



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

**THE PEAK PROFESSIONAL
BODY FOR THE REMOTE AND
ISOLATED HEALTH WORKFORCE**

crana.org.au

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CRANApplus acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, waters and sky, and respects their enduring spiritual connection to Country. We acknowledge the sorrow of the past and our hope and belief that we can move to a place of equity, partnership and justice together. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging, and pay our respects to the cultural authority of First Peoples.

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Above: Taras Vyshnya – stock.adobe.com

CEO'S REPORT



The past twelve months have been marked by the continued achievements of CRANAplus. The organisation has experienced sustained growth and has excelled as the industry's peak body in providing education, support, and advocacy for the remote and isolated health workforce.

As Australia emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, remote area nurses, midwives, and other health professionals described their feelings of exhaustion resulting from the challenging work that they had experienced over the past three years. For those working in the sector, I admire your tenacity and professionalism during this difficult time and thank you on behalf of the communities you serve.

CRANAplus has been with the workforce every step of the way. We have been advocating on behalf of the sector by providing advice to government and policy makers. We are proud to have been representing nurses and midwives on many steering committees, stakeholder groups and forums.

Despite the challenges, never has there been greater interest by the nursing profession in pursuing a career in rural and remote Australia. This was most evident in the interest shown in CRANAplus' pilot Remote Area Nurse Pathway Program which helps rural and new-to-remote RNs build clinical skills, resilience and cultural safety in preparation for remote area practice, providing a pathway to a remote nursing career.

Additionally, there has been continuous uptake of CRANAplus' education products. The education team has been delivering high-quality education, specifically tailored to the remote context. We successfully delivered face-to-face courses across Australia and continued to provide a suite of online courses and modules for those working in remote practice.

CRANAplus Membership has remained strong. We have welcomed many new nurses and midwives and retained long-standing Members.

Many of our Members have been volunteering their own time to contribute to the success of the organisation: facilitators on our education courses, clinician roundtable members, guest speakers for our webinar series and podcasts, content reviewers, and of course the Board of Directors. I thank you for your contribution to our strategic priorities and commitment to the values to which we aspire.

The CRANAplus First Peoples' Strategy has remained at the forefront of all that we do. It provides a strategic roadmap that defines our future vision and how we will get there. It guides us in an organised, flexible and aligned manner for the delivery of our mandate. The vision and values hold our organisation accountable in ensuring it efficiently and effectively supports First Peoples on their path to self-determination.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing team has delivered workshops and resources to support and assist the workforce, all underpinned by the service provided by the Bush Support Line. Subscriptions to our Mindful Monday email continue to grow, reaching the inbox of thousands of rural and remote nurses and health professionals every Monday morning. Our newsletter helps readers to cope with the daily challenges of living and working in demanding environments and manage stress, trauma, grief, workplace conflict and other common challenges.

The Professional Services team has been working assiduously with nurses through all stages of their career, from students, early career to highly experienced remote area nurses. We strongly believe that a sustainable nursing workforce is required to deliver culturally safe, effective health care to rural and remote Australia. We contributed to and celebrated the launch of the Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework, a seminal document which is shaping the way in which we build that workforce.

In closing, I give my heartfelt thanks to the CRANAplus team for their commitment to our values, which has created the space for innovation, continued quality improvement and the achievement of our strategic objectives. I particularly acknowledge the executive team for their collegial support and leadership that has facilitated transformation across the organisation.

CRANAplus acknowledges the ongoing support of the Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care through its continued provision of a Commonwealth Grant over 2021-2024. This funding ensures that the organisation can continue to build on its significant achievements in providing the remote and isolated health workforce with support, advocacy, and educational opportunities.

Katherine Isbister

Former Chief Executive Officer (August 2019 to July 2023)
CRANAplus

CHAIR'S REPORT



The past year has provided the Board of CRANAplus with both challenging decisions and great opportunity as we, along with the rest of the country, grapple with the return to a post-COVID world and the difficult economic environment.

Throughout the year, we have been encouraged to see CRANAplus progress its vision as the peak professional body for the remote and isolated health workforce and in doing so increase its voice at the highest levels by advocating and providing expert advice in rural and isolated health workforce matters. This year, in support of the remote and isolated health workforce, we delivered 91 face-to-face courses, 66 wellbeing workshops and 1730 wellbeing packs.

The Commonwealth Government's continued support of CRANAplus, through the provision of significant funding, is further affirmation of the valuable work CRANAplus undertakes in the remote health space.

Under the stewardship of Amelia Druhan, CRANAplus educational programs have provided relevant targeted resources, training and support to remote and isolated nurses, midwives, and other health workers.

The work of the Mental Health & Wellbeing and Professional Services teams, under the leadership of Acting Chief Executive Officer Pamela Edwards, have provided important support and resources, specifically for those who live and work in our unique environment. Responding to emerging issues that affect the rural, isolated, and remote workforce, CRANAplus has continued to provide advocacy on behalf of the workforce, in relation to their safety, mental health and wellbeing.

First launched in 2021 under the direction of Dallas McKeown, the CRANAplus First Peoples' Strategy continues to be embedded in organisational decision-making and provide guidance to CRANAplus on ways to amplify the voices of First Nations people as we move towards reconciliation and justice.

I am delighted to advise, despite the significant increase in the cost of delivering services created by the current economic environment, CRANAplus remains in a solid financial position. To this end, I would like to acknowledge Steven Dangaard, Chief Financial Officer, for providing sound financial management and advice through another year of a challenging economy.

During the June meeting of the Board, executive director Katherine 'Kati' Leary presented the results of the staff survey which reflects the positive work culture created amongst the team at CRANAplus.

In June this year, the Board reluctantly accepted Katherine Isbister's resignation for personal reasons. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the exceptional leadership and direction Katherine provided in her time as CEO and wish her well on behalf of the Board.

Also on behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge the resilience of all the CRANAplus staff this past year and thank them for their dedication, adaptability, and hard work; it has not gone unnoticed.

To our Members, supporters, and amazing volunteers: thank you! We would not be here without your support; you are an integral part of CRANAplus' existence.

