunities, everyone has made significant progress in developing their independence. Many participants have become more confident when navigating the community, using public transport, communicating with others and making decisions for themselves.

One of the highlights of the semester has been seeing participants support one another and build positive relationships with their peers. Their willingness to try new experiences, step outside their comfort zones and work together has been impressive. Participants have demonstrated increased responsibility, resilience and problem-solving skills, all of which are important steps towards greater independence.

It has also been encouraging to see participants continue to develop workplace skills such as punctuality, teamwork, communication and following instructions. These skills will assist them as they work towards future employment opportunities and meaningful participation in their communities.

Tyler



At Burke and Beyond, I have really enjoyed learning how to cook and becoming more confident in the kitchen. One of my favourite parts is going to the supermarket to buy groceries and learning how to choose the ingredients I need for different recipes. I have also learned important cooking skills, like how to safely slice and dice vegetables and other ingredients. These experiences have helped me become more independent and given me greater confidence in preparing meals. My favourite meal to make was mac and cheese with steamed vegetables because it was delicious and fun to cook. I enjoy trying new recipes and learning new cooking techniques each week.

Alice

At Burke and Beyond, I have really enjoyed developing my customer service skills and joining in a range of programs. I work in the café at KNLC, where I serve coffee and food to customers. This has helped me build my confidence when communicating with people and providing friendly customer service. My favourite part of my role is using the computer to send emails to Giant Steps as I enjoy working with technology and learning new computer skills.

I have been engaged in all of the programs and activities and always try my best to take part. I especially enjoy helping my friends and supporting others when they need assistance. Being able to work alongside my friends has helped me build positive relationships and develop teamwork skills. At Burke and Beyond, I have gained valuable experience, increased my confidence, and enjoyed contributing to the community.



RINGWOOD

Overview

Term 2 has been a vibrant and rewarding period for participants at the Ringwood site, with a strong focus on building independence, community connections, and work ready skills. Across the past few months, participants have embraced a wide range of learning opportunities and meaningful experiences that continue to support their growth and learning.

One of the standout highlights this term was our CPR information session delivered by Life Saving Victoria. Participants showed great enthusiasm while learning these vital life-saving skills and gained a better understanding of how to respond in emergency situations. This session ended with an opportunity for the group to get hands on and practice their CPR skills on some practice dummies.

Community engagement has also continued to grow across the term, with several participants beginning volunteering roles at local op shops. We are proud to see participants now contributing their time and skills at both the Epilepsy Foundation Op Shop and the Vinnies Op Shop in Croydon. These opportunities have allowed participants to develop workplace skills, interact with customers, and become active members of their local community. It has been fantastic to see their confidence grow week by week as they take on new responsibilities and build meaningful connections.

Participants have also returned to Box Hill TAFE this term. They have been actively involved in the Healthy Me and Hospitality courses where they are continuing to develop essential life and work ready skills. Through the Healthy Me course, participants have been exploring wellbeing, nutrition, and self-care, while the Hospitality course has provided hands-on experience in food preparation, teamwork, and customer service. Participants have been working very hard during this and we look forward to seeing their continued progression across the remainder of the year.

Recently a handful of participants were also invited to speak to a group of students from Box Hill TAFE Lilydale who were currently studying Individual Support. Participants were asked questions around their social lives and goals for the future while meeting the students and were invited back to speak to a second class later in the day. Participants expressed that they enjoyed the opportunity to get to know the students and help them in their learning.

As we wrap up another successful term, it is great to see that the Next Step Ringwood site continues to be a place of growth, opportunity, and community participation. The achievements of our participants over Term 2 reflect their commitment, resilience, and willingness to step outside their comfort zones and develop new skills.

With the upcoming winter break fast approaching, we would like to wish everyone a well deserved and relaxing week off. We hope participants, families, and staff alike take this time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the cooler season. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for Term 3.



There have been some exciting new activities happening at Balwyn this term.

Independent Life Skills

Participants have been supported by the staffing team to develop their independent life skills, from practicing washing our hands really well to completing rostered daily cleaning duties. Wiping tables, sweeping, vacuuming, gardening, emptying bins, washing the buses and laundry chores are done quicker when working in teams.