I would also like to thank my fellow Board Directors who volunteer significant time and expertise. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to this unique and wonderful organisation. It has been a pleasure to work with such a skilled and committed leadership group.

As the Board commences the search for a new Chief Executive Officer, and introduces the governance role of Company Secretary, we look forward to continuing to improve our organisational position through a move from an Association towards a company limited by guarantee. It is anticipated the next year will also see a new round of Commonwealth funding, the diversification of organisational income streams and the commencement of the review of the CRANAplus strategy, which whilst being led by the Board and Executive will be heavily informed by our Members and stakeholders.

In the interim, we continue to be mindful of the challenges faced by the remote and isolated workforce working to deliver quality health care throughout this unique land and we stand ready to support you.

Fiona Wake

Chair
CRANAplus Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Fiona Wake
Chair



John Wright
Deputy Chair



Dr Nicholas Williams
Treasurer



Naomi Zaro
Secretary



Belinda Gibb
Board Member



Emma Barritt
Board Member



Danielle Causer
Board Member



Dr Ann Aitken PhD
Board Member



Linda Kensington
Current Chief
Executive Officer
(From September 2023)



Pamela Edwards
Acting Chief
Executive Officer
(July–September 2023)



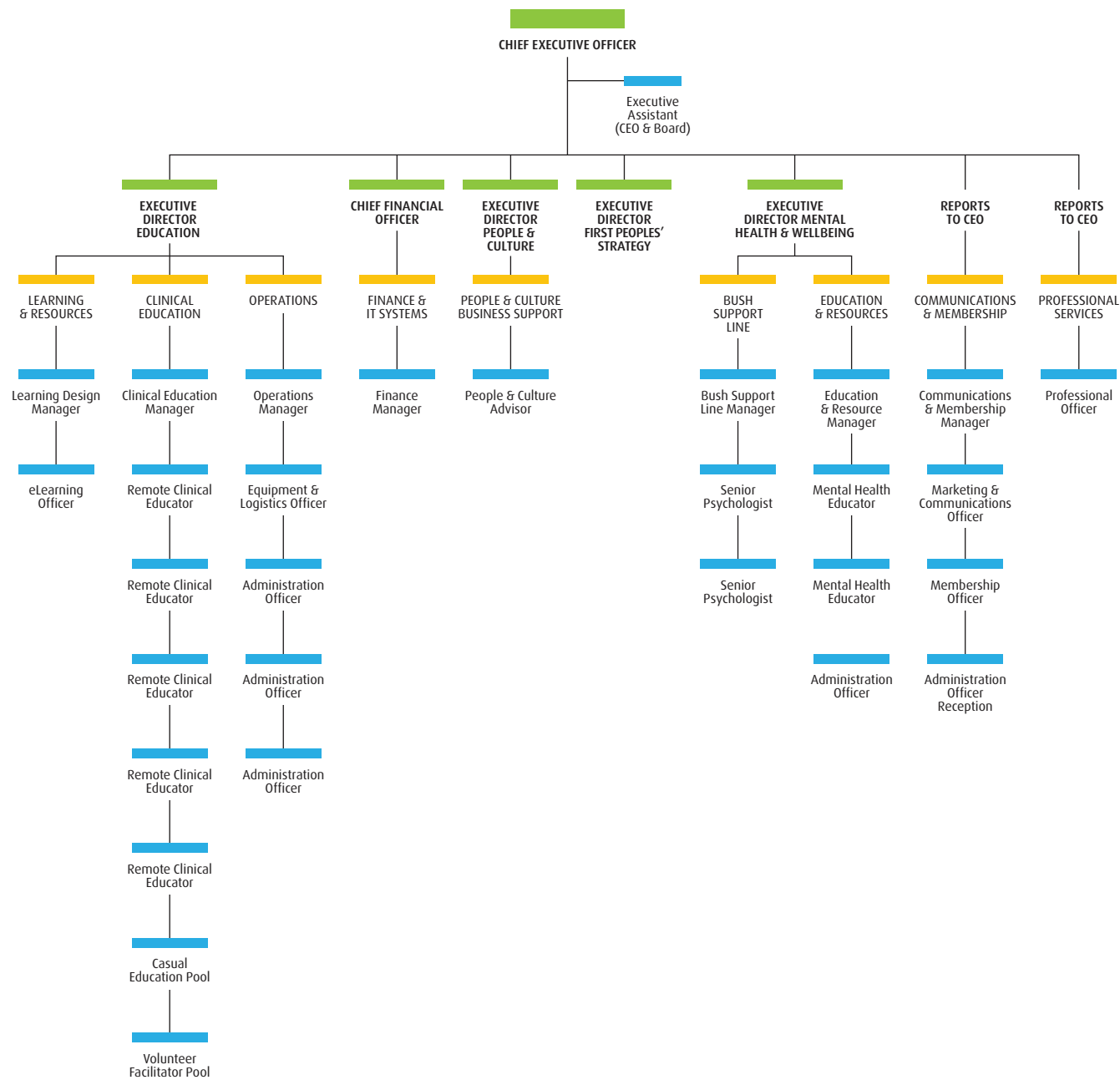
Katherine Isbister
Former Chief
Executive Officer
(Until July 2023)



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

ABOUT US

Current Organisational Structure



CRANApus STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2025



ABOUT US



Dallas McKeown
Executive Director,
First Peoples' Strategies

First Peoples' Strategy

The CRANaplus First Peoples' Strategy is embedded across the organisation and has provided a cultural lens to the development of resources and processes into all facets of our business.

In the development of education products, the use of case studies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples has provided opportunities for staff and participants to address existent issues and consider responses as appropriate. As noted in the Education section of this report (page 18), the CRANaplus Education team delivered its first Mirii Course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners and Workers in Batchelor, NT, in October.

Our 39th Conference in the same month saw keynote and abstract presentations from First Peoples speakers including Prof. Roianne West, Leeona West, Vicki Tooditj Wade, Sonita Giudice, Melina Connors, Kellie Kerin, and Geoffrey Angeles.

We have participated in a number of events throughout the year that mark days of significance, including Mabo Day, Close the Gap Day, Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Day and International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Ongoing internal staff development has seen webinars and face-to-face workshops delivered to develop and enhance knowledge and understanding about First Peoples' past and contemporary topics.

Dallas McKeown
Executive Director, First Peoples' Strategies
CRANaplus

Above, from left: Dallas speaking at the 39th CRANaplus Conference; Sonita and Melina at the 39th CRANaplus Conference; Senior Kurna Man, Mickey Kumatpi O'Brien delivering the Welcome to Country at the 39th CRANaplus Conference.

CRANaplus First Peoples' Strategy 2021 - 2025

Our Vision

To be the leading experts supporting the remote and isolated health workforce

Lift our voice to advocate for remote and isolated health

- Engage with peak bodies and key stakeholders on identified health issues.
- Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to support positive outcomes.
- Contribute to the Professional Learning sessions (webinars).

Through a strengths-based approach contribute to improving the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in rural and remote Australia

- Increase engagement and advancement across cultural knowledge, cultural safety and recognition.
- Establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to access resources that enable the delivery of CRANaplus services.
- Develop a talent pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Facilitators for delivery of relevant education courses.

Respond to health impacts from social determinants and a changing climate

- Engage in research collaborations and projects.
- Develop leadership to build cultural respect, reducing discrimination and racism.
- Increase meaningful representation of First Peoples' presence in our workplace to stay well-informed with current issues.
- Value and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's capacity to co design and deliver evidence-based programs and services with their communities.

Increase our competitiveness and strengthen our resources

- Be an organisation of choice for staff and volunteers and support a professional, flexible and mobile workforce.
- Review our services and applicability to First Peoples' requirements.
- Promote CRANaplus to attract and retain more client business.

Grow, develop and up-skill the workforce

- Develop a proactive approach to identifying opportunities for First Peoples.
- Develop a Community of Practice forum for First Peoples members.
- Promote and leverage CRANaplus's competitive edge in remote health training and provide advice on CRANaplus promotional and educational material relating to First Peoples.
- Build cultural safety capabilities and practices through learning programs to cultivate understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality healthcare.

We respect the diversity and vibrancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and listen to worldviews from across the country. We recognise that First Peoples' traditions and knowledge systems are sources of strength, wisdom and guidance. We reflect First Peoples' cultures in our workplace and in our work practices. This plan is a strategic roadmap that defines our future vision and how we will get there. It guides us in an organised, flexible and aligned manner for the delivery of our mandate. The vision and values will hold our organisation accountable in ensuring it efficiently and effectively supports First Peoples on their path to self-determination. We look forward to continuing our journey together.

Our Values • Integrity • Social Justice • Excellence
• Respect • Inclusiveness • Accountability • Safety

ABOUT US

Representation on External Committees

Chief Executive Officer

- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Ministerial Rural Health Roundtable
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Primary Health Reform Consultation Group
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Primary Health Care COVID-19 Response Teleconference
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Rural & Remote Health Stakeholder COVID-19 Roundtable
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Nursing & Midwifery Strategic Reference Group COVID-19 Roundtable
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Nurse Practitioner 10 Year Plan Steering Committee
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – National Rural Health Commissioner Advisory Committee
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – National Rural & Remote Nursing Generalist Framework
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – National COVID Vaccine Taskforce – Rural Health System Preparedness Stakeholder Roundtable
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Health Workforce Division – Stronger Rural Health Strategy Evaluation Stakeholder Reference Group
- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Nursing Workforce Priority Work – Rural & Remote
- Australian College of Nurse Practitioners – Nursing Peaks Nurse Practitioner Strategy Forum
- Australian College of Nursing – Rural and Remote Nursing & Midwifery Community of Interest
- Australian Women’s Health Network – Women’s Health Hub
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations – CRANaplus Representative
- Health Workforce Queensland – Health Workforce Stakeholder Group
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce – Expert Clinical Panel (Leadership Group)
- National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) – CRANaplus Representative
- National Rural Health Commissioner – Rural Generalists & Multi-Disciplinary Teams Summit Steering Committee

- National Women’s Health Advisory Council – CRANaplus Representative
- NT PHN Education – NT Nursing & Midwifery Collaborative Working Group
- Nursing and Midwifery Office Queensland – Peak Nursing & Midwifery Bodies Meeting
- Rural Locum Assistance Programme (Rural LAP) – Rural LAP Steering Committee
- University of Wollongong – Expert Reference Group for the Alternative Arrangements for Residential Aged Care Staffing Requirements Project

Deputy CEO & Executive Director of Education

- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Nurse Practitioner 10 Year Plan Steering Committee
- Australian Living Evidence Consortium – Living Evidence for Australian Pregnancy and Postnatal Care Guidelines Steering Committee
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations – CRANaplus Representative
- Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence – Education Working Group and Clinical Practice Guideline for Respectful and Supportive Perinatal Bereavement Care

Chief Finance Officer

- Centre for Remote Health – Remote Primary Health Care Manuals Governance Committee

Executive Director First Peoples’ Strategies

- ArneyChong Consulting – South Australian Department for Correctional Services
- Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet – Cultural Consultation Project
- Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre – Remote Research Collaboration
- Close The Gap Campaign – Steering Committee
- National Allergy Council – Shared Care Project Working Group

Executive Director Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – National Nurse and Midwife Health Service Advisory Group

Professional Officers

- Australian Government Department of Health & Aged Care – Aged Care Diversity Consultative Committee
- Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine – Rural & Remote Digital Innovation Group

- Aged & Community Care Providers Association – ACCPA Graduate Nurse Transition to Practice Program National Advisory Group
- Flinders University College of Nursing and Health Sciences – End-of-Life Essentials National Advisory Group
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce – Expert Clinical Panel (Primary and Chronic Care)
- NSW Rural Doctors Network – Natural Disaster and Emergency Response Group
- NT PHN Education – Administrator’s Medals in Primary Health Care Panel Awards
- TAFE New South Wales – Industry Collaboration Reference Group – Rural Health
- TAFE New South Wales – Industry Collaboration Reference Group – Nursing
- University of Melbourne – Australian Dental Association & Melbourne Dental School Advisory Group