Another focus has been utilizing the Promethean board to work out the prices of items we need to purchase for cooking, art projects and the site. We then write the list before going shopping, remembering to take the reuseable bags.

Meals on Wheels

Due to the fantastic job the Monday Meals on Wheels crew have been doing we received a few calls to help on other days. This term another Meals on Wheels location has requested Balwyn participants to volunteer on Fridays.

Comments:

- "I like knocking on the door and the door opens and I talk to the people."
- "It makes me happy to help the community."



Communication and Social Skills

We work collaboratively with allied health professionals such as speech pathologists, physios, occupational health and positive behaviour support therapists to have a consistent supportive approach for people to work towards their goals and improved quality of life.

With the recommendation of speech pathologists, we have had an increase in participants being supported to develop their communication skills with the assistance of communication devices. These have proven to be great tools to empower people by expanding their capacity to engage in conversation, developing cognitive skills, and increasing choice and decision making. With the staffing team support, this enhances participants' ability to share the day's events with families, friends and carers.



OUTREACH SUPPORT

Becky Chan

I volunteered for the Upper Ferntree Gully FNC at Berwick Easter Fair. As it was my first time helping out, they got me preparing the bread on napkins. I prepared the bread, one person put sausages and onions on the bread for me to give out to customers, and it was fun as I thought it might not be. It was a good opportunity to use my multitasking work skills, learnt from my careers in hospitality and retail. People were impressed with my fast pace and being able to carry multiple sausages. After the Easter break, the footy season started again and it feels so good to be back at games, seeing people and connecting with them and the club. I have had the chance to volunteer more closely with the teams, having the opportunity to run the water at some of the games. I am looking forward to more opportunities with the club.



FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

Friday Night Social continues to be a hit across all sites, with a welcome increase in participation over the past term. From bowling and darts to laser tag and cooking, participants are offered a wide range of activities to explore.

Stepping out of our comfort zones in a supportive environment opens our eyes to new opportunities—not only through activities and food, but more importantly through connections with peers. It's a chance to discover shared interests and build friendships that may not have been explored before.

Saturday Socials

The Saturday Social group meets monthly to explore a variety of exciting locations and activities across inner and outer Victoria. Participants are supported to develop safe travel skills, navigate community access, and build effective communication and social skills.

Alongside these activities, participants also have the opportunity to experience Melbourne's multicultural cuisines and enjoy a wide range of delicious treats.

Opportunities to engage

If you or someone you know is interested in Outreach support or attending one of our social groups, please reach out today for more information.

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Edited by: Becky Chan

Inclusion that counts

SUPPORTIVE | PROGRESSIVE | ACCOUNTABLE



BURKE & BEYOND

Burke and Beyond Outreach Service

*Compassionate, Reliable,
Person-Centred Support at Home*

**Helping you live independently,
stay connected and achieve your goals.**

At Burke and Beyond, we're here to support you in the comfort of your own home and community with tailored supports that suit your needs, preferences and lifestyle.



**Empowering
Families,
Enriching Lives**

**Your partner in
a brighter future.**

Our Services



Personal Care

Respectful assistance with showering, grooming, dressing, toileting, and hygiene.



Daily Living & Independence Skills

Support with cooking, cleaning, budgeting, routines, and building confidence in everyday tasks.



Community Access

Help to attend appointments, social activities, shopping, and community events.



Medication Support

Reminders and assistance with safe medication routines.



Assistance with domestic tasks

Help with meal preparation, laundry, light household cleaning and maintaining a safe, comfortable home.



Social & Emotional Support

Companionship, conversation, and meaningful engagement.

Why Choose Burke and Beyond?



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Experienced, qualified and caring support workers



Flexible support that fits around your lifestyle



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- ✓ Self-managed, Plan-managed and NDIA-managed participants welcome
- ✓ Serving Eastern and South Eastern Melbourne
- ✓ In-home and community supports available



Registered
NDIS
Provider

Supporting people to live independently, participate confidently and thrive in their community.