Remote Clinical Educators

- Australian Commission of Safety, Quality in Health Care – Emergency Triage Education Kit (ETEK) Project Advisory Group
- Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD), Menzies School of Research – Midwifery Education Advisory Group
- Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence – Education Working Group and Clinical Practice Guideline for Respectful and Supportive Perinatal Bereavement Care
- Australian Stroke Alliance – National Education Working Group

Education & Resource Manager, Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Climate and Health Alliance Coalition – CRANaplus Representative
- Services for Australian Rural & Remote Allied Health – Transition to Remote and Rural Allied Health Practice Toolkit Steering Committee

CRANaplus Fellows & Members

- Independent Hospital Pricing Authority – Small Rural Hospitals Working Group
- Australian Commission of Safety, Quality in Health Care – Primary Care Committee
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce – Expert Clinical Panel (Primary and Chronic Care)

CRANaplus Board Chair

- NT PHN – NT Health Workforce Stakeholder Group

Photo: Kwest – stock.adobe.com

MEMBERSHIP

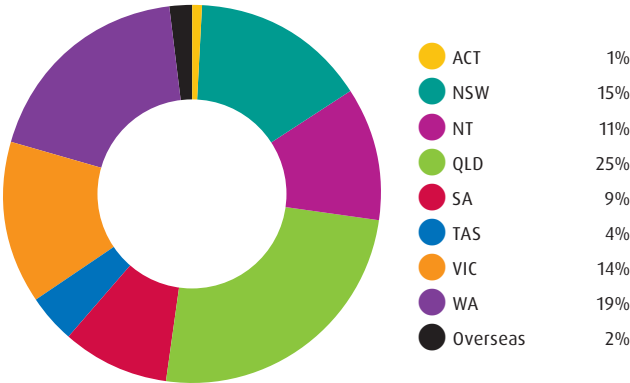
During this financial year, CRANaplus maintained a Membership base of approximately 2000 individuals and organisations. After achieving this milestone last year, we were able to maintain and stabilise these numbers, and we emerge into the 2023/2024 financial year with a solid and loyal Membership base. The demographics that make up our Membership remain broadly consistent, with an increase in our younger Members indicating heightened engagement with the emerging workforce.

CRANaplus Membership fees remain highly competitive, with one of our key points of difference being accessibility and affordability. Members were supportive of CRANaplus as we retired the temporary reduction in our fees we had initiated as a gesture of support during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also graciously accepted a \$10 fee increase due to rising costs. The provision of Membership benefits, such as scholarship and grant eligibility, CRANaplus Magazine, and course discounts, accounts for the value Members continue to see in Membership.

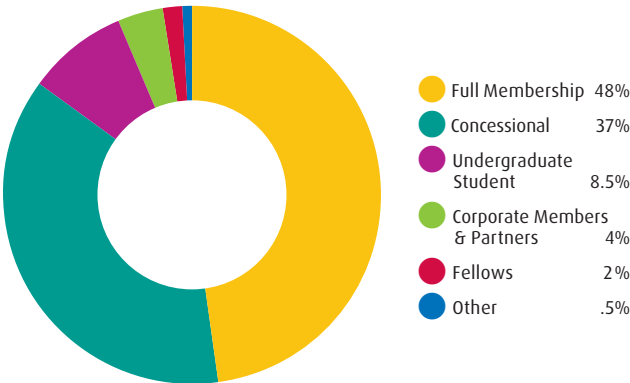
The 2022 Member Survey and the Nursing & Midwifery Roundtable (as outlined in the Professional Services section of this report on page 25) spearheaded our Member engagement for this financial year. As always, the Member Survey provided valuable insights from the grassroots, highlighted existing and emerging issues and solutions, and affirmed that Membership is not just about receiving much-needed benefits, but giving back – many participants stated that they are Members in order to support their peak body. The 39th CRANaplus Conference was also a great opportunity to connect with our Members.

In summary, the support of our Individual and Corporate Members continues to empower our organisation to deliver a wide range of services to the remote health workforce. A big thank you is due to our Members for contributing to remote health through their work and through their Membership.

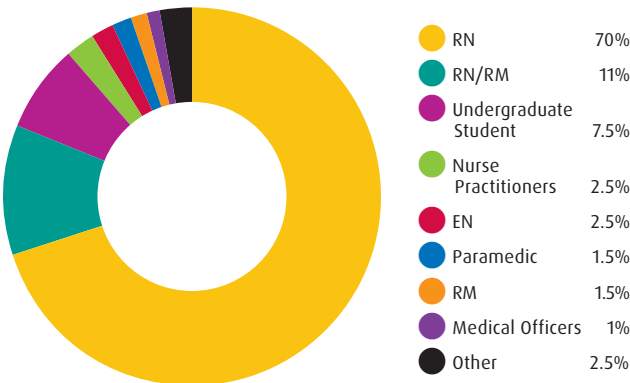
Membership by Location



Membership by Type



Membership by Profession



Corporate Members and Partners



MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

CRANApplus has a presence across a range of in-house and external digital and print media. By this means, we seek to raise awareness of our services, and the needs of remote area nurses and midwives, while supporting, informing and connecting the remote health workforce. Media and communications activities within the 2022/2023 financial year included but were not limited to:

- **Our website.** The CRANApplus website recorded almost 1.2 million page views during the financial year, representing an increase of over 10% from the previous year and a 25% increase in users. During the second year of our redeveloped website, the improved user experience combined with CRANApplus' ongoing relevance to the remote health workforce to contribute to these numbers.
- **The CRANApulse eNewsletter.** We delivered our weekly newsletter 50 times to a growing body of subscribers, which approached 10,000 towards the end of June and demonstrated increasing engagement with newsletter content. This pairs with the Mindful Monday newsletter sent by the Mental Health & Wellbeing team, which experienced a 13% increase in engagement, while expanding to over 3,400 subscribers.
- **CRANApplus Magazine.** In 2022/2023, CRANApplus published three editions of CRANApplus Magazine, which has a print run of over 7,500 and is distributed to Members and stakeholders across the country. This year saw us increasingly adapt magazine content to other contexts, as we told the stories and news of the remote health workforce across a wider range of forums including social media and our online 'your stories' page. This section of our website experienced a 220% increase in engagement compared to the previous year's page views.
- **Social media.** CRANApplus retains a loyal following on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter, capping off the year with a combined following of over 7,200.
- **Mainstream media.** CRANApplus released multiple press releases throughout the year and provided commentary in response to media requests.



Photo: Jason Bennee - stock.adobe.com



EDUCATION SERVICES



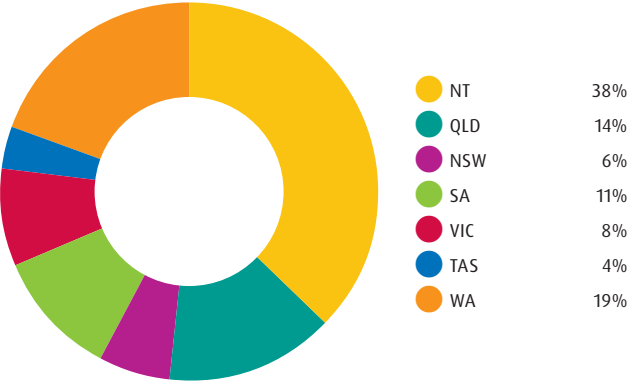
Amelia Druhan
Former Deputy CEO
& Executive Director,
Education Services

Throughout the year CRANaplus Education provided vital professional development and clinical upskilling to many of Australia’s most remote and isolated health professionals. Relevance and applicability for the remote context remained our focus and point of difference. Delivering across the length and breadth of our country, our service started where other providers stopped.

Face-to-face Workshops

With the disruption caused by the pandemic abating, our commitment to getting on the road and in the room with the remote workforce was fully realised. A total of 91 courses were successfully delivered on location in all states and the Northern Territory.

Percentage of total courses delivered



Dr Naomi Malouf PhD
Executive Director,
Education Services

A total of 1,670 rural and remote health professionals attended a face-to-face clinical education workshop with CRANaplus during the financial year.



Over 95% of participants rate face-to-face courses as

Good – Very Good

(Scale is Very Poor, Poor, Okay, Good, Very Good)



Over 95% of participants rate online courses as

Good – Very Good

(Scale is Very Poor, Poor, Okay, Good, Very Good)

eRemote

Our suite of online learning opportunities via interactive, contemporary courses and modules on our eRemote platform continued to expand. eRemote provided health professionals with access to time-efficient, cost-effective clinical training and development any time, any where.

Throughout the year a total of 5,565 health professionals completed online learning with CRANaplus Education, including 58 very remote health professionals who completed online learning and practical assessment for mandatory Advanced Life Support training.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Consistent with the CRANaplus Strategic Plan 2020–2025, we remained committed to increasing our competitiveness and strengthening our resources. Our CQI Framework continued to drive quality and innovation across our service delivery. Our approach was informed by stakeholder feedback and evaluations, the contemporary evidence base (both clinical and educational), and our contractual and organisational targets. Commitment across the team and our processes increased our responsiveness and capacity to close the loop on CQI.

The Maternity Emergency Care course was comprehensively revised for release in January 2023. The revised course includes contemporary online pre-course learning and an activity-based, interactive two day workshop.

Above, left to right: Members of the Education team and participants of the first Mirii (star) course delivered at Batchelor Institute, NT, in October 2022; ALS Adelaide, August 2022; Clinical Education Manager Leanne Laurie and participants of the inaugural Mirii course, NT, October 2022; Members of the Education team preparing course kits. Overleaf, left to right: Above, left to right: ALS Adelaide, August 2022; Mirii plastering group; Mirii plastering group; Tamworth REC pelvic binding; Mirii.

EDUCATION SERVICES



Cultural Safety

The CRANaplus First Peoples' Strategy, along with targeted professional learning for our clinical educators, provided insight and direction towards culturally safe service delivery. With the support of the Executive Director of First Peoples' Strategies, clinical case studies from our resources were reviewed and enhanced. 5.3 per cent of participants who attended face-to-face workshops identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

A dedicated course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professionals was written and launched in October 2022. Now part of our ongoing service offering, the Mirii (Star) course focuses on the effective use of clinical care manuals and guidelines in response to common patient presentations. It includes a particular focus on early recognition of the deteriorating patient, and appropriate assessment, treatment, and management of patients in the context of a remote setting. Content and case studies cover both acute and chronic disease presentations.

Clinical Governance

Clinical governance of our service was further enhanced through the new practices of internal and external review. External reviewers, selected for their skill and experience, were formally engaged to assess new and revised materials for clinical currency, relevance to the remote context and quality control.

The Team

Further investment in our people brought new talent and experience into the team and an increased capacity for continuous quality improvement.

Our service delivery would not be achieved if not for the passion and commitment of our volunteer clinical facilitators. Our current pool of 135 volunteers includes three new facilitators who were onboarded during the year.

The CRANaplus Board, Executive and Staff remain deeply grateful for the contribution of our facilitators. Their generosity and continued engagement with CRANaplus is appreciated by all of us, and the sector more broadly.

Across our Remote Clinical Educator, Learning Design, Equipment & Logistics and Administration teams our capacity to meet the evolving learning needs of the sector was responsive and adaptive throughout the 2022/2023 financial year.

CRANaplus Education concludes another year in a position of strength as the leading expert in the delivery of safe, quality education to the rural and remote health sector.

Amelia Druhan

Former Deputy CEO & Executive Director, Education Services
CRANaplus

Dr Naomi Malouf PhD

Executive Director, Education Services
CRANaplus

Testimonials

"This was an amazing experience! The whole course was run so professionally, the facilitators were incredibly knowledgeable and passionate, and the food was great! The group was terrific too, everyone [was] friendly and so supportive of me, a [future] RAN there to learn, be challenged, build confidence and open some employment opportunities for myself."
– Remote Emergency Care, Adelaide

"The teachers from this course were incredible! They were friendly and gave such a wonderful range of knowledge This course has changed my entire perspective on participating in birth and has taken away a lot of fear. I enjoyed every aspect of this course and listening to what all the teachers had to offer was incredible. Their wealth of knowledge and their encouragement made me feel so much safer and more confident in my own abilities."
– Maternity Emergency Care, Coffs Harbour

"The course was delivered to great effect. I couldn't be happier with the pre-course learning, and it was complemented very well by the two-day workshop"
– Paediatric Emergency Care & Paediatric Advanced Life Support, Adelaide

"Great course, learnt plenty. Awesome instructors! I will definitely use what I've learnt this weekend in my practice. Thank you!"
– Maternity Emergency Care, Nhulunbuy

"I feel that the repetition during the course of the DRSABCDE and COACHED was fantastic. In a time of crisis, it's often easy to get confused and forget steps. This was really hammered into us, and I feel much more confident to deal with such situations since attending the course. Also, refresher on drug administration and aftercare was terrific. Thank you everyone involved."

– Advanced Life Support, Katherine

"I've done REC five times in my long career – this one was the best!"

– Remote Emergency Care, Adelaide

"I feel much more confident since doing the course and would be happy to be a team leader in the event of an emergency presentation now."

– Advanced Life Support, Launceston

"Excellent course and enjoyed the scenario sessions as these demonstrated teamwork and great learning. It also provided reflective practice after the scenarios and team discussion."

– Paediatric Emergency Care & Paediatric Advanced Life Support, Broome

"The course was well contextualised to the remote and isolated setting, which was fantastic and what I wanted to gain."

– Remote Emergency Care, Mt Isa

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



Kristy Hill
Acting Executive
Director, Mental
Health & Wellbeing
Services

As the pandemic continued and the industry struggled with workforce shortages throughout 2022/2023, the Mental Health & Wellbeing Service was busy supporting and responding to the mental health and wellbeing needs of the rural and remote health workforce.

We provided high-quality mental health and wellbeing support across our free 24/7, 365-day telephone counselling support line and a range of mental health and wellbeing workshops, resources and education.

Bush Support Line

Free, 24-hour telephone counselling through the Bush Support Line (BSL) continues to be a valuable support for the rural and remote health workforce and their families. The service's value is reflected in the feedback we regularly receive:

"I called last week and found the service beyond fantastic. It made me so reassured, and again I'm so appreciative of the time and support given. CRANaplus is an invaluable rural health organisation, and the Bush Support Line couldn't be better. I'm so glad I'm a member to help support your work, and believe rural health is all the better for your team. Thanks so much again."

"BSL is an absolute godsend. I don't know what we'd do without it"

Our new CRANaplus Record Information System (CRIS), a bespoke record information and management system, has enhanced the privacy, security and confidentiality of records and improved our understanding of emerging and contemporary issues affecting the sector.



Pam Edwards
Executive Director,
Mental Health &
Wellbeing Services

For example, throughout 2022/2023, interpersonal relationships were the Primary Presenting Concern affecting callers. Workplace relationships impacted 18% of callers, and 21% of callers were affected by personal relationships. 11% of callers presented for help following a specific incident or event and 9% of callers required support for isolation and loneliness.

Of the health workers who called the line, approximately 70% were nurses, 10% were medical officers, and 9% were allied health professionals. 15% of callers were immediate family members of our rural and remote health workforce.

Mindful Mondays

Our Mindful Monday readership continues to grow, with over 3,400 subscribers. This expert psychological advice that heads to the inboxes of thousands of rural and remote health workers every Monday morning continues to receive an incredible amount of positive feedback. Examples include:

"The Mindful Mondays have been a lifesaver to me. Seriously, it's gotten me out of some dark places."

"Inspiring and motivational. Mindful Mondays is something I utilise and incorporate within my working week, along with sharing tips and tricks with my colleagues. Thank you for this wonderful service."

Wellbeing Workshops

The Mental Health & Wellbeing team continue to ensure their free wellbeing workshops are tailored to each and every unique audience. We have heard that most rural and remote health workplaces are looking for short, practical sessions delivered online, with content that supports workers to manage prolonged stress, avoid burnout, manage vicarious trauma and prioritise their wellbeing.

Over the past 12 months, we have delivered 66 workshops to 1,151 rural and remote health workers across Australia. Our workshops continue to be adapted as we develop innovative and engaging content, and this is reflected in our feedback:

"Thank you. I will definitely take your words on board. I am planning some self-care activities already!"

"As a new remote nurse, it's made me feel like it's okay to reach out if we need to. It's reduced stigma around reaching out for help."

We have continued to invest in incorporating strategies to support and engage First Peoples' Health Workers by ensuring our resources and workshop content is reflective of need. We have recently developed and delivered a wellbeing workshop specifically designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers in rural and remote areas. Feedback from a recent workshop facilitator stated it was 'a very powerful session'.

Above, left to right: Mental Health & Wellbeing team at the 2022 CRANaplus Conference; A rare treat – a face-to-face lunch with some of the BSL Crew (left to right) Steph Cooper, Therese Forbes, Andrew Hart, Trish Preston, Nicole Jeffery-Dawes, Tracy Shepherd and Jane Dodding; A screenshot of a virtual Wellbeing session delivered by CRANaplus staff to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



Resources

Mental Health & Wellbeing currently have 30 resources on the CRANaplus website, including a series of written resources, podcasts and eLearning. Our most popular written resource is the Wellbeing for the Bush booklet, which contains professional advice on a range of topics, including managing prolonged stress, living and working remotely, workplace conflict, civility, self-care, trauma and First Peoples wellbeing. These resources are also available in hard copy as part of our free Wellbeing Packs. This year we distributed over 1,730 Wellbeing Packs to rural and remote health workers across Australia.

Wellbeing Lounge at the 2022 CRANaplus Conference

For the first time, the Mental Health & Wellbeing team hosted a Wellbeing Lounge at the 2022 CRANaplus Conference. The lounge was a reserved area offering delegates a chance to take a break and recharge amongst the business of the conference day.

The lounge provided delegates the opportunity to relax while they recharged their phone; sample mindfulness activities and a gratitude wall; learn more about CRANaplus' wellbeing workshops, resources and the Bush Support Line; connect and collaborate with others, and share wellbeing strategies. This was also a fantastic opportunity for the team to meet in person those whom we often only get to support on the phone or online.

Mindful Photography Competition

The Mental Health & Wellbeing team ran a Mindful Photography competition in 2023. With over 85 entries, it was a rewarding experience to see so many rural and remote health workers taking the opportunity to consider their surroundings to a deeper level, opening themselves up to viewing things with a different or new perspective, and capturing a story in a single photo. The judging panel thoroughly enjoyed the experience. With so many incredible entries, choosing the winner was a very challenging job. Pictured right are 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners.

Kristy Hill
Acting Executive Director, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
CRANaplus

Pamela Edwards
Executive Director, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
CRANaplus



Above, left to right: MHW products; Wellbeing Lounge at the 2022 CRANaplus Conference; Gratitude Wall in the Wellbeing Lounge at the 2022 CRANaplus Conference; Mindful Photography Competition winning entries – 1st Prize: Karen Dawe – Photo taken from Pioneer River, Mackay, Queensland. 2nd Prize: Juergen Lohrbacher – Photo taken at Palm Island, Queensland. 3rd Prize: Salina Woolley – Photo taken in Balgo, Western Australia.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



Melanie Avion
Professional Officer

Safety and Security

The comprehensive redesign of the CRANaplus suite of resources to support the safety and security of remote area health professionals has continued, augmenting the CRANaplus Safety and Security Framework. This financial year, we released the redeveloped *Safety and Security for Rural and Remote Health Professionals* online reflective module.

Stakeholder Engagement

During the financial year, CRANaplus provided the remote and isolated health perspective at seven events, including workshops, symposia, consultations and working groups. The Professional Services team maintains representation on eleven ongoing committees and forums related to rural and remote health. All ongoing and one-off representations are logged, approved, and reported in a central register.

CRANaplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable

Meetings with the generous and insightful CRANaplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable have been held quarterly. Roundtable meetings are now an established forum where members have offered feedback on CRANaplus activities and informed our priorities and advocacy, particularly around safety and security, workforce sustainability and clinical issues of interest. The input of the Roundtable has resulted in national scoping of continuing professional development options suitable for remote area health professionals seeking upskilling in responding to reports of sexual assault.

The CRANaplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable has reached the two-year mark, with most of the Members keen to continue for another year. We will soon be joined by new representatives to ensure full national engagement.

Above, left to right: Community store, Yuendumu, Warlpiri Country; Occupational therapy student Annabelle Keynes with camp puppy, during her placement at Purple House, Yuendumu, Warlpiri Country; YOPP, Yuendumu, Warlpiri Country.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



CRANApplus Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program

CRANApplus successfully completed its inaugural Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program. The nine-month program supported four CRANApplus Members to build clinical skills, resilience, and cultural safety in preparation for their transition to remote practice. The program covered a range of learning and development opportunities facilitated by Professional Officers, and included:

- The CRANApplus Remote Emergency Care course
- The CRANApplus Maternity Emergency Care course
- The CRANApplus Online Clinical Assessment Suite
- A range of webinars featuring guest speakers, designed to support professional development and preparedness for expanding your scope of practice
- Resilience workshops and professional reflection activities
- Cultural Safety professional development.

Participant attendance at the CRANApplus courses was supported by the Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant.

Free CPD Webinar Series

Our free CPD webinars have continued, with the delivery of topics and guest presenters relevant to rural and remote health professionals. Webinars continue to be delivered live with interactive Q&A and 'on-demand' later via the CRANApplus website. 2022/2023 CRANApplus webinar topics were:

- Childhood anaemia in the remote setting
- The Social Determinants of Health – A RAN's role?
- Journey into Rural and Remote Management
- Preventing RHD: the clinical and cultural perspectives
- Human diseases caused by insects
- Child Health in Remote Practice Series (Series of 3)
- Machado-Joseph Disease in Australia.

CRANAcast

Eleven episodes of CRANAcast, a podcast telling the stories of the remote area nurses and midwives, have been released in the 2022/2023 year. Every episode, a nurse, midwife, or student shares their experiences of working in rural and remote Australia. CRANAcast is designed to help the workforce to connect with CRANApplus when on the plane, in the car between clinics, or during their downtime between internet access.

RAN Certification

There were eight completions of RAN Certification in the 2022/2023 year.

With the release of The National Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework 2023-2027 by the Office of the National Rural Health Commissioner, RAN Certification is being phased out; after 30 September 2023, the certification program will become inactive. Support for RANs working toward RAN Certification is continuing and will be available as needed in the meantime.

To support nurses and midwives at all career stages to plan and develop into a sustainable remote area career, Professional Services this year developed and launched an interactive reflective resource, *Becoming a remote area nurse: essential knowledge*.

Student Engagement

Professional Services continues to engage and support undergraduate health students in both rural and metropolitan settings. Initiatives include collaboration with the National Rural Health Student Network (NRHSN), clinical placement scholarships and the LINKS Mentoring Program.

LINKS Mentoring Program

There are 15 mentor/mentee pairs currently undertaking the LINKS Mentoring Program. Feedback from mentors indicated workforce pressure has limited their capacity to undertake formal mentoring agreements; however, some are now seeking additional mentees.

Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship

This annual scholarship is jointly sponsored by CRANApplus and Flinders University College of Medicine and Public Health. It covers all course fees for the Graduate Certificate in Remote Health Practice. The scholarship attracted a high calibre of applicants in 2022, with the successful recipient being Ms Emily Evans.

Undergraduate Remote Placement Scholarship

The Undergraduate Remote Placement Scholarship remains popular. The available funds supported five scholarship recipients from various health disciplines including nursing, midwifery, and allied health.

CRANApplus continues to seek additional external sponsorships for these valuable scholarships to support undergraduate students with the opportunity to undertake a remote or rural clinical placement.

Above, left to right: CRANApplus Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program participant, Michelle Appo; CRANApplus Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program participant, Jessica Payne; 2022 Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship recipient, Registered Nurse Emily Evans; An unexpected visitor to the clinic; 2022 Ray Wyeth Early to Remote Practice Award recipient Lorraine Woods (right).

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant

The Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant assisted six members to undertake CRANaplus clinical courses and upskilling. Support is provided by way of registration fee subsidy. Additionally, the grant supported four members to each attend three CRANaplus courses as part of the Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program (RANPP).

CWA Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development Grant

CRANaplus continues its collaborative relationship with the Country Women’s Association (NSW) to support the continuing professional development of 11 nurses (registered and enrolled) and midwives living and working in rural and remote Australia.

CRANaplus has been able to additionally support the grant through the establishment of an online application process.

2022 CRANaplus Awards

The prestigious CRANaplus Aurora Award was initiated by CRANaplus to recognise individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to remote health. The 2022 recipient was Lynette (Lyn) Byers, Clinical Nurse Consultant with Nganampa Health Council in the APY Lands.

The Excellence in Remote Health Practice, sponsored by James Cook University/Murtupini Centre for Rural and Remote Health, was awarded to Lorraine Harry from Mala’la Aboriginal Health Service.

The Ray Wyeth Early to Remote Practice Award, sponsored by Flinders University – Rural and Remote Health (CRH), was awarded to Lorraine Woods from Palm Cockatoo Midwifery Group Practice on Cape York.

Melanie Avion
Professional Officer
CRANaplus

Above, left to right: 2022 CRANaplus Aurora Award recipient, Lyn Byers, Clinical Nurse Consultant at Nganampa Health Council in the APY Lands; Lorraine Harry, the 2022 recipient of the Excellence in Remote and Isolated Health Practice Award.

Photo: jakub – stock.adobe.com



THE CYBER SECURITY, INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECT



CRANApus is dependent on its infrastructure and technology to effectively conduct business operations. Technology that is fit for purpose, accessible, secure and available is essential for all organisations, and heightened need for the security and protection of consumer and business information and changes to industrial relations and privacy legislation have resulted in CRANApus focusing on this area this year.

In February 2023 the Board approved an 18-month Cyber Security, Information, Communications and Technology Project to identify objectives and activities to ensure CRANApus is positioned to adequately protect and utilise its information and communication technology services into the future and to ensure privacy, security, and compliance of the information the CRANApus collects.

CRANApus has approached this Project with an understanding of the interrelationships with security and privacy and the broad range of our stakeholders including Members, education participants, Corporate Members, and award and scholarship recipients. The need for consumer confidence is paramount, as is the confidence that we are doing all we can to ensure the security of our systems and that we are adequately prepared in response to potential cyber threats.

Combining these objectives into a medium-term Project has allowed the approach to be viewed holistically and resources managed to achieve the objectives. The Project is governed by a Steering Group and guided by expert internal and external advice, and this initial focus was of discovery and priority setting. In the six months since inception the Project has enabled an external security audit, resulting in planned changes to our infrastructure and systems, a heightening of risk identification and management mechanisms, and threshold privacy assessments conducted across data and information systems. The next 12 months will focus on actions and ensuring our systems can grow and adapt and continue to service the organisational need.

Above, left to right: Taras Vyshnya – stock.adobe.com; 169169 – stock.adobe.com; Taras Vyshnya – stock.adobe.com

FINANCIAL REPORT 2022/2023



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

This year the 2023 financial statements were prepared and audited by Grant Thornton. A full set of the Financial Statements are now available to all members. Copies can be provided on request by emailing cfo@crana.org.au

It is with great pleasure that I announce this year’s audit report was again completed with no qualifications. The financial position of the organisation remains healthy, with net assets growing to just under \$4.86 million, while achieving a net annual operating surplus of \$19,997 and comprehensive annual profit of \$364,747.

During the 2023 financial year CRANAplus returned to full operational capacity after three financial years of intermittent COVID disruptions. As a result, all services, products, and income streams have now stabilised with a 10% increase in revenue from the previous financial year. CRANAplus also continues to see strong equity growth, with our properties in both Cairns and Adelaide increasing in value to further strengthen the organisation’s financial position.

Moving into the next financial year CRANAplus now has the important task of continuing to innovate and provide flexible solutions to meet the needs of the remote health workforce, whilst continuing to face the new challenges of operating in an economic environment of high inflation. The core funding agreement with the Australian Government Department of Health remains a critical component to the organisation’s ongoing operations, and over the next seven months CRANAplus will continue to work with Government in securing another three-year agreement.

Above: beau – stock.adobe.com

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue and Other Income		
Grant Revenue	4,788,867	4,971,670
Membership Revenue	340,519	269,972
Course Revenue	1,462,071	1,089,053
Donations	30,847	11,363
Other Income	507,178	143,607
	7,129,482	6,485,665

Expenditure		
Employee Costs	(3,705,173)	(3,726,891)
Depreciation	(228,368)	(245,294)
Amortisation	(159,558)	(140,708)
Conference Costs	(50,482)	(7,496)
Consultants and Subcontractors Fees	(384,689)	(283,295)
Course Costs, Catering and Facilitators	(274,230)	(229,363)
Donations	(32,743)	(34,703)
Interest Expense	(66,052)	(44,204)
IT Costs	(578,544)	(674,910)
Postage, Printing and Stationery	(290,451)	(315,047)
Rent and Utilities	(54,707)	(72,268)
Travel and Accommodation	(639,677)	(434,473)
Loss on Disposal of Assets	(1,410)	(12,510)
Other Expenses	(643,401)	(582,423)
	(7,109,485)	(6,803,585)

PROFIT BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE	19,997	-317,920
Income Tax Expense		
PROFIT AFTER INCOME TAX EXPENSE	19,997	-317,920

Other Comprehensive Income <i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss</i>		
Increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	344,750	765,750
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	364,747	447,830

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